



Spatial Economics Research Centre

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Margate and the Turner Contemporary

Margate is the latest place to try the "[art-gallery-as-urban-regeneration-project](#)"

I wouldn't like to comment on the aesthetics, so let's focus instead on the strategy. One possibility is that this will boost tourism. At some point in the future we should be able to assess this on the basis of visitor numbers.

Another possibility is that it will attract "Bohemians" (artists and the like) a regeneration strategy closely associated with [Richard Florida](#). It would be fair to say that the "cultural class" strategy is not without its critics. I confess myself to be deeply sceptical. I am even more sceptical about the ability of signature buildings to attract the creative class to struggling areas.

Still, when the opening of one high profile project generates such a huge amount of coverage, you understand why local politicians are so attracted to such grand projects. Unfortunately, I know of no systematic evidence that they have any of the effects claimed for them.

Posted by [Prof Henry G. Overman](#) on [Tuesday, February 08, 2011](#)

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