Press Release on the CULTIVATE conference

“Copyrighting Creativity: Creative Values, Cultural Heritage Institutions and Systems of Intellectual Property”
(26-27 April, Tate Modern, London)

File Sharing, Peer-to-Peer, Open Access and the Creative Commons: references to these and similar phenomena daily overflow the media. These terms all relate to the digital accessibility of cultural content. Digitization expands the horizon of creative opportunities, and is actively encouraged in the European Union. 100% digital accessibility to Europe’s rich cultural heritage is aimed to be reached by 2025. However, copyright frameworks constructed in the analogue era oppose serious challenges to reaching these goals. Cultural heritage institutions are significant stakeholders in the digitization process and the formation of new information infrastructures, but have so far remained in the periphery of the copyright debate. The seminal role of cultural institutions in making culture accessible and encouraging new creativity, and at the same time regarding the current copyright challenges in and beyond the European Union was brought to the fore in the CULTIVATE’s closing conference, hosted by Tate Modern in London.

Highlights of the conference, which was opened by Tate Modern’s Curator Public Programmes Marko Daniel, were the Pecha Kucha presentations of the CULTIVATE-members, and the contributions of Jane Anderson, adjunct professor of Law at New York University School of Law, on ‘Anxieties of Authorship and Ownership: Copyright, Indigenous Collections and De-colonial Futures’, the renowned Polish artist Marysia Lewandowska, on ‘Reproducing the Future’, and Peter Baldwin, professor of History at the University of California Los Angeles, on ‘The Copyright Wars: Is the Tide About to Turn?’. During the dinner session in the Soho-based Groucho Club, the keynote speech was presented by John Naughton, vice president of the Wolfson College in Cambridge. Italian film maker Federica Messina made the conference documentary which will be first shown at the HERA-JRP final conference which will be held between 30 May and 1 June in London.

The CULTIVATE Collaborative Research Project addresses the relationship between creativity, intellectual property law and cultural heritage from a European perspective against the background of Europe’s multitude of languages, cultures and legal traditions. Scholars from both the humanities and the social sciences, from cultural studies to law, have engaged together with cultural practitioners and representatives of cultural heritage institutions, fostering an interdisciplinary dialogue across and beyond academia proper. The CULTIVATE-project leaders are:

* Helle Porsdam, Professor of American Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark;
* Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, Professor of Library and Information Science, Uppsala University, Sweden;
* Fiona Macmillan, Professor of Law, Birkbeck School of Law, University of London
* Madeleine de Cock Buning, Professor of Copyright, Communication- and Medialaw, director of the Centre for Intellectual Property Law (CIER), Utrecht University, The Netherlands and Lucky Belder, Assistant Professor at CIER, Utrecht University;
* Valdimar Tr. Hafstein, Assistant Professor of Folkloristics/Ethnology, University of Iceland.