Foreword and acknowledgements

If one were to have second thoughts about Iceland as the choice for the location of our fourth Movements Workshop, it would be that it was a bit too obvious a place for the theme of fire, not least as we were based in Bifröst Business School, located in the middle of a lava field in the Norðurárdalur valley. But as is often the case with fire, you quickly get fascinated by how it potentializes the air, how it transforms the earth and how it is contained by water and ice. We must say that the beauty of the place and the smooth efficiency of the local organizers left a firm conviction in our minds that we have to, some day soon, re-visit. Our special and cordial thanks go to the local organizing committee, headed by Rögnvaldur Jóhann Sæmundson and Kristin Hulda Sverrisdóttir, both at Reykjavik University. They truly made us feel home in Iceland and provided a perfect introduction to an exotic and warm culture. We were lucky to visit Reykjavik during its yearly Arts Festival so that the many exhibitions could inspire our discussion on aesthetics, politics and entrepreneurship. Together with Magnus Aronsson and the team at ESBRI (Entrepreneurship and Small Business Research Institute, Stockholm) that hosted the conference in collaboration with Reykjavik University, the fourth Movements Workshop provided the fertile beginnings of this book.

The workshop, like the book, was a performative event. Our invited plenary speakers – Paul du Gay (Open University, Milton Keynes) and Pierre Guillet de Monthoux (Stockholm University) contributed with distinct political and aesthetic perspectives on entrepreneurship and made the workshop into an event that moved ideas and bodies, energized like fire. In addition, Jerome Katz provided most insightful feedback on several presentations and aided in this way the emergence of this book. More than in previous workshops (2001, 2002 and 2004) the theme of politics and aesthetics challenges researchers to take stances on issues and agree between themselves on how to relate to novel approaches to and take on critical perspectives on entrepreneurship. The political and the aesthetic (of course not neatly separable as may be implied) clearly engaged the whole person. People reacted and discussed, provoked and became provoked, experienced and sensed. Hopefully we have been able to keep some of this life in the book as it evolved. With regard to the final stage of this book’s production, a very special thanks goes to Lena
Olaison who has provided precision and patience in putting this manuscript together.

Distilling a book out of a workshop is not a smooth process. Simply put, we take editing seriously, and try to engage with every chapter as readers eager to learn. Several contributors to the workshop chose not to engage in the book project. Of those who did, some found out that the book was not the best place to publish the work they were developing. We wanted a book that carried politics beyond policy, and aesthetics beyond art. Whether we have succeeded in this ambition is up to you as readers, but our feeling is that this book also does what it discusses, why we would like to think it is a political and aesthetic book, intensifying the presence of these crucial dimensions in entrepreneurship research.

Keep looking at the ‘Movements’, Daniel and Chris