Small Venues as Networking Nodes

Live Music in the
Context of Creative
City Development

Master Thesis
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June 2020

Master Thesis

Global Markets, Local Creativities 2018-2020

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Acknowledgments

The process of writing this master thesis was a difficult journey with fluctuating success and occasional speedbumps. Difficulties in finding motivation, the limitations caused by the anti-COVID-19 lockdown, the problems of conceptualisation and other barriers appeared on the way. I want to express my gratitude to my supervisor Jeroen Euwe, who encouraged, motivated and guided me throughout this long process and without whose always detailed feedback the quality of this work would have suffered greatly.

I am grateful to the whole team of the Poplive Research Project and, in particular, to Arno van der Hoeven and Rick Everts, who supervised my work during my internship at Poplive. I learned a lot from you about, among others, the music industries in the Netherlands, the research methods used to study live music and the sources I can use for my research.

I want to thank all my professors and GLOCAL classmates for constantly inspiring me over the course of these two years. Finally, I want to thank our thesis study group of James Foss, Dyana Wing So and Iris Hsin Ping Cheng for the continuous support that guided me through the difficult final months of the thesis work spent in the lockdown.

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June 29, 2020

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Abstract

Over the course of the last twenty years, cultural industries, including live music, have gained importance within urban development policies with the rise of the concepts of the creative city and the creative class. Nonetheless, during this period, more and more small live music venues have been gradually descending into precariousness with gentrification, tightening noise regulations and other reasons forcing many of them to close down. This research aims to connect the study of live music to a broader creative city development discussion by investigating the importance of small live music venues and events for networking of music industry practitioners. By studying this issue, this research strives to highlight the vital role that small live music venues and events play in the cultural life of cities. The study was conducted in Rotterdam in the spring of 2020 using the means of semi-structured in-depth interviews. Drawing on the notion of social capital of Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman and the concept of Live Music Ecology of Frith *et. al* this research investigates the mechanisms of social capital formation and the importance of this resource for bookers and musicians in Rotterdam. As this study shows, both groups consider networking as a crucial practice to succeed in the industry. However, due to the hierarchical structure of the live music field, where event organisers have the power to decide who, where and when gets to play, it appeared to be easier to mobilize and utilize social capital for bookers, rather than for musicians. It leaves musicians in a subordinate position, who, consequently, still rely mainly on self-promotion and not on their networks to advance their careers. Nonetheless, small venues and events play a crucial role in the formation of networks and milieus of the live music industry practitioners. These milieus, in turn, allow for more collaborations to happen and for more events to be organised, which contributes to the cultural output of the city further enhancing the development of Rotterdam as a creative hub.

Keywords: live music, small venues, creative cities, creative industries, social capital, networking, milieus

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Chapter 1: Introduction

'The show must go on' - Queen, 1991[1]

Live music has always been an important element of the urban fabric, contributing to the city's cultural and social environments as well as to its economic output. It has the potential to attract tourists, build up the sense of local identity and overall create a more vibrant cultural environment.[2] It can be defined as 'events that bring musicians and audiences together in one place at one time and involve performance on vocals or other music instruments and technologies, or with music recordings'.[3] Over the course of the last twenty years, live music gained more importance not only within the music industry itself but also in the context of urban development. For musicians, it has become the main source of income as with the rise of the internet and streaming services the record sales have dropped drastically. Despite the digital availability of music, consumers still cherish the experience of live performances and attend concerts and festivals more and more every year.[4] For cities, events in general (including live music), have become an important part of development policies. With the rise of the concepts of 'creative cities' introduced by Charles Landry and Franco Bianchini and the 'creative class' by Richard Florida at the end of 1990s - beginning of 2000s, events started to be considered as playing an essential role in establishing an ambience that would attract and retain

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[1] Brian May et al., *The Show Must Go On* (London: Parlophone, 1991).
[2] Arno van der Hoeven and Erik Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music: Sustaining Urban Live Music Ecologies', *Cities* 90 (1 July 2019): 263–71, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2019.02.015.
[3] Sara Cohen, 'Live Music and Urban Landscape: Mapping the Beat in Liverpool', *Social Semiotics* 22, no. 5 (1 November 2012): 587–603, there 587, https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2012.731902.
[4] Simon Frith, 'Live Music Matters...', *Scottish Music Review* 1, no. 1 (2007), https://doi.org/10.3166/Reseaux141-142.179-201; Mark Sweney, 'Value of UK's Live Music Scene Hits Record High', *The Guardian*, 20 November 2019, sec. Business, https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/nov/20/value-of-uk-live-music-sector-hits-11bn; 'Concert Attendance Higher than Ever', Central Bureau for Statistics, 19 December 2019, https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2019/51/concert-attendance-higher-than-ever; UK Music, 'Wish You Were Here: The Contribution of Live Music to the UK Economy' (London: UK Music, 2017), https://www.ukmusic.org/assets/general/Report_WYWH_17.pdf; UK Music, 'Music By Numbers 2019' (London: UK Music, 2019).

creative individuals in the city as well as bring other economic, cultural and social benefits.[5]

These developments contributed to the increase in attention to live music by scholars and policymakers in the past two decades. Alongside numerous academic articles and public reports emphasizing its economic contribution, a body of literature exploring cultural and social impacts of live music and places where it happens on cities has been emerging during this period. One of the studies that highlight the social and cultural importance of live music was undertaken in 2019 by two professors of media studies Arno van der Hoeven and Erik Hitters. In their analysis of various policy documents, the authors outline three main dimensions of live music's social value: social capital, public engagement and local identity.[6] The notion of social capital among others includes the networking potential of live music events and venues, which provides a specific angle from which the contribution of live music to the city's creative environment can be investigated. This research employs the idea of social capital and, combining it with existing studies of live music, venues and networks in creative industries, aims to contribute to the analysis of live music in the context of creative city development by investigating the potential of small-size events and venues to foster networks of music industry practitioners. The research was conducted in the city of Rotterdam, which strives to become a creative hub and where small venues and events lie at the core of the pop music development strategy.

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[5] Charles Landry and Franco Bianchini, *The Creative City* (Demos, 1995); Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002); Greg Richards and Robert Palmer, *Eventful Cities: Cultural Management and Urban Revitalisation* (Routledge, 2010).
[6] Van der Hoeven and Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music'.

Chapter 2: Live Music and the Creative Cities Paradigm

2.1 Creative industries and cities

The social and cultural impact of music venues and big events, mainly festivals, on cities and local communities has been widely researched. The potential of big concert halls to cause the so-called 'Bilbao effect' (urban regeneration supposedly caused by a new building of a certain cultural institution designed by a famous architect, in the case of Bilbao, the Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry) and their overall influence on the urban environment, the use of festivals as a creative and eventful city strategy, audience perception of live music and its intrinsic cultural value, the potential of festivals in generating social cohesion and other topics have been studied by various scholars.[7] These articles, as well as many other studies connecting events and music venues to urban development, have appeared over the course of the last twenty years. Such attention by academics to this topic in this particular time frame can be explained by the shift in general approach towards culture and cultural industries by both policymakers and scholars alike.

Prior to the 1990s cultural industries were mainly valued for their social, political and cultural importance and were not seen as important economic drivers, as this place was then occupied by traditional industries, such as manufacturing or mining.[8] The first half of the twentieth century saw the emergence of 'mass culture' and the birth of what became

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[7] Beatriz Plaza, 'The Return on Investment of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30, no. 2 (June 2006): 452–67, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2006.00672.x; Nikolay Zherdev, 'Festivalization as a Creative City Strategy', *IN3 Working Paper Series*, 13 May 2014, https://doi.org/10.7238/in3wps.v0i0.2151; Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*; Adam Behr, Matt Brennan, and Martin Cloonan, 'Cultural Value and Cultural Policy: Some Evidence from the World of Live Music', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 22, no. 3 (15 December 2014): 403–18, https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2014.987668; Charles Arcodia and Michelle Whitford, 'Festival Attendance and the Development of Social Capital', *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* 8, no. 2 (8 January 2006): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.1300/J452v08n02_01; Linda Wilks, 'Bridging and Bonding: Social Capital at Music Festivals', *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 3, no. 3 (1 November 2011): 281–97, https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2011.576870; Bernadette Quinn and Linda Wilks, 'Festival Connections: People, Place and Social Capital', in *Exploring the Social Impacts of Events*, ed. Greg Richards, Marisa P. de Brito, and Linda Wilks, 1st ed., 2013, 15–30, https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.2269.7281.
[8] Jason Potts, *Creative Industries and Economic Evolution* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011).

known as cultural industries. During this time, intellectuals and academics feared that commodification of art would decrease its artistic and cultural value, which remains a concern up to this day.[9] Thanks to various factors including technological advancement and rising prosperity in the Western world, cultural industries enjoyed a notable growth during the post-war years and by the end of the 1970s gained significant economic importance.[10] After de-industrialisation started to hit Western cities and countries in the 1980s, in search of a new foundation for the economy, policy-makers turned to cultural industries. This process started in London where in the years 1981-1986 a new set of policies was introduced giving culture a more central role in the local economy.[11] On a national level, cultural industries (not yet called creative) began to enter policies in 1994 in Australia with the 'Creative Nation' document, which emphasized the economic importance of the cultural sector.[12] The final shift from cultural towards creative industries happened in 1997 in the UK with the decision of Tony Blair's government to establish the Creative Industries Task Force (CITF) within the newly created Department of Culture, Media and Sport.[13] Relabelling cultural industries as 'creative' allowed to enlarge the scope of industries included in the definition, adding such sectors as advertising and software to the list.[14] Up to this day, however, no commonly accepted definition of creative industries exists neither in academic literature nor in policy documents. Nonetheless, defining the concept as a whole is out of the scope of this research as it is focused on music, which is unanimously accepted as one of the core cultural and creative industries.[15]

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[9] UNESCO, 'Creative Economy Report 2013, Special Edition: Widening Local Development Pathways.' (New York, NY: United Nations Development Programme, 2013); David Hesmondhalgh and Andy C. Pratt, 'Cultural Industries and Cultural Policy', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 1 (1 March 2005): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.1080/10286630500067598.

[10] Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 'Cultural Industries and Cultural Policy'.

[11] Franco Bianchini, 'GLC R.I.P. Cultural Policies In London 1981-1986', *New Formations* 1 (Spring 1987).

[12] Jennifer Radbourne, '"Creative Nation" —A Policy for Leaders or Followers? An Evaluation of Australia's 1994 Cultural Policy Statement', *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 26, no. 4 (January 1997): 271–83, https://doi.org/10.1080/10632921.1997.9942966.

[13] Terry Flew, 'Origins of Creative Industries Policy', in *The Creative Industries: Culture and Policy* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2012), 9–32, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446288412; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 'Cultural Industries and Cultural Policy'; Potts, *Creative Industries and Economic Evolution*.

[14] 'Creative Industries Mapping Documents 1998' (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 9 April 1998), https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creative-industries-mapping-documents-1998.

[15] UNESCO, 'Creative Economy Report 2013, Special Edition: Widening Local Development Pathways.'

Around the same time as CITF appeared, at the turn of the millennia, the ideas of Charles Landry, Franco Bianchini and Richard Florida on creative cities and the creative class started influencing urban policies around the world and signified the final arrival of creative industries strategies in the urban context on a global scale.[16] The goal of such policies is to attract businesses to the city and thereby foster local economic activity. Various views on how to achieve this objective exist in academic literature, however, it is possible to divide them into two main approaches. Human geographers Jan Jacob Trip and Arie Romein in their study of Rotterdam as a creative city outlined them as being business- and people-oriented.[17] The first one focuses on creating a favourable environment for creative businesses to thrive through infrastructure, regulatory measures, etc. The second one follows the ideas of Florida and aims at improving the city's quality of life and its cultural vibrancy, which is supposed attract the creative class (professionals who possess skills and talent for innovation in any field), who in turn, as a pool of talent concentrated in a certain city, are supposed to attract major corporations and hence bring investment and economic prosperity.[18]

As a part of the creative city strategies, many urban entities embraced the music industry. A prominent example of such a strategy is the UNESCO Cities of Music Network. It currently consists of thirty cities, 'that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development'.[19] There are various reasons for cities to embrace the music industry. As early as the end of the 1980s, it was used in Liverpool in an attempt to, among others, improve the city's image, generate employment and attract tourists.[20] Some use it as a means of establishing an atmosphere of cultural vibrancy thereby implementing the people-oriented approach to creative city development. For example, it was a part of Austin's (self-proclaimed 'Live Music Capital of the World')

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[16] Graeme Evans, 'Creative Cities, Creative Spaces and Urban Policy', *Urban Studies* 46, no. 5–6 (1 May 2009): 1003–40, https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098009103853.

[17] Jan Trip and Arie Romein, 'Beyond the Hype: Creative City Development in Rotterdam', *Journal of Urban Regeneration & Renewal* 2, no. 3 (1 January 2009): 216–321.

[18] Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*.

[19] 'UNESCO Cities of Music | Network', UNESCO Cities of Music, accessed 22 January 2020, https://citiesofmusic.net/.

[20] Sara Cohen, 'Popular Music and Urban Regeneration: The Music Industries of Merseyside', *Cultural Studies* 5, no. 3 (1 October 1991): 332–46, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502389100490281.

motivation to support its music industry in the 1990s and 2000s, because, quoting its former mayor Will Wynn, 'jobs follow people'.[21] Another reason to support music in cities is the attempt to preserve and promote cultural heritage. For instance, Auckland (being a part of the UNESCO Cities of Music Network) in its music strategy dedicated a special place for the musical heritage of the Māori people.[22] Some cities, such as Nashville or Sheffield, attempt to become music industry centres which implies being a hub for recording, producing, performing, making music and other field-related activities.[23] This is a more business-oriented approach that reflects the ideas of Tony Blair, who saw creative industries as the new central economic activity. Regardless of the reasons, it is clear that music is gaining importance in urban development strategies and as sociologists Paul Baird and Michael Scott put it: 'for cities, the risk of not developing live music is not only economic, it is reputational.'[24]

2.2 The music industries and cities

In the public and academic discourse, the music industry is generally perceived as a single entity. Professors of music studies Martin Cloonan and James Williamson argue that although there is a set of industries whose work is centred around music, it is incorrect to consider them a single unit with a unified voice.[25] One of the reasons to move towards the notion of music industries is because each of them has different objectives. What benefits record companies does not necessarily benefit the live music sector or musicians themselves.[26] This distinction of various music industries has its implications for policy-making. Depending on what is the role of music in the city

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[21] Jonathan R. Wynn, *Music/City: American Festivals and Placemaking in Austin, Nashville, and Newport* (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 27.

[22] Auckland UNESCO City of Music, 'Auckland Music Strategy | Te Rautaki Puoro o Tāmaki Makaurau 2018 - 2021' (Auckland: Auckland UNESCO City of Music | Tāmaki Makaurau UNESCO Pā Puoro, November 2018).

[23] Wynn, *Music/City*; Adam Brown, Justin O'Connor, and Sara Cohen, 'Local Music Policies within a Global Music Industry: Cultural Quarters in Manchester and Sheffield', *Geoforum*, Culture Industries and Cultural Policy; Globalizing Cities;, 31, no. 4 (1 November 2000): 437–51, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0016-7185(00)00007-5.

[24] Paul Baird and Michael Scott, 'Towards an Ideal Typical Live Music City', *City, Culture and Society* 15 (1 April 2018): 1-6, there 2, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2018.03.003.

[25] John Williamson and Martin Cloonan, 'Rethinking the Music Industry', *Popular Music* 26, no. 2 (May 2007): 305–22, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143007001262.

[26] Ibid.

development strategy certain music industries should be given preferential treatment. In the people-oriented creative city approach, for instance, the live music industry becomes central as live music events and venues can contribute to the city's cultural environment.

Nowadays, among the music-related industries, live music takes up a crucial if not the central place. Touring has become the major (and for beginners perhaps the only) revenue stream for musicians.[27] With streaming platforms paying less than one cent per stream and favouring big artists it is almost impossible for musicians starting their careers to earn money through record sales.[28] One can say that in the past tours were used to promote records, but now records are used to promote tours.[29] From the consumer side, live concerts offer a unique social and sound experience, that cannot be substituted digitally. Despite the music and recordings of live performances being available online, in the UK, for example, the number of people attending concerts, festivals and participating in music tourism is growing every year.[30]

The value that live music adds to cities can be divided into three categories: social, cultural and economic. Some authors argue that the research on the contribution of live music focuses mostly on its economic impact.[31] This can be explained by the fact that social and cultural impacts are harder to measure and also because economic indicators might be an effective tool to provide evidence of the importance of live music to policy-makers.[32] Whether economic considerations should be the decisive factor when it

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[27] Deloitte, 'The Economic, Social and Cultural Contribution of Venue-Based Live Music in Victoria' (Melbourne: Arts Victoria, 20 June 2011), https://musicvictoria.com.au/assets/Documents/DAE_Live_music_report_2011.pdf.

[28] Alyssa Meyers, 'A Music Artist Says Apple Music Pays Her 4 Times What Spotify Does per Stream, and It Shows How Wildly Royalty Payments Can Vary between Services', Business Insider, 10 January 2020, https://www.businessinsider.com/how-apple-music-and-spotify-pay-music-artist-streaming-royalties-2020-1.

[29] Frith, 'Live Music Matters…'

[30] UK Music, 'Wish You Were Here: The Contribution of Live Music to the UK Economy'; UK Music, 'Music By Numbers 2019'.

[31] Behr, Brennan, and Cloonan, 'Cultural Value and Cultural Policy'; Van der Hoeven and Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music'; Declan Martin, 'Cultural Value and Urban Governance: A Place for Melbourne's Music Community at the Policymaking Table' Perfect Beat, no. 18 (2017): 110–30, https://doi.org/10.1558/prbt.32968; Michael Hutter and Charles D. Throsby, eds., *Beyond Price: Value in Culture, Economics, and the Arts*, Murphy Institute Studies in Political Economy (Workshop, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008).

[32] Adam Behr et al., 'Live Concert Performance: An Ecological Approach', *Rock Music Studies* 3, no. 1 (2 January 2016): 5–23, https://doi.org/10.1080/19401159.2015.1125633; Van der Hoeven and Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music'.

comes to designing cultural policies is debatable, however, the economic potential of live music cannot be overlooked. For instance, in the second-most populous state of Australia, Victoria (population six and a half million), in 2009-2010 it amounted to $301 million which approximately accounts to 14,900 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and in the third-largest city of the Netherlands, The Hague (population half a million), the contribution of local pop music activities in 2016 stood at €27 million or around 800 FTE. [33] Additionally, live music also has the potential to attract tourists, which can further boost its economic impact.[34]

As claimed in the academic literature, the main social contributions of live music include its positive impact on personal well-being, development of social cohesion, forming the sense of local identity, creating collective history, generating public engagement, and others.[35] In regards to culture, the value of live music is seen to lie in musical creativity (new genres), talent development, which in turn can lead to more cultural offerings in the city, and its direct contribution to the city's cultural environment through live events, which is one of the main arguments for music in the people-oriented creative city development strategy.[36] Apart from these positive impacts, live music can also be linked to certain negative side effects, such as illegal activities taking place inside venues (drug handling), noise and violence that can accompany live music events or excessive alcohol consumption leading to anti-social behaviour.[37]

To study live music in an urban setting an ecological approach can be employed, in particular, the concept of 'live music ecology', which was developed by a group of British music researchers including Simon Frith, Martin Cloonan and others.[38] It implies taking a

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[33] Deloitte, 'The Economic, Social and Cultural Contribution of Venue-Based Live Music in Victoria'; Afdeling Citymarketing, 'Economische Impact Popmuziek 2016' (The Hague: Gemeente Den Haag, 15 May 2017).

[34] Ray Hudson, 'Regions and Place: Music, Identity and Place':, *Progress in Human Geography*, 1 July 2016, https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132506070177.

[35] Cohen, 'Live Music and Urban Landscape'; Van der Hoeven and Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music'.

[36] Van der Hoeven and Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music'.

[37] Martin Cloonan, 'Researching Live Music: Some Thoughts on Policy Implications', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17, no. 4 (1 September 2011): 405–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2010.544728; Van der Hoeven and Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music'; Martin, 'Cultural Value and Urban Governance'.

[38] Simon Frith et al., 'The Ecology of Live Music: The Evolution of an Idea', *Live Music Exchange* (blog), accessed 18 May 2020,

comprehensive look at all the factors that influence the live music environment in the city: promoter's networks, availability of local musicians and audience, noise, fire and safety regulations, public transport during the night, venues, etc. Although the term of ecology might be used in the literature as an intricate replacement for a simpler word 'context', this ecological perspective allows to put live music venues into a broader urban setting connecting various spaces and people into one interconnected system. Such a comprehensive approach to cultural production is not unfamiliar in the sociology of arts and can be linked to the works of Howard Becker from the 1970s and 1980s and Pierre Bourdieu from the 1990s, who also emphasized the interdependence of various actors involved in the production, distribution and consumption of works of art.[39] The theories they developed and their connection to the live music ecology concept will be explained in greater detail in the 'Methodology' chapter. In general, a healthy live music ecology ensures enough opportunities to perform for local and touring musicians, supports talent development, and sustains the cultural vibrancy in the city, which in turn informs the people-oriented creative city development policies.

2.3 Small live music venues

One of the central elements of a healthy live music ecology is the spaces where music can be performed. Many studies, policies and reports emphasize the importance of big-scale venues and events, mainly festivals, whereas small venues are lacking the attention of researchers and especially of policymakers.[40] Such lack of attention creates an unstable situation for small size venues, which are, in fact, one of the fundamental

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https://livemusicexchange.org/blog/the-ecology-of-live-music-the-evolution-of-an-idea-live-music-exchange-editorial-team/.

[39] Howard Becker, 'Art Worlds and Social Types', *American Behavioral Scientist* 19, no. 6 (1 July 1976): 703–18, https://doi.org/10.1177/000276427601900603; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Columbia University Press, 1993).

[40] Tom Parkinson et al., 'Understanding Small Music Venues: A Report by the Music Venue Trust' (London: UK Music, 2015), https://www.academia.edu/11334790/Report_Understanding_Small_Music_Venues_A_Report_by_the_Music_Venue_Trust.

pillars of a healthy live music ecology and a broader urban cultural and social environment.[41]

Positive effects of small music venues on cities and local music scenes have been extensively studied by researchers. Such venues provide a ground to perform for starting musicians, who have not 'made it big' yet, first experiences for bookers, sound technicians and other aspiring music industries professionals, allow for experimentation with new music styles, develop local audiences, scenes and music communities, constitute the main touring circuit for niche genres, etc.[42] They contribute to the local community development as small venues are cheap, easy-to-access and open-for-everyone places of recreation and social interaction; they can become safe spaces for political and subcultural expression like the hip hop culture, and they often open their space for other community events such as book clubs, dance lessons, game nights, comedy shows, etc.[43] Small venues greatly contribute to the cultural vibrancy of the city by, among others, generating 'buzz' and creating the sense of local collective identity; they also have the potential to become iconic places for the city's history like the Cavern in Liverpool where the Beatles started their career.[44]

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[41] The definition of small venues is discussed in the 'Methodology' section of this study

[42] Harry Harris, 'Without Small Venues, the UK Doesn't Have a Music Industry', *Vice*, 17 January 2019, https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/a3mxq4/without-small-venues-the-uk-doesnt-have-a-music-industry; Martin, 'Cultural Value and Urban Governance'; Ben Gallan, 'Gatekeeping Night Spaces: The Role of Booking Agents in Creating "Local" Live Music Venues and Scenes', *Australian Geographer* 43, no. 1 (1 March 2012): 35–50, https://doi.org/10.1080/00049182.2012.649518; Andy Bennett and Richard A. Peterson, *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal and Virtual* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2004); Shane Homan, 'A Portrait of the Politician as a Young Pub Rocker: Live Music Venue Reform in Australia', *Popular Music* 27, no. 2 (2008): 243–56.

[43] Parkinson et al., 'Understanding Small Music Venues: A Report by the Music Venue Trust'; Dan Miller and John Schofield, 'The "Toilet Circuit": Cultural Production, Fandom and Heritage in England's Small Music Venues', *Heritage & Society* 9, no. 2 (2 July 2016): 137–67, https://doi.org/10.1080/2159032X.2017.1330936; Philip Kiszely, 'From Place to Space to Scene: The Roxy Room and the Emergence of Manchester's Alternative Pop Culture Identity', *Punk & Post Punk* 2, no. 1 (1 March 2013): 27–42, https://doi.org/10.1386/punk.2.1.27_1; Michael Dowdy, 'Live Hip Hop, Collective Agency, and "Acting in Concert"', *Popular Music and Society* 30, no. 1 (1 February 2007): 75–91, https://doi.org/10.1080/03007760500503459; Ramon Lobato, 'Gentrification, Cultural Policy and Live Music in Melbourne', *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy* 120, no. 1 (1 August 2006): 63–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X0612000110.

[44] Gallan, 'Gatekeeping Night Spaces'; Sara Cohen, 'Musical Memory, Heritage and Local Identity: Remembering the Popular Music Past in a European Capital of Culture', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 19, no. 5 (1 November 2013): 576–94, https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2012.676641; Christina Ballico and Dave Carter, 'A State of Constant Prodding: Live Music, Precarity and Regulation', *Cultural Trends* 27, no. 3 (27 May 2018): 203–17, https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2018.1474007; Sophie Arkette,

Despite such an array of positive effects, nowadays many small-size music venues find themselves in a precarious situation operating on the brink of collapse and facing constant financial problems.[45] For instance, in the period from 2007 until 2016 the number of grassroots music venues in London, which is a city with one of the most vibrant live music scenes in the world, dropped from 144 to 94.[46] A comprehensive first of its kind study on small music venues done in the UK by Parkinson *et. al* outlined the following issues that lead to such an unstable situation: property developers, either acquiring premises that music venues occupy without the venue's consent and repurposing it or building residential blocks near the venues which leads to noise-related clashes, insufficient public funding, lack of cooperation in the small venues sector, negative stereotypes about music venues (noise, alcohol, drugs and criminal activity), complicated relationships with local authorities and so on.[47] Studies from Australia indicate a range of similar challenges, including the impact of gentrification and rising rent prices, toughening liquor licensing regulations, a general decline in pub attendance, big leisure conglomerates acquiring venues and 'corporatizing' the sector, etc.[48] With gentrification, venues become victims of their own success. Now used as a means of urban regeneration, music venues improve the quality of life by adding to the city's cultural vibrancy, which in turn results in the rise in rent prices and new housing developments, which eventually leads to venues losing their profitability and closing down.[49]

This calls for direct action from city governments to protect small music venues. Some municipalities, such as London, take the initiative by offering subsidies and implementing

'Sounds Like City':, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23 June 2016, https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276404040486; Emma Webster et al., 'Valuing Live Music: The UK Live Music Census 2017 Report', Census (Arts & Humanities Research Council, February 2018).

[45] Van der Hoeven and Hitters, 'The Social and Cultural Values of Live Music'.

[46] The Greater London Authority et al., 'Rescue Plan for London's Grassroots Music Venues: Making Progress' (London: Greater London Authority, January 2017).

[47] Parkinson et al., 'Understanding Small Music Venues: A Report by the Music Venue Trust'.

[48] Gallan, 'Gatekeeping Night Spaces'; Dawn Bennett, 'State of Play: Live Original Music Venues in Western Australia', *Perfect Beat* 11, no. 1 (21 June 2010): 49–66, https://doi.org/10.1558/prbt.v11i1.49; Ballico and Carter, 'A State of Constant Prodding'; Lobato, 'Gentrification, Cultural Policy and Live Music in Melbourne'.

[49] Kate Shaw, 'Independent Creative Subcultures and Why They Matter', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 19, no. 3 (1 June 2013): 333–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2013.788162.

the 'agent of change' principle which implies that if a new residential building is built next to an existing venue, it is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the noise from the venue does not bother new residents.[50] In other cases, for instance, in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Melbourne venue owners mobilize the citizens to rescue their venues. In each of these cities, more than 15.000 signatures were collected asking for public support to avoid the closure of a certain iconic venue, further proving the importance of small size music venues for cities and their residents.[51]

Not surprisingly, the research of live music and small venues in the last twenty years has been dominated by studies from the United Kingdom, particularly Scotland and England, and Australia, the countries which embraced the creative industries paradigm first. Some research is also being conducted in the US and the Netherlands. Such an impression, however, might be attributed to language-related limitations as within this study only academic texts written in English were consulted. Nonetheless, the dominance of the British and Australian discourse is well reflected in the attention of policymakers towards small venues, which is the most visible in these two countries.

With small venues being a substantial part of live music environment in cities and a vital element for musician's career and local scenes development, with small venues being financially unstable, with small venues' unique contribution to the city's creative ambience and the quality of life, and with their financial contribution to the urban economy it is important that such venues are supported and looked after by local authorities. Among all the studies that highlight various positive contributions of such venues to the urban environment, no research addresses the ability of small live music venues to foster networks of music industry practitioners. This study aims to fill in this gap and thereby demonstrate and further emphasize their importance for the development of the people-oriented creative city.

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[50] The Greater London Authority et al., 'Rescue Plan for London's Grassroots Music Venues: Making Progress'.
[51] Harris, 'Without Small Venues, the UK Doesn't Have a Music Industry'; Martin, 'Cultural Value and Urban Governance'.

2.4 Networks and social capital in creative industries

In his book of 1996, a Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells suggested that with the rapid advance of technology, accelerating globalisation and the transition to the information age, the functioning of the society has been centred more and more around networks, which consist of subjects, technologies and the links in between.[52] In 2001 a professor of cultural and media studies Andreas Wittel elaborated further on this trend and brought it down from the macro to the micro-sociology perspective. He introduced the concept of 'network sociality', which implied that in 'the new cultural economy', networking, consisting of ephemeral information-based relations, will become the key social practice determining individual success.[53]

Cultural and creative industries (CCI) represent a specific knowledge-based sector of this new economy, which is mediated and defined by social networks. By the means of networking in CCI trends disseminate, art scenes form, knowledge is shared, business connections and informal support systems are built, professionals discover employment opportunities and generate individual competitive advantage, which lies in the size of their network, etc.[54] On an individual level, however, the notion of networking as a tool to succeed is not novel neither to this 'new cultural economy' nor to CCI. It can be connected to the theory of social capital, which was developed in the 1980s by, among others, Pierre Bourdieu. It refers to the network of acquaintances/friends a certain person possesses and the resources that this person can obtain or mobilize with the use of this network in order to gain economic or cultural benefits (this concept will be explained in greater detail in the 'Methodology' chapter).

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[52] Manuel Castells, *Rise of the Network Society*, 1st ed. (USA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 1996).
[53] Andreas Wittel, 'Toward a Network Sociality', *Theory, Culture & Society* 18, no. 6 (1 December 2001): 51–76, https://doi.org/10.1177/026327601018006003.
[54] David Lee, 'Networks, Cultural Capital and Creative Labour in the British Independent Television Industry':, *Media, Culture & Society*, 10 May 2011, https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443711398693; Gernot Grabher, 'Learning in Projects, Remembering in Networks?: Communality, Sociality, and Connectivity in Project Ecologies', *European Urban and Regional Studies* 11, no. 2 (1 April 2004), https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776404041417; Emma Felton, Christy Collis, and Philip Graham, 'Making Connections: Creative Industries Networks in Outer-Suburban Locations', *Australian Geographer* 41, no. 1 (1 March 2010), https://doi.org/10.1080/00049180903535576.

In 2009, the reliance of CCI on social networks was conceptualized by economists Jason Potts, Stuart Cunningham, John Hartley and Paul Ormerod. They proposed a new way to define the sector not as a set of industries, but as a set of markets where production and consumption are influenced 'to a greater extent than other socio-economic activity' by social networks because decision-making in CCI relies more 'on 'word of mouth', taste, cultures, and 'popularity'' than on other factors such as price or 'innate preferences'.[55] Many studies on networks in CCI also rely on the concept of 'embeddedness', which was developed by an American sociologist Mark Granovetter in the 1980s. He argued that economic actions do not happen independently in a vacuum of economic relations but instead are embedded into institutions and networks which are socially constructed and are influenced and determined by human culture.[56] Such a notion reflects one of the main characteristics of all CCI as being a sector where value is being determined within social networks and is rooted in the cultural context.[57]

The role of networking within various creative industries has been well explored over the course of the last twenty years. Studies by geographers Neil. M Coe (2000) and Lily Kong (2006) demonstrated high reliance of the film industries of Vancouver and Hong Kong on social networks to secure funding, find reliable co-creators and crew members, etc. on different geographical levels: local, national and international.[58] Professors of media studies David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker in their work on the television, the recording and the magazine industries of the UK highlighted the importance of after-work networking (most frequently, drinking in pubs) for professionals in these sectors to find

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[55] Jason Potts et al., 'Social Network Markets: A New Definition of the Creative Industries', *Journal of Cultural Economics* 32, no. 3 (1 September 2008): 167–85, there 169 and 170, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-008-9066-y.

[56] Mark Granovetter, 'Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness', *American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 3 (November 1985): 481–510; Neil M. Coe, 'The View from out West: Embeddedness, Inter-Personal Relations and the Development of an Indigenous Film Industry in Vancouver', *Geoforum*, Culture Industries and Cultural Policy; Globalizing Cities;, 31, no. 4 (1 November 2000): 391–407, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0016-7185(00)00005-1; Lily Kong, 'The Sociality of Cultural Industries', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 1 (1 March 2005): 61–76, https://doi.org/10.1080/10286630500067812; Pacey Foster, Stephen Borgatti, and Candace Jones, 'Gatekeeper Search and Selection Strategies: Relational and Network Governance in a Cultural Market', *Poetics* 39, no. 4 (1 August 2011): 247–265, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2011.05.004.

[57] Potts et al., 'Social Network Markets'.

[58] Kong, 'The Sociality of Cultural Industries'; Coe, 'The View from out West'.

employment opportunities and remain visible on the job market.[59] A media studies scholar, David Lee, who also connected networking to the notion of social capital, discovered that in British TV industry social networks are vital to enter the industry, move up the career ladder and navigate uncertainties.[60] Various studies pointed out that such 'mandatory' networking in CCI puts at disadvantage the people who due to their personality do not enjoy frequent socialising. It creates barriers of entry for those with initially low social capital, which can be the result not only of personality traits but also of class, gender and race divides, as well as leads to other issues.[61] After work socialising often happens in bars and pubs which are frequently also music venues, which highlights the importance of such spaces for the creative environment of the city and demonstrates that they have the potential to enrich social capital not only of music industries practitioners but also of professionals from other CCI.[62]

In the poetry sector, social capital in the form of participation in formal organisations determines the position of a certain poet in the hierarchy of poetic circles, which impacts his/her employment prospects.[63] Sociologists Ailsa Craig and Sébastien Dubois in their study of this industry, emphasized the importance of social capital for poets to find employment, in particular, for novice authors. They also found out that such networking mainly happens at public readings.[64] These findings reveal that events and venues where artists can showcase their work also act as opportunities to get valuable contacts and enrich their social capital, which is directly connected to this particular study on the networking potential of small live music venues.

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[59] David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker, '"A Very Complicated Version of Freedom": Conditions and Experiences of Creative Labour in Three Cultural Industries', *Poetics* 38, no. 1 (1 February 2010): 4–20, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2009.10.001.
[60] Lee, 'Networks, Cultural Capital and Creative Labour in the British Independent Television Industry'.
[61] Ibid.; Ailsa Craig and Sébastien Dubois, 'Between Art and Money: The Social Space of Public Readings in Contemporary Poetry Economies and Careers', *Poetics* 38, no. 5 (1 October 2010): 441–60, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2010.07.003; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, '"A Very Complicated Version of Freedom"'.
[62] Lobato, 'Gentrification, Cultural Policy and Live Music in Melbourne'; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, '"A Very Complicated Version of Freedom"'.
[63] Helmut K. Anheier, Jurgen Gerhards, and Frank P. Romo, 'Forms of Capital and Social Structure in Cultural Fields: Examining Bourdieu's Social Topography', *American Journal of Sociology* 100, no. 4 (1995): 859–903.
[64] Craig and Dubois, 'Between Art and Money'.

Research on music industries also indicates the high reliance of this sector on social networks and places, such as recording studios and bars, to form these webs.[65] Several studies demonstrate that bookers as gatekeepers at music venues rely on social networks to deal with uncertainties concerning which acts to book.[66] British sociologist Nick Crossley in his article of 2009 'The man whose web expanded' outlines the role of networks in the formation of Manchester's post-punk music scene at the end of the 1970s which produced world-famous bands such as Joy Division and The Smiths.[67] Manchester still reaps the benefits of its vibrant music scene which was kickstarted by this post-punk wave.[68] According to Crossley, the number of relations in the network of people involved in the post-punk scene of Manchester increased drastically from 96 to 346 in the period 1976-1980, which allowed for the scene to develop and rise to prominence.[69] He indicates several mechanisms of network formation. First, foci, a concept introduced by Scott Feld which implies that people with similar interests tend to go to the same events and places and as a consequence form ties and communities.[70] Second, mediated foci, which means publicly advertised foci, which would still attract people from a similar social circle. For example, placing an advertisement in a music magazine will enlarge the sample of people who can discover the foci, however, the audience of this advertisement would still be limited to the readers of this magazine who would mainly be music fans. Third, the Granovetter effect, which implies that weak ties (acquaintances, but not close friends) are crucial for discovering and entering new social circles as strong ties (close friends) usually tend to cluster and interact with each other, rather than look outwards.[71]

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[65] Chris Gibson, 'Cultures at Work: Why "culture" Matters in Research on the "Cultural" Industries', *Social & Cultural Geography* 4, no. 2 (1 June 2003): 201–15, https://doi.org/10.1080/14649360309059; Will Straw, 'The English-Canadian Recording Industry since 1970', in *Rock and Popular Music: Politics, Policies, Institutions*, ed. Tony Bennett et al., Culture (London; New York: Routledge, 1993), 52–65.

[66] Yun Tai, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want: Gatekeeping and Social Capital in the Live Music Scenes of Atlanta and Taipei' (PhD Dissertation, Atlanta, Emory University, 2014); Foster, Borgatti, and Jones, 'Gatekeeper Search and Selection Strategies'.

[67] Nick Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded: Network Dynamics in Manchester's Post/Punk Music Scene 1976–1980', *Poetics* 37, no. 1 (1 February 2009): 24–49, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2008.10.002.

[68] Brown, O'Connor, and Cohen, 'Local Music Policies within a Global Music Industry'.

[69] Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded'.

[70] Scott L. Feld, 'Social Structural Determinants of Similarity among Associates', *American Sociological Review* 47, no. 6 (1982): 797–801, https://doi.org/10.2307/2095216.

[71] Mark Granovetter, 'The Strength of Weak Ties', *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (1973): 1360–80.

Fourth, reputation, which draws people to certain places (foci). And fifth, preferential attachment, when people seek to meet certain persons who possess significant reputation and resources.[72] For this particular study, small live music venues are perceived as (mediated) foci where music industry practitioners can enrich their social capital and hence get an opportunity to enter the music industry and consequently contribute to the city's creative economy and environment.

The theory of social capital has also been employed in relation to the music industries. Sociologist Michel Scott demonstrated how DIY musicians who lack financial capital, use their social and cultural endowments to boost their careers and promote their music.[73] Timothy Dowd and Diogo L. Pinheiro, two sociologists from Atlanta, found that social and cultural capital play an important role in the economic success of jazz musicians.[74] Professor of sociology Carey Sargent discovered that especially for musicians starting their careers, social capital is an important tool to build a local fan base and maintain visibility and connections within their music scene.[75] Several studies also applied the social capital theory to events, mainly, festivals, however, they focused primarily on the impact of festivals on social cohesion and community building in cities.[76] Although they demonstrate that festivals can improve the quality of life in a certain place and subsequently inform the people-oriented creative city development strategy, these studies are not directly related to the question of this research as it aims to investigate the ability of small venues to form social capital on the production side of live music, i.e. bookers and musicians, rather than on the consumption side, i.e. audiences.

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[72] Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded'.
[73] Michael Scott, 'Cultural Entrepreneurs, Cultural Entrepreneurship: Music Producers Mobilising and Converting Bourdieu's Alternative Capitals', *Poetics* 40 (1 June 2012): 237–255, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2012.03.002.
[74] Diogo Pinheiro and Timothy Dowd, 'All That Jazz: The Success of Jazz Musicians in Three Metropolitan Areas', *Poetics* 37 (1 October 2009): 490–506, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2009.09.007.
[75] Carey Sargent, 'Local Musicians Building Global Audiences', *Information, Communication & Society* 12, no. 4 (1 June 2009): 469–87, https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180902857660.
[76] Arcodia and Whitford, 'Festival Attendance and the Development of Social Capital'; Wilks, 'Bridging and Bonding'; Quinn and Wilks, 'Festival Connections'; Bernadette Quinn and Linda Wilks, 'Linking Social Capital, Cultural Capital and Heterotopia at the Folk Festival', *Journal of Comparative Research in Anthropology and Sociology* 7, no. 1 (2016), https://doi.org/doi:10.21427/D7BP6G.

All these studies demonstrate that networks and spaces where social capital can be developed are vital for the healthy functioning of cultural and creative industries. Hence, in order to maintain a prosperous cultural and creative sector, as an economist Roberta Comunian in her paper of 2012 argued, networks in the industry should be supported by local authorities, especially 'the more hidden or temporary ones, which can be the first step for people into the sector.'[77] This is the kind of entry-level creative networks that this research seeks to investigate by studying small size live music venues.

2.5 Small live music venues as networking nodes (research question)

This study aims to fill in the gap in the analysis of live music, its social value and its role in the people-oriented creative cities development strategy. Investigating the potential of small music venues and events for the development of social capital of music industry practitioners, it seeks to analyse the importance of music venues and events of small scale for the urban live music ecology and the city's creative environment in general. The precarious and unstable situation that venues find themselves in nowadays around the world, their contribution to the quality of life and the cultural and creative environment in the city, their ability to bring economic benefits through providing employment and attracting tourists and their significance as foci for fostering local creative networks make small events and venues an important research object. This study was conducted in spring 2020 amidst the COVID-19 virus outbreak, which led to a complete halt in the live music sector due to the measures against the spread of the virus prohibiting public gatherings. This situation makes small music venues even more vulnerable and their future even more unpredictable than before. Thus, studying the importance of such venues for cities becomes even more relevant as without public support many of them might not survive the crisis caused by the virus.

The research question, thus, is formulated as follows:

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[77] Roberta Comunian, 'Exploring the Role of Networks in the Creative Economy of North East England: Economic and Cultural Dynamics', in *Encounters and Engagements between Economic and Cultural Geography*, ed. Barney Warf, GeoJournal Library (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 143–57, there 153, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2975-9_9.

What was the role of small size live music events in the formation of social capital of the live music industry practitioners in Rotterdam in the period 2006-2020?

The study analyses various small venues and events in Rotterdam focusing on a variety of music genres. The regularity of events in small venues and low entry barriers at such events allow music industry practitioners to frequently interact with each other and thereby enrich their social capital, i.e. enlarge their professional networks. Alongside the social capital potential of small venues, the live music ecology of Rotterdam and the position of small live music venues in it are analysed to provide context for the study and connect it to the broader context of urban development. Using the concept of 'small size live music *events*' allows to include into the research question event series that frequently change locations and the venues which position themselves as not exclusively live music places, but which still contribute to Rotterdam's live music ecology. The word 'professionals' was deliberately avoided in the formulation of the research question and the wording 'music industries practitioners' was used instead to include those who do not consider their music activity as their profession. The timeframe in question, the selection of music industry practitioners and small venues in Rotterdam will be explained in the 'Methodology' section.

To answer the main question several sub-questions were posed:

1. How did Rotterdam's live music ecology develop over the course of the past twenty years?
    a. What are the main characteristics of the local live music ecology?
    b. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the local live music ecology?
    c. What policies were implemented by the local municipality in regards to the city's pop music sector?

d. How did the place of small live music venues and events change over time in the pop music policies of Rotterdam and its live music ecology?

2. How do music industries practitioners get involved in the live music sector for the first time?
    a. How do such people get first acquainted with the music sector?
    b. How did they discover/obtain the first opportunity?
    c. What are the entry barriers for each particular role?

3. What are the mechanisms of social capital formation in the context of small live music venues/events?
    a. How do these mechanisms differ among various groups of the practitioners involved in live music events?
    b. How do these mechanisms differ across various music genres?

4. What is the influence of the social capital gained at small live music events on further career development of music industries practitioners?
    a. How does this influence differ among various groups of practitioners involved in live music events?
    b. How does this influence differ across various music genres?

5. How do music industries practitioners experience the live music ecology of Rotterdam?
    a. How do they evaluate the support live music receives from the municipality?
    b. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the local live music ecology in the eyes of the practitioners?

6. What are the implications of the enrichment of social capital of music industries practitioners for Rotterdam's live music ecology and its cultural output in general?
    a. How can these implications be connected to the people-oriented creative city development strategy?

Question one provides an overview of the live music ecology of Rotterdam and thereby allows to put the research into broader urban and historical contexts. Question two looks at the first steps of the live music industry practitioners in the sector and at the entry barriers they face in the very beginning of their careers. Questions three and four represent the main body of the research and imply the analysis of the social capital formation in the context of small size live music venues and events and the importance of networks for the career development of the live music industry practitioners. Questions five and six connect the findings to the broader urban setting of Rotterdam, allowing to identify the relevance of the study for the city and its development and laying down the foundation for further research. To answer the question one local pop music and cultural policy documents were consulted. Questions two to five were answered using the means of semi-structured in-depth interviews. A more detailed description of the methods used in this study can be found in the 'Methodology' section.

The goal of the research was to identify concrete examples of how networking at small live music events helped music industry practitioners to advance their careers and determine if it subsequently benefited the city as a whole. The studies on the conversion of social capital into economic one by musicians and bookers have been previously conducted by various scholars.[78] This research does not aim to investigate the practitioners themselves, but the ability of venues to generate the social capital of these practitioners. The connection between venues and urban development is not often explored in the academic literature on live music, however, it is constantly present in various reports on the value of live music published by city halls or other private or public organisations.[79] This study aims to explore this link in the academic context.

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[78] Tai, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'; Foster, Borgatti, and Jones, 'Gatekeeper Search and Selection Strategies'; Sargent, 'Local Musicians Building Global Audiences'.

[79] Webster et al., 'Valuing Live Music'; The Greater London Authority et al., 'Rescue Plan for London's Grassroots Music Venues: Making Progress'; Parkinson et al., 'Understanding Small Music Venues: A Report by the Music Venue Trust'; Deloitte, 'The Economic, Social and Cultural Contribution of Venue-Based Live Music in Victoria'; Jasper Van Vugt, 'De Waarde Van Pop 2.0: De maatschappelijke betekenis van popmuziek' (Amsterdam: Vereniging Nederlandse Poppodia en -Festivals, January 2018), https://vng.nl/sites/default/files/waardevanpop2_def_download.pdf.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework & Methodology

3.1 Social capital

To investigate the potential of small music venues and events in the formation of networks of music industries practitioners the concept of social capital is employed in this research. This notion has been widely discussed by sociologists and policymakers over the course of the last forty years, however, the social capital theory does not convey any essentially new ideas. Positive impacts of belonging to a certain group and having numerous social connections have been discussed among sociologists since the start of the nineteenth century.[80] Giving such a phenomenon a name of 'capital', as an American sociologist Alejandro Portes argues, allows scholars to attract the attention of policymakers by bringing a social category to the language of economics.[81] The contribution of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam, three sociologists who started the debate in the 1980s and 1990s, is considered fundamental to the study of social capital.[82]

The term first appeared in the article of 1986 by Bourdieu titled 'Forms Of Capital'. He argued that in addition to the accepted forms of capital such as economic capital and human capital, a new category of social capital should be added. He defined this new concept as '...the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition...'.[83] Bourdieu considered the way that any form of capital is being distributed represents 'the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that

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[80] Alejandro Portes, 'Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology', *Annual Review of Sociology* 24, no. 1 (1 August 1998): 1–24, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.1.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital', in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241–58; James S. Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital', *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988): S95–120; Robert D. Putnam, 'Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital', *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (1 January 1995): 65–78, https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.1995.0002; Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 1. touchstone ed (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000).
[83] Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital', 248.

world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices'.[84] Despite looking for non-economic reasons for power formation and retainment, he studied human and social capitals as eventually convertible into economic capital, thereby denoting the ability to gain economic resources as the ultimate goal of investing in human and social capital. The power of one's social capital according to Bourdieu is defined by two main variables: the size of the network one possesses and is able to mobilize at a certain point in time (including the connections of the people who belong to the social network of the initial actor) and the quality of the resources such connections possess. It is unclear, however, how to define this quality. Another important feature of Bourdieu's interpretation of social capital is the notion that it can be activated only through the process of exchange and thus its power lies in the network itself rather than belongs to an individual as human and economic capitals do.

Several years later in 1988, James Coleman tried to combine sociological and economical explanations of social action and used the concept of social capital as a tool to create a new interpretation that would address the lack of 'engines of action' in the sociological approach and add a social component to the rational economic stance. He saw social capital as another resource available to an individual actor, which is defined by its function in the form of 'a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors'.[85] According to Coleman, social capital exists in relations among people, which again emphasizes the idea that it is the only form of capital, which although belongs to a certain individual is not in his immediate possession. There are three main categories of resources attributed to social capital: information channels, norms structures and, as one category, obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness. The latter might be seen not as a resource but as the mechanism by which social capital can be formed and its quality enhanced. The central idea behind Coleman's vision of social capital is the role it plays in the creation of human capital, which in turn would provide an individual with opportunities for a more economically successful life. Additionally, he mentions that

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[84] Ibid, 242.
[85] Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital', 98.

'actor or actors who generate social capital ordinarily capture only a small part of its benefits, a fact that leads to underinvestment in social capital'.[86]

Bourdieu and Coleman both did not address the emotional part of social capital formation and the irrationality behind the decisions of certain individuals to make their social resources available to a particular person, which means to a certain extent to control someone else's social capital.[87]

Robert Putnam was the person who took out the notion of social capital from the academic discourse to the public one. His work on the declining social capital of the US titled 'Bowling Alone' gained him an audience with then-president Bill Clinton and popularized the notion in the American public discourse.[88] Putnam connected the idea of social capital to the quality of life and used civic engagement (membership in community groups, voting) of each particular citizen to illustrate that numbers of people socially engaged in the US have dropped significantly in the second half of the twentieth century.[89] According to Putnam, social capital refers to the '… features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit'.[90] In his following book of 2000, he outlines two categories of social capital: bonding (inward-looking, strengthening existing ties) and bridging (outward-looking, creating new ties out of the current network).[91]

For the research of small live music venues, various insights can be drawn from different interpretations of the concept. All scholars identify networks as the core element of the social capital phenomenon, providing access to resources other members of the network possess and determining the potential of one's social capital. Both Bourdieu and especially Coleman argued that social capital plays an important role in the formation of human capital, which is one of the most important assets for practitioners in

[86] Ibid, 119.
[87] John Field, *Social Capital*, 3rd edition, Key Ideas (London New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017); Portes, 'Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology'.
[88] Portes, 'Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology'.
[89] Putnam, 'Bowling Alone', 1 January 1995.
[90] Ibid, 67.
[91] Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 2000.

creative industries.[92] According to Bourdieu and Coleman possessing human capital eventually leads to economic gains for a certain person. By gaining social capital, music industries practitioners can enrich their human capital, which is one of the key attributes of creativity, and obtain connections necessary to advance their careers and create new projects, be it new music in case of musicians or a new concert series in case of bookers. These projects, in turn, are convertible into economic capital for these individuals, if implemented correctly.

Such a transferability of social capital into the other forms of capital allows to connect this concept to the broader urban environment in the context of this study. Although Bourdieu and Coleman focus on individuals as those possessing social capital, both indicate its social, not personal, nature as it lies in the network of connections rather than belongs to a certain human. In the case of music industries, such social capital networks can exist on the urban scale such as the web of the post-punk scene in Manchester at the end of the 1970s.[93] By supporting such networks, municipalities can ensure that music industries practitioners have access to social capital. With this access the probability of practitioners meeting each other, collaborating and creating new projects increases. Although the success rate might fluctuate, some of these projects have the potential to bring economic benefits not only for the individuals that were involved in it but for the city as a whole. These projects can generate the 'buzz' and the vibrancy required for the development of a people-oriented creative city as well as attract tourists and generate employment. On top of the economic benefits, they can also improve social cohesion, personal well-being, overall quality of life, etc.[94]

It is this logic which informs this study, which aims to investigate whether small music venues act as places where music industry practitioners can enrich their social capital.

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[92] Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital'; Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital'.
[93] Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded'.
[94] Such far-reaching effects might be considered as positive externalities of live music in cities. The concept of externalities was developed at the end of the nineteenth - the beginning of the twentieth century by, among others, Arthur Cecil Pigou in 1920: Arthur Cecil Pigou, *The Economics of Welfare*, 1st ed. (London: Macmillan, 1920). For application of this concept to cultural and creative industries see the works of David Throsby and Ruth Towse: David Throsby, *The Economics of Cultural Policy* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Ruth Towse and Trilce Navarrete Hernandez, eds., *Handbook of Cultural Economics*, 3rd ed. (Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2020).

The concept of social capital is employed here as an idea of having connections which can result in new collaborations, projects or employment opportunities which can later have an impact on a person's career and the city as a whole. Such a point of view limits the set of people who in the context of this research are considered as enriching social capital to professional connections. This excludes audiences and fans, understood as *groups* of people attending events and following a certain artist, from the social capital of musicians. Generally, audiences and fans are the consumers of music and, although the success of a certain event heavily depends on attendance figures, they do not directly participate in the organisational process and thus cannot be considered as professional connections. It is acknowledged that people who play music, work in the related industries or who might potentially provide employment for musicians often participate in music events on the audience side. In this case, however, such people are considered as individuals having the potential to become a professional connection who happened to be a part of the audience rather than representatives of the audience as a whole.

3.2 Complexity of art production

Small music venues and networks of music industries practitioners do not exist separately on their own but both represent two of the major elements of the whole interconnected and complex system of live music production or 'live music ecology'. This intricate and interrelated nature of cultural production was previously emphasized and conceptualized by various scholars. The most influential theories of art worlds and fields were developed by sociologists Howard Becker at the end of the 1970s - beginning of the 1980s and Pierre Bourdieu at the beginning of the 1990s respectively.

Field Theory

The field theory of Bourdieu, formulated in a book of 1993 'The Field of Cultural Production', argues that society should not be viewed as one large entity, but instead as

a set of numerous interrelated fields, such as politics, education, arts, etc.[95] In general, fields represent semi-autonomous spheres of action where agents operate based on their position in the hierarchy within the field.[96] Positions that agents occupy are determined by various factors, among which are 'habitus', 'doxa', 'illusio' and different forms of capital, including the social one.[97] Equipped with what they have, agents compete for social positions and this competition is what determines the structure of the field.[98] Bourdieu was interested in capturing the structural relations among positions in the artistic field. He wanted to investigate laws and mechanisms that govern this structure and build a theoretical framework by the means of which the fields can be analyzed.[99] Bourdieu's approach, however, has been criticized for focusing too much on the objective relations within the field and disregarding the subjective part which contains actual relationships among actors and, hence, diminishing the role of social capital in determining the actor's position.[100]

Fields operate on different levels. One field can be a part of another one, for instance, the music field of a given city is a part of its cultural field. Also, fields are positioned hierarchically among each other, for example, the cultural field can be subject to the political one as the latter has the power to determine what can be presented in public and limit artistic expression.[101] Additionally, fields can have conflicting interests and what is good for one field might be harmful for another one. A good example of such a contradiction is the argument of Williamson and Cloonan presented in the previous chapter on why the music industry should not be perceived as a single entity. Within this

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[95] Tai, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'.
[96] Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*.
[97] Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded'; 'illusio' describes how committed people are to participate in a certain field and how much they believe that this participation is worthwhile, 'doxa' is a set of non-questionable believes that are valid in a certain society, 'habitus' is a set of internal assumptions of each individual that both reflects the society around this person and defines how he/she perceives it.
[98] Anheier, Gerhards, and Romo, 'Forms of Capital and Social Structure in Cultural Fields'.
[99] Hans van Maanen, *How to Study Art Worlds: On the Societal Functioning of Aesthetic Values*, On the Societal Functioning of Aesthetic Values (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46n0p3.3.
[100] Bridget Fowler, *Pierre Bourdieu and Cultural Theory: Critical Investigations* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1997), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446250464; Wendy Bottero and Nick Crossley, 'Worlds, Fields and Networks: Becker, Bourdieu and the Structures of Social Relations':, *Cultural Sociology*, 31 January 2011, https://doi.org/10.1177/1749975510389726.
[101] Brown, O'Connor, and Cohen, 'Local Music Policies within a Global Music Industry'.

research, the field of live music production is considered to be a part of the field of urban development. It emphasizes the power relations between the municipality, who possess the power to distribute subsidies, create liquor, noise or construction-related regulations and enact development policies, and small venues, whose survival might directly depend on the decisions of the city government.

Art Worlds

Howard Becker with his concept of 'art worlds' from 1982 argued that production and distribution of artworks is the result of a coordinated action of numerous actors necessary to complete the process and, hence, artworks should not be seen as products of an isolated creator alone but of all the people involved.[102] For instance, to write a rock song, an artist would need a guitar, which was previously produced by someone, who should also be considered a part of the art world as without his contribution in a form of musical instrument it would have been impossible to write the song in the way it was written. The art world is also where the value of a certain work of art is formed.[103] Although like Bourdieu's field theory it highlights the complex structure of cultural production, it differs from the field approach in several essential points. It focuses on actors and interpersonal relations (ground level) rather than on objective forces that govern the whole structure (top-down perspective).[104] Becker emphasizes the collective and collaborative nature of artistic production, while Bourdieu is concentrating on competition.[105] Additionally, unlike the field theory, the art world approach does not attempt to theorize every aspect of creative production, speaking in general terms of 'networks', 'resources' and 'conventions'.[106] Networks represent the essence of the art world as they both facilitate and result from the actions of cultural production, allow for the distribution of resources, draw boundaries of sub-worlds and allow for the dissemination of 'conventions', by which the norms and standard practices within the art

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[102] Howard Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).
[103] Becker, 'Art Worlds and Social Types'.
[104] Bottero and Crossley, 'Worlds, Fields and Networks'; Tai, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'.
[105] Howard Becker and Alain Pessin, 'A Dialogue on the Ideas of "World" and "Field"', *Sociological Forum* 21, no. 2 (1 June 2006): 275–86, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11206-006-9018-2.
[106] Bottero and Crossley, 'Worlds, Fields and Networks'; Tai, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'.

worlds are implied.[107] One of the conventions in the world of live music might be having a drink while watching a show in a pub as it is a commonly accepted practice in the pub concert setting. Conventions are not mandatory, but according to Becker, following them is the simplest and cheapest way to operate within the art worlds.[108]

In the art worlds concept, Becker outlines seven activities required to produce an artwork. The creator needs to conceive the idea (1) and then execute it (2). To execute ideas quite often tools such as cameras or brushes need to be produced (3). Later, the works get exchanged for some sort of payment (4), for instance, get distributed to consumers who pay money. To distribute the work, support activities (5) are necessary, for example, a stage needs to be set up for a band to perform. The last two activities are not directly related to the production of the work but are still necessary for it to fully exist. The work needs to generate some kind of response and appreciation (6) and the final step is to create and maintain (7) 'the rationale according to which all these other activities make sense and are worth doing'. Although, according to Becker, all these steps are necessary to create a complete artwork, some of them might be skipped, however, in this case, the work would be 'unsupported' or 'unappreciated'.[109] For instance, one can write a song, but never perform it, which would mean ignoring several activities outlined by Becker, but the song would still exist as a work of art. This focus of the art worlds theory on people and their actions was criticised by Bourdieu himself, who saw Becker's approach as descriptive and unfit due to its lack of explanation on objective relations within the art world which determine why and how people act to conserve or change the current structure of each particular world.[110]

For this research, the notion of conventions from the art worlds concept can be employed in regards to the mechanisms of networking of various music industries practitioners. This concept also emphasizes the importance of each person who is

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[107] Ibid.
[108] Becker, *Art Worlds*.
[109] van Maanen, *How to Study Art Worlds: On the Societal Functioning of Aesthetic Values*; Becker, *Art Worlds*.
[110] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, Meridian Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1996).

participating in the art world, which in case of this research highlights the importance of all people involved in the production of live music shows and the functioning of the general live music environment. Nonetheless, Becker's theory is concentrated on people and, as well as Bourdieu's concept, does not take into account physical infrastructure, which is the focal point of this study in the form of small venues and events.

Live Music Ecology

The term 'ecology' has been used in application to music since the 1950s with a variety of meanings implied by the concept, however, the main purpose of using it is to draw parallels with the natural world to emphasize the complexity of the music sector and the interconnectedness of its elements.[111] The notion of live music ecology, however, is relatively new. The term was coined by a group of British professors of music studies Simon Frith, Martin Cloonan, Emma Webster, Matt Brennan and Adam Behr at the end of the 2000s - the beginning of the 2010s.[112] It shares the idea of interconnectedness and the importance of each element involved in cultural production, in this case, live music, with the theories of Bourdieu and Becker. However, live music ecology, although it is focused only on one aspect of only one art form, is more comprehensive when applied to events and places of live music. It includes not only the people who are involved in the art world or the field of live music, but also the people who are not directly connected to it, but who can still exert influence on it, such as local officials designing cultural policies or fire departments imposing safety regulations. It also includes the material conditions around live music events like public transport availability and even policies and regulations as documents themselves, such as noise licensing or fines for parking in front of a certain venue.

Generally speaking, live music ecology includes everything that can influence live performances including rehearsal spaces, venue owners, musicians, audiences, public transport operating hours at night, drinking age limits, number of venues and their

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[111] Brent Keogh and Ian Collinson, '"A Place for Everything and Everything in Its Place?" The (Ab)Uses of Music Ecology', *Musicultures* 43, no. 1 (1 January 2016): 1–15.
[112] Frith et al., 'The Ecology of Live Music'.

variety, etc. Live music ecology stance does not imply that all its elements are involved in the creation of the meaning of an artwork. Rather, it attempts to highlight the importance of all the factors that create conditions for live music and make concerts the way they are in a certain context. This context can be of various scales: international, national, regional, urban, or even as specific as venue- and event-based.[113] In this study, to connect small music venues with the city development process, live music ecology is considered as a phenomenon of the urban scale. It allows to limit research in space, link it to the official cultural policies of the city in question and provides a comprehensive framework for the analysis of the local live music environment.

One of the main questions that the ecological approach poses is 'what constitutes a healthy live music ecology?' It brings forward a notion of not just interconnectedness of various elements of the whole ecology, but much like in the ecosystems in the natural world, the necessity of each small part for the proper functioning and, in some cases, even the survival of the whole.[114] This approach, unlike the field theory of Bourdieu and the art worlds notion of Becker, includes the material and the regulatory conditions of the live music production. It makes the live music ecology concept more suitable for this study allowing to unite development policies, music industries practitioners and venues under one umbrella.

Although people are the core element in the cultural production and venues are filled with meaning by people, as physical spaces, they represent hard music infrastructure necessary for the implementation of the people-oriented creative city development strategy. Through subsidies and regulations, local authorities have the power to influence the well-being of small venues and thereby they play an important role in constructing and supporting the city's live music ecology. By investigating the potential of small live music venues and events to become local networking nodes and form social capital of music industry practitioners, this research aims to add to the study of venues and events as elements of a healthy live music ecology.

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[113] Behr et al., 'Live Concert Performance'.
[114] Frith et al., 'The Ecology of Live Music'.

Scenes

In music studies, one more concept is widely used to analyze conditions and peculiarities of a certain music environment - the notion of 'scenes'. This approach, like the theories of Bourdieu and Becker, draws attention to social relations among musicians, fans, promoters, etc. within the space where music is created and circulated.[115] A cultural sociologist, Andy Bennett defines scenes as 'a particular local setting, usually a city or district, where a particular style of music has either originated or has been appropriated and locally adapted'.[116] This approach is rooted in places and spaces which contribute to the development and spread of a certain genre. It can be as big as a region in the case of Delta Blues, it can be a city, such as Seattle and its grunge, or a set of venues and recording spaces as in the case of the post-punk scene of Manchester.[117] Within the scenes paradigm, much like in the live music ecology notion, a great degree of flexibility exists and no clear parameters are defined of what is included in the scene, which was previously criticized in the academic literature.[118] Moreover, the scene approach relies on genres, which are subjective categories to organise music. It creates even more uncertainty over where a particular scene ends and begins. As this research aims to explore music venues and events in the context of the city development, the live music ecology approach which is not limited to a certain genre or 'scene' seems more appropriate for this study. Nonetheless, the attention to places and spaces where music happens in connection with the emphasis on the social nature of scenes can be employed in this research to highlight the link between small music venues and events and social capital of music industry practitioners.

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[115] Benjamin Woo, Stuart R Poyntz, and Jamie Rennie, *Scene Thinking: Cultural Studies from the Scenes Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

[116] Andy Bennett, 'Consolidating the Music Scenes Perspective', *Poetics* 32, no. 3 (June 2004), 223-234, there 223, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2004.05.004.

[117] Mark Yarm, *Everybody Loves Our Town: An Oral History of Grunge*, 1st ed. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2011); Ted Gioia, *Delta Blues: The Life and Times of the Mississippi Masters Who Revolutionized American Music* (New York, London: W. W. Norton, 2009); Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded'.

[118] David Hesmondhalgh, 'Subcultures, Scenes or Tribes? None of the Above', *Journal of Youth Studies* 8, no. 1 (1 March 2005): 21–40, https://doi.org/10.1080/13676260500063652; Woo, Poyntz, and Rennie, *Scene Thinking*.

3.3 Defining the concepts

Small venues and events

No commonly accepted definition of a small venue exists neither in academia nor in public reports. Such a categorisation of music venues depends on the urban context, for instance, its population size, the scene this venue operates in, the genres that are prominent in the city and other factors. In the policy vision for pop music in Rotterdam, the local municipality draws the following distinction in venue sizes: small with up to 399 people capacity, medium from 400 to 999 and big starting from 1000.[119] Several other sources also categorize small venues as having the capacity of fewer than 400 people. In the report 'Understanding Small Venues' by Parkinson *et. al* more than 80% of venues studied had a capacity of 400 people and fewer.[120] The study of Behr *et. al* on the ecological approach towards live music events used the iconic King Tut's Wah Wah Hut in Glasgow of a capacity of 300 as an example of a small size venue.[121]

The size, however, is not the sole indicator that can allow to define a venue as small. The description of small size live music venues provided in the report of Parkinson *et. al* outlines their qualitative characteristics: '...they [small venues] are usually dependent on the market for their survival but are often subsistence rather than profit-driven, and fulfil a vital role in fostering underground and emerging popular culture but are not typically supported by public funding for the arts.'[122] The criteria to define a 'small venue' quite often rely on the tacit understanding of the concept rather than on precise standards which can be measured in numbers. The 'Melbourne Live Music Census 2017 Report' studied music venues as places that host advertised concerts with 'featured' (promoted and named in advance, i.e. open-mic or club nights are excluded from the sample) artists at least twice a week, and, although extensively uses the term 'small venues', does not

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[119] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030', Policy Vision (Rotterdam: Gemeente Rotterdam, 16 April 2019), https://www.poplive.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Beleidsvisie-Pop-2019-2020-Rotterdam.pdf.
[120] Parkinson et al., 'Understanding Small Music Venues: A Report by the Music Venue Trust'.
[121] Behr et al., 'Live Concert Performance'; 'Venue', King Tuts Wah Wah Hut, accessed 21 January 2020, https://www.kingtuts.co.uk/venue.
[122] Parkinson et al., 'Understanding Small Music Venues: A Report by the Music Venue Trust', 11.

discuss the size criteria for this category.[123] A report on live music from the UK defines 'small*er* venues' [italics added by author for emphasis] as having a capacity under 1500 people, which is useful to study such spaces in a comparative perspective within the whole music industry with massive festivals and stadium concerts.[124] However, this capacity requirement might be classified as including both small and medium scale venues.

The Music Venue Trust (MVT), a British non-profit that strives to protect grassroots venues, provides a framework to distinguish such venues from others but it also utilizes qualitative rather than quantitative criteria. Six characteristics are used to identify a grassroots venue: the elephant test (whether locals perceive a venue as a grassroots one), the focus on the cultural activity as the venue's main purpose, whether it is a music business run by music experts, whether it takes risks with its cultural programme, whether it brings life to local night-time economy and whether it is a 'nice' member of the local community.[125] Furthermore, MVT divides grassroots music venues into three categories of small (up to 350 capacity), medium (351-650 capacity) and large (more than 651 capacity). There are more numeric indicators to each of these categories such as the number of full-time jobs, reliance on volunteers or profit potential, however, MVT acknowledges that these numbers are flexible and depend on the local context.[126] Thus, in this study, not only the size criteria of having the capacity of fewer than 400 people is used, but also the qualitative assessment is employed in each particular case to identify whether a certain venue or event classifies as a small entity.

In this study, the concept of small live music *events* is prioritized over *venues*. Nonetheless, most of what has been discussed so far in this work were based on the previous research of music venues because that is where most of the music events happen and because they represent a tangible part of the live music ecology which can

[123] Dobe Newton and Rosa Coyle-Hayward, 'Melbourne Live Music Census 2017 Report' (Music Victoria, April 2018).
[124] UK Music, 'Wish You Were Here: The Contribution of Live Music to the UK Economy'.
[125] Music Venue Trust, 'Music Venue Trust Response to HM Government - Building Our Industrial Strategy Green Paper' (London: Music Venue Trust, 7 April 2017).
[126] Ibid.

be relatively easily defined and hence addressed in official development policies. The choice of events over venues, however, allows to include concert series which frequently change locations into the sample. Such series might happen in places, which cannot be described as music venues, such as co-working spaces, abandoned buildings, barbershops and other spaces. It also allows to include spaces which organise shows on an ad hoc basis, but which are still an important part of the local live music ecology. One example of such a space can be a squat house. The choice of events over venues is also informed by the unique collaborative method of operation of the live music sector of Rotterdam. In this city, programmers and bookers from various venues work together and although being employed by a certain venue utilize many other spaces in Rotterdam. This creates a situation when a venue is not a physical space, but rather a team of people organising events around the city under the name of the venue. Such a cooperative model is one of the main reasons that make Rotterdam a unique and valuable case study. It will be explained in greater detail in the chapter on the live music ecology of Rotterdam.

Live music

A professor of social anthropology and music, Sara Cohen defines live music as 'events that bring musicians and audiences together in one place at one time and involve performance on vocals or other music instruments and technologies, or with music recordings'.[127] This definition includes all possible interpretations of live music. It mentions technologies and music recordings which allows to include electronic music and DJing into the study sample. Indeed, for the purpose of this study, clubs or DJ nights are not different from metal bars and rock concerts. All of these venues and events are equally important elements of the local music ecology and they all have the potential to contribute to the cultural vibrancy of the city and thereby be a part of the creative city development policy.

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[127] Cohen, 'Live Music and Urban Landscape', 587.

In the regulatory framework of Rotterdam, traditional live music events and electronic music or DJ shows are both included in the definition of pop music, which is defined as everything, which cannot be explicitly called 'jazz, classical or composed music', including both live (bands, singer-songwriters) and, what they categorize as, non-live music (DJing).[128] Such framing supports the notion of the equal importance of these types of performance for the urban development of Rotterdam. This definition of pop music, however, can be contested. For instance, within PopLive, a large-scale research project on pop music based at the Erasmus University and the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, everything which cannot be categorized as 'classical' is considered as pop music, including jazz.[129] Within the context of this study, no fixed definition of pop music is adopted as this research focuses on live music in general and its contribution to the city's cultural vibrancy regardless of the genre.

Selecting venues in Rotterdam

In the 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019 - 2030' ('Policy Vision Pop 2019-2030,' translation by author) document issued by the Department of Culture of Rotterdam seven most prominent small venues of the city were outlined, including V11, Rotown, Roodkapje, Grounds, Baroeg, BIRD and WORM.[130] These venues were selected as a starting point to contact the music industry practitioners who either worked or performed in these venues. As the next step, a rooster of local music venues collected by Popunie was consulted.[131] Popunie is a non-profit organisation that is aimed at promoting and supporting pop music in Rotterdam, it will be presented in greater detail in the section on the live music ecology of the city. Additionally, during the interviews respondents were asked to name the most prominent small venues in Rotterdam in their scenes. This research is not limited to specific venues as musicians are not tied to specific venues and other music industries practitioners quite often combine positions at several institutions. It would be

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[128] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030'.
[129] The author of this research was a part of the research team at PopLive in February - April 2020
[130] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030', 14.
[131] Popunie, 'Optreden in Rotterdam?', Popunie Rotterdam, accessed 25 March 2020, https://popunie.nl/optreden-in-rotterdam/.

wrong to limit the study to certain places taking into account the collaborative nature of programming in Rotterdam, which implies no fixed connection to any particular physical space. Additionally, as this research took place during the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus limiting the study to a small number of venues would threaten its feasibility. The complete list of venues contacted within the scope of this study and their descriptions can be found in Appendix 1.

The time frame & official documents

The choice of the time period in study as 2006-2020 was informed by the pop music policies of Rotterdam and by the time span of the careers of the local music industry practitioners. 2006 marked the year of the release of the first comprehensive study of the Rotterdam pop music sector in the twenty-first century titled 'Rotterdam has got that pop'.[132] Since then, pop music has been enjoying special attention from the city hall and several more studies of the city's pop music sector were published. Therefore, choosing the starting point as 2006 allowed for more thorough research of the live music ecology of Rotterdam based on the official documents and for a clearer connection with the creative city development paradigm as that was the year pop music received a more strategic role within the cultural policy of the city.

Relying on official reports and public policy documents to describe the city's live music ecology has its limitations. Such documentation is usually produced in order to inform future policy visions or provide an overview of the sector to redistribute subsidies. To avoid relying on one-sided official point of view, an interview with an expert on the local live music environment was conducted, as well as interviewees among the music industries practitioners were asked to evaluate the current state of the live music ecology in Rotterdam and, if applicable, highlight the pivotal points in its development in the last fourteen years.

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[132] RRKC, 'Rotterdam has got that pop' (Rotterdam: Rotterdamse Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur, July 2006), https://www.rrkc.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/rotterdam-has-got-that-pop-incl-cover.pdf.

Music industries practitioners

Building on Becker's notion of art worlds, as it focuses on people and cooperation among them, an extensive list of occupations that are involved in the creation of a live music event can be identified: musicians, bookers, promoters, group managers, sound engineers, stage stuff, volunteer managers, volunteers, photo- and videographers, poster designers, etc.[133] This list is not comprehensive as there are more roles to be filled in the environment of small music events such as doorman, barman and others. It is also possible to include label representatives, music equipment producers, venue owners and others into the art world of live music. For this research, however, two core occupations were chosen: musicians and event organisers/bookers. Musicians are the core of any music world, including the live music one, as they are the producers of the main product i.e. the authors of the artworks. Event organisers, who often act as bookers in the small venues' setting, are one of the key elements of the live music world as they act as gatekeepers. Bookers' role as gatekeepers and the way they operate have been previously researched and despite the upsurge of the DIY culture among musicians and the rise of the internet as a means of gaining audiences, bookers still remain one of the key players in the live music environment, who hold the power to select who is going to perform, where and when.[134] Comparing the networking experiences of these two groups is also one of the ways this study can contribute to the academic discourse as no such comparison has been drawn previously.

Frith *et. al* suggest the following classification of concert promoters: 'enthusiast', 'state-funded' and 'commercial'. The first group organise concerts because they want to, the second one for the reason of implementing public policies and they rely on subsidies, the third group organises shows to earn money.[135] Taking such a classification into account, the term 'practitioners' was chosen instead of 'professionals' in the formulation

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[133] Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded'.
[134] Foster, Borgatti, and Jones, 'Gatekeeper Search and Selection Strategies'; Gibson, 'Cultures at Work'; Tai, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'; Gallan, 'Gatekeeping Night Spaces'.
[135] Simon Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain, Volume I: 1950-1967: From Dance Hall to the 100 Club*, 1st ed., Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

of the research question in order to include the people who do not consider playing music or organising events as their primary professional activity. Such enthusiasts should not be excluded from the studies of live music ecologies because they constitute a notable portion of the whole set of people who are involved in organising small events or performing at them and their contribution to the city's cultural output is also valuable. The presence of such enthusiastic workers in the small live music events world makes such events and venues even more of a special study subject as it also raises questions of non-monetary incentives for music work, which are although out of the scope of this study, still constitute an important topic that requires further investigation.

In this study, the terms 'promoter', 'booker' and 'concert/event organiser' are used interchangeably. Although booking is just a part of work that concert organisers and promoters do, which might also include marketing, on-site management and other tasks, in the context of small live music venues, the lines between various duties are often blurred. Furthermore, all the practitioners from the organisers' side interviewed for this research have tried themselves in various roles during their careers, which does not allow to categorise them as solely 'bookers' or 'promoters' but instead makes the interchangeable use of these terms viable.

Interview design

The main part of the study on the social capital of small live music venues and events was conducted using the means of semi-structured interviews. Such a technique has been previously employed by numerous scholars of creative and music industries in their investigations of networks and social capital. The research of Kong on creative networks in the Hong Kong film industry, the study of Felton, Collins and Graham on the networks in creative industries in the suburban environment, the work of Hesmondhalgh and Baker on the 'mandatory' nature of networking in the creative industries, the report of Parkinson *et. al* on small music venues, the studies of Wilks & Quinn on the social capital of festivals, the investigation of Tai on social capital and gatekeeping in the live music

scenes of Atlanta and Taipei, the study of Gallan on the role of booking agents in creating local scenes, all rely on interviews as the main source of information.[136]

Despite its wide-spread usage, the semi-structured interview method has a set of limitations in addition to its advantages. In application to this research, the main beneficial sides of this technique are its ability to collect highly detailed information and provide a personalised perspective. Such interviews, however, might be prone to bias and they rely heavily on the skills of the interviewer, which might lead to the information being under-collected and incomplete.[137] This technique is time-consuming, which leads to a limited number of interviewees and thus a restricted potential for the results to be generalized.[138] As in this particular study the time frame is defined as 2006 - 2020, another limitation of the interviews is relying on people's memory to recall the past, which might not always correctly reflect the actual events or simply do not provide complete information.

The interview was designed with the narrative structure, allowing the interviewees to reconstruct the story of their paths in the music world.[139] This made it possible to cover the main questions in study while placing the story into a broader context of one's career development and of the Rotterdam live music ecology. The topics covered in the interviews included the interviewee's current work, first contact with the live music industry, further career development, the role of networking, the mechanisms of social capital formation, live music ecology of Rotterdam and small venues of the city. The list of approximate questions can be found in Appendix 2.

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[136] Kong, 'The Sociality of Cultural Industries'; Felton, Collis, and Graham, 'Making Connections'; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, '"A Very Complicated Version of Freedom"'; Parkinson et al., 'Understanding Small Music Venues: A Report by the Music Venue Trust'; Wilks, 'Bridging and Bonding'; Quinn and Wilks, 'Festival Connections'; Quinn and Wilks, 'Linking Social Capital, Cultural Capital and Heterotopia at the Folk Festival'; Tai, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'; Gallan, 'Gatekeeping Night Spaces'.

[137] Steinar Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, The SAGE Qualitative Research (London: SAGE Publications, Ltd, 2007), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208963.

[138] Crystal Boyce and Peta A. Neale, 'Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting in-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input.' (Watertown, MA: Pathfinder International, 2006), 16.

[139] Gallan, 'Gatekeeping Night Spaces'; Kvale, *Doing Interviews*.

Data collection process

To recruit participants for the interview at the first stage emails were sent to bookers at the venues mentioned on the Popunie website and in the Policy Vision Pop 2019-2030. The initial plans to conduct interviews at the venues where respondents either perform or work, which could have allowed for a more authentic experience and result in the number of growing connections and thereby potential interviewees, were interrupted by the measures against the spread of the COVID-19 virus as all music venues were closed in the Netherlands in the middle of March and remained shut during the whole process of the interviewing.[140] For this reason, all interviews, except one, were conducted online.

To expand the scope of the search for appropriate interviewees in these circumstances the snowball sampling technique was used. It implies that participants of the study recruit people they know to also participate in the research.[141] This makes it possible to access hard-to-reach individuals and get introduced to potential interviewees, which builds up the credibility of the researcher and increases the chances of receiving a positive response.[142] Additionally, the snowball sampling method is a good example of how social capital can be mobilized to one's benefit, which is one of the central topics of this research. In the context of this study, such a technique allowed to recruit new interviewees via people within the live music sector of Rotterdam, which ensured that new participants would remain relevant for the study and allowed for a wider reach than it would have been possible with only desk research. A potential pitfall of this method, however, is that the people whom the interviewee recommends would represent the same niche of the society with similar views and experiences.[143] For this reason, it was important to start snowball sampling from different entry points, i.e. in different scenes of

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[140] 'Aanvullende maatregelen onderwijs, horeca, sport', Rijksoverheid, 15 March 2020, https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/03/15/aanvullende-maatregelen-onderwijs-horeca-sport.
[141] Rowland Atkinson and John Flint, 'Snowball Sampling', in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*, by Michael Lewis-Beck, Alan Bryman, and Tim Futing Liao (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 2004), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412950589.n931.
[142] Kelly E. Tenzek, 'Snowball Subject Recruitment', in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, ed. Mike Allen (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2017), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411.n569.
[143] Ibid.

the city. In total, thirty-five interview requests to local musicians and concert organisers/bookers were sent, which resulted in twelve interviews with representatives from various scenes, such as Latin music, noise/experimental, singer-songwriter, electronic dance music and others. The sample included practitioners for whom music work is the main source of income and people who participate in the live music world as enthusiasts. The dates of the interviews and short descriptions of the participants can be found in Appendix 3. The transcripts of the interviews can be found in a separate document attached to this study.

Analytical framework

For the analysis of the interviews, a structure of three parts based on the research sub-questions and the theoretical framework was created. Additionally, the respondents were divided into two groups of musicians and event organisers (bookers) to investigate whether the process of social capital formation and the importance of networks differ depending on the occupation. The first part of the analytical structure answering sub-question two explores the process of entering the live music field. It attempts to investigate the entry barriers in the sector and how future music industries practitioners get introduced to the music world for the first time. Finding out the intrinsic motivation for participating in the music production was not the aim of this study, as it focused on identifying how and where future music industries practitioners get acquainted with the music sector. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of various forms of capital, the question of whether possessing rich social capital is a necessary prerequisite to enter the industry is investigated. The second part (sub-questions three and four) represents the core of this study and investigates how important social capital is for music industries practitioners to advance their careers and whether small music venues act as networking nodes, i.e. contribute to the enrichment of social capital. Employing the notion of art worlds of Becker, the specificity and complexity of networking in the art world of live music production is studied here. The field theory of Bourdieu and its ideas of agents competing for positions and constantly seeking resources to improve their status is also

utilized in this section to indicate power relations and the dynamics of change in the live music sector. The third part relating to the sub-question five explores the experiences of local music industries practitioners of the live music ecology of Rotterdam. The concluding section of this study draws on the impact of networking in the live music sector on the city in general and its development.

Chapter 4: Small Venues as Networking Nodes in the Context of Creative City Development: the Case of Rotterdam

4.1 Rotterdam and its live music ecology

Rotterdam as a (creative) city

The life of the city of Rotterdam has been long defined by its port, which was once the busiest in the world.[144] During the twentieth century, the employment opportunities the harbour offered attracted many migrants from all over the world, which made Rotterdam a highly international place and led to the phenomenon of 'super-diversity' with more than 160 nationalities currently residing in the city.[145] On May 15, 1940, in an attempt to capture the city and its port to force the Netherlands to surrender, the Nazi army carried out the bombardment of Rotterdam, which resulted in the city centre being almost fully destroyed.[146] In the 1980s, the port started to move out of the city, vacating land and buildings. Additionally, with the general transition to a more service-oriented economy, many jobs at the port were lost, creating an acute unemployment problem.[147] The port also shaped the rough no-nonsense working-class image of Rotterdam which persisted up until the beginning of the 2010s. All these historic events, which on the surface might not seem to be connected to music, had a profound impact on the music scene of Rotterdam, its live music ecology and the city's urban development in general.

For decades, Rotterdam has been slowly changing its image and its economic structure to that of a creative, rather than a working-class city. In 1995, the pioneers of

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[144] Wim Ravesteijn, Yi Liu, and Ping Yan, 'Responsible Innovation in Port Development: The Rotterdam Maasvlakte 2 and the Dalian Dayao Bay Extension Projects', *Water Science and Technology* 72, no. 5 (1 September 2015): 665–77, https://doi.org/10.2166/wst.2015.272; Martin Aarts et al., 'Port-City Development in Rotterdam: A True Love Story', *Urban-e*, no. 3 (2012): 1–28.

[145] Warda Belabas and Jasper Eshuis, 'Superdiversity and City Branding: Rotterdam in Perspective', in *Coming to Terms with Superdiversity: The Case of Rotterdam*, ed. Peter Scholten, Maurice Crul, and Paul van de Laar, IMISCOE Research Series (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 209–23, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96041-8_11.

[146] Helma Coolman, 'Bombardement Rotterdam 80 jaar geleden vandaag vooral digitaal herdacht', *NOS*, 14 May 2020, https://nos.nl/l/2333826.

[147] Valerie Symes, *Unemployment in Europe: Problems and Policies* (Psychology Press, 1995).

the creative city concept Landry and Bianchini named Rotterdam as one of the examples of a city with a creative urban development mindset, attributed to the social democratic government, which took office in the middle of the 1970s and focused its policies on the city's liveliness and the citizens' participation. Rotterdam's peculiar architecture such as Cube Houses, which made the city stand out from the ordinary 'international corporate style' landscape of many cities of the 1980s, was also praised by the two.[148] The real shift to the creative city approach in Rotterdam happened in the middle of the 2000s when the Economic Development Board Rotterdam was created to overcome current economic difficulties.[149] The board proposed to base the development of Rotterdam on three pillars: retaining traditional business and port activities as an 'Enterprising City', attracting progressive companies as a 'Knowledge and Innovative City' and luring talented people as an 'Attractive City'.[150] The first two pillars focus on the business-oriented approach of the creative city paradigm and represent the core of the economic development policy of Rotterdam. The last pillar is centred around people and the implementation of this strategy in Rotterdam is considered to be a part of its cultural policies.

The city hall of Rotterdam acknowledges the potential of CCI to become economic drivers by themselves and to improve the attractiveness of the city, however, monetary considerations are not the central part of the city's cultural strategy, which is mainly focused on the social impacts of culture.[151] In terms of the city's attractiveness, one of the main goals of local cultural policies since the 1980s was to regenerate the city centre, which was re-designed after the bombardment in the post-war years in a modernist way with strict separation of shopping, business and transportation zones.[152] Despite all the attempts to improve the vibrancy and liveliness of the downtown, in 2008 the city

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[148] Landry and Bianchini, *The Creative City*.
[149] Trip and Romein, 'Beyond the Hype'.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Dienst Kunst en Cultuur, 'In verbeelding van elkaar samen het toneel van stad zijn. Uitgangspunten voor het cultuurbeleid 2009-2012', Public Policy (Rotterdam: Gemeente Rotterdam, July 2007), https://adoc.tips/in-verbeelding-van-elkaar.html.
[152] A. Romein and J. J. Trip, 'Key Elements of Creative City Development: An Assessment of Local Policies in Amsterdam and Rotterdam' (City Futures '09, Madrid: Universidad Rey Juan Carlos of Madrid, 2009), https://repository.tudelft.nl/islandora/object/uuid%3Ac53f0f71-da54-4591-879e-618b9d69421b.

government still considered the area as lacking 'buzz' and quality to become attractive enough to fit the people-oriented development strategy.[153] In 2016, however, as the growth of Rotterdam progressed, this goal was removed from the culture plan for 2017-2020. It might indicate either a change of the focus of the local cultural policy or that the city government is currently satisfied with the situation in the city centre.[154]

Since 2005, local cultural policies have been centred around Rotterdam's young and super-diverse population.[155] Over the years, the main goals included talent development, cultural education, internationalisation, inclusivity, cultural entrepreneurship and innovation, city-wide collaboration and wider public outreach.[156] Some of these goals came and went throughout the years. What remained unchanged, however, is the special place pop music occupied in the city's cultural policies and the potential that the local Department of Culture recognised in the pop music sector of Rotterdam.

Pop music policies and the Live Music Ecology of Rotterdam

Before Nighttown fell (1980s - 2010)

The evolution of the live music ecology of Rotterdam, especially in the context of urban development, can best be seen through the pop music policies of the city. The importance of pop music for cities is widely accepted not only in Rotterdam but in the whole of the Netherlands. In the document 'The Value of Pop 2.0' issued in 2017, the Association of Dutch Pop Venues and Festivals outlined four main values of pop music,

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[153] Bureau Binnenstad, 'Binnenstad als City Lounge: Binnenstadsplan 2008 - 2020' (Rotterdam: Gemeente Rotterdam, October 2008), https://www.rotterdam.nl/wonen-leven/binnenstad/BinnenstadsvisieDEF.pdf.
[154] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Cultuurverkenning Rotterdam 2017', Public Policy (Rotterdam: Gemeente Rotterdam, January 2018), https://www.rotterdam.nl/vrije-tijd/kunst-en-cultuur/Cultuurverkenning_2017.pdf.
[155] Romein and Trip, 'Key Elements of Creative City Development'; Belabas and Eshuis, 'Superdiversity and City Branding'.
[156] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Cultuurverkenning Rotterdam 2017'; Afdeling Cultuur, 'Stad in transitie, cultuur in verandering', Public Policy (Rotterdam: Gemeente Rotterdam, June 2019), https://rotterdam.raadsinformatie.nl/document/7675964/1/19bb15795; Dienst Kunst en Cultuur, 'In verbeelding van elkaar samen het toneel van stad zijn. Uitgangspunten voor het cultuurbeleid 2009-2012'; Gemeente Rotterdam, 'Uitgangspunten voor het cultuurbeleid 2005-2008', Public Policy (Rotterdam: Gemeente Rotterdam, 8 September 2003), https://rotterdam.raadsinformatie.nl/document/4055640/2/type%3Dpdf.

which exist alongside its intrinsic value. Culturally (1), pop music helps to form everyday identities, it has ubiquitous public recognition, provides an easily accessible link to other art forms and simply contributes to personal well-being for both listeners and amateur musicians. Economically (2), pop music creates job opportunities, contributes to the horeca (hotels-restaurants-cafés) sector and, most interestingly for this particular study, provides an attractive climate for companies and highly-educated individuals to settle in the city, which connects directly to the people-oriented Florida-inspired urban development strategies. Pop music contributes to inclusivity and diversity (3) by representing various ethnic and sub-cultural groups and by allowing people to volunteer. It also promotes talent development (4), which provides people with employment as artists and enriches the city's cultural output.[157] This report and local music policies in Rotterdam talk about pop music in general, not only about its live part. However, most of these values and impacts can easily be applied to the live music sector, especially the economic part as it emphasizes pop music's contribution to the horeca industries and to the city's attractiveness, which are both the results of live shows, rather than recorded music. In the current policy vision, Rotterdam's city hall employs the same framework to assess the value of pop music, however, the city started to work closely with this sector long before 'The Value of Pop 2.0' was released.

The first study of the local pop music field 'Popmuziek in Rotterdam' was conducted in 1984 by Rotterdam Arts Council. In this document, the first regulations on subsidy distribution among music venues and youth centres were formulated and thereby the basis for the financial support system for pop music in Rotterdam was established.[158] Eight years later, pop music and jazz entered city-wide cultural policies, which allowed to secure structural funding for local music venues as a part of the public budget for culture.[159] This was an important milestone for the pop music sector of Rotterdam but just one of

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[157] Van Vugt, 'De Waarde Van Pop 2.0'.
[158] Gemeente Rotterdam, 'De Visie Op De Lokale Popsector', Policy Vision (Rotterdam: Gemeente Rotterdam, 2007),
https://rotterdam.raadsinformatie.nl/document/249502/1#search=%22de%20visie%20op%20de%20lokale%20popsector%22.
[159] Ibid.

the few which made the 1990s the formative years for the live music ecology of the city as we know it today.

In 1993, 'Rotterdam Festivals' as a coordinating body for festivals of all sorts was established. It signified another important step as this organization would eventually become one of the pillars of the people-oriented development policies of Rotterdam.[160] This organisation exists up to this day and provides funding and administrative support for, among other, various music festivals that exist in Rotterdam, shaping the festival side of the local live music ecology. However, the festivalization of Rotterdam started much earlier. As revealed in an interview with a local professor of leisure economy and live music studies, Martijn Mulder, the destruction of the city centre in 1940 was the initial reason for it. In the bombing, Rotterdam lost most of its cultural amenities. To revitalize the sector in the post-war period in the absence of physical cultural infrastructure, the municipality decided to rely on a mobile form of culture provision - events and festivals.[161] Over the years, the city became so successful in this strategy that it won the IFEA World Festival & Event Cities Award three times in 2010, 2015 and 2019.[162]

After 1992, Rotterdam experienced a boom in its clubbing scene with the development of a special local genre of 'gabber house', which put the city on the map of European electronic music. Rough and hardcore nature of this style with its fast tempo and industrial sound reflected the port spirit of Rotterdam with its no-nonsense working-class culture.[163] The rise of electronic music and gabber, in particular, led to the growth of the clubbing culture in the city, which dominated Rotterdam's live music landscape throughout the 1990s with medium and big capacity venues, such as Las Palmas, Nighttown, Waterfront and others.[164] Many parties were also organised in semi-legal venues, which suited the aesthetic of gabber and contributed even more to

[160] Johan Moerman, '25 Jaar Rotterdam Festivals', Rotterdam Festivals, 2018, https://zakelijk.rotterdamfestivals.nl/verhalen/25-jaar-rotterdam-festivals.
[161] Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020.
[162] 'Past Recipients', International Festivals & Events Association, accessed 26 May 2020, https://www.ifea.com/p/industryawards/worldfestivalandeventcityaward/pastrecipients.
[163] Hillegonda. C. Rietveld, 'Gabber Overdrive: Noise, Horror, and Acceleration', *Turmoil CTM Magazine*, 25 August 2018, https://openresearch.lsbu.ac.uk/item/869q7.
[164] Steven Pieters, in discussion with the author, April 29, 2020.

the city's authenticity and its underground industrial image. Rotterdam was still considered 'boring' at that time but this flourishing club scene based on a locally created genre of music brought a new form of entertainment that the citizens could relate to and gave a mental boost to the city's cultural sector.[165]

In the middle of the 2000s, taking into account the new creative economy course of the city government and the fact that the local music environment needed some fresh blood and investment, the municipality made a decision to create a new pop music policy. In 2006, Rotterdam Arts and Culture Council issued a report 'Rotterdam has got that pop' marking the beginning of a new chapter of the local pop music sector. According to the document, among other impacts, pop music had the potential to contribute to the creative economy of Rotterdam and advance the promotion of the city as a place to be as 'without events […], the city has nothing to promote'.[166] The inventorisation of the live music ecology of Rotterdam at the time revealed that there was a big number of music venues offering shows in a wide range of genres, however, no venue with a capacity between 1500 and 3000 visitors existed in the city, creating a gap in performance opportunities for either local or international touring artists of such scale. The lack of performance spaces for beginners to build up audiences and launch their careers was also highlighted as a weak point. The local dance scene was characterized as having a shortage of places to go out as in the years before the report was published several prominent clubs had shut their doors. Additionally, within the urban genre, the performance opportunities were deemed insufficient.[167]

The report outlined the following problematic points of local music venues: the need for professionalisation of the staff, the need for innovation in programming, the lack of general funds and the lack of budget for high-risk experimentative programming, housing issues with rising rents and unfit spaces, and the need to reach broader audiences. It praised the willingness of local venues to collaborate but simultaneously called for even more coordination of the activities among programmers and for more

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[165] Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020.
[166] RRKC, 'Rotterdam has got that pop', 4. Translated from Dutch by the author.
[167] RRKC, 'Rotterdam has got that pop'.

'guest-programming', meaning opening up venues for bookers from other venues to organise shows in your space. These last two recommendations and this collaborative spirit combined with other events that would happen in the coming years would later define and shape the live music ecology of Rotterdam the way it is now, especially its small venues sector.

This report led to the formulation of 'De Visie Op De Lokale Popsector' ('The Vision On the Local Pop Sector', translation by author) issued in 2007. It was supposed to bring structure to the pop strategy of the city, separate it from the cultural policies, giving the sector special attention, and replace the previous system of the pop field management, which relied on ad hoc decisions.[168] The policy was focused on addressing the problems outlined in the report of the previous year and on providing support to already existing venues, including five core ones subsidised by the city hall: Nighttown, Rotown, WORM, Waterfront and Baroeg. The complexity of the art world of pop music was recognised in this document as it talked about pop education, rehearsal spaces, audiences, etc., however, its main focus was the venues as spaces where the value of pop music is manifested the most. In line with the 'Attractive City' strategy, The Vision On the Local Pop Sector emphasized the importance of pop music in the development of Rotterdam as a creative city, openly citing Richard Florida and his ideas of jobs following people.[169]

This vision, as well as those to come, reflected the main idea of the city's broader cultural policies: it focused on what already existed in the city and on the talent development of its diverse multinational population. Such an inward-oriented policy was supposed to ensure the sustainability of the local live music ecology by working on the constant supply of new talent. It could bring authenticity to the local scene, which could make the city more attractive for the creative class and also encourage other musicians to relocate to Rotterdam. Nonetheless, the municipality still considered the lack of a major venue as one of the weak points of the local live music ecology and the policy declared the city hall's long-term commitment to building such a space, which would allow to bring international acts to Rotterdam and scale up its local scene. One of the

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[168] Gemeente Rotterdam, 'De Visie Op De Lokale Popsector'.
[169] Ibid., 14.

main strengths of the city's pop sector, according to this vision, was the willingness of various venues to work together, seven of which had united into a 'clubsectoroverleg' (club sector consultation, translated by author) to create a common development strategy even before this policy document was formulated. Although some funding was previously available to the core venues within the budget for culture, financial insecurity, which at that point in time threatened four out of five of these venues, was highlighted as one of the main dangers for them.

Despite such financial and structural support from the municipality, one of these venues, Nighttown, filed for bankruptcy in 2006.[170] This event became a pivotal point in the development of the local pop sector. Nighttown was a middle-size pop venue with the capacity around 1000 people, which was seen as the most iconic music venue in the city as over the years, such famous artists as Nirvana and Johnny Cash performed there. [171] Losing a place of such importance seemed inappropriate and with the help of the city hall, a new organization called WATT was set up by local entrepreneurs in the same building in 2008. WATT team was merged with the team of another core venue Waterfront to ensure high-end expertise in the venue management, but due to various issues, including noise isolation problems and high rebuilding costs, WATT was highly unprofitable, declaring a loss of €1.8 million after the first year.[172] The municipality could not afford to sponsor such a venture and after the city hall withdrew its support, WATT filed for bankruptcy in 2010.[173] Since then the local government had attempted several times to create a new middle-size pop venue but all of the projects either failed or never

[170] 3voor12, 'BV Nighttown failliet, voortbestaan poppodium onzeker', 3voor12, 12 July 2006, https://3voor12.vpro.nl/lokaal/rotterdam/artikelen/overzicht/rotterdam/2006/juli/bv-nighttown-failliet-voortbestaan-poppodium-onzeker.html.

[171] Marian Van Ewijk, 'Grote verbouwing van Rotterdamse poptempel Nighttown', 3voor12, 27 May 2005, https://3voor12.vpro.nl/lokaal/rotterdam/artikelen/overzicht/rotterdam/2005/april/grote-verbouwing-van-rotterdamse-poptempel-nighttown.html.; Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020; Fiona Fortuin, 'Documentaire over Nighttown toont unieke beelden Johnny Cash en Nirvana', 3voor12, 3 December 2009, https://3voor12.vpro.nl/artikelen/overzicht/2009/december/documentaire-over-nighttown-toont-unieke-beelden-johnny-cash-en-nirvana.html.

[172] Laura Suijkerbuijk, 'Samen werken aan een levendige popsector: Een onderzoek naar de samenwerkingsverbanden van poppodia binnen de infrastructuur van de Rotterdamse popsector' (Master Thesis, Utrecht, Universiteit Utrecht, 2015).

[173] Ingse Janse, '5 faillissementen die de Rotterdamse cultuur raakten', Vers Beton, 31 December 2013, https://versbeton.nl/2013/12/5-faillissementen-die-de-rotterdamse-cultuur-raakten/.

left the drawing board.[174] The last attempt was undertaken at the beginning of 2019 with the opening of a 2000-capacity stage in an old grain elevator 'Maassilo', which used to host parties since 2004, but was vacant for some time.[175] This venue is yet to prove its profitability, especially taking into account the crisis in the live music sector inflicted by anti-COVID-19 restrictions in the spring of 2020.[176] The absence of a medium-size venue, however, appeared to be a blessing in disguise and led to the development of a unique approach to the pop music sector which makes Rotterdam stand out in comparison to other Dutch cities.

The Rotterdam Model (2010 - …)

The 2010s was the decade of change for Rotterdam: modern architecture, flourishing cultural life, the inflow of the creative class and other developments altered the city's image. It has become more fashionable and so did its live music sector.[177] New venues programming more 'hip' rather than underground music were opened and gradually came to the forefront of the local scene. BIRD is a perfect example of such a shift. It opened its doors in 2010 with programming centred around black music (soul, funk, hip hop) and quickly became one of the core subsidised venues of Rotterdam. Such a shift to a more trendy culture is one of the ingredients of the creative city recipe of Richard Florida.

In 2010 Rotterdam was left without a major venue but what it had was a group of small venues who were willing to work together. The initiative to collaborate, as it previously happened with the 'clubsectoroverleg', did not come from the city hall, but instead emerged organically from the venues themselves in an attempt to bring cohesiveness to the local music scene. This desire to cooperate coincided with the need to do so. Without a major middle-size venue the whole pop music sector of Rotterdam

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[174] Suijkerbuijk, 'Samen werken aan een levendige popsector'.
[175] Robert van Gijssel, 'Nieuw poppodium in de Maassilo in Rotterdam', *de Volkskrant*, 3 October 2018, sec. Cultuur & Media, https://www.volkskrant.nl/gs-bdfda188.
[176] Joëlla Angenent, 'Locaties in de coronacrisis: hoe gaat het nu met… de Maassilo?', *GreaterVenues.com*, 15 May 2020, sec. Nieuws, https://www.greatervenues.com/nieuws/locaties-in-de-coronacrisis-hoe-gaat-het-nu-met-de-maassilo/.
[177] Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020.

did not just rely on small venues, it almost fully consisted of them. Small venues were no longer one of the parts of the local live music sector, they became *the* sector. This situation gave rise to the model of city-programming (stadsprogrammering) or the Rotterdam Model.

The main idea of this approach is that bookers and event organisers from the city's small venues (or independent promoters) organise concerts not only at their own premises but also at other venues if the genre of the performing artist fits the other venue's profile, and in other non-music spaces all over the city. The Rotterdam Model means that the local pop sector is not a chain of venues. It exists in the network of people, who work together to make live music thrive in the city. It is a complex interconnected system the main value of which lies in people and connections between them rather than in physical infrastructure, which is a perfect example of Becker's theory of art worlds, which emphasized cooperation and collective effort in the creation of artworks, which, in this case, are music shows. One of the ways this model functions can be seen in the way Maassilo operates. This space does not have an own programming team but instead is open for promoters from various venues of the city to organise their own shows there.[178] As the advancer of Rotown Dennis Koster explained, venues also help each other to promote each other's shows if it seems like the audience of another venue can also be interested in this specific concert.[179] Bookers often book artists for other venues or any other available space in the city when their own space seems to be less suitable for this particular act.[180] This system is a unique way for the live music sector to function and, as professionals in the industry believe, it is what makes the pop music industry of Rotterdam successful and sustainable.

This collaborative strategy is a point of difference for Rotterdam as all other cities in the Netherlands focus on the traditional model with one or more major venues. As revealed by Martijn Mulder, The Rotterdam Model stands out so much that sometimes

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[178] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030'.
[179] 'Advancer' is a person who is in charge of implementing the steps following the booking of the artists, such as dealing with accommodation, transportation and other details necessary to bring the artist to the venue/city
[180] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030'.

other municipalities even have problems understanding how such a model without a major venue can be successful. It is one of the main strengths of the city's live music ecology. With market pressure and the unstable situation for music venues when even iconic places are shutting their doors, venues are more and more forced to program acts who can sell out the place, which leaves little room for upcoming artists. By focusing on a broad network of small venues, Rotterdam allows local talent to grow as the smaller the place is the easier it is to sell it out and the less famous you need to be to do so. It ensures the authenticity and sustainability of the local scene. The collaborative nature of the model allows for the exchange of knowledge and experiences, which also contributes towards the sustainability of the whole pop music sector of Rotterdam.

The model is also one of the main weaknesses of the city's live music ecology. It is built on trust, which is an intangible resource hidden in personal relations among the sector's practitioners. As Kong demonstrated in her study of the Hong-Kong film industry, trust plays an important role in decision-making, it allows to manage risks and makes collaborations possible.[181] However, it takes time to build, it is based on personal judgement and it can be fragile.[182] In Rotterdam, some of the core figures in the pop music world have been working in the sector for fifteen-twenty years. Over such a period of time, they managed to reach a high level of trust in each other which ensures smooth successful functioning of the Rotterdam Model. A potential threat which can negatively impact the system is the change of players in the team, especially if the ones leaving would be the core members of the network. In this case, the trust would have to be built anew, which might not just take time, but even not happen at all due to the interpersonal nature of this phenomenon.[183]

The Rotterdam Model started from the sector itself but eventually made its way to the official pop strategy of the city. After all the unsuccessful attempts to create a new middle-size venue, the city hall decided to change its approach and instead of investing millions in a new major building, embraced the city-programming approach. The latest

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[181] Kong, 'The Sociality of Cultural Industries'.
[182] Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020.
[183] Ibid.

policy vision for the pop music sector in Rotterdam presents this model as one of its main strengths. It proudly highlights the uniqueness of the model in comparison to the strategies of other cities: 'having a big venue with its own marketing department is therefore proven to be not the only form of success.'[184] The change in the strategy's focus from physical infrastructure to networks can be seen through the distribution of subsidies in the sector. In 2007, all of them went to the five core venues (Baroeg, Nighttown, Rotown, WORM and Waterfront) but in the vision of 2019 the pop music budget was split among thirteen organisations, only six of which were venues (Baroeg, Rotown, WORM, BIRD, Grounds and Roodkapje).[185] This model has contributed greatly to the success of the Rotterdam pop sector from the organisational side but to make the whole live music ecology truly successful, the other side of the industry, the artists themselves, has to be flourishing as well.

Luckily, as it was revealed in the official documents and proved by local musicians and bookers during the interviews, the city hall does not just support the production side, it does not leave local artists without support either. Among various organisations that work towards talent development in the city such as Music Matters or Roots & Routes, perhaps the most important one is Popunie. This organisation fulfils a vital role in Rotterdam by working closely with local musicians and music organisations. It has existed since 1985 when it was founded as an initiative for the whole province of South Holland. In 2013, Popunie changed its focus to work specifically in Rotterdam and now it is being subsidised by the city hall.[186] The main goal of the organisation is to promote the local pop music sector and increase its quality. Popunie has three core tasks. Talent development and enlivenment of the city (1) through organising events around Rotterdam and programming specifically local acts. Knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship (2) through providing feedback to musicians, organising lectures and meetings with music industries professionals and providing all sorts of consultation to upcoming artists and

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184 Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030', 15. Translated from Dutch by the author.
185 Gemeente Rotterdam, 'De Visie Op De Lokale Popsector'; Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030'.
186 Popunie, 'Meer Informatie over Popunie', Popunie Rotterdam, accessed 28 May 2020, https://popunie.nl/over-popunie/algemeen/.

entrepreneurs. Promotion and export of the music of Rotterdam (3) by providing financial support and expertise to local bands going on tour, organising exchange programmes (one act from Rotterdam comes to City X and an act from that city comes to Rotterdam), etc.[187] Grote Prijs Van Rotterdam might be one of the best examples of how Popunie helps musicians grow. Within this competition, acts can get support and expert opinion on their music, perform at a major event, gain publicity, meet the people from the industry, etc. Popunie also ensures local acts get booked and paid by redistributing the funds supplied by the city hall to small venues around the city which can be spent only on Rotterdam-based artists. The actions of Popunie do not only help musicians themselves but also greatly contribute to the overall cultural vibrancy and the 'buzz' of the city as they organise over 900 shows in 80 different locations on a yearly basis. In their policy plan of 2017-2020, Popunie themselves emphasize their importance for the city to become a place to settle in, to attract tourists and to develop its creative sectors.[188]

The latest policy vision 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030' highlighted the success and the current positive state of the live music ecology of Rotterdam and outlined the ways it will develop in the future. The main assets of it, apart from the unique collaborative model, according to the vision, are the city's vibrant youth culture and a wide range of music genres offered at numerous local venues. Currently, the local venue circuit consists of many small spaces most of which, despite the flexibility of the Rotterdam Model, are aimed at a particular genre, allowing for broad representation of styles in the city. BIRD programs black music, Baroeg is a metal venue, Rotown is a place for rock, Dizzy and LantarenVenster program mainly jazz, l'Esprit is for blues, WORM is for experimental music, etc. Combined with some genre-specific or ethnic festivals, such as Rotterdam Bluegrass Festival or Sodade Festival of Cape Verdean music and culture, it all creates a special composition of the local live music industry which is not centred around a dominant genre but where instead a lot of niche styles coexist.

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[187] Popunie, 'Ontdekken, ontwikkelen, verbinden: beleidsplan 2017-2020', Policy Vision (Rotterdam: Popunie, 2016), https://popunie.nl/web/media/Beleidsplan-Popunie-2017-2020.pdf.
[188] Ibid.

This document again emphasized the importance of pop music for the development of Rotterdam as a people-oriented creative city: 'A flourishing pop sector contributes to the economy of the city, to the image of the city and is an essential element in the settling climate for citizens and companies and the attractiveness for tourists'.[189] To keep the local pop sector prospering, the policy sets two main goals which are aligned with the objectives of general cultural policies of Rotterdam: stimulate artists and assist their professionalisation (1) and ensure a wide, high-quality supply of music for a broad audience securing a place for local talent in it (2). Within these goals, venues play one of the central roles, as these places allow musicians to practice, gain audiences and showcase their art, which means the quality as well as the cultural supply increase with time. To reach the goals, the policy set out several focal points for each of them. For the talent development goal those are: ensure the provision of maker-spaces for musicians (rehearsal rooms, recording studios, etc.), strengthen artists' market position by making sure they are getting paid and secure a sufficient flow of new talent by supporting beginners and stimulating people to play music or work in the sector. The talent development goal includes not only artists themselves, but also bookers, promoters and other participants of this art world, which is crucial for the development of a healthy live music ecology. For achieving the second goal of high-value supply for a diverse audience the policy calls for supporting venues financially and politically by distributing subsidies and by including them into district development plans, for assisting in the development of the Rotterdam Model, for ensuring that music supply is of diverse genres and that it is spread evenly around the city and for increasing visibility and the image of Rotterdam as a place with a prosperous pop industry.[190]

Despite the support the government provides for the sector as a whole and for the Rotterdam Model itself, the live music ecology of the city still experiences some structural problems. Venues in the city centre became the victims of their own success. With gentrification, they cannot afford to stay in the areas they once helped regenerate. Many

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[189] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030', 4. Translated from Dutch by the author.
[190] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030'.

professionals in the local live music world indicate it as the main threat for the sector.[191] In the area of Schieblock, Rotterdam has already lost BAR in 2019, which was a club for experimental and electronic music, and now Annabel, the biggest pop venue/club in the city apart from Maassilo, is under threat as on May 28, 2020, the city hall voted in a redevelopment plan of the area which implies its complete rebuilding with two high-end residential skyscrapers and office spaces.[192] The place of Annabel within these plans is still unclear. Despite the success of the Rotterdam Model, the absence of a major venue can still be considered as a potential weakness of the local live music ecology. It can lead to the decline in the city's attractiveness for musicians to settle or tour in Rotterdam and to the lack of expertise in working with acts of this scale. Moreover, without such an organisation other venues do not have an example they can look up to and consult with if needed.[193] Additionally, the once prosperous club scene of Rotterdam has experienced a decline during the last decade. The number of clubs reduced from sixteen in 2008 to nine in 2017 and with ever-tightening licensing regulations and intensifying gentrification it becomes difficult to establish a new dance venue.[194] More issues of the local live music ecology will be discussed in the final chapter of this study, which will explore how local musicians and bookers experience the live music world of Rotterdam.

Rotterdam strives to become a creative city and pop music is one of the pillars of the people-oriented part of its strategy. As of 2020, the pop music sector of Rotterdam is enjoying stability and full governmental support, successfully creating the 'buzz' necessary to make the city an attractive place to live in and relocate to. Such reliance on public funding, however, is a potential weakness of the system. In case the cultural budget being reduced or the city hall simply changing its vision on urban development in

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[191] Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020.
[192] Britte Kramer, 'Hou je vast: club BAR kondigt zijn einde aan', indebuurt Rotterdam, 14 November 2018, https://indebuurt.nl/rotterdam/nieuws/hou-je-vast-club-bar-kondigt-zijn-einde-aan~72904/; Rijnmond, 'Toren tot 200 meter hoog bij nieuw Schiekadeblok in Rotterdam', *Rijnmond*, 28 May 2020, https://www.rijnmond.nl/nieuws/195830/Toren-tot-200-meter-hoog-bij-nieuw-Schiekadeblok-in-Rotterdam.
[193] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030'.; Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020.
[194] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030', 12.; Martijn Mulder, in discussion with the author, April 15, 2020.

general and specifically its cultural part, the core venues of Rotterdam might quickly disappear if they fail to regroup.

Only a fraction of what comprises the live music ecology of Rotterdam has been presented here. Nothing has been said about booking agencies, labels, rehearsal spaces, liquor regulations and other important elements of the whole ecology, however, it was deliberately omitted from the overview as the main focus of this study lies in the realm of venues and networks. Within the unique Rotterdam Model, small music venues occupy the central place but the core and the strength of the apparatus lie not in the physical infrastructure, but in the network of people managing it. In such a relation-based system, social capital becomes one of the key resources that determines the success not only of an individual practitioner but of the whole structure. As in the concept of art worlds of Howard Becker, the model enjoys high levels of cooperation and every element of the whole system is necessary for it to function fully. Such an interconnected network-based model makes Rotterdam a perfect place to investigate how or if small venues act as networking nodes and what is the importance of these spaces for the creation of social capital of local musicians and bookers.

4.2 Small venues and Social Capital in Rotterdam

'I get by with a little help from my friends' - The Beatles, 1967[195]

As research on creative and cultural industries shows, social capital is a vital asset for personal career development in the field. Among all the studies, however, none have investigated how networking functions in the live music sector. This particular art world has a unique nature of late working hours, it is fully focused on here and now as it emphasizes the *live* experience of music, it also penetrates other art forms as live music often accompanies events connected to fine arts, film, poetry, etc. Despite such ubiquity of live music and the complexity of this art world with many different occupations

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[195] John Lennon et al., *With a Little Help from My Friends* (London: Parlophone, 1967).

involved in each particular event, the organisation side of live music in the urban context usually consists of a limited circle of individuals, who work simultaneously on several projects and constantly interact with each other. In such a tight world, it is logical to assume that social capital would be a crucial success factor. Circumstances for musicians are, however, not the same. The artists are located on the other side of this world and are being employed by event organisers and hence the dynamics of their networking process might differ from those of bookers. Using the means of semi-structured interviews, this study attempts to investigate how and where social capital of music industries practitioners is being formed and how it works for musicians and bookers from different scenes with a focus on small music venues and events. By distinguishing two groups of musicians and bookers, the research tries to explore the differences in the process of social capital formation from the employer (booker) and the employee (artist) sides and alleged power relations between them. This chapter is based on the analysis of the interviews conducted by the author in the period between March and June 2020. Only a selection of quotes is incorporated into the text with footnotes used to refer to the conversations where the current topic was mentioned. Full transcripts can be found in a separate document attached to this study.

How it all begins: entering the field

To enter any field in any industry, either with the goal of becoming a professional or just as an enthusiast, people generally are required to possess some form of capital. It might be financial, such as being able to afford a purchase of a music instrument, it can be cultural, such as knowledge of a certain music scene, or it can be social, such as having an acquaintance who can recommend the aspiring professional/enthusiast to a potential employer or provide direct employment. With the example of the British television industry, Lee demonstrated that lavish social and cultural capital are the key requirements to start a career in the creative sector. While this situation is beneficial for those who are rich in these resources, such a reliance on these forms of capital might

lead to exclusion of outsiders, nepotism and even class and racial divides.[196] This section explores how important social capital was for the musicians and event organisers in Rotterdam to put on their first shows and what barriers, if any, they encountered while making their first steps.

Popunie suggests a five-stages framework of the talent development process of musicians, which can also be applied to bookers: introduction to music (1), practising and learning the skill (2), performing (3), becoming professional (4) and excelling (5).[197] The first stage usually happens naturally at home, in school or through various media. The role of the middle and high school, as well as the family, is also important at the second stage. First shows and small music venues come at the third stage of 'performing'. This phase is a crucial turning point for musicians and bookers, which can define whether they would pursue a career in the sector or not. Unlike in classical music and jazz which are being taught in public educational institutions, the formation of social and cultural capital at the beginning of the 'performing' stage for the pop music sector is completely left 'to the market'.[198] In Rotterdam, such organisations as Popunie try to mediate this process, however, at this stage, small venues and events come to the forefront for musicians and bookers in pop music as these are one of the main places where aspiring artists/event organisers can gain social and cultural capital. Small venues become the foci for people who want to start participating in the live music sector.[199]

Musicians: do-it-yourself

In line with the framework of Popunie, most of the respondents, be it musicians or bookers, emphasized the importance of family and, in general, childhood years in the formation of their interest in music. For those who would later become musicians, a recurring topic was the parents' desire for their children to study music or having a relative or a parent or a family friend who practised this art form.[200] Such an atmosphere

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[196] Lee, 'Networks, Cultural Capital and Creative Labour in the British Independent Television Industry'.
[197] Popunie, 'Ontdekken, ontwikkelen, verbinden'.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Feld, 'Social Structural Determinants of Similarity among Associates'.
[200] Conversations with Merle Sibbel, Juliana Martina, Rens De Boer, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, Steven Pieters, Wouter Mol, Raluca Baicu.

of music is perceived by these musicians as a natural irreplaceable part of their childhood. As nowadays Berlin-based singer-songwriter Merle Sibbel (stage name Mone) explained: 'I always had different music projects, projects like with my uncle [...]. We would pick an album and in summer we would play together and he would sing and I would sing sometimes too, and play the guitar. So there were always some projects going on, I guess.'[201] A jazz/Latin music singer-songwriter Juliana Martina also points out the family environment as an inextricable part of her music life: 'So I, music has always been in my life because I grew up in a family where everybody plays an instrument.'[202] These years of coming in contact with music for the first time and practising it in a safe home environment represent the first stage of talent development. This is the time when initial music tastes are formed and the foundation for future involvement in the music world is laid.

The next big step for musicians is to start performing and that is where various public and private institutions come into play. Several interviewees attended music lessons or schools which regularly organised showcases of their students' progress, which provided many of those who would later keep making music with first performance opportunities. [203] As a lead singer and a guitarist of Out Of Skin Wouter Mol, who attended music classes in Centrum voor de Kunsten in Spijkenisse (a suburb of Rotterdam), explained: 'So there were guitar lessons and things but you can go to pop class and then you get a coach. And you can start a band with people you don't know [...]. So our first gig was at Theater De Stoep, it's in Spijkenisse too, because every six months you can perform your thing, so it was a very big gig. It was a great stage and a lot of audience.'[204] Other events such as street festivals, high-school shows or parties organised by friends were also highlighted by musicians as important first stages of their artistic development where they could gain experience in a non-commercial environment and build up confidence in their music abilities.[205]

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[201] Merle Sibbel, in discussion with the author, April 12, 2020.
[202] Juliana Martina, in discussion with the author, April 18, 2020.
[203] Conversations with Wouter Mol, Merle Sibbel, Lauren Ter Horst.
[204] Wouter Mol, in discussion with the author, May 11, 2020.
[205] Conversations with Wouter Mol, Merle Sibbel, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, Lauren Ter Horst.

After such concerts, comes the decisive stage when either an artist remains at the amateur level or takes the next step towards becoming more professional. To do so, an artist needs to change the vision and the strategy from 'playing when an occasion comes' to actively seeking performance opportunities and attempting to get paid for his or her work. Not for all the interviewees of this research performing music is the main source of income and not all of them aspire to be full-time musicians, however, all of them get paid for their performances and actively work on the advancement of their music careers. It is logical to assume that the transition to this more professional stage happens at small venues and indeed, such spaces provide most of the performance opportunities for musicians at this stage. The dominant way for musicians to kick-start their careers and start putting on shows, according to the interviewees, is to approach small venues and events via email or phone to organise a performance or attend open mic nights.[206] However, it is not the only way to enter the field. Juliana Martina participated in a Latin music competition while pursuing another education, where she was spotted by a band who later invited her to join them. At the same competition, she learned about the conservatory in Rotterdam and switched her career path to become a professional musician. A pop singer-songwriter Lauren Ter Horst started her career in music by participating in the TV-show the Voice of Holland, which immediately brought attention to her as a musician and opened up performing opportunities. Both singers have previously performed at the amateur level but considered the competition and the TV-show as their first 'serious gigs'. A guitarist of now-defunct band Standup '69, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk got involved in organising concerts at his college after performing there several times and later on volunteered at a small venue in Vlaardingen managing local bands' nights. It allowed him not only to book his own group for this venue but also learn the way this art world functions and establish first connections within the field.

Such examples demonstrate various entry points into the live music industry for musicians. Despite the differences, all of them do not require an aspiring artist to possess

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[206] Conversations with Wouter Mol, Merle Sibbel, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, Juliana Martina.

rich social capital within the industry itself to get the first professional stage experiences, which indicates relatively low entry barriers. Having a network undoubtedly helps to understand how this art world works and makes it easier for musicians to get their first shows, such as in the case of Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, however, cultural capital and the quality of the presented material remain the main factors of success. Thus, being connected to bookers is an advantage, but not a mandatory requirement to start performing. It was confirmed by the interviewees as all of them indicated doing cold calls and sending out introductory emails as the main way of getting first gigs.

This situation also exemplifies interdependencies within the art world of live music. Although bookers are mostly interested in programming acts who can sell as many tickets as possible, it is still in their long-term interest to take the risk of programming young musicians to keep new music appearing in the city and attract new audiences. Upcoming artists have ways of circumventing bookers in getting their first gigs by either performing at open mic nights or renting venues on their own, however, both alternatives have their limitations. The first option is accessible to everyone and while entry barriers are extremely low as often one can just come and play without an audition, open mic nights are still organised by other people which makes musicians dependent on them. The second option is available only for those who possess enough financial capital to pay for the venue in advance, which creates an impassable barrier for many beginners. As local talent development is one of the cornerstones of the music policy of Rotterdam, the city tries to mediate and improve this interdependency through such institutions as Popunie or Music Matters. They provide subsidies for venues to pay local musicians, thereby reducing financial risks for bookers and opening up opportunities for upcoming talent.

Bookers: grab the chance

Several patterns of getting first experiences in the live music field also were discovered among the interviewees on the event organisers side. Here, the categorization of Frith *et.*

al between 'enthusiast', 'state-funded' and 'commercial' promoters can be employed.[207] For four interviewees of this study, organising shows is the main professional activity, making them a part of the 'commercial' category. However, the city hall of Rotterdam subsidizes venues and organisations where these professionals work, therefore in the context of this study the distinction between 'commercial' and 'state-funded' is blurred. Three other interviewees put on shows as enthusiast promoters without the goal of earning money from this activity. A big distinction in the way people get involved in organising shows for the first time that transcends all the categories is whether it was a result of a deliberate action (seeking to be involved in live music) or of a spontaneous reaction to an emerging opportunity. As an enthusiast promoter Pablo Beneitez, who currently books bands for Hostel ROOM and scouts venues for Sofar Sounds (see Appendix 4), explained how he first got involved in the music world:

> 'After a few weeks [*of working in Hostel ROOM as a receptionist and staff member, (added by the author)*], I realized that they also have live music. So I started, like, just joining the music nights just to, just to watch them, just to be there and listen to music. And of course, the manager saw me every time and said, like, Hey, you wanna try to, you know, help with the music nights? So I started doing a bit of, a little bit of sound engineering […]. And then, like, a year later, they offered me to be in charge of the booking because they, because they needed somebody to do so.'[208]

For Pablo, therefore, attending events at a small venue resulted in being offered a position of a booker at this venue. In terms of reacting to opportunities, volunteering at various sorts of venues and events was described by the interviewees as one of the main ways of starting in the world of live music.[209] For instance, Dennis Koster, who currently does advancing for Rotown and booking for numerous festivals, started his way in the

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[207] Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain, Volume I.*
[208] Pablo Beneitez, in discussion with the author, April 10, 2020.
[209] Conversations with Dennis Koster, Pablo Beneitez, Rens De Boer, Raluca Baicu.

sector as a volunteer for the Motel Mozaique festival, the opportunity he discovered while browsing the internet. Applying for a volunteer position might also happen in a deliberate attempt to enter the field, not only as a spontaneous decision. Another form to start in the live music sector, similar to volunteering, is interning. Linda Nijboer, who organises shows at Poortgebouw, and Raluca Baicu, a booker at BIRD and North Sea Round Town festival, both started their paths as interns at WORM and Jazz International Rotterdam respectively completing a part of their studies.

For some promoters, like Guido Van Dieren of BIRD or Steven Pieters of Triphouse Rotterdam, the career in music started by being artists themselves (DJs). In this case, parties of various scales, including small events, where Van Dieren and Pieters performed, acted as foci. At these events they met their future collaborators, with whom they moved from the performing to the organising side. As Van Dieren explains how he met the partner with whom they organised parties for several years: 'I met a lot of people through DJing. So and we had a similar style or similar tastes of DJing. So that was the way we connected.'[210] Rens De Boer, who currently books bands for Poortgebouw, has also started his way in music by being a musician. Through meeting people, i.e. developing social capital at the events he played at, he first became a volunteer at one of the small venues in Utrecht called ACU and later on, using his experience and network, began organising his own shows in Rotterdam.

As these examples show, for bookers the possession of rich social capital is also, as in the case of musicians, not a strict requirement to start organising shows and enter the field of live music. Cultural capital in the form of a particular set of skills and personality traits appears to play a greater role. For instance, one's cheerful attitude might help to become accepted as a volunteer whose job would be to communicate with the audience or one's knowledge of creative industries gained at the university might lead to him or her getting an internship in the sector. Financial capital can also help if one wants to start organising shows on his or her own to cover possible costs of renting the equipment or the venue, paying the musician, etc.[211]

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[210] Guido Van Dieren, in discussion with the author, May 27, 2020.
[211] Ibid.

Nonetheless, social capital remains a valuable asset: networks help to disseminate information about new opportunities and meet people with whom one can start creating these opportunities for him or herself. However, even while being an outsider and having no connections in the field it is still possible to make use of such entry points as volunteering or interning. As Webster *et. al* outlined, the small music venues sector is heavily dependent on volunteer work as venues often lack funds to hire more employees for assisting tasks such as scanning tickets.[212] This need makes the live music sector even less exclusive as everyone can apply for being a volunteer or an intern. These entry-level positions, however, reflect the precarious dynamics of cultural industries, where to start working in the sector, one has to be able to afford working for free or for a very low salary.[213] The transition from these non or barely-paid jobs and the enthusiastic way of organising shows to the professional level is the stage where most barriers appear for those who wish to make a living from organising live music events. Despite being welcoming for volunteers and interns, the live music world consists of a relatively small number of individuals and full-time positions in the sector are limited. It means that although it is relatively easy to make the first step into the field as a volunteer or an intern making use of one's cultural capital, further success is not guaranteed. Just as in the case of the British television industry described by Lee, cultural capital in the live music sector allows for the formation of social capital, which, in turn, is often necessary in this industry to eventually start gaining the economic one by being formally employed.[214]

Moving forward: generating social capital at small venues

After taking first steps in the industry be it playing the first show or getting accepted as an intern or a volunteer, comes the stage of building up reputation and expanding the network. This section explores the way musicians and event organisers navigate the field of live music production with the focus on the formation of their social capital. It attempts to investigate how important this form of capital is for them to boost their career, where

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[212] Webster et al., 'Valuing Live Music'.
[213] Lee, 'Networks, Cultural Capital and Creative Labour in the British Independent Television Industry'.
[214] Ibid.

they can gain social capital and how and if this process differs for musicians and bookers from various music scenes. In this section the main question of this study is being answered: do small music venues and events act as networking nodes, allowing musicians and bookers to enrich their social capital?

Each particular scene in the world of live music has its own network, which consists of the people of various occupations such as bookers, musicians, venue owners, sound technicians, etc. This idea of interconnectedness within the field is embedded in the notion of scenes itself, it relates to Becker's theory of art worlds and it was exemplified by Crossley in his study of the post-punk scene of Manchester.[215] Any scene as a milieu is a great example of the main feature of social capital, which was highlighted by Bourdieu and Coleman: it does not belong to a certain individual, social capital lies in the network itself.[216] Hence, the denser the network, the more interconnected a certain scene is, the more resources each of its members can mobilize. Within this study, this phenomenon was observed on both sides of musicians and bookers, however, as this section demonstrates, artists and event organisers operate these milieus in different ways.

Musicians: keep pushing and try to stay visible

For musicians in Rotterdam, the networks in their respective scenes constitute a valuable resource, however, the importance of social capital, the places of its formation and the density of the milieus differ from scene to scene. For most genres, the main difference lies in the foci where the practitioners of a certain music style gather: DJs at clubs, singers-songwriters at open mic nights, etc.[217] The availability of such foci, or simply places that attract people of similar interests, impacts the ability of musicians to both generate and mobilize social capital. As this section shows, small venues and events in Rotterdam indeed act as these places of encounter, however, the return on investment that musicians reap from this networking is often not immediately distinct and can manifest itself only in the long-term. Within this study, the attention was paid to the

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[215] Becker, *Art Worlds*; Crossley, 'The Man Whose Web Expanded'.
[216] Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital'; Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital'.
[217] Conversations with Merle Sibbel, Steven Pieters, Guido Van Dieren

formative years of musicians' careers as during that period they form the foundation of their social capital in the music world.

All the interviewees indicated that networking at events is a necessary practice which might potentially lead to certain benefits, such as being booked by another venue or being recommended to a festival.[218] The outcomes of such networking, however, are only potential and can be characterised as having high levels of uncertainty. Thus, the main goal of networking at events might be described not as gaining specific contacts but as staying visible in the scene. This allows the artists to stay aware of all the developments in the live music world, keep the 'buzz' around their name, gain reputation, create a certain image for their act, etc.[219]

Small music venues and events appeared to be important foci for musicians in Rotterdam to carry out this type of networking, i.e. to form their social capital. As Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk put it about after-gig networking: '…it definitely can help because, you know, you don't always know who you're talking to, and, or who they know.'[220] Although this quote reflects the necessity and the potential benefits of this networking, it also captures the uncertainty over the return on such sort of investment. For his band Standup '69, however, performing at small music venues like Club Vibes and Rotown appeared to be beneficial. At the first venue they developed a good relationship with the booker who organised live music shows there. Later on he helped Standup '69 with promoting their music by inviting them to his radio show. At Rotown, the band was spotted by a record label representative, who later offered them a deal for an album at Butler Records. These are two prominent examples of how connections built at small live music venues can contribute to musicians' career development. Additionally, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk mentioned that at such events it is possible to meet bands that play in a similar genre, with whom one can later organise a show together which would

[218] Conversations with Merle Sibbel, Wouter Mol, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, Juliana Martina, Lauren Ter Horst
[219] Straw, 'The English-Canadian Recording Industry since 1970'; Gibson, 'Cultures at Work'; Conversations with Lauren Ter Horst, Merle Sibbel, Wouter Mol, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk
[220] Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, in discussion with the author, April 27, 2020.

make it easier to sell more tickets and hence reduce the financial risk of putting on a concert.

Merle Sibbel also explained how playing open mic nights at small stages helped her start getting paid gigs:

'I think the first paid gig I played was because I played the open stage at Cafe De Bel in the north. [...] And actually, just around the corner there's cafe Faas. [...] And I had a friend who played in a band, and they played there quite often. And they know the owner. So I think through my friend, I also got a gig there. [...] And it's the same owner of a cafe called De Riddert [...], they have an open stage as well. So I played there too. And actually, I first played there on the open stage and I got a gig there in that cafe, just because, I mean, the same person who was hosting the open stage was booking gigs.'[221]

This example illustrates not only the possible benefits of networking but also the snowball effect in the formation of social capital of musicians, which many interviewees referred to as 'one show led to another'.[222] This effect is enabled through networking by either meeting people who can directly book the artist, recommend him, her or them to a promoter or by simply allowing the information about opportunities to circulate.

One scene appeared to stand out the most in the way social capital is formed in it: jazz. The musicians of this genre most often receive formal education at conservatories or other music institutions. These institutions do not only act as training grounds but also allow students to accumulate big amounts of social capital in the form of their classmates and professors. It is later mobilized to find venues to play, share information about opening opportunities and new projects, collaborate, recommend each other to bookers and promoters, etc. Having such a powerful centre of gravity as a conservatory ensures the high density of the network in this scene and gives jazz musicians a solid social

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[221] Merle Sibbel, in discussion with the author, April 12, 2020.
[222] Steven Pieters, in discussion with the author, April 29, 2020; Conversations with Merle Sibbel, Lauren Ter Horst, Wouter Mol, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk

capital base to start their careers with in comparison to other genres where such formal centralised foci do not exist.[223]

Among the interviewees, two other institutions were repeatedly mentioned as important places to get valuable connections: Popunie and talent competitions, such as Grote Prijs van Rotterdam. Via the events of Popunie and various contests, musicians have the opportunity to meet the professionals from the music industries, which can become an important asset in their social capital portfolio. Additionally, it also brings people who want to pursue a career in music together, becoming a focus space where like-minded artists can meet, exchange experiences and information and form new connections.[224]

As these interviews have shown, small music venues and events do act as important spaces for enriching social capital of musicians at the early stages of their careers. Being immersed in the network or the milieu of a certain scene, the process that by itself often starts at small venues or events, was outlined by the interviewees as a crucial way of getting valuable connections, receiving relevant information and maintaining visibility of the act. Despite such milieus and networking happening at small venues and in other places, all the musicians interviewed emphasized that the main way of getting booked and advancing their careers by a wide margin was promoting your act yourself by emailing and calling.[225] Most of the time, the musicians use the networks within the scenes they are in or search online for similar bands to discover what venues they might fit and hence where they can get potentially booked. Afterwards, they contact the venues themselves, most often, in the form of an introductory email. Such cold calls have a bigger chance to succeed if the booker has already heard about the act, i.e. if the act is visible in the milieu.[226] It is this 'buzz' around the artist which is the most important outcome of networking at small live music venues and events for musicians. In other words, generating visibility is the main role of such venues and events in the formation of

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[223] Juliana Martina, in discussion with the author, April 18, 2020.
[224] Conversations with Merle Sibbel, Wouter Mol
[225] Conversations with Merle Sibbel, Wouter Mol, Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, Juliana Martina, Lauren Ter Horst
[226] Ibid.

social capital of musicians at the beginning of their careers. Nonetheless, this networking remains a supportive activity for one's career development which is centred around individual self-promotion efforts.

Although this help-yourself method was outlined by every interviewee as the main one, it has a very low success rate: 'I think 90% of the time they did not even respond at all', 'A lot of times, you don't get, like, any reply', 'Sometimes you can send a hundred emails and then there's one answer'.[227] This situation when musicians are the ones actively seeking contact with bookers and not the other way around exemplifies the idea of power relations from the field theory of Bourdieu and indicates that the role of bookers as gatekeepers in the live music world has not diminished with the rise of the internet and DIY culture. Such a hierarchical structure of the field results from, as Bourdieu would put it himself, the competition within it.[228] The live music market is oversaturated with the number of acts requesting to play by far exceeding the capacity of venues to host shows and the demand from the audiences. In this situation, musicians are forced to compete for gigs. This gives power to bookers who determine when and where a certain act gets to play. It, in turn, demonstrates the ideas of Bourdieu and Coleman that social capital does not belong to individuals themselves. Even knowing a certain booker, the musician is not able to mobilize the resources that this booker possesses as the latter would still have the power to decide whether to make these resources available to the musician or not. Another reason contributing to this hierarchy and to the low success rate of networking at small venues and events for musicians is that, as Merle Sibbel and Juliana Martina outlined, bookers do not come to venues anymore to check artists. With bookers receiving large numbers of online requests on a regular basis the need for them to network with musicians face-to-face decreases.

Nonetheless, even taking into consideration the low return on investment and the non-favourable power relations, networking at small music venues and events can be described, employing the language of Becker, as a widely accepted 'convention' among

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[227] Lauren Ter Horst, in discussion with the author, April 20, 2020; Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, in discussion with the author, April 27, 2020; Wouter Mol, in discussion with the author, May 11, 2020 respectively.
[228] Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*.

musicians i.e. a common practice, which helps them navigate the field. Such an obligation to network, however, might put at a disadvantage those artists, whose personality does not fit this pattern of frequent forced interaction: 'I never was really that great at that. So I had to sort of push myself to do that and the other band members as well.'[229] This problem of mandatory networking was, among others, also outlined by Hesmondhalgh & Baker and Lee in their studies of various creative industries in the UK.[230]

As one of the features of social capital that makes it different from cultural and financial ones, Coleman indicated that actors who invest in it experience a great degree of uncertainty over return on investment and often capture only a small part of its benefits.[231] With the power relations, the overload of bookers with requests and the high density of the market, the situation the musicians interviewed for this study are in seems to illustrate Coleman's idea. Networking at small music venues and events allows artists to stay visible in the scene, which is the main way for them to gain benefits from having connections, i.e. convert their social capital into the economic one. However, with bookers having the final say, the portion of the benefits the musicians can seize is limited and the uncertainty over the return on investment remains high.

Bookers: non-stop office

As this research shows, small venues act as important foci for bookers, where milieus of various scenes can meet. Like in the case of musicians, these spaces allow bookers to enrich their social capital, however, for event organisers, such networking tends to have more tangible outcomes and a higher return on investment. This is the result of the difference between musicians and bookers in the way they can mobilize and approach social capital. For artists, such encounters are a way to advance their careers, which is centred around the music they make. This networking often leaves artists in an inferior position to the people who can help them advance, be it bookers, label representatives, journalists, etc. For event organisers, on the other hand, networking is

[229] Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk, in discussion with the author, April 27, 2020
[230] Hesmondhalgh and Baker, '"A Very Complicated Version of Freedom"'; Lee, 'Networks, Cultural Capital and Creative Labour in the British Independent Television Industry'.
[231] Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital'.

not only a means of getting a career boost, but an essential part of their day-to-day job as their main activities are related to the coordination of people. A certain degree of power relations can also exist among promoters as some bookers can potentially act as employers for others, but the contrast between positions among bookers is not that strong as between bookers and musicians.

For all the event organisers interviewed, the connections built at small venues brought career opportunities and led to new projects being realised.[232] Steven Pieters explained how the music collective 'Triphouse Rotterdam' he has been running for approximately fourteen years as of spring 2020 came to be as a result of him attending parties at various venues in the city:

'I would follow a certain style of music. So whenever the DJ from outside the Netherlands was coming to perform in the city, I would be there. And then when I look around, there's always the same group of people on the floor. [...] And then I started talking to them. [...] We decided to team up and organize events together. And first, we didn't have the name, but this slowly evolved into Triphouse Rotterdam.'[233]

Linda Nijboer, who has been living in the community of Poortgebouw and organising events there since 2010, ended up in this place as a result of networking during her internship at WORM. Dennis Koster, while working at De Unie, a now-defunct small venue in Rotterdam, gained contacts which eventually allowed him to obtain his current position at Rotown and also become a programmer for a now-defunct festival Duizel In Het Park. He also emphasized the high density of the art world of event organisers: 'if you write it out, there's all these lines going through [...] just a few persons.'[234] For Guido Van Dieren, who has been one of the core members of the BIRD team since its foundation in 2011, an encounter at one of the events he organised led to him getting employed by this venue. These are just a few examples of how social capital gained at

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[232] Conversations with Steven Pieters, Pablo Beneitez, Dennis Koster, Raluca Baicu, Guido Van Dieren, Linda Nijboer, Rens De Boer
[233] Steven Pieters, in discussion with the author, April 29, 2020.
[234] Dennis Koster, in discussion with the author, March 24, 2020.

small venues and events helped bookers in Rotterdam to advance their careers and subsequently organise more concerts.

For professional bookers, one of the most important components of social capital is what Coleman called 'trustworthiness'. It means that one actor trusts another one that the favours made will be reciprocated in the future.[235] The work of professional promoters is based on reputation, which defines how much trust bookers in the milieu have in each other. Once an individual is able to gain a certain level of trust within the field, employment opportunities follow: 'Just do your job well and work hard and then people see it and they ask you for other stuff. That's what it is.'[236] As Raluca Baicu who at that point was already working at BIRD explained about her involvement with North Sea Round Town festival:

'You have to meet the right people at the right moment. Of course [...] I was already working [...] in the industry [...] for a while so [...] people already started to know me as [...] what I do and how I do it [...]. And then North Sea Round Town last year [...] came up with a pilot project of inviting five young programmers to develop a program during North Sea Round Town. [...]. So I got lucky, let's say, and I was invited for an interview'.[237]

In the project-based environment of the live music sector, trust and reputation become one of the key resources to get jobs and advance one's career. All the professional bookers interviewed for this study work on several festivals, venues or event series simultaneously (see Appendix 3 for short profiles of the interviewees). It leads to a high degree of interconnectedness in this world: 'It's a very small [...] music scene you have, in the ten years I've worked and now I think I know almost everybody that works in it', 'It is a small network in the city so we all know each other a little bit.'[238] This network

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[235] Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital'.
[236] Dennis Koster, in discussion with the author, March 24, 2020.
[237] Raluca Baicu, in discussion with the author, May 21, 2020.
[238] Dennis Koster, in discussion with the author, March 24, 2020; Guido Van Dieren, in discussion with the author, May 27, 2020 respectively.

density is what enables bookers' reliance on social capital in their work and what allows them to get invited to new projects.[239]

All the interviewees considered their networks as one of the major assets in their arsenal to successfully execute their job. The work of event organisers in large part consists of coordinating activities of various people and making arrangements with others. For all the interviewees, talking to people and constantly utilizing their social capital is a fundamental part of their work, which makes it possible, or at least much easier, to do what they do.[240] As Raluca Baicu put it about the cooperative nature of the live music industry: 'There's always a collaboration that goes on because […] that's how the sector functions, basically.'[241] Networks help navigate uncertainties and deal with emergencies as this quote from Pablo Beneitez illustrates: 'We got cancel with the band in the last minute […] so I just pick up the phone, call a few bands and, and we got a band right on the spot.'[242] Rens De Boer mentioned that through networks bookers exchange information about the bands, which makes it easier for them to select acts to book. This benefit of promoters' networks has been previously documented in Boston by Foster *et. al.*[243] More concrete examples of how networking might benefit bookers were mentioned during the interviews, however, a short quote of Dennis Koster can summarize the importance of social capital in the work of event organisers: 'I think I can't do without (*the network*).'[244] Such constant collaboration in the milieu of event organisers in Rotterdam illustrates one of the features of social capital which was highlighted by Bourdieu - it is being activated only in the process of exchange.[245]

Venues of all scales, including the small ones, act as foci or centres of gravity for event organisers and bookers from the same scene, which allows for random encounters to happen and thereby for social capital to be generated. However, the more

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[239] Conversations with Steven Pieters, Dennis Koster, Raluca Baicu, Guido Van Dieren, Linda Nijboer, Rens De Boer

[240] Conversations with Steven Pieters, Pablo Beneitez, Dennis Koster, Raluca Baicu, Guido Van Dieren, Linda Nijboer, Rens De Boer

[241] Raluca Baicu, in discussion with the author, May 21, 2020.

[242] Pablo Beneitez, in discussion with the author, April 10, 2020.

[243] Foster, Borgatti, and Jones, 'Gatekeeper Search and Selection Strategies'.

[244] Dennis Koster, in discussion with the author, March 24, 2020.

[245] Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital'.

professional a booker becomes, the more deliberate the interactions become. For the bookers, who are already deeply involved in the live music world and gained enough trust within the industry's milieu, random encounters at small venues start to have diminishing returns. Instead, staying visible in the general network and maintaining the reputation becomes more important in the networking process. The role of small venues thus changes with the development of one's career from being a networking node and a place to enrich one's social capital to being the main workplace or the 'office' of a well-established concert promoter. Nonetheless, the social capital built at such venues at the beginning of each booker's career path is a valuable resource that is able to determine the professional success of a certain event organiser as this job relies heavily on connections between people and new employment opportunities are usually found through the network within the art world of live music. The networking at small live music events and venues is what initially forms professional milieus of various scenes. It is these professional milieus which are of most importance for bookers. Through such networks information on bands and professional opportunities is exchanged, potential partners or employers can be met and reputation can be earned.

As these two sections have demonstrated, networking is a vital practice for musicians and bookers to progress with their careers. In Rotterdam, small venues appeared to play a key role in the formation of the social capital of artists and promoters at the early stages of their talent development. The results of this research seem to validate what was previously proposed by Brown *et. al*. They suggested that loosely structured place-based milieus and not physical facilities are what constitutes 'the real context for a local music industry'.[246] They also listed a range of roles such milieus play: testing ground for new ideas, formation of trust and local identity, providing context for artworks, allowing for accumulation and transfer of knowledge, forming scenes, etc.[247] Although not elaborating on the roles of milieus, this research has shown that such networks are

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[246] Brown, O'Connor, and Cohen, 'Local Music Policies within a Global Music Industry', 446.
[247] Ibid.

indeed central to the local live music industry of Rotterdam and that they are based in various places around the city, including small live music venues and events.

In line with the theory of Bourdieu, most of the interviewees were able to eventually convert their connections (social capital) into financially lucrative ventures (economic capital) in the form of either being booked, getting a record deal, being offered a paid position, implementing new projects, etc. There are, however, imbalances in the conversion of social capital into the financial one in the live music sector of Rotterdam. Musicians often end up in a subordinate to bookers' position, trying to compete for their attention and the resources they can offer. Although it might seem that such power relations are rigid and go one way from top to bottom, the internal field structure is not that hierarchical. While musicians depend on bookers to get shows, bookers depend on musicians to deliver the main product of the industry - live music. Moreover, the quality of a certain event and hence the reputation of a certain booker heavily depend on the artist's performance. This mutual dependency is what keeps the balance in the world of live music and prevents the power to be overconcentrated in the hands of concert organisers. Nonetheless, as this research shows, bookers still occupy a higher position in the hierarchy of the field of live music production and they are able to capture a greater share of benefits of their social capital than musicians. For both sides, networking proved to be a widely accepted convention and participating in this process is inevitable if one wants to advance in the field. For many interviewees, especially the bookers, the idea of networking appeared to be so embedded in what they do that it could not be separated from their major activity.

In the context of the Rotterdam Model, which relies on collaboration among event organisers, the presence of small venues as foci determines not only individual success, but the success of the whole live music system of the city. Through social capital gained at such events, musicians are able to perform more and thereby increase the cultural offer in the city; bookers start to organise more events, which also increases the city's cultural output and provides musicians with more performance opportunities. Hence,

among its other functions, small live music venues act as vital networking nodes, the presence of which is mandatory for a healthy live music ecology.

Living in the city: musicians, bookers, Rotterdam and its live music ecology

Looking at the pop music policies of Rotterdam and other official documents issued by the city government, one can paint a positive picture of the local live music ecology. Indeed, the real-life experiences of the interviewees were mostly positive, however, representatives of various scenes highlighted several issues which have not been explicitly outlined in the official reports.

One of the main positive sides of the live music ecology of Rotterdam, that almost all the interviewees from both sides of musicians and bookers mentioned, was the institution of Popunie. This organisation contributes greatly to talent development in the city using a wide range of tools. Pablo Beneitez and Merle Sibbel highlighted the funding that Popunie distributes among the venues to pay local artists. It allows venues to program more musicians from Rotterdam and attempts to tackle the precarity of the sector where sometimes artists have to 'pay to play'.[248] Lauren Ter Horst and Wouter Mol mentioned that the organisation is so active that they might recommend a band or an artist to a booker even if the artist did not request help. Merle Sibbel and Wouter Mol emphasized the importance of Meet The Pro sessions and the competition Grote Prijs Van Rotterdam for the knowledge and experience transfer. At events of such sort, upcoming artists get a chance to consult with professionals from various music industries and gain valuable insights about the peculiarities of the music world. It provides important guidance for independent musicians: '... [it] really gave me a bit of like 'I am okay'. I'm not completely lost in trying to figure out how to become more professional.'[249] Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk praised Popunie for providing funding for touring musicians and stressed the fact that without such funding it would be financially unfeasible for young artists to tour. Juliana Martina, however, as an artist of a jazz-like genre is not eligible for

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[248] Lauren Ter Horst, in discussion with the author, April 20, 2020
[249] Merle Sibbel, in discussion with the author, April 12, 2020.

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Popunie funding and, based on her own research, no alternative for the musicians of her scene exists in the city. Popunie, nonetheless, in the eyes of the musicians and bookers appeared to be one of the most important and highly-praised features of the local live music ecology. It functions as an effective tool for reaching the objectives of talent development and the professionalisation of the sector formulated in the latest Rotterdam's Policy Vision Pop.

To make the live music industry of Rotterdam more professional and entrepreneurial, however, more opportunities need to be created in the city for young promoters. As Raluca Baicu outlined: 'The problem with, with industry here is that there are no really jobs for beginners, [...], so junior position. You either have internships which are very bad paid or unpaid at all, or you have senior positions, [...], but there's really a big range of people in the middle that there's actually nothing in this industry for them.'[250] It also raises questions about the precariousness of the sector and the necessity to work for free to start a career. Moreover, it highlights the barriers aspiring promoters have to face to become professional and the limited number of jobs that exist in the live music industry of Rotterdam. Although one of the goals of the policy vision is to give space for young talent, the problems that Raluca Baicu outlined are not explicitly addressed in the document.

Another goal of the city hall pop policy is to provide sufficient performance and maker spaces. In general, the interviewees had positive feelings about the supply and diversity of spaces and venues to perform and create music in Rotterdam.[251] However, two particular concerns have been repeatedly mentioned by the interviewees. First, Lauren Ter Horst and Merle Sibbel pointed out the gap between easily accessible entry-level small venues such as V11, Cafe De Bel or Hostel ROOM and the venues such as Rotown or BIRD, which are still categorized as small, but operate already on a much more professional level. This slows down artistic development as when those who have already improved enough to leave the entry level but have not yet developed the sufficient fan base to fill in a professional space find themselves in a vacuum with no

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[250] Raluca Baicu, in discussion with the author, May 21, 2020.
[251] Conversations with Wouter Mol, Dennis Koster

performance opportunities. Second, according to several interviewees, niche scenes are not being supported enough in Rotterdam in regards to performance spaces.[252] The touring circuits in the city for, for instance, world, noise or experimental music are limited to a handful of places, which also hinders artistic growth: 'There's a few places where you can perform, but after a while, you've played all of them, and then there's nothing more.'[253] Linda Nijboer and Steven Pieters also emphasized that although performance spaces might generally seem sufficient in the city for musicians, it is difficult for independent promoters and young bookers to organise shows as the live music sector has been commercialized and the venues cannot afford the financial risk which comes with an unestablished booker or DJ. According to Steven Pieters, the club circuit of Rotterdam has also been underserved in recent years and considering that two of the main clubs of the city are located in the Schieblock area which is going to be redeveloped soon, the whole scene seems to be in a dangerous position.

Despite the success of the Rotterdam Model and the general content with it, some organisers pointed out that the absence of an iconic middle-size venue still limits the capabilities of Rotterdam to attract international and local acts of that scale. Although Maassilo could potentially become such a place, the way it functions now with collaborative programming creates clashes in the schedule which makes it necessary to make compromises, which limits the opportunities to bring famous musicians to the city.[254] Several bookers also outlined that despite the significant progress in the last decade, the city's image as a pop-music hotspot is still not that strong and international acts prefer going to Amsterdam rather than to Rotterdam.[255] This problem is recognised in the latest policy vision as one of its main goals is to improve the city's visibility and image in the eyes of both booking agencies and the general public.[256]

There were two main features that all professional bookers interviewed cited as clear advantages of the local live music ecology: the availability of subsidies and the

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[252] Conversations with Rens De Boer, Juliana Martina
[253] Juliana Martina, in discussion with the author, April 18, 2020.
[254] Conversations with Dennis Koster, Guido Van Dieren
[255] Conversations with Dennis Koster, Steven Pieters, Guido Van Dieren
[256] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030', 26.

Rotterdam Model.[257] The latter was deemed especially important in critical situations, such as the crisis, which in spring 2020 befell on the sector in the form of the anti-COVID-19 restrictions: 'everybody try to come together and work together on finding solutions or finding strategies of how to move forward, how to work together, how to lobby together, how to present together to the government [...]. And I think that's a really strong point of the sector at this point.'[258] The collaborative nature of the live music sector in Rotterdam was also praised by the bookers for the creative opportunities it enables and for the various forms of support that venues provide to each other. The subsidies that the city hall distributes were considered essential for the sector as only with such financial support institutions like BIRD, Rotown or WORM can be sustainable. Although subsidies help develop the live music industry, such a reliance on public funding also creates the situation where the core of the local live music sector can collapse if for whatever reason the city hall decides to stop providing the money. This puts the subsidised venues in a subordinate position to the local government as to keep getting the funds they have to adjust their own agenda to that of the official cultural and pop music policies of Rotterdam. This, in turn, might limit creativity and innovation endeavours of the venues.

As this research demonstrates, however, Rotterdam city hall might have enough reasons to keep supporting its small live music venues and events as through networking at such places the projects that benefit the whole city and not only its live music sector can be born. Through the chain of encounters, which formed mainly at small venues, Dennis Koster was invited to become a programmer for the festival Duizel in Het Park, which lasted for ten years and in its final editions attracted around 10.000 visitors.[259] Such massive events contribute to the city's cultural vibrancy and are seen to improve the quality of life by providing leisure and entertainment opportunities.[260] While organising events at Hostel ROOM, Pablo Beneitez met one of the managers of the

[257] Conversations with Dennis Koster, Steven Pieters, Guido Van Dieren, Raluca Baicu
[258] Raluca Baicu, in discussion with the author, May 21, 2020.
[259] 'Rotterdams festival Duizel in het Park stopt', Entertainment Business, 13 December 2018, https://www.entertainmentbusiness.nl/live/rotterdams-festival-duizel-in-het-park-stopt/.
[260] Richards and Palmer, *Eventful Cities*.

Vocalsz foundation, which supports and guides young musicians from Rotterdam in establishing their careers. This encounter resulted in a collaboration between the hostel and the foundation which lasted two years, where Hostel ROOM regularly provided the stage for the students of Vocalsz.[261] Such projects contribute to the development of local talent, which is one of the main goals of the pop music policy of Rotterdam. Having locally bred artists can be seen as another way to enrich the city's cultural output and increase its attractiveness as a unique and vibrant place to be.

One of the most significant examples of how networking at small venues can impact the whole city is the collective of Triphouse Rotterdam founded by Steven Pieters and his partners. It was established as a result of these people belonging to the same cultural milieu and attending the same clubs. Triphouse Rotterdam in more than ten years of its history organised more than 700 concerts in Rotterdam, including big-scale events such as the Tegenstroom Festival in 2015, which attracted several thousands of visitors.[262] At the time when the clubbing scene of Rotterdam experienced a decline (the end of the 2000s - the beginning of the 2010s), the record shop that they owned became 'a central hub where everybody from the underground scene met each other' allowing for even more networking and subsequently projects to be realized.[263] Throughout the years, the collective itself consisted of more than thirty different nationalities reflecting and representing the diverse population of Rotterdam acting as a safe welcoming space for people from various cultural backgrounds. As Pieters explained, the Triphouse shop was even used as a gentrification tool being invited to run-down neighbourhoods to attract a different crowd and regenerate the area.

These examples show not only what role networking at small live music venues plays in the personal career development of music industries practitioners, but also how it contributes to the urban environment and informs the people-oriented creative city development strategy. The importance of live music for the attractiveness of the city as a place for the creative class to settle in was also mentioned by some of the interviewees.

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[261] Pablo Beneitez, in discussion with the author, April 10, 2020.
[262] 'Tegenstroom Festival', Partyflock, accessed 21 June 2020, https://partyflock.nl/party/295623:Tegenstroom-Festival, the exact number of visitors is unknown.
[263] Steven Pieters, in discussion with the author, April 29, 2020.

As Steven Pieters outlined: 'you have to have an attractive cultural climate because people don't only want to work there but they also want to enjoy, like, a good cinema, good restaurants, good clubs and bars.'[264] Guido Van Dieren also highlighted that small venues act as meeting places for everyone, not only for music industry practitioners: 'I think also people meet each other, get to know each other, they network with each other, they have fun with each other. Sometimes new ideas are born from their new collaborations.'[265] This notion goes in line with the opinion in academia that music venues act as networking spaces not only for the people from the music industries but also for professionals from other creative sectors.[266] It, in turn, only increases the importance of live music venues for the people-oriented development of creative cities.

The live music ecology of Rotterdam has mainly positive reviews from the local music industries practitioners, but it is not flawless. The interviewees outlined various problematic points which need to be taken into account by the city government when creating plans for the sector. Nonetheless, the support the city hall provides, be it conceptual in a way of such documents as 'Policy Vision Pop 2019 - 2030' or in the form of subsidies, is generally accepted and praised by the musicians and bookers of Rotterdam. The core of the sector relies heavily on public funding, which, in line with what Bourdieu suggested, creates power relations between the live music field and the political field. Moreover, within the field of culture itself, live music competes for funding with other sectors of art production. In this situation, the general prosperity the live music sector of Rotterdam enjoys (or enjoyed before the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus) depends on the development trajectory the local government chooses. Nonetheless, the city hall still has its reasons to keep supporting its live music industry as it remains one of the key elements of the cultural sector of Rotterdam and makes significant contributions to the city's cultural output, its attractiveness and its development as a people-oriented creative centre.

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[264] Steven Pieters, in discussion with the author, April 29, 2020
[265] Guido Van Dieren, in discussion with the author, May 27, 2020.
[266] Lobato, 'Gentrification, Cultural Policy and Live Music in Melbourne'; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, '"A Very Complicated Version of Freedom"'.

Conclusion

Small live music venues and events have been studied by various scholars and their importance for local live music ecologies has been proven in academia over the course of the last twenty years. This research attempted to add to this body of literature by investigating whether such venues and events act as places of social capital formation for music industries practitioners, how the networking functions in this environment and how important social capital is for musicians and bookers to advance their careers. Based on the case study of Rotterdam, it is possible to conclude that small venues represent an important part of urban live music ecologies not only as training grounds for beginners but also as places of networking and milieu development. The process and the outcomes of the formation of social capital at such venues, however, differ for musicians and event organisers. Due to the higher hierarchical position of bookers, it appeared to be easier for them to generate and mobilize social capital than for musicians, who still mainly rely on self-promotion to move further with their careers. Nonetheless, as this study has demonstrated, small music venues and events act as important networking nodes for both groups. Through such networking musicians and bookers are able to generate social capital which they, in turn, can later convert into certain economic benefits be it through new employment opportunities, being booked for another show, creating new collaborative projects, etc.

The milieus and networks which are formed at small venues are considered to be beneficial not only for the practitioners themselves and not only for the live music sector but for the city as a whole. They allow for more encounters and collaborations to happen which results in more events and projects being organised. It enriches the cultural output of the city and contributes to the people-oriented development policies inspired by the thinking of Richard Florida. This study identified several prominent examples of how networking at small venues and events can lead to projects significant on the urban scale. Among others, such examples include the collective of Triphouse Rotterdam,

which became one of the central elements of the city's club scene at the end of the 2000s - the beginning of the 2010s and the collaboration between Hostel ROOM and the Vocalsz foundation, which allowed many upcoming musicians to gain stage experience and develop their talent. Such projects can act as evidence on the role small venues and events play in the development of cities, which in turn can convince more local governments around the world to support this vulnerable segment of the live music industry.

In Rotterdam the pop music sector already enjoys special attention: it is regulated through the city-wide policy vision and is subsidized by the city hall. It is also a part of the effort of Rotterdam to become a more vibrant and attractive creative city. Both the musicians and bookers interviewed had mainly positive reviews of the local live music ecology and praised the way the city government expresses its support for the sector. However, such an involvement of the local authorities sharpens the power relations which exist between the field of cultural production and the political field. Live music venues, in this case, rely on public funding for survival. They are required to tweak their programmes to fit the criteria to become eligible for the subsidies, which might limit their creative freedom. Nonetheless, considering that nowadays many small venues around the world are closing their doors due to the pressures of gentrification and other reasons, governmental support might be critical not only for the survival of certain venues but for keeping the sufficient supply of live music in cities in general. Moreover, with the crisis that the live music sector has been experiencing in the spring and summer of 2020, caused by the anti-COVID-19 lockdown, venues might be even more in need of public support.

This crisis has not been extensively addressed in this research, however, its influence on the future of the live music industry should not be overlooked. Due to many countries banning large public gatherings and limiting international travels, big festivals, which typically dominate the live music sector in summers, had to be cancelled in 2020. This creates a situation when small music venues and events might become the centre of the whole industry and the main supplier of live music in the post-lockdown world. This might

help small venues to recover, provided that they have survived the initial crisis. The uncertainty over cross-border movement also leads to an unclear future regarding touring for artists and venues alike. Additionally, with the closure of small music venues, the structure of networking in the industry might change. If more interactions would take place online, the chance of meeting random people would diminish and interactions would become more deliberate. It can lead to a more rigid structure of networking and potentially create a more exclusive milieu as outsiders would lose the chance of randomly getting accepted into the circle.

The lockdown has also impacted the research itself which led to certain limitations for this study. According to the initial plan, more occupations within the live music sector, such as sound engineers, poster designers, volunteer coordinators, etc. were supposed to be included in the sample. Due to the difficulties in identifying people of these professions in these circumstances, the selection was limited to musicians and bookers. It allowed for a more focused and thorough study of these two groups, however, for this reason of a narrow sample, the results of this research cannot be extrapolated to the live music industry as a whole. Originally, the number of interviews was also planned to be higher, amounting to twenty instead of thirteen. However, the uncertainty and turbulence brought upon the live music sector by the lockdown resulted in a high non-response rate and the unwillingness of potential respondents to participate. Nonetheless, the sample of thirteen interviews was sufficient for completing the research and allowed for comprehensive coverage of different segments of the live music industry of Rotterdam. Due to the venues being closed during the research period, it was also impossible to observe the mechanisms of networking in real time. It could have contributed to the understanding of the dynamics of the networking process among musicians and bookers separately and between these two groups, providing more insights into the nature of power relations in the live music sector. One of the main limitations of this research, however, does not result from the anti-COVID-19 lockdown. Due to the nature of the Rotterdam Model, which is centred around networks of people rather than around venues, the results of this study, especially those concerning event organisers, can not

be universally applied. Networking mechanisms and dynamics might differ in cities with a less collaborative approach to live music.

This calls for further research on the topic of networking in the live music sector, potentially, using the method of comparative analysis, investigating cities with different industry models. Avenues for future studies can also include more analysis concentrated on the features of real-time networking once the lockdown restrictions would be lifted and such a study would become possible. Online networking tools, which might gain more importance for gaining social capital in the post-lockdown circumstances, and their role within the live music sector can be another topic for investigation. Entry points and possible exclusivity of the networks in the live music sector also constitute a promising research track. A study on the size of the network within the industry required for the healthy functioning of the urban live music ecology can provide insights into the potential number of full-time positions in the sector. Many interviewees mentioned the precariousness of the industry where one is required to play or work for free before starting getting paid for the job. This problem can also be investigated and documented. To address the limitations of this particular study a more in-depth investigation of each music scene is required to understand the differences in the mechanisms of social capital formation and its importance across genres. Other participants of the live music ecology such as stage staff, volunteers and others should be included in the study sample as well. Additionally, the number of interviewees can be increased to allow to truly generalize the findings of the study as this research was limited in time and scope as a master thesis effort.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Small live music venues in Rotterdam

The following is a brief description of the most prominent small live music venues in Rotterdam and other venues mentioned in this study. It is mostly based on the information provided in the 'Policy Vision Pop 2019-2030' document and official websites/social media pages of the venues.[267] All the descriptions capture the situation these venues were in before the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus. As of June 2020, none of the venues described here filed for bankruptcy, which makes it possible to assume that once it is allowed, they will return to their usual live music schedule.

Baroeg

Baroeg is a venue with more than 37 years of history, located in the south of Rotterdam with the capacity of 350 people. It mainly programs hard alternative music, including rock, metal, hardcore, punk, psychobilly, electro and industrial. The team of the venue also organises a free festival 'Baroeg Open Air', which attracts up to 10.000 visitors yearly.[268] Baroeg receives subsidies from the city hall and is considered to be one of the core venues in Rotterdam.

BIRD

BIRD was founded in 2011 near the former Hofplein station in the city centre of Rotterdam. It fits around 350 people and programs music associated with black culture, chiefly jazz, hiphop, funk, soul and related electronic music. It is one of the core subsidised venues of Rotterdam. Among the interviewees there were 3 bookers affiliated with BIRD: Raluca Baicu, Guido Van Dieren and Steven Pieters.

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[267] Afdeling Cultuur, 'Beleidsvisie Pop 2019-2030'.
[268] Yvette Hogenelst, 'Recordaantal bezoekers Baroeg Open Air', AD.nl, 16 September 2018, https://www.ad.nl/rotterdam/recordaantal-bezoekers-baroeg-open-air~a3acac0e/.

Café De Bel

Café De Bel is a small bar and venue in the north of Rotterdam, mainly programming jazz, blues and rock-based music with weekly jam sessions and open mic nights.[269]

De Riddert

Proeflokaal de Riddert claims to be the smallest pop music venue of Rotterdam. It is located in the area of the central station.[270]

Faas

Proeflokaal Faas is a beer bar in the north of Rotterdam with regular live music shows, including open mic nights.[271]

Grounds

The venue Grounds was founded in 2006 as WMDC (World Music and Dance Centre) in the Delfshaven district of Rotterdam. With the capacity of 200 it is aimed at programming world music, such as jazz, latin, hip hop and other genres reflecting the cross-cultural nature of the city. Grounds also provides a stage for Codarts (local conservatory) and SKVR (Stichting Kunstzinnige Vorming Rotterdam, Artistic Training Foundation Rotterdam, translation by author). Grounds is one of the core subsidised venues of Rotterdam.

Hostel ROOM

ROOM is a hostel in the area of the Erasmus Bridge on the northern side of the river, which regularly hosts live music and organises monthly open mic nights.[272] Pablo Beneitez who books bands for ROOM was interviewed for this study.

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[269] Rotterdam Tourist Information, 'Café de Bel', Rotterdam Tourist Information, accessed 23 June 2020, https://rotterdam.info/locaties/cafe-de-bel/.
[270] De Riddert, 'De Riddert (About)', Facebook, accessed 23 June 2020, https://www.facebook.com/DeRiddert/about/?ref=page_internal.
[271] Proeflokaal Faas, 'Proeflokaal Faas (About)', Facebook, accessed 23 June 2020, https://www.facebook.com/proeflokaalfaas/about/?ref=page_internal.
[272] 'Hostel ROOM Rotterdam - Bar', Hostel ROOM, accessed 23 June 2020, https://roomrotterdam.nl/bar.

Kopi Soesoe

Kopi Soesoe is a small cafe in the Katendrecht area of Rotterdam that regularly programs live music. It is one of the smallest venues in the city. They are not limited to certain genres and they emphasize the importance of the live music experience 'because everyone here comes to really listen to the music.'[273]

Poortgebouw

Poortgebouw is a living community that started as a squat in 1980. The building is located in the Kop Van Zuid area of the city. It was built in 1879 and before it was squatted, it accommodated various organisations including the Rotterdamse Havenbedrijf. The events in Poortgebouw are mostly organised by the members of the community, i.e. by the residents of the building. The venue fits around 50 people and does not have a specific music genre focus but the programming is mainly concentrated around niche genres, such as noise or experimental. Poortgebouw also acts as a responsible member of the society regularly organising such events as communal kitchen, clotheswap, etc.[274] Rend De Boer and Linda Nijboer who put on shows in Poortgebouw were interviewed for this study.

Rotown

Rotown is a venue in the city centre of Rotterdam with the capacity of 250 visitors, which opened in 1987. Being one of the core subsidised venues, Rotown is one of the main players in the Rotterdam Model organising events all over the city, including Maassilo, V11, other locations and various festivals. It is focused mostly on mainstream rock music. One of the interviewees, Dennis Koster, is currently an employer at Rotown.

Roodkapje

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[273] 'Espressobar and music stage', Kopi Soesoe, accessed 23 June 2020, https://www.kopisoesoe.com.
[274] Romain Pomian, 'The Short Story', *Poortgebouw Rotterdam* (blog), 9 December 2018, https://poortgebouw.org/2018/12/09/the-short-story/; Conversations with Linda Nijboer, Rens De Boer.

Roodkapje is a platform that seeks to combine arts, music and food and provides space for innovation in these creative sectors. The music programming of the venue, which fits 120 people and located in the Schieblock area, is centred around experimental music.[275]

V11

V11 is a restaurant and a music venue located in the Leuvehaven area of the city. The special feature of this space is that it does not reside in a building but instead it is a boat with the capacity of around 70 visitors. The music programming of the venue is not limited to specific genres.

Vibes

Vibes is a small club in the centre of Rotterdam, which occasionally hosts live music shows.[276]

WORM

WORM is an institution in Rotterdam that is aimed at promoting avant-garde culture. It is located in the city centre and fits 375 people. There is no genre focus in the music programming of the venue. WORM is one of the core subsidised venues of Rotterdam and a good example of the Rotterdam Model as this space is open for other venues and independent programmers to organise their own shows. Music is only one of the areas WORM works in, which otherwise include film, art projects, festivals, talk shows, etc.

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[275] 'About', Roodkapje, accessed 23 June 2020, https://roodkapje.org/about.
[276] 'Uitgaan in de gezelligste Club van Rotterdam', Club Vibes Rotterdam, accessed 23 June 2020, https://clubvibes.nl/club/.

Appendix 2: The list of approximate questions for the interviews

2 separate lists of questions for musicians and bookers were created in order to account for potential differences in their career development. The broad topics covered, however, remained the same for both sides. These questions were used as general guidelines as the interviews followed the semi-structured approach and the questions were adjusted during the conversations. One more list of questions was created for the interview with Martijn Mulder on the development of the live music ecology of Rotterdam.

Bookers

Broad topics	Preliminary questions
Current situation	Can you tell me about your current work in the music sector?
First job/contact with the music industry in general and in Rotterdam	Why did you first decide to try out working in music? How did you find out about the first opportunity? What position did you try yourself in? Who did you reach out to in order to get the first job?
Further career development	What kind of jobs in the music industry did you get afterwards? How did you get them? What do you think is the most important way of finding new jobs in general in the music industry for a position like yours?
Networking	How important were the connections for you to find jobs? How important do you estimate them to be now to do your work? Can you tell me about some projects or events that came to life thanks to you meeting someone at an event and later on starting working together?

Local live music ecology	How would you fit the events you organise into Rotterdam's music scene? What is, in your view, the specificity of the live music industry in Rotterdam? Where do you see its strengths and weaknesses? Is there something you personally would like to see being done with the music environment in the city?
Small venues of Rotterdam	What role do small venues play in Rotterdam's live music environment? What are the most prominent venues of small size in the city? Does any collaboration happen among small venues?
Rotterdam's cultural sector	Do you collaborate/receive support from the municipality in any way? Do you know about the pop music strategy of Rotterdam? What role do you think such cultural activities as live music play in the city in general?
Recap	Questions adjusted for each interview

Musicians

Broad topics	Preliminary questions
Current situation	Can you tell me about your current work as a musician?
First job/contact with the music industry in general and in Rotterdam	How did you decide to become a musician/play music? When was your first professional (paid) gig (excluding school or uni performances)? Who did you reach out to in order to get your first gig?
Further career development	How did you get your further gigs afterwards? What do you think is the most important way of finding new gigs for upcoming musicians in Rotterdam in general?

Networking	How important were the connections for finding new gigs/being booked/advance with the career? How important do you estimate them to be now for your career? Can you tell me about some projects or events that came to life thanks to you meeting someone and later on starting working together?
Local live music ecology	How would you fit your music into Rotterdam's music scene? What is, in your view, the specificity of the live music industry in Rotterdam? Where do you see its strengths and weaknesses? Is there something you personally would like to see being done with the music environment in the city?
Small venues of Rotterdam	What role do small venues play in Rotterdam's live music environment? What are the most prominent venues of small size in the city?
Rotterdam's cultural sector	Do you know if the city hall or other organisations support young musicians in Rotterdam? What role do you think such cultural activities as live music play in the city in general?
Recap	Questions adjusted for each interview

Local live music ecology expert

Broad topics	Preliminary questions
The place of music in the cultural sector of Rotterdam	Can you tell me about the attitude of the local municipality towards culture in the context of urban development? Can you highlight certain cultural development strategies? How does music fit into the whole narrative of cultural development in Rotterdam? How much attention is given to music in the city compared to other cultural sectors?

Official cultural and pop music policies in Rotterdam	Can you tell me about the approach of the city hall towards music-related policies in Rotterdam? Is the impact of such policies felt in the city?
Live music industry of Rotterdam	How did Rotterdam's live music sector change over the course of the past 15 years? What were the major events/pivotal moments in this period? What are the major challenges that the music sector faced in Rotterdam in the last 15 years? How did the city cope with such problems? What are the main challenges nowadays?
Advantages and disadvantages of the local music ecology of Rotterdam	What are the strengths and weaknesses of the live music environment of Rotterdam? What makes it different from other places in the Netherlands? What is lacking in the city's live music environment?
Small venues of Rotterdam	What place within this broader picture of live music ecology in Rotterdam do small venues occupy? What do you understand by small venues? Has this place changed in the last 15 years? How do you estimate their importance/contribution to the live music ecology of the city? What are the most prominent small music venues in Rotterdam?
Recap	Reiteration of the most important points and clarification of all information that might have remained unclear

Appendix 3: Short description of the interviewees

Bookers

Name	Interview date	Short biography
Dennis Koster	24/03/20	*Currently*: advancer at Rotown, location manager at De Oerol, independent promoter *Previously*: programmer for Duizel in het Park, De Unie, Erasmus Paviljoen, location manager at De Doelen for International Film Festival Rotterdam, production team member at WATT and Motel Mozaique Professional promoter
Pablo Beneitez	10/04/20	*Currently*: venue scout for Sofar Sounds, booker at Hostel ROOM Enthusiastic promoter
Rens De Boer	17/04/20	*Currently*: booker at Poortgebouw, bass player at Shunyata *Previously*: volunteer at ACU (Utrecht) Enthusiastic promoter
Steven Pieters	29/04/20	*Currently*: owner and founder at labels Triphouse Rotterdam and Instrument of Change, booker at BIRD, independent promoter, live DJ, radio DJ, member of the Rotterdam Festivals advisory board, marketing manager for various festivals including Jazz Night Express, independent promoter *Previously*: promoter at Club Rotterdam and WATT and various other positions Professional promoter
Linda Nijboer	13/05/20	*Currently*: booker at Poortgebouw, independent promoter, musician *Previously*: collaborator at Textuur, intern at WORM, booker at Eureka (Zwolle) Enthusiastic promoter

Raluca Baicu	21/05/20	*Currently*: programmer at BIRD and North Sea Round Town, co-founder and manager of Romanian Jazz International, managing director at LiveLoop *Previously*: programme coordinator at Jazz International Rotterdam, booking and management for Europalia Arts Festival 2019 - 2020, journalist and communication manager at Jazz Compass, professional jazz musician, various other positions Professional promoter
Guido Van Dieren	27/05/20	*Currently*: programmer at De Geheime Winter Tuin, Motel Mozaique, Podium De Flux (Zaandam), artistic leader at BIRD, independent promoter *Previously*: director of the Live at North Sea Jazz Club foundation, booker at North Sea Jazz Club, radio host at VPRO, DJ Professional promoter

Musicians

Name	Interview date	Short biography
Merle Sibbel	12/04/20	Singer-songwriter at MONE, formerly known as Moan (acoustic). Currently resides in Berlin, however, spent 4 years in Rotterdam, where she decided to become a musician.
Juliana Martina	18/04/20	Singer-songwriter at Juliana Martina (Latin music, jazz), vocal and music coach, formerly singer in various bands
Lauren Ter Horst	20/04/20	Singer-songwriter at Lyka Eyrie (solo project, pop, indie-pop), marketing specialist at mark that thing, North Sea Round Town, Doorgedraaid, Révolt Evenementen, Annabel. Formerly singer-songwriter at Moonday, participant of the season 4 of the Voice of Holland (2013)
Willem-Pieter Zoutendijk	27/04/20	Musician at KTKT (electronic music), former member and the founder of Standup '69 (rock, alternative), former bassist and booker for Tsunami Rider

| Wouter Mol | 11/05/20* | Guitarist, singer at Out Of Skin, music therapist, formerly guitarist and singer at Mol, winner of De Grote Prijs van Rotterdam 2016 in the category of singer-songwriter *This interview was conducted in-person by the request of the interviewee. |

Local live music ecology expert

Name	Interview date	Short biography
Martijn Mulder	15/04/20	PhD candidate within the Poplive research project, researcher at Kenniscentrum Creating 010 at Hogeschool Rotterdam, researcher and professor at Willem de Kooning Academy specialising on leisure economy and urban studies

Appendix 4: Sofar Sounds

Sofar Sounds is an international organisation currently present in more than 400 cities around the world.[277] These events have several important traits that distinguish them from a live music venue or any other concert of such sort. Sofar Sounds concerts are meant to be held in a quiet and intimate atmosphere, which implies a limited number of guests (usually around 50). The location of Sofar Sounds events changes every time and often the concerts happen in places which are not designed to host live music (barbershops, private living rooms, art studios, co-working spaces, etc.). It does not allow to classify Sofar Sounds as a music venue, but instead, it can be named a concert series. The line-up generally consists of 3 musicians, who usually perform stripped back or unplugged versions of their material and whose names are kept secret from the audience until the moment they arrive at the venue. Sofar Sounds shows are held 1-2 times per month in most of the cities, but in such big centres like London, Madrid, Chicago or New York City, concerts are organised daily or every 2-3 days. Most of the Sofar Sounds cities, including Rotterdam, are volunteer-run, relying solely on organizers' passion and donations by the guests as the entrance is free and the events are pay-what-you-want. This is an important feature as such a volunteer-based structure reduces entry barriers for aspiring music industries practitioners and also influences the motivation why certain individuals join the organisation with no expectations of monetary remuneration. In the US, the UK and Norway, however, Sofar Sounds recently shifted to the policy of commercialization, moving to the paid tickets scheme and a more rigid organizational structure.

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[277] 'Main Page', Sofar Sounds, accessed 12 January 2020, https://www.sofarsounds.com/.