City brand- and artistic community assemblage

(Re)assembling the city: differences and similarities in Rotterdam city branding and the arts community

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Master's Thesis
July 2014

Abstract

This paper draws on Actor-Network (ANT) theory to research the relationship between the official city branding and local artistic practices of Rotterdam. ANT holds the view that the empirical world exists of all interaction between human or non-human actors that together create a network that is the assemblage of the social. The mixed method approach of qualitative document analysis, participant observations and interviews led to the following findings. Rotterdam's branding practices exist of networks that that construct society through elements of branding theory, brand constructs, brand audiences with a specific role for citizen as a stakeholder in the city. Though more than that this leads to an integration of the worldviews of the city as a brand and the city as assembled by the local arts and culture community, the business oriented and economy focused approach of the city as a brand is perpetuated. Contrastingly, the arts and culture community of Rotterdam assemble the city through artistic endeavours and social networks that lead to the reinforcement of emotive relations to place in the form of place attachment and place identity. This paper concludes by stating that the two assemblages overlap only in limited ways in which they understand and produce the city, but they come together with a similar sense of place of Rotterdam. By shedding light on the way city branders and artistic communities interpret and 'produce' the city, these groups of people are better understood. The value here lies in bringing the different groups of citizens closer together for the benefit of the city as a whole.

Keywords

City branding, arts, culture, community, Rotterdam, assemblage, Actor-Network theory

Contents

1. Introduction

Background

2014 promises to be a good year for Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Ranking tenth place in the New York Times travel guide for 2014, the city has gained a lot of attention globally. The caption mentions the city's history, the port and the unique architecture as its main attractions to visit (Mala, 2014). Another listing comes from the Rough Guides, once more referring to the port city as a place to visit for its latest architectural highlights. Despite this acclaim, Rotterdam is not part of the city ranking within the renowned Anholt-GfK Roper City Brand Index, even though this index measures the image and the reputation of cities based on various economical, political and social factors. According to the Anholt Index, Rotterdam has yet to rise to global world-city level. Charles Landry, an urban planner, developed The Creative Cities Index where the innovation culture of cities is assessed. Again, Rotterdam is excluded from this list that features about seventeen cities over the world. These city rankings have become a popular tool to measure the cities' competitiveness on a worldwide scale. This thesis focuses on how Rotterdam has been 'produced' as a city, connecting and noting the differences between 'official' narratives or branding of the city and those of more local artistic communities.

Globalization has led to a global competition on resources, ideas, people and attention between cities, regions and countries (Giannopoulos, Piha &Avlonitis, 2011; Kavaratzis, 2005). Research on how to improve the competitive position of a place has mushroomed in the last years. This has led to an extensive body of literature on 'place branding' and 'city marketing' (Anholt, 2006; Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker, 2010; Hankinson, 2001; Kavaratzis, 2005). Lucarelli and Berg (2011) in their review of the academic city branding domain, indicate that within the last twenty years studies on city branding have increased rapidly into a multi-disciplined area. Place branding literature is for example researched from an international relations perspective, urban planning and tourism and vacation studies, making it a cross-disciplinary practice (Hankinson, 2004; Kaneva, 2011). Amongst this literature, agreement is found between the different perspectives of branding as the practice of performing a favourable image of a place that leads to the audiences' desire for a given place to be 'consumed' (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009).

City branding is not considered to be an easy task as the complexity of the place brand is much greater than that of a traditional product (Kavaratzis, 2005; Anholt, 2006;

Henderson, 2007; Zhang & Zhao, 2009). The main difficulty that city brand managers and strategists face, relates the dynamic and ever changing nature of a city and the multiple stakeholders involved in 'consuming' the city. It has been found challenging to create an encompassing place branding model or theory that effectively captures all opinions, views and realities of a city that is held by the diverse stakeholders of the place (Rainisto, 2003; Hankinson, 2004; Kavaratzis, 2005). As such, branding practices perform only a selective view of the city as seen by brand managers and strategists as this study will research.

Purpose of the study

This research aims to address this branding challenge by adopting Actor-network theory (ANT) as research approach. The roots of the ANT school of thought were set by Gabriel Tarde in the 20th century (Dudhwala, n.d.). He argued that research should analyse the different ways in which 'actors' collaboratively take part in a network that produces a view of the social world. These actors evolve in a network that arises through the connection of these actors that "draw up a picture of the world" (Tarde, 1999, as cited in Joyce, 2002, p.125). ANT attempts to reveal the relations between the different actors within a network so that social complexities are more easily analysed as to why and how they exists (Cressman, 2009).

ANT started off as an approach to disentangle the relationship between science and technology (Cressman, 2009). Bruno Latour is considered one of the main advocates for ANT as sociological school of thought. Latour (2005) builds on studies of sociology by Emile Durkheim and Auguste Comte but advances the study of the 'social' by not differentiating between human and non-human (technical) actors within networks. John Law and Michael Callon have also broadened the research field in which ANT is adapted as framework (Cressman, 2009). Both these researchers have demonstrated that ANT is applicable to the analysis of diverse social phenomena, ranging from Callon's (1999) analyses 'the market' and Law and Callon's (1988) study of aircraft projects (Dudhwala, n.d.).

Actor-Network Theory has been most widely and broadly applies to studies of society in relation to technology (Harman, 2009), something only minimally explored here. However, ANT's inclusive relational approach fits well in the purposes of this research.

ANT's strengths lie in its ability to describe phenomena through its underlying relations as emergent practices, which is valuable in relation to this research (Callon, 1999). ANT does not discriminate between human and 'non-human' artefacts, forming a holistic approach that suits this paper well. In order to manage the scope of the network analysis, the networks are bounded by the literature framework presented and the methodological approach of this paper as is explained below.

In applying an ANT approach to cities and city branding, the city is understood as a brand assemblage. In this way, city branding is understood as one of the many ways in which actors work together to create a view of the social world – in this case, a view of the 'city'. In its application to the analysis of city branding practices, all the stakeholders of the city account as actors within the city branding network assemblage. This means that the city as a 'brand' is comprised of all the activities and interactions and practices of stakeholders, media and theory that serve to collaboratively brand the place (Lury, 2009). The city as 'assemblage' emerges from all the elements that reflect the way the city is seen and understood by a group of actors in a city. This research will show that Rotterdam's brand assemblage is made up out of, amongst other things, the official city 'brand' identity, capturing the city as: "a young, international city along the water with a down to earth, driven mentality city'' (Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam, 2008, p.19).

ANT, as an analytical tool (Figueiredo, 2008), allows for the assumption that different actor collectives assemble the city in different ways. This leads to a multitude of city assemblages. The city as an assemblage-framework then sees citizens as stakeholders in the city, actors that are as much a part of the city assemblage as official brand strategists and managers. This point is crucial for understanding the role of local artistic communities in the production of, in this case, Rotterdam as a 'city'.

Study focus

As such, the focus of this research is on Rotterdam as an assemblage, both in relation to the city as a brand and the city as understood by the local arts and culture community. The latter group represent a different set of 'stakeholders' in the city that by living and working in Rotterdam are invested in the city. The role of the local arts and culture community in cities have in past research been widely connected to the regeneration of neighbourhoods or to the

social function they serve within the city (Currid, 2007; Ginsburgh, 2012; Florida, 2003; Kay, 2000). The dynamics of arts communities more generally have been studied by Howard Becker (1982) but the connection of the artists as valuable a valuable community in the city in relation to city branding has not been academically addressed.

The ANT approach of this thesis allows us to more readily see how the inhabitants of the city are crucial actors that produce their own understanding the city as assemblage. The city is comprised of all the sense making, city 'making' or city 'producing' processes by citizens of the city out of which the city as an assemblage emerges (DeLanda, 2006; Latour, 2005). It concerns the way citizens assemble their world according to their understanding of it. These citizens are critical actors that live in the city and are constantly producing their own city perspective through their actions and dialogue (Kavaratzis, 2012). That the local articulation of a city can differ from the official brand production is illustrated by the following example: the city hall prefers to refer to Rotterdam in the media as "Manhattan on the Maas" whereas locals alternately identify with Rotterdam as "Roffa" or "Rotjeknor". This difference in jargon when citizens refer to Rotterdam illustrates that the local articulation of a city can differ from the official brand production. Though branding strategies aim to include citizens as stakeholders within the brand development, this research finds that the city is understood by brand producers quite differently from specifically the way local arts and culture community assemble the city.

By following an ANT approach in examining the workings of Rotterdam Partners – the city marketing organization of Rotterdam – and a local arts and culture community, ANT offers an analysis on the branding practices beyond existing branding literature. ANT allows for a rich description of the social world as assembled by city branders and reveals the (in this case limited) connections this world has with one of the local city assemblages. The challenge that the more 'official' representatives of the city face in incorporating the different views that exists of a city can be more richly described through an ANT approach as it assists in unveiling the actor-networks and their relations that 'make up' the city. Theoretically, this research brings together the increasing attention that is placed on the involvement of citizens in city branding processes by practitioners, and the existing literature on the role of creative residents in a city. Branding literature emphasizes collaborations between the branding process and citizens, but the interplay between official branding processes and local artistic practices has been underdeveloped (Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker, 2010; Florida, 2008; Kavaratzis, 2003; Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). In response to this, this

paper aims to look at the official city brand assemblage in relation to local artistic city making through assemblage by answers the following question: "what is the relationship between official city branding and the local artistic practices of Rotterdam?". For this, an understanding needs to be created about the way people assemble the city they live in and the way this relates to the way city brandings aim to promote the city.

Through this research, a deeper understanding of the branding process is created and light is shed on the different elements that make Rotterdam as a 'brand' come together. The first subquestion "How is Rotterdam city brand assemblage practiced?" focuses specifically on the work of Rotterdam Partners. Rotterdam Partners, the city marketing office is responsible for the official city branding strategy and management. The findings from this research in relation to this question could serve a practical relevance for Rotterdam's official branding strategy as brand values are matched and evaluated against local understandings of the city.

The local city making process is evaluated by focussing on the local arts and culture community in Rotterdam. By answering the question: "How are local artistic practices connected to the city as an assemblage?", the city as it is assembled by the local arts and culture community is uncovered. Rotterdam's cultural community is perceived to centre around the Witte de With street: as this district forms the art-axis of the city (Hitters & Richards, 2002, Richards & Wilson, 2004). Most of Rotterdam's galleries and museums are located along these streets. By placing the focus on artists within this process, the role of the creative industry as important stakeholder for Rotterdam Partners can be mapped. Furthermore, the focus on citizen assemblage of a city in this research is connected to the interaction of actors during a cultural event. Events and festivals are common phenomena to research within the focus of a city, as literature has shown (Hankinson, 2001; Henderson, 2007; Zhang & Zhao, 2009; Karvelyte & Chiu's, 2011). The role of cultural events in city branding strategies has been researched by Richards and Wilson (2004) when they investigated Rotterdam as cultural capital of Europe. Nonetheless, the city as assemblage from the artistic community's view, has not yet been researched.

By answering these two research sub-questions, the link between the city assemblage from the official branding and local artistic practices will become clear. The context in which this research is conducted is shaped in chapter two when city branding as captured in academic research is discussed. The focus lies on relational and process based city branding theories as they complement the ANT approach that in itself focuses on dynamic network

actions (DeLana, 2006). Arts and culture communities are understood through the theory that outlines the workings of this community. In the methods section of this paper, the ANT approach is further elaborated. Chapter three explains why this research relies on expert interviews, participant observation and document analysis as data collection methods, arguing that these methods are in line with ANT. Rotterdam Partners's perspective is researched on the city as a brand assemblage and the artistic city assemblage is studied during a monthly local art & culture event called "Derde Dinsdag". The findings are discussed in chapter four and reveal that both perspectives on the city signify city assemblages with similar articulations of Rotterdam's 'sense of place'. However in the expression and implementations of the official city brand, the city is produced as an economical entity whereas the local artistic community understands the city as a stage for human interactions and emotions. The approach that ANT offers enables us to see these two city making processes as separate sets of practices and in relation to each other.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. What is a city?

Different definitions exist on what a city is or of what a city is composed. Glaeser (1998) in his essay on the future of cities for example states that "a city is just a dense agglomeration of people and firms" (p.140). With this conceptual interpretation he takes on a pragmatic point of view where a city is little more than a geographical clustering of groups of people. Jewson and MacGregor (1997) reflect on the city in relation to economic competitiveness on regional and national levels. Their perspective is influenced by Fordism and Europe's postwar urbanism that resulting in working cities (Jewson & MacGregor, 1997). Anthony Pascal did not believe that these cities would remain for long as his research from 1987 advocated that cities would dissolve because electronic networks would take over the physical arrangements of a city. His conception of a city as a place only for "face-to-face interactions", is rather narrow (Pascal, 1987, as cited in Amin & Graham, 1997). Though technology does influence city life and the way people interact with each other, social life still draws people together creating a sense of place. A human and networked centred definition of a city was formed already in the early 20th century stating that "the city is above all else a theatre of social action" (Mumford, 1937, p.92). Mumford's (1937) ideas as an historian and academic are still influencing today's urban planning theorists. According to Mumford (1937) a city is multidimensional and a continuously changing stage for all actors to perform their acts. Florida (2003) agrees when he states that a city exists of communities, connected to each other and to the place by social capital and interaction.

Each place or city has its unique social, cultural and economic facets that are situational for that specific place (Pratt, 2011). A structured overview of the city's attributes according to Mumford (1937) is to see the city as a geographical space, as economic activities, as an institutional process and as a place for social life (Mumford, 1937, p. 94). The geographical, economical and social dimensions of a city are parallel to the ideas of modern day urban planner theorist Landry (2006). He identified the city as an interconnected web of four main facets: economic, social, a designed environment, and natural environment (p.6). Additionally, policies and governance regulate the workings of these different dimensions of a city (Landry, 2006). Different industries exist in close proximity next to each other and close to people, making the city an effective place for economic workings (O'Flaherty, 2005). In the 20th century, the role of cities as a place of economic processes

and systems economy holder became especially apparent with the rise of city business centres (Sassen, 2005). The city can also be analysed based on its geographical space. Jensen (2007) analyses the city as a physical environment that can be natural or artificially planned and built. The spatial attributes of a city that exist of concrete indicators of a certain space are also recognized by Jensen (2007) as the ''signs in place'' (p.218). All these specific elements of a city influence the sense of place, a feeling that people indicate a city with. People make sense of their environment and their relationship with the environment by developing a place image that forms a city identity (Govers & Go, 2009). These manifestations of the city are then targeted when branding strategies are applied on a city (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Pratt, 2011).

Ultimately, the city can be seen as a mosaic of people, constructs, and infrastructure among other things and the city is comprised of the interactions among these elements. As Actor-Network theory sees it, the different perspectives on the city whether social or economical, are understood to be different ways of analysing the city. These analyses of the city together with the different elements that make up the city from its location, buildings to the discourses that take place within the city, are seen against the backdrop of Actor Network theory (ANT) the underpinning theory of this research. ANT forms the lens through which the city is seen as this mosaic where all the features of a city together form the social world that is being researched (Law, Ruppert & Savage, 2011). Latour (2005) has labelled this way of understanding all that comprises social life as 'assemblage'. 'The city as assemblage' attempts to capture the network of relations that is involved in the 'making' or 'production' of the city. This city making or city producing in the terms of ANT should be understood as the interrelated parts within a city that emerge to become what the city is as a whole (DeLanda, 2006). These parts, actors called in ANT, range from events to people to communication to media and more, that make up the environment according to the perspective of a collective of actors (Latour, 2005). From ANT's perspective, the different theoretical definitions of the city all allow a way of understanding of how the city is constructed and made understandable through every day practices. The different perspectives on the city are understood as ways diverse groups of actors assemble the city. Multiple assemblages produced by various stakeholders all connect to the city through their interactions that take place in the city (Latour, 2005). This research focuses on two specific city assemblages from the official branding approach and a local artistic way to view the city. Previous theory on city branding and arts and culture communities have framed

particular ways of understanding the practices that take place within branding and within artistic communities and will be discussed in the following chapter.

2.2. Place branding in perspective

Along the lines of Actor-Network theory (ANT), branding is seen as a practice that leads to a way of understanding the city through the eyes of the brand strategists and managers. Literature on city branding adds to the way the city is seen as brand by Rotterdam's brand producers and is an important actor within this research to elaborate on.

The foundation of place 'branding' lies in the field of marketing and can be traced back into the 20th century. Traditional marketing theory was aimed at the promotion of solely products when Kotler and Levy (1969) suggested a broadening of this definition. They argued that marketing could be applied on different, less tangible subjects such as services, people, organizations or even ideas. Parallel to this development, the application of marketing and branding jargon and practices also arose out of demand by the city makers themselves (Braun, 2008). Kavaratzis (2005) stated that, starting in Europe, city planners and government officials saw the need to treat cities more like businesses to improve local economic development. Ashworth and Voogd (1988) mention the importance of distinguishing a city to maintain its competitive position on the market. Taking this business focused perspective meant that the activities within the city are seen to revolve around supply and demand, a production and consumption tension. Not only the buildings or services that a city offers can be marketed as a product, the city itself also can be acknowledged as a product (van den Berg and Braun, 1999).

Following this line of thought, marketing and branding practices were seen as applicable to the performance of a city. All the activities and interactions within the city as well as the city itself could be seen as a holistic product that could be branded. This management of the city as 'brand' then involves measurements on a financial, organizational, promotional and spatio-function dimension (Ashworth and Voogd, 1988). Depending on the focus of the city marketing, the economical, sociological or spatial workings of the city can be improved. City branding was seen as a way to address these

aspects of improvements by 'selling' it, allowing for a commercialization of the place as a product. The city has become a product competing in a market as a place can be promoted (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). Adapting the business language in the discourse about places led to the realisation of a city as a product that can be branded and with consumers that 'consume' the city.

2.3. The brand

Branding literature has theoretically captured elements that together form the process of 'branding' a city. To create an understanding how city brands are produced according to branding theory, the following sections touch upon some of the 'brand' concepts

2.3.1. Place identity

In the construction of the brand, concepts of place identity, image and communication are identified by Moilanen and Rainisto (2009). Place identity is developed by practitioners who aim to present a place in a certain way according to their goals and target audience. Hankinson (2004) has defined this place identity consisting of three aspects: personality, positioning and reality traits ascribed to the place identity as brand entity. A brand personality exists of a functional dimension. The place fulfils a certain practicality in the way it is set up or the activities and facilities that are present (Whan Park, Jaworski & Maclnnis, 1986). The brand personality also encompasses intangible attributes in the form of symbolic and experiential connotations the brand awakens. These involve feeling and expression that form the sentiment that takes place between the brand and the consumer. According to Ekinci (2003) personal traits should be assigned to the brand for it brings the brand to life, enhancing an emotional connection between the brand and the consumer. Secondly, brand positioning refers to the portrayal of unique values that create a certain position for the product within the market (Whan Park et al., 1986). Positioning regards

highlighting the attributes that differentiate a place brand from its competitors (Hankinson, 2004; Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). The last element in Hankinson's (2004) brand model states that a place 'promise' should link up to the reality: the expectations that the audience holds when the place is visited needs to be met.

2.3.2. Place image

Within the branding, the city is assumed to evoke a certain image about the city. Gardner and Levy (1955) stated that a place image concerns the combination of feelings, ideas and attributes towards a city brand that creates a perceived impression of the city. This image is created and maintained in the mind of the city 'consumer' (Anholt, 2008; Anholt, 2010, Gardner and Levy, 1955; Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). An image is formed based on preset knowledge and subjective understandings an audience has of a place (Govers & Go, 2009). The (potential) visitors of a place construct an image out of the summary of all the associations the city evokes (Kohli and Leuthesser, 2001). The subjectivity of this image is especially prominent in place 'products' over traditional products because the audience consumes an experience instead of a tangible product. Tourists are always ''searching for experience" (Selby, 2004, p.190). Adjustment of the image then can only happen gradually when audiences gain real knowledge about the 'product through action and experience of the place (Selby, 2004). In short, the city image is the reputation of a place that exists in the mind of the audience (Anholt, 2007).

Brand producers believe that within the city brand, an ideal image of the city is captured and managed by the brand producers (Rainisto, 2003). Since it is hard to control the process in the consumers' minds, brand developers also aim to manage the context in which the image is received. Consequently, city marketers and brand managers need to control the 'promise' that this brand conveys (Kavaratzis, 2005).

2.3.3. Brand communication

Media are seen as inextricably linked to the process of branding. Marketing tools are used to communicate the produced city 'brand'. Often this is done by communicating a brand name

and visual (Murphy, Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2007; Rainisto, 2003). Visualizations express the brand identity and can help to guide the expectations of (potential) visitors about a city (Murphy, Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2007). Hankinson (2001) agrees when stating that a logo and slogan further distinguishes the brand by making the brand quality recognizable. However, in practice, the communication that is part of a brand identity exists of more than a visual campaign as the interplay between image formation by the audience and brand management by producers is a complex. Branding as a practice is understood as the construction of the city with an identity and image that is strategically performs the city via the media (Anholt, 2010; Kohli & Leuthesser, 2001; Wan Park et al., 1986). Within Actor-Network theory the media that is involved the practice of branding, are part of the assemblage of the city as a brand (Lury, 2009).

2.4. Branding as a process
2.4.1. Branding models

Emphasis is placed on models that understand branding as a continuous process with stakeholder involvement. Several city branding frameworks and models have captured this and ANT argues these models are ways to understand city branding as a dynamic process. Rainisto (2003), Hankinson (2004), Kavaratzis (2005) and Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) share the view that city branding is a continuous process by multiple people that all have stakes in the city (Figure 1). Rainisto's (2003) research called for a strong organizational body that should lead the production of a city 'brand'. Hankinson (2004) sees the 'brand' as placed in the middle of an arena of influences such as consumers and media relationships. Kavaratzis (2005) addresses the assembling nature of a 'brand' when visualizing that a brand can be developed but it will only be carried out after constant revision of stakeholders in the city.

Most interesting is Kavaratzis and Hatch's (2013) model as they emphasize on the interdependence of brand producers with brand consumers within the branding process (Figure 2). They conceive branding as the process that expresses, impresses, mirrors and reflects the identity and image of a city. The framework sees branding as a shadow process that emerges out of place culture, place identity and place image. This is in contrast to

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Rainisto (2003), Hankinson (2004) and Kavaratzis (2005) who saw the city brand as 'constructed' by multiple stakeholders rather than having an emergent character.

Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) believe that the culture of a place is foundational to the branding process. The city is understood to be the result of the expression of a place culture and is assembled of a situated historical, political and cultural discourse that is specific to that given city (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998 in Govers and Go, 2009). The concept of place identity as discussed above is elaborated upon by Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) to contains a place attachment component referring to the bonds people have with a place (Lewicka, 2008). According to Lewicka (2008), emotional attachment, how long people have been living in a place as well as their social ties, could influence the strength of place identification. Place identity is said to be affected by whether or not people are natives to the place they live in (Hernandez, Hidalgo Salazar-Laplace & Hess, 2007). Physical features of a place also influence place attachment as the way the city looks can affect the way people see the city (Lewicka, 2008). Place identities are then seen as constantly constructed, imagined and experienced (Govers & Go, 2009). Within Kavaratzis and Hatch's (2013) branding framework, place culture influences the place identity that leads to impressions of the city on others. This place images are expressed through texts, forms, productions and as consistent message these images form the city as a brand. Actor Network theory (ANT) approach stimulates the view of these models whereby the brand is emergent out of the place culture and as a reflexive process; the brand creation in turn also influences culture. Simultaneously, culture is by itself a circuit process whereby the formation of place culture is continuously adapted and contested (Johnson, 1986).

Actor-Network theory sees these branding models as performing the place in a specific way. This performance of a brand allows consumers to be seen as empowered in the relationship with marketing and branding practitioners. Branding is not only the production or the consumption of a place; it is not a binary supply and demand practice. Pridmore, Sprenkels and Falk (n.d.) state this as a constant "assembling" that is performed by both producers and consumers.

	Framework	Author	Focus	Brand constructs	Brand influencers
1	Success Factors in Place Marketing	Rainisto (2003)	Success factors, place marketing management organization	Strategy, identity, image, communication	Global marketplace, local development, and the occurrence of coincidental events
2	Relational Network Brand	Hankinson (2004)	Destination brands	Personality, positioning, reality	Consumers, primary services, media, brand infrastructure relationships
3	The City Branding Process	Kavaratzis (2005)	Brand authority that stimulates conversation	Vision, strategy,	internal culture, local community, synergies, infrastructure, cityscapes, gateways, opportunities, communication
4	Identity-based place branding model	Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013)	Branding as process of expressing, reflecting, mirroring and impressing	Place culture, place identity, place image	internal culture, local community, synergies, cityscapes, gateways, opportunities, communication, brand infrastructure, consumer relationships, vision and strategy
					Figure 1: branding models

2.4.2. Brand assemblage

The branding models as discussed in 2.3. believe the city 'brand' is assembled out of the
conceptual brand components that are then performed through a continuous process of
contestation with stakeholders. Brand performance is talked about as assemblage because
the different brand elements come together to in a 'brand' that creates a certain way to see
the city. Actor-Network theorist Lury (2009) states that brands are assemblages created
within a network of "diverse professional activities, including marketing, graphic and
product design, accountancy, media, retail, management, and the law, with each of these
professions having multiple histories, being internally divided, in tension with each other,
and sometimes being contradictory or opposed in their relation to specific instances of

branding" (p. 67). As such, the city as a brand emerges from interaction between non-human and human interactions.

| EXPRESSING: Effective place branding expresses the place's cultural understandings | MIRRORING: Effective place branding taps the images of others by mirroring their impressions and expectations |

PLACE CULTURE → PLACE IDENTITY → PLACE IMAGE

| REFLECTING: Effective place branding changes identity by implanting new meanings and symbols into culture | IMPRESSING: Effective place branding leave impressions on others |

Figuur 2: Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013

2.5. The city consumer

In most branding literature, different 'consumers' of the brand are identified based on their motives, values and needs (Ashworth and Voogd, 1988; van den Berg and Braun, 1999). Roughly three typologies of audiences are identified, depending on the goal of branding to "increase attractiveness of companies and investments, promote objectives of tourism industry, support interest of exporting industry, promote public diplomacy, strengthen citizen identity and increase self esteem" (Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009, p.1; Zenker, 2009). Zenker (2009) summarizes the branding audience categories as shown in Figure 3. Firstly, the most evident groups that are addressed with city branding literature are tourists and visitors of a place. This place branding perspective is related to the concept of destination branding in vacation and tourism studies (Kaneva, 2011; Karavatzis, 2005; Anholt, 2008). This branch of place marketing can be seen as the most commercial where marketing tools and promotional materials are most visible for it is key to sell the city to potential visitors (Anholt, 2010). Tourism here refers to the performance of a social act in which people travel and seek leisure (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Urry and Larsen (2011) introduces the concept of the tourist gaze, the socially constructed act of seeing. This gaze is, among other influences, shaped by media and tourists have to be taught when, where and how to 'gaze'. Branding hereby aims to attract tourists by enhancing awareness and to guide their attention to

maintain a positive outlook about a particular holiday destination (Brent Ritchie and Ritchie, 1998).

Secondly, the city can be seen as a place where companies settle and people work. Overall this audience group is formed by the business consumer of the city, sometimes separated into companies and investments/export categories (Zenker, 2009). This audience segment is deemed important as companies provide employment and income, stimulating the local economy (Hospers, 2009). Branding can help in attracting these companies and investments and thus symbolizes the interplay between city branders and businesses. Thirdly, branding can be aimed at residents of a city. The city is for them a place where they live, and branding hopes to influence how residents feel about the city, keep them satisfied and proud and to attract new residents (Anholt, 2006; Olins, 2002).

This separation of typologies of citizens provide a systematic way of understanding the role of citizens in the city and consequently in the city branding process. Theoretically the relation between a citizen and the city can be identified as a visitor, employee and as a resident but in practice this is assumed to be blurred.
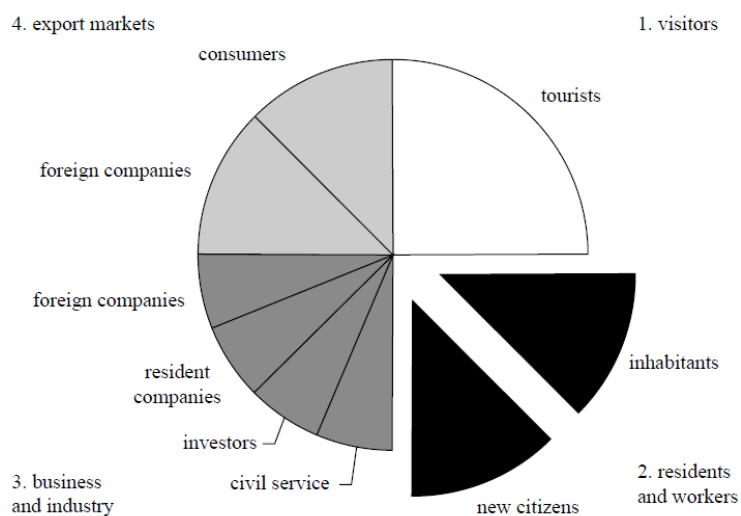
Sources: Datko (2006); Kotler *et al.* (1993)

Figuur 3: Zenker, 2009

However, rather than addressing consumers as passive audiences as discussed above, this paper holds the consumers as active stakeholders influencing the branding process. Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) agree as their process model analyses brands on a level where

they are "continually produced and reproduced in interaction with their surroundings" (p.9). The residents are explicitly stated to have a participatory role in the shaping of brand identity and image for the brand is an expression and reflection of the city's intrinsic culture. Residents are inherently linked to the city brand for they are part of the brands character by living in the city. At the same time, residents also form the evaluation of the brand, contest it and reproduce it for they perceive and hold an image of the city themselves (Braun, Kavaratzis, Zenker, 2010). Braun (2010) also states that residents influence the brand by being the visiting cards of the city, the ones who are capable of spreading free word of mouth promotion. This branding literature shows to have acknowledged citizens as critical audiences that form their own opinions on what a brand is or what it should be. However, the branding perspective sees citizens as participatory audiences in the construction of the official city brand but not as a group of actors that reassemble their own city, as Actor-Network theory assumes.

2.6. The city assembler

While most branding literature focuses on brand performance outwards to external stakeholders that a city wants to attract, only recently has research emphasized on the residents as target audience (Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009). Whether the citizen sees the city as a 'brand' or not, positive conceptions about the city can only be ensured by creating an understanding of the way residents perceive their city (Zenker, 2011). The citizens of a city are not only interesting as a target audience or the consumers of a city as branding strategies assume. This paper argues that understanding citizens is crucial as they are important in their own right as critical judges on how they see their city. Actor-Network theory allows citizens to be seen equally both as target audiences of brand performances and as city 'makers' themselves. Uncovering how citizens assemble the city, conclusions can be derived on how the assemblage relates to the branding assemblage (Latour, 2005).

Zenker (2011) focussed on the city as understood through the eyes of the citizen as he mentioned that citizens evaluate their city on four main categories: urbanity and diversity, nature and recreation, job chances, cost efficiency. Though this is only a rough and far from extensive categorization, as other researchers for example state that in choosing a place to settle, (potential) residents look at functional aspects that a city fulfils (Leyden, Goldberg & Michelbach, 2011). Next to the functional goods and services a place offers less tangible

place bound factors such as sense of place have a significant influence the choice of settlement because it impacts one's happiness (Florida, 2008). This sense of place relates to the emotional factors such as identification and satisfaction that connects people to a place that enhances place attachment as discussed before (Florida, Mellander & Rentfrow, 2011; Leyden, Goldberg & Michelbach, 2011; Lewicka, 2008). In this light, people are more likely to be found happy when they feel identified with the city and when the city provides them with enough facilities on which their ''social capital'', the social relations they have with and in the city, can flourish (Leyden et al, 2011, p.866). These elements come together in Landry's (2006) good 'quality of life' concept as result of extensive research on the evaluation of cities (p.285). Jensen (2007) also argued that arts and culture activities are one way to enhance the quality of life in cities. The following sections will elaborate on the definition of arts and culture communities and argued why these practices add to the quality of life in cities.

2.7. Arts and culture in perspective

To research how the arts and culture community of Rotterdam assemble the city, understanding needs to be created on what this community is and how they practice their work within the city. Several definitions and perspectives of the arts and culture community arise from literature. According to Walker & Scott Melnyk (2002) arts and culture "encompasses the extraordinary variety of artistic and cultural expression in a diverse society" (p.7). Ginsburgh (2012) differentiates between disciplines of the arts and culture sector: visual arts, performing arts and cultural heritage. Heilburn and Gray (2001) separate the live performing arts and the fine arts that is presented at exhibitions from the other categories of arts and culture such as film, media and writing. Traditionally the former groups are referred to as "high culture" (Ginsburgh, 2012, p.4; Heilburn & Gray, 2001). Ginsburgh (2012) states that commonly the non profit sector is associated with "high" art and for-profit arts are related to the making of mass art by the self employed. More specifically, books, movies, popular music, records, the media and internet are grouped as products from "the cultural industries" (Potts, Cunningham, Hartley & Ormerod, 2008). This latter group is classified by Florida (2003) as part of the "creative class" under which "scientists and engineers, university professors, poets, novelists, artists, entertainers, actors,

designers, and architects, as well as the "thought leadership" of modern society: nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank, researchers, analysts, and other opinion makers", are grouped (p.8). This definition stretches the conventional arts and culture interpretation to a categorization that refers to highly educated leaders of change.

In a report by Rotterdam's advisory boards EDBR and RRKC, the creative sector in Rotterdam is stated to be: new media, architecture, music, design and product innovation. These are presented as the vital creative sectors of Rotterdam (EDBR/RRKC, 2006). It becomes clear that the Rotterdam creative economy is distinctive from its arts and culture sector. The arts and culture sector as articulated by Rotterdam city hall resembles Ginsburgh's (2012) approach. In Rotterdam's cultural budget report, visual arts, history and museums, artistic talent development, theatre, venues, music, festival/debate/multimedia, youth groups, film, dance, design and literature are identified to make up the Rotterdam cultural sector (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2012). These are the art and culture forms that are produced by the subsidized institutions. The selection of the Rotterdam institutions that receive government support is based on guidelines of the Rotterdam municipality. The pillars that make up the framework on which the cultural institutions are judged to get subsidiaries are whether they are "cultural facilities (theaters, museums, music venues) provide art expressions in public space, and "develop cultural talent on all levels" (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2012).

2.7.1. Role of arts and culture in the city

The function that arts and culture has in the city make up an element within the network of the city as it is being understood by the creative community. Markusen and Gadwa (2010) summarize the roles that arts and culture have in the city. Arts and culture serve an economical function for it creates jobs and generates revenue for the private and public sector (Bilton, 2007). In a secondary stage this economic activity revitalized the city on a local scale (Florida, 2003; Kay, 2000; Richards & Wilson, 2004). Ginsburgh (2012, p.5) presents this as the "arts multiplier" that refers to the spill over effects arts can have on the neighborhood in which arts and culture activities are present. Not only the physical environment rejuvenates aesthetically but more so, the businesses such as hotels and restaurants benefit from arts and cultural activities in the neighborhoods. These activities

also reflect on the city from an economic perspective again as artists' population are stated to be influential in attracting new and maintaining old residents to a city (Florida, 2008). Furthermore, creativity, culture and art have been linked to cities for the role it plays in creating a sense of belonging and happiness with city residents (Florida, Mellander & Rentfrow, 2011; Leyden et al, 2011). As Richards and Wilson (2001) state: "cultural events in particular have emerged as a means of improving the image of cities, adding life to city streets and giving citizens renewed pride in their home city" (p.1932). Arts and culture activities create feelings of inclusiveness and in its extreme "offers pleasure, beauty and food for the soul" (Yeoman, Robertson, Ali-Knight, Drummond, MacMahon-Beattie, 2004; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010, p.380). Arts and culture are understood to influence the city by enhancing the quality of life in the city because artists create products and activities that provide leisure opportunities (Currid, 2007; Jensen, 2007). These cultural facilities are seen as a part of the social life that exists within a city that can be consumed by fellow city residents as fun and entertaining activities (Markusen, 2006).

2.7.2. Local communities

The understanding of a community is offered by Mumford (1937) who states that communities within a city are formed by a cluttering of like minded people that seek close proximity to each other. Communities in that sense offer a safe place for members and are established among other dimensions, through a shared set of beliefs and values (Hill, 1996; McMillan, 1996). A community is also formed by setting boundaries of in- and out group members (McMillan, 1996). This cluttering is even seen as a natural effect of social activity within a specific place: "human capital accumulation is a social activity, involving groups of people in a way that has no counterpart in the accumulation of physical capital" (Lucas, 1988 as cited in Benabou, 1993, p.621).

Currid (2007) has linked the arts and culture community to a physical agglomeration and connection to place. She states that people within a community group together not only through social interaction, but also through geographical locations where: "Buildings become a symbol of […] social relatedness" (p.8). Groups of people can share the emotion attachment they feel towards a place by looking for a sense of belongingness to within

groups (McMillan, 1996). When this is the case, the identification with a group of people is based on the relation with a particular space which can be a city. The activities that are practiced by this group then inherently express the culture of that city as the activities arise out of the city's culture (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). Florida (2008) has stated that this local sense of place is visible in the practices of an arts and culture community. The artistic endeavours are seen as a way for the arts and culture community members to make sense of their environment (Borer, 2006). Derrett (2003) even sees events as ways to celebrate local culture and to express community feelings.

2.7.3. Artistic communities

In shaping an understanding of the way artistic communities assemble their world, Howard Becker's researches are drawn from. Becker (1982) studied the system of art communities from a social organisation perspective arguing that artistic production and distribution is not individual but rather a collaborative network. The 'system' as Becker (1982) mentions is indicated by Florida (2008, p.53) as a ''scene'' of collaborative creative people centred in a place, is crucial to the way the community operates. Currid (2007) found that the clustering of like minded arts and culture workers provide a basis for the cultural economy because it creates a "social environment" (p.457). This social environment is foundational to the way this community works. The network plays a part in creating job access and in this way it sustains the cultural economy (Currid, 2007). Pratt (2011) highlights the need for a vibrant networking atmosphere within the arts and culture community as jobs are often temporary forms of work, project based and executed by freelancers. The networking happens at events and during the nightlife in a rather informal realm in comparison to other industries (Currid, 2007). The network of social interactions is necessary to survive and that collaboration with other individuals is crucial (Caves, 2000).

The cultural and arts practices are furthermore characterized by their experiential nature. For example, arts and culture practices are often events that can be visited instead of traditional products that can be bought (Markusen, 2005). The work is received in a highly subjective manner by the audience as a result of personal taste (Currid, 2007). The social network here can also function as a safety net when solidarity is called upon by artists. Jensen (2007) also refers to these characteristics when he summarizes that culture and arts

have a positive effect on a city because it indicates affordable city life and they bring in supportive social networks.

These analyses on artistic communities advocate that art practices can only come into existence because of a network of people. Every single actor within the artistic community has its own task and the different stakeholders in the form of producers, performers, distributer and supporters perform the art activity. This network of activities is inherently related to a place and locality for the interaction does not only take place with human actors but is also influenced by the city and non-human factors. In this way Becker's (1982) analysis reveals the way the city is seen as an assemblage (Lury 2009), related to Actor-Network theory. It is not only the artist that stands with a brush in his hand; he is connected to the brush itself, the distribution of these materials, the promotion of the art show, the gallery behind the exhibition, the location or place of this exhibition and the audience that comes and consumes this work of art, amongst other 'actors' in the 'network'.

3. Method

3.1. Research Design

In order to examine the connection between the city of Rotterdam as a brand and how local artistic communities produce the city, a qualitative research method is applied. Qualitative research is conducted for it allows meanings and interpretations to emerge from the perspective of the research units (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011). This means that the qualitative approach reveals the sense making process that people undergo in constructing their world, in line with Actor-Network theory. This approach also allows for the actions, beliefs and values about the city to interpretively arise from Rotterdam's branding perspective and local art community. The aim to derive in-depth knowledge on the two ways of city assemblages is why qualitative research was chosen (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Furthermore a qualitative approach is concerned with process-based outcomes which fits with Actor Network theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Actor Network theory (ANT) that is drawn on, examines the connections between the theoretical discussion and research findings in the attempt to answer the research questions. ANT calls for a fluid social analysis as opposed to the fragmentation of theory, substance and method into different 'elements' of research. The research methods in this research are seen as ways that allow us to understand the complexities of the social world whilst at the same time guide us in organizing these social worlds (Law, Ruppert, Savage, 2011). In this process, there is no division between the knowledge and artifacts of human or non-human actors that are all treated as equally influential (Crawford, 2004). ANT approach sees these actors as having roles that are assigned that emerge only through interaction with other actors in a network (Crawford, 2004, p.2). It enables the researcher to take a holistic approach towards what is observed and how it is observed. This way, not only the interviewees are actors but the academic literature that is discussed in this research also from actors that assemble the way the city is understood from the branding and arts world.

Practically speaking, ANT allows for a variety of methodological approaches. For this research, the data analysis can be seen as connected to the approach of grounded theory. It roughly follows a 'situational analysis' approach that describes a grounded theory, taking into account the various human and non-human elements that produce a particular 'situation' (Clarke, 2003). The emphasis on these elements can be directly connected with an ANT approach as there are synergies found between grounded theory and actor network theory. Both can make use of the same data collection methods as they enable for example,

interviews, observations or content analysis to take place. The methodological underpinnings of the analysis of the collected data can also be seen as complementary to each other for both ANT and grounded theory. ANT provides for a relational network perspective to viewing social practices and grounded theory works inductively to determine in the data analysis phase what data is relevant and redundant (Zimmerman, 2008). Again, the coding process of the data follows the grounded theory approach to guide the analysis rather than fully adapting the method. It provides a systematic analysis structure aimed to derive theory from the data (Babbie, 2008).

Beyond this interconnected methodological approach, in more concrete terms this research uses a triangulation of research methods. This mixed methods approach enables the researcher to see the situation from different perspectives and standpoints (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Given the reliance on ANT and grounded theory, these perspectives allow for multiple approaches to both the city brand production by Rotterdam Partners (RP) and the city 'production' by the artistic community. Interviews, participant observation and document analysis methods are applied in multiple settings to capture how the city is articulated and practiced by these two perspectives and enhance triangulation. The two perspectives and the complementary methods triangulate the data that creates findings for an extensive research (Muskat, Blackman and Muskat, 2012). Additionally, triangulation enhances internal validity (Merriam, 1995).

3.1.1. Rotterdam Partner's perspective

This section explains the methods that will be used to answer the first sub-research question: "How is Rotterdam city branding assemblage practiced?"

The social world that is focussed on with this question follows the official city brand production by Rotterdam Partners. Rotterdam Partners (formerly, Rotterdam Marketing) is a foundation that aims to stimulate Rotterdam's (leisure) economy through stimulation of (work) tourism and image building (Rotterdam Marketing, 2012). The three divisions International Trade & Investment, Hospitality and Convention Bureau & Tourism Board collaboratively strive for the city's economic growth. The foundation is subsidized by the local government of Rotterdam and with its local business and institutions acquisitions; Rotterdam Partners (RP) facilitates contact between the municipality and the private sector.

RP became responsible for the city branding management in 2012 that is practiced in close collaboration with the city hall and its city marketing and branding staff.

3.1.1.1. Document analysis

The research into the branding perspective started with a document analysis. Document analysis is defined by Bowen (2009) as the systematic review of documents. The material is analysed in the same manner as other data according to the interpretive qualitative research method (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). A qualitative analysis is aimed to reveal what is articulated and communicated in these documents about Rotterdam's branding strategy and will follow an interpretive approach (Babbie, 2008). The analysis of governmental and official documents on Rotterdam's official branding strategy is an unobtrusive manner of obtaining data. Its relevance lies in the fact that document analysis complements other research methods as it shapes the context in which interview data can be placed. Bowen (2009) states that document analysis can form the basis from where interview questions can evolve as they provide background information on development and events. As such, the findings of the document analysis provided the context of Rotterdam's branding strategy and the background of Rotterdam's arts and culture sector in which qualitative interview questions were grounded. The document analysis provided pre-knowledge to be used in the expert interviews.

	Document/report	Retrieved via
1	Riezebos, R. (2014). Position paper Rotterdam 2014. [rapportage merkwaarden]. January 22, 2014. Retrieved from informant.	Purposeful sampling
2	Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam. (2008). Rotterdam Brand Strategy. Retrieved from www.rotterdam.nl/.../Merkstrategie%20NL%20nov%2	Snowball /purposeful sampling
3	Gemeente Rotterdam (2013). DNA Rotterdam. Retrieved from www.robedrijf.nl/.../Document%202013/DNA%20van	Snowball sampling/ purposeful sampling
4	Gemeente Rotterdam (2013). Uitvoeringsstrategie Rotterdam. Retrieved from www.rotterdam.nl/.../Document%202013/Uitvoeringss	Snowball sampling/ purposeful sampling
5	College van Burgemeesters en Wethouders. (2013). Economische Verkenning Rotterdam. Retrieved from http://www.rotterdam.nl/evr2013	Snowball sampling/ purposeful sampling
6	EDBR (2005). Economische Visie Rotterdam 2020. Retrieved from	Snowball sampling/

	edbr.nl/nl/.../EconomischeVisieDefinitiedeel2a.pdf	purposeful sampling
7	EDBR/RRKC (2006). Rotterdam maakt werk van creativiteit. Retrieved from edbr.nl/nl/Documenten/EDBR-RKKC%201_8.pdf	Purposeful sampling
8	Nesselaar, R. (2014). The city branding of Rotterdam [PowerPointSlides]. Retrieved from informant.	Informants
9	Heessels, M., & de Vries, C. (2012). Cultuurparticipatie van Rotterdammers, 2011. Retrieved from http://www.rotterdamfestivals.nl/zakelijk/cultuur-participatie/onderzoek-en-expertise/onderzoeken/vrijetijdsonderzoek-rotterdammers/	Informants
10	De Vries, M., & van Hanswijk Pennink, I. (2012). City strategy. Delft: Eburon.	Informants
11	Gemeente Rotterdam (2012). Midden in de stad. Retrieved from http://www.rotterdam.nl/cultuurplan2013_2016	Purposeful sampling
12	Hendrik Beerda (2013). Strategische merkanalyse van de Rotterdamse cultuursector. Retrieved from http://www.rotterdamfestivals.nl/Assets/Uploads/Documents/Presentatie%20cultureel%20merkenonderzoek%202013.pdf	Informants
13	Wijgers, W., & Ram, J. (2012). Beschrijving Rotterdamse Doelgroepen. Retrieved from http://www.rotterdamfestivals.nl/zakelijk/cultuur-participatie/onderzoek-en-expertise/onderzoeken/onderzoeksrapporten/	Informants
14	Reijnen, A. (2010). Imageo Rotterdamse festivals. Retrieved from http://www.rotterdamfestivals.nl/zakelijk/cultuur-participatie/onderzoek-en-expertise/onderzoeken/onderzoeksrapporten/	Informants
15	RRKC. (2010). Rotterdam 2025 visie op kunst en cultuur 'het DNA van de stad'. Retrieved from http://www.rrkc.nl/advies_item/rotterdam-2025-visie-op-kunst-en-cultuur-het-dna-van-de-stad/	Purposeful sampling
16	Taskforce Citybranding (2005). Governance city marketing. Retrieved from http://edbr.nl/nl/Documenten/Rapport%20Governance%20Structuur%20jul.2005.pdf	Informants
	Figure 4: RP document analysis	

The sampling procedure of the official documents and reports as research unit of the document analysis followed several techniques (Figure 4). Firstly, official documents were provided by informants within Rotterdam Partners. These documents were relevant to analyse as informants are believed to have access to documents that "provide insight and understanding for the researcher" (Mashall, 1996, p.523). Secondly, non-probability purposive sampling is conducted. The documents were judged based on their source, topics and content to fit the purposes of this study (Babbie, 2008). As the research asks for an official branding perspective, documents by government bodies or institutions related to Rotterdam's city hall were selected. The criteria for the topics and content of the documents was that the documents discussed both city branding and the arts and culture sector, or shaped the context in which these practices took place in Rotterdam. The second method

was combined with the third method of sampling regarding the snowball sampling method with in-document references. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) mention that snowballing is a reliable technique when used in combination with other sampling selections as it provides for documents that are relevant and that would otherwise be difficult to locate.

In total 16 documents were used for data analysis. Six of these document are written by the city hall, seven were written in assignment of city hall or meant as advisory reports to city hall and three in relation to Rotterdam Partners or Rotterdam Festivals.

3.1.1.2. Qualitative interviews

The qualitative expert interviews aim to generate the main valuable knowledge, providing deeper insight into the branding practices over the document analysis. The qualitative approach of interviews is chosen to gain in depth knowledge and to come to inductive findings and conclusions (Babbie, 2008). Qualitative interviews are conducted to reveal meanings that underlay choices and decisions as well as relationships (Weiss, 1994). Conducting qualitative interviews is seen as an effective method to reveal complex process (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Regarding branding and the process based theoretical framework this research employs, this data collection method is relevant. The focus lies on how the interviewees see and what their motive is in regards to their activities in the city branding practices.

The interviews are based on the "subjective aspects of the expert knowledge" (Audenhove, 2007, p.13). The expert interviews are conducted to understand how branding practices are understood through the eyes of the main actors within the branding network. Cressman (2009) mentions that practices take place within a network and that in these networks, certain "network builders" are identifiable (p.3). From the official branding perspective, the network builders are selected based on their knowledge on Rotterdam's city branding and their power within this branding process network. Audenhove (2007) states that expert interviews, as a specification of semi-structured interviews, are characterised by interviewees that have specific knowledge on a topic, have a broad network within the field and are motivated to participate. Meuser and Nagel (1991) have defined experts as people "who [are] responsible for the development, implementation or control of solutions, strategies, policies" or people "who [have] privileged access to information about groups of persons or decision processes" (as cited by Audenhove, 2007, p.6). The interviewees are

selected from the network of Rotterdam Partner personnel based on their expertise for they are responsible for or have been closely related to the development of Rotterdam's branding strategy. It is taken into account that their knowledge is not neutral due to their active involvement in the practices researched, however it is specifically this opinion formation on the city branding practice from the official branding perspective that is aimed to be captured.

The interviewees were subject to a non-probability purposive sampling method, after which I was dependent on the availability of the experts. Snowball sampling was conducted meaning that a sample of interviewees is created through referrals by already interviewed participants (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This method is seen as particularly useful for social research when it comes to selecting a group that share similar characteristics and knowledge (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). This method is valuable for the expert interviewees are 'in the know' of fellow experts within the branding network. It has led to participants who would not have been located otherwise.

The qualitative face to face interviews took place in April and May, depending on the availability of the interviewees (Figure 5). Robbert Nesselaar was the first expert interviewee. Contact was initiated through my internship at Rotterdam Partners. Via snowballing, Petra Eielts from Rotterdam Partners was contacted as second interviewee. Informants within Rotterdam Partners referred to Reinier Weers as additional city branding expert from an events and festival approach. The interviews took place in the natural work environment of the interviewees. This enhances the validity of the qualitative approach of the interviews as this provides data from the interviewees' own social setting (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The interviews were audio recorded for further analysis.

The interviews were open-ended, semi-structured interviews, providing guidelines to the conversation on the most significant concepts whilst being free and open to stories emerging during the interview. The interview guides can be found in Appendix A & B.

	Interviewee	Title	Company	Date of interview
1	Robbert Nesselaar	Brand Director	Rotterdam Partners	April 14, 2014
2	Petra Eielts	Sr. Communication advisor	Rotterdam Partners/ Municipality Rotterdam	May 9, 2014
3	Reinier Weers	Senior Project Manager	Rotterdam Festivals	May 12, 2014
				Figure 5: RP qualitative interviews

3.1.1.3. Participant observation

The third data collection method is the participant observer method. This type of research is appropriate to study the process of branding for it creates a full understanding of practices of social life (Babbie, 2008). Conducting field research as a participant observer helps to reveal how the findings of other methods are exercised in practise with specific attention to the practice of interactions and relations on site (Becker & Geer, 1957). As a press intern at Rotterdam Marketing, access was gained to conduct field research as a participant observer. During the time as an intern, field notes are taken to capture the observations made. The observations that are made contributed to the holistic understanding of the official branding practices as formulated and acted upon by actors at Rotterdam Partners (Cresswell, 2012). Observing the site where the branding strategy is developed and practiced produced interpretive data that help to create an understanding of the official branding practices that would not have been captured otherwise. The internship period of four months heightens the internal validity and reliability of the research as it leads to consistent and in-depth engagement in the field (Merriam, 1995).

The three types of data analysis together helped to understand the process that underpins the social world from the official branding perspective (Merriam, 1995). Saturation of the data collection was researched when the mixed method approach led to enough data from the three data collection methods on both the city branding and the arts community approach. The findings from the branding and arts and culture community shed light on the city assemblage from different angles, complementing each other (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

3.1.2. Artistic community perspective

This part describes the methodology used to research the second sub-research question: "How are local artistic practices connected to the city as an assemblage?"

This question addresses the social world that is produced by the local artist community identified in Rotterdam. To research the city assemblage by local artists, the

focus lies on a monthly artistic event: "De Derde Dinsdag" (DDD). This event is held every third Tuesday of the month and is initiated by the "Kunstblock" (Arts Block Rotterdam) a collaboration between several galleries and art institutions: Showroom MAMA, TENT, CBK Rotterdam, V2, Witte de With and WORM. DDD is a joint-effort event between Kunstblock and MAAS theatre and dance, Ro Theatre, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Productiehuis Rotterdam/Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Dansateliers and de Doelen, all of which are arts and culture institutions in Rotterdam. DDD event is a live show that introduces next month's cultural activities of the organisations involved. The event showcases the performance or exhibition agenda of these twelve collaborating arts and culture institutions as an interactive preview. Summarized, the venue roulette, special guest, interview questions, visuals and interactivity have been identified as reoccurring themes during the DDD evenings. DDD takes place at a different location every month with venues taking turns in hosting the event. The locations of the venues are centred around the Witte de With street, with only Maastheatre, Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Dansateliers and the De Doelen as exception to this observation. Each month the host, Anna Visser is accompanied by a guest that is invited to join the live show.

3.1.2.1. Qualitative interviews

	Interviewee	Title	Working status	Date of interview
1	Anna Visser	Presenter DDD	shop owner, politically active for GroenLinks	March 20, 2014
2	Katelyn Brand	event production & manager DDD	Freelance	March 20, 2014
3	Cynthia Soeters	Marketing DDD	Owner Looking Glasses: project management, marketing & communication. Rotterdam Festivals	April 10, 2014
4	Floris Visser	Artist, visual art	Vloris Fisser	April 17, 2014
				Figure 6: Arts qualitative interviews

To research how the social world of the local artistic community is assembled, interviewees were selected based on their expert knowledge as part of the arts and culture community in Rotterdam, similar to the description in 3.1.1.2. The interviews were necessary to get in-depth knowledge on what these individuals do, how they connect to the city and how their behaviour influences Rotterdam's branding. As described in 3.1, the qualitative method is useful for it provides a comprehensive coverage of social and dynamic processes such as

branding (Babbie, 2008). The interview method is used to collect empirical data of individuals involved in the De Derde Dinsdag (DDD) and consequently in the arts and community of Rotterdam. Via purposive expert sampling the selection started with the organisers of the event, Anna Visser and Katelyn Brand. Through snowball sampling influential Rotterdam based artists and artistic community builders Cynthia Soeters and Floris Visser were selected for the expert interviews. The semi-structured face to face interviews took place in various cafés as proposed by the interviewees (Figure 6). The interviews were audio recorded for transcription and further analysis purposes, see appendix C for the interview guide.

3.1.2.2. Participant observation

As a participant observer at De Derde Dinsdag (DDD) event, understanding is gained of how the production of Rotterdam branding takes place within this artistic community. As described in section 3.1.1.3, participant observation can be used to gain a holistic understanding of behaviour "as they occur" (Babbie, 2008; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p.35). Participant observation is especially effective to observe natural interactions within a community (Kawulich, 2005). This method is used to capture relations, behaviours and activities to understand how the phenomena that are articulated in the interviews are being practiced on site. Kawulich (2005, n.p.) states that: "observations may help the researcher have a better understanding of the context and phenomenon under study." Participant observation provides complementary data for it reveals non-verbal communication and show the performance of the roles that each actor has within the network. The research bias that occurs during participant observation research is taken into account and reduced as much as possible through reflexivity on the data and by balancing the role between a complete observer and complete participant. Additionally, the observations are consistently captured in field notes, see appendix E, to enhance research reliability (Merriam, 1995; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). DDD is visited five times on December 17, 2013, January 21, 2014, February 18, 2014, March 18, 2014 and April 15, 2014. The events started at 20.00 lasting around one and a half hours.

3.2. Operationalisation

The different data collection methods allow insight into empirical world of official branding and the local artistic community of Rotterdam. In measuring how these world are constructed, the following operationalisation translates theory into observable concepts so that the differences and similarities between the ways the city is assembled offers the answers to the sub-research questions and to the main research question: "What is the relationship between official city branding practices and the local artistic practices of Rotterdam?"

As this research follows Actor-Network theory, the interviews were aimed to create an understanding of the world as it is constructed by the interviewees. The interviews were therefore only loosely based on literature as discussed in the theoretical framework to emphasize on the emergent character of the city assemblage through the eyes of the interviewee. Emphasis is placed on the way the interviewees feel connected to the city not only through their work put also on a personal level.

3.2.1. City branding

To discover how Rotterdam's branding process is practised, an emergent approach is taken focussing on the way Rotterdam's branding experts construct their world loosely following the understandings of city branding as discussed in the theoretical framework. The three experts involved in the branding strategy implementation are interviewed about their profession and how their work relates to Rotterdam (Appendix A & B). This provides a view into the way these interviewees construct their world whereas the document analysis provides insight into the specific strategies that are used in the branding practices.

Introductory question are important in shaping an understanding of the way the interviewee reflects on their role within the city branding process. Question on responsibility within the branding activities follow as they give insight into the way Rotterdam's branding is structured. For the interviewee from Rotterdam Festivals, city branding assumptions are emphasised less clearly in the interview but rather certain obligations towards the city hall are asked about. During the interview, questions that directly link to locality, locals are

asked to discover how the brand managers perceive citizens in relation to branding practices. The questions on the local arts and culture community aim to reveal how this community is interpreted as part of the city branding assemblage. From these interviews arises a lens through which the city is seen as a brand.

3.2.2.   Local arts and culture community

The arts and culture practices that are presented in De Derde Dinsdag event come from cultural institutions that are subsidized by the Rotterdam government. From the seventy-seven arts and culture institutions that qualified for the government subsidies, twelve institutions are represented at the DDD-event. Those twelve institutions have a prominent position within Rotterdam as they form the art-axis of the city at Witte de With street (Veenkamp, 2013). This street is indicated as the cultural district of Rotterdam for most of the city's museums and art galleries are located here (Hitters & Richards, 2002; Richards & Wilson, 2001; Veenkamp, 2013). The geographical clustering of the arts and culture activities that the institutions at Witte de With street form the basis for community forming as these actors located here are likely to share a similar sets of beliefs and values (Hill, 1996; McMillan, 1996). These bonds allow for a community forming (Mumford, 1937). The collaboration between twelve institutions along Witte de With street at the 'De Derde Dinsdag' event is considered a manifestation of Rotterdam's local arts and culture community. The people that are present at the event on stage and off stage are considered part of the arts and culture community. All interactions that take place at the event consequently take part in the process of assembling from the local arts and culture perspective. For these reasons De Derde Dinsdag is chosen as cultural event to conduct the participant observation.

This study researches whether and how the activities that the Rotterdam arts and culture community members conduct are connected to Rotterdam. This connection, indicated as sense of place, the 'Rotterdammness' of the arts and culture community are addressed in the interviews with community participants in certain ways (Appendix C). Firstly, the attachment to a place can be based on emotional bonds (Derrett, 2003; Lewicka, 2008). Derrett (2003) discusses place as a space with a personality that people can emotionally relate to. In the interviews the arts and culture community members are asked

about their relationship with the city via probes such as "are you originally from Rotterdam?", and "how long have you worked in Rotterdam?"

Secondly, social relations between people within a place also make up the sense of place. Activities that facilitate social life enhance feelings of belongingness and the attachment towards a place (Florida, 2008; Leyden Goldberg & Michelbach, 2011). To reveal this, the interviewees are asked about their opinion on the arts and culture of Rotterdam.

Thirdly, sense of place can be indicated by discovering how a perceived in relation to other cities. Comparisons evaluate the place in perspective and through this, attachments to a city are enhanced or diminished (Jensen, 2007). In the interviews with the arts and culture community members probes about what kind of work the artist does, where the artist does it and how the artists thinks about the artistic community signify the functionality and the network of social relations.

Lastly, the relevance of De Derde Dinsdag for the individual arts and culture community member is questioned during the interviews to see how such events are perceived by the community itself. The interviewees are questioned about their relation to Witte de With as cultural district and how they perceive this art-axis as important for the city. The interviews resulted in data revealing the interviewees view on Rotterdam attachment, identity and community. Uncovering the way the interviewees see the city and move around in it leads to data that in connection to the official branding perspective shows ''how local artistic practices connect to the city as an assemblage''.

3.3. Method of analysis

Structure

As all the research methods aggregate an understanding of the social worlds from where city assemblages come into existence, all data are treated the same in terms of method of analysis. Grounded theory provided a framework through which an ANT informed analysis was made possible. Transcriptions are analysed following an emergent coding scheme to discover general themes and categories. The analysis followed an emergent approach that allowed for the categories to arise from the transcript readings (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). Structured via the process of open, axial and selective coding, meaning is derived from the data to come to theoretical findings (Straus and Corbin, 1994). For this reason all

transcripts, document analysis, participant observation field notes and interviews are read several times to ensure the researcher has knowledge of the data (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). To ensure research validity, an example is given of how the data was analysed so that insight is given into the interpretations of the findings (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The open coding stage involves an examination of the transcripts from which initial concepts arise. These concepts capture notions that signify certain differences or similarities in and among the transcripts (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). For example, in reading the artistic community member interviews the open coding stage led to the labelling of the following codes:

Katelyn (female): what do we do besides Derde Dinsdag? I am a freelance event organiser [**freelance**]. I also work for Festival World of Witte de With, I worked for the film festival so those are all separate projects where I work for the production or organisation or location manager or something like that [**within cultural sector**]. I became part of De Derde Dinsdag because I worked for WORM (Institute for avant-garde recreation) just on a contract [**freelance versus contract**] and I worked with Hajo Doorn, he is the director of WORM. He had thought of the Derde Dinsdag concept and I worked with him a lot [**close relationships**] so I went ahead and set it up together with him by making contact with different organisation to see if they were interested in implementing that [**initiating contact between cultural institutions**]. Then other people took over and I was always the one who made the program at WORM [**flexibility in employment**]. Then I left WORM and other people that worked for De Derde Dinsdag also left so they asked me if I wanted to work there [**job access through connections within network**].

The concepts are reviews and grouped together in the axial coding stage (Burnard, 1991; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The labelled information was analysed into depth revealing whether the concepts has other dimension of information (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). For example, the codes identified above share similarities after which they are grouped in the category 'work'. The codes signify different dimensions that all connect to the way the artistic community structures the working life. They differentiate between 'freelance' and 'contracted work' whilst most of the work is short term, project based. They mainly find themselves in the 'cultural sector', 'hopping jobs frequently'.

During selective coding, the categories were compared and relationships between them are sought (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). From the relationships between the categories insight was gained into the underlying structure of the brand production from both official

and artistic perspective. In the example given, the artists are analysed to be reliant on the community for, amongst other things, job access. The 'work' category relates to 'networking' category that arose from the data. The network of artists and culture producers form the community that offers its members more than just a safe place with like-minded others (Hill, 1996; McMillan, 1996). The three stages of grounded theory provided structure during the analysis approach and enabled city assemblages from a branding and artistic community perspective to arise according to actor-network theory.

Actor-network theory

To clarify the use of Actor-network theory (ANT) in this research, this section emphasises the features of this perspective that guides this paper. The table below summarizes the two key concepts within this research and gives examples of how these concepts are visible in the data analysis. Afterwards an explanation on the way ANT is incorporated in this paper follows.

Concept	Definition	Examples
Actors	"Entities that do things" (Latour, 1992a, p.241).	e.g. Branding theory/literature, branding strategy, government institutions, citizens, media,
Networks	"Groups of unspecified relationships among entities of which the nature itself is undetermined." (Callon, 1993, p.263)	e.g. The network of people and 'things' involved in Rotterdams' branding practices. The network of people and 'things'

An ANT approach influences the whole process of the research set up, allowing the researcher to see the literature used in the theoretical framework as 'actors' that influence the assemblage that is created. For example, the branding literature is an actor as it influences the network that produces the city as a brand assemblage. Branding theory contributes to the way the city is seen by Rotterdam city marketers and the relation or connection between these two actors make up a part of the network.

The research methodologies also reflect the ANT approach as the documents analysed in the document analysis data collection method are considered actors. Documents are understood as a mediated form of communication that reflects and shapes the social and

thus gives insight into the city as assemblage (Law, 1992). The interviews addressed in the interview method are considered key actors in relation to the building of a network. Also, the participant observation method follows ANT closely because everything that is observed on-site is seen as able to shape and make up the 'reality' of the world that is observed.

All these aspects are important in the light of ANT, with artefacts or non-human actors considered equally important in network building alongside 'human' actors. As such, a holistic approach is taken of the world behind branding practices and the arts and culture community. The network tells the story of all the elements that participate in creating and shape the social (Law, 1992). This means that every element that plays a part in these worlds are worth analysing as they influence the way the network is shaped. The art works or events as a whole, as well as the communication about the event, the people that visit and even the location matters in the analysis of the art community within the ANT perspective. In a practical sense, these networks consist of both people and things that assemble the city in particular ways. These two concepts within ANT are interdependent: "an actor can not act without an network and a network consists of actors" (Stalder, 1997, p.20). Actor-network theory (ANT) as an approach allows for possibility that 'everything' is both an actor and a network. An actor-network exists of simultaneously the actors "whose activity is networking heterogeneous elements and a network that is able to redefine and transform what it is made of" (Callon, 1987, p.93). As Cressman (2009) stated, it is the perspective that is taken on the subject of analysis that reveals the actor-network. This means that all the elements observed in the data collection method that make up the way the city of Rotterdam is seen from a city branding and the artistic community perspective, are considered actors within the city branding and artistic community network.

4. Results and discussion

In this section the results that arose from the empirical analysis are discussed. The findings are separated according to the themes that emerged building up to answer of the sub-research questions. Chapter 4.1 and 4.2. provide answers to the two sub-research questions that are further elaborated throughout the process of discussing the answer the main research question in chapter 4.3. to 4.5. The way the city is characterized in both assemblages forms the relationship between the two assemblages as they are built around the same city, that of Rotterdam. The way of approaching Rotterdam's residents is found to form the main difference between the city as brand assemblage and the city as understood by the artistic community. Though the two city views rely on collaboration, this collaboration is acted upon in different ways. The results lead to the answer of the research question that the branding practices do not assemble the city in a similar way as citizens in the artistic communities do. The economic vis-à-vis the emotional way that the city is related to show that there is little connection between the two networks surrounding the city of Rotterdam.

4.1. Rotterdam as a city brand assemblage

4.1.1. Necessity of branding practices

In capturing how Rotterdam is assembled as a city brand the multiple research methods led to results that are stated here. The findings are discussed according to Actor-network theory and together form the bits and pieces that come together in creating Rotterdam as a city brand assemblage, answering the sub-research question "How is Rotterdam city brand assemblage practiced?".

The document analysis as the first research method conducted, provided contextual information on the city branding practices as understood by governmental bodies and actors closely related to the official city branding strategy of Rotterdam. One of the document analysis transcripts regarding the 'Positioning paper Rotterdam 2014' presents the necessity for Rotterdam municipality to strategically think about a city brand and the responsibility of managing a brand as the quotation from the document transcript analysis shows:

Just after the turn of the century it became clear that something had to change about the image of Rotterdam towards residents, visitors, companies and (potential) students. On the one hand because the image lagged behind what the city really had to offer ('more than a

harbour city') and on the other hand because Rotterdam provoked mainly negative
associations with outsiders ('a cold, uncomfortable work-city')

Citation from the document transcription analysis.

This quote is an example of the way document analysis shape the context in which Rotterdam's branding is practiced. The citation explains Rotterdam city council's view on the necessity to promote Rotterdam as a brand. The city's image was found to no longer match with the developments taking place in the city and to fight the negative connotations surrounding Rotterdam. For this reason 'branding' is implemented.

Though one of the critiques on Actor-Network theory (ANT) describes the incapability of ANT to reveal intangible elements "like values and norms" or in this case motivations or intentions behind branding implementations, the reports and strategy documents still form actors in the network of the Rotterdam city as a brand assemblage (Cressman, 2009, p.10). The documents analysed, document a view of the 'social' as articulated by actors involved in the city as a brand assemblage. The language used unveils that the city is personified by associating the city with human personality traits as figure (7), page 48, shows. The reports as a whole are actors that relate to the assemblage of Rotterdam as a city brand because they influence other actors in their activities in relation to practicing the city as a city brand assemblage. This effect shows for example that until early on in the 21st century, Rotterdam was mainly perceived by outsiders as subordinate to the industrial activities the harbor brought along together with its hard working, working class immigrants. Another association that was prominently present in the view of non-citizens was the damage that the Second World War inflicted to the city and its people when much of Rotterdam's historic centre was destroyed. This information, as an actor within the network, connects to other actors who acted upon this knowledge and the city hall decided to adopt branding practices with the aim to change this image of Rotterdam. City Marketing Office taskforce was set up to develop a city branding strategy on behalf of Rotterdam municipality. In collaboration with several parties such as the city development department of the city hall, advisory boards to city hall and independent brand consultancy agencies, the narrative of Rotterdam as a brand is constructed (figure 7). The collaboration between these actors show the interrelatedness of the elements that only together make up what is understood as city branding. Currently, Rotterdam Partners is one of the parties responsible

for the implementation of the city branding strategy that is captured in brand and marketing policies by the city hall.

The qualitative expert interview method identified specifically influential actors that build the network of city branding as an assemblage. The interviews provide additional information to the document analysis method on the way actors act and work on the assembling of Rotterdam as a brand.

You could say that our current image gets in the way of achieving our goals so we want to adjust the image. The DNA [of a city] is harder to adjust, the location of your city whether or not you are located along a river is very hard so those are a given.

(Robbert)

The previous document transcript citation and this quote and indicate that in the analysis of the city according to Actor-Network theory (ANT), a differentiation is made between the city itself as one actor and the image of the city as another actor. Some assets of a city itself are fixed, like its geographical location as Robbert explains. Just like the geographical location, the harbour and the Rotterdam Blitz during the Second World War is understood to be anchored, unchangeably connected to Rotterdam. The way people think about Rotterdam, however, the associations that this city evokes in the minds of people are considered not to be fixed but fluid perceptions that can be steered. This reveals that Rotterdam's branding practices lend from branding theory that have stated that 'branding' a city is a way to gain influence of the city's image in the mind of audiences (Anholt, 2007; Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). In terms of ANT, the branding literature proves to be an element that as an actor influenced the way branding is practiced. Branding literature shapes the way Rotterdam's branding strategies are set up that in turn connects to the way actors act upon each other. The interviews illustrate this by showing how mediated texts on branding as actors are internalized by people as actors in the city assemblage process.

4.1.2. Business perspective of Rotterdam city brand assemblage practice

In the practice of carrying out Rotterdam as a brand assemblage, the historical references to Rotterdam's past have become part of the official city brand performance of Rotterdam. Rainisto (2003) discussed ways to successfully develop a city brand and argued that the

history of a place can be incorporated into the city brand in such a way that it becomes a positive and attractive asset. The story of Rotterdam's destruction in the Second World War in the city as a brand performance includes the emphasis on the tangible memories of the event as the rebuilding of the city is visible in the city's architecture. Within the official branding narrative these spatial and physical appearances of Rotterdam are prominent. Pratt (2011) argues that heritage is an important part of how a city promotes itself. However when no or little heritage is prominent within a city, "cultural-icon branding" becomes a branding approach which means that specific sites or constructs are promoted as iconic (Pratt, 2011, p.6). The official branding currently promotes the Erasmus Bridge, the Euromast Tower and the new "De Rotterdam" skyscraper as icons of the city.

The document analysis results in the finding that the vocabulary that is used in performing the city as a brand resembles business oriented perspectives as the following quote illustrates.

The 10 Unique Buying Points listed below are relevant and attractive for both living, working, studying and recreation. It is important that these ten points are always taken into account.

• International, cosmopolitan character. Intercultural:174 nationalities.

• Rotterdam: world port, smart port, logistic hub, excellent accessibility: road, rail, air, water and fibre optic cable

• Best location in the Randstad (the Holland region)

• More than 400 years successful experience in trade and shipping

• Modern architecture, urban development, design, photography

• A city that gets things done! Room for initiatives and ideas

• Attractive price/quality ratio, 'budget-friendly' (real estate)

• Dynamic, hip, trendy, young and innovative

• (International) knowledge (institutes) in the city

• Sport and cultural events: the events city of the Netherlands.

(Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam, 2008, p.31, excerpt document transcript analysis)

The data shows that the value propositions are called "unique buying points" of the city. The vocabulary within the city brand assemblage indicates these buying points have become part of the way Rotterdam is 'sold' to outsiders. In marketing, these buying points are called 'value proposition', a feature that differentiates a company or product from its

competitors (Porter, 1996). Most branding literature claim that 'unique buying points' need to be articulated in order to differentiate a city from other cities or regions (Hankinson, 2004; Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). Porter's (1996) strategic analysis of companies states that establishing a value proposition helps to effectively position a company within the market. Other theorists such as Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010) also state the importance of determining the value propositions as it is a building block for the company. Establishing a value proposition becomes important in order to captures the city's position within the market. The value propositions of a city are the assets that make the city unique to consumer. The official branding perspective shows that the unique historical events are used to enhance the value proposition of the city brand. This signifies that the official city branding practices take on a corporate management approach in discussing the city of Rotterdam (Shafer, Smith, Linder, 2005).

In terms of ANT, the communication that takes place within the network of the city branding practices are themselves 'actors' in the network of relations that makes up the city as a brand assemblage. These stand in relation to other actors that act upon this business language consequently leading to the strategic development embedded in the city as a brand network. Literature on business practices are actors within the formation of the city as a brand assemblage as they are drawn from by city brand managers and strategists. The business language that is used is seen as an indicator that the city is seen as a business or product that can be sold to outsiders similar to business ventures that articulate value proposition as a result of the business model approach. Another excerpt from the document analysis transcripts illustrates the business perspective on the city as assemblage even more explicitly:

With the business model of a city the focus is on the complex factors that explain the way the city or region creates economic value. In the heart of the business model is the value proposition of the city: the way it differentiates itself from other cities and is attractive for companies and visitors.

(De Vries & van Hanswijk Pennink, 2012, p.14, excerpt document analysis transcripts)

This quote again states the way the business approach results from the document analysis revealing the way the documents are embedded by the view of seeing the city as a business. The city is perceived to have economic clusters that produce income similar to economics and business management where the structure of a company's revenue stream is

determined based on a business model. Creating a business model means that strategic thought it put into generating return on the value creation within a business (Shafer et al., 2005). The city is seen as a working business that needs investments and has costs and generates revenue as an output. The way the arts and culture sector is presented in the data exemplifies this. If the city is approached as a business, arts and culture form a department within that business that are linked to producing economic value as the excerpt from the data analysis transcript shows:

The set of actors that produce the city as a brand perceive the arts and culture sector as a 'cost' in the form of subsidies. The arts and culture sector in Rotterdam is publicly funded for 77,25 million euro's that is distributed among selected art and culture institutions within Rotterdam (Het Rotterdamse Cultuurplan 2013-2016, 2012). The sector is further measured by its role in creating jobs. Data shows that in Rotterdam the cultural sector together with sports and recreation, provides 3.135 jobs out of the 51.522 consumer related jobs in total (College van Burgemeester en Wethouders, 2013). The 'output' the arts and culture sector generates is valued based on the spending done by visitors in the city. The cultural sector, here defined as museums, theatre, concerts, performances, lecture, city tour, art and events together are good for 15 percent of the total spending done by visitors to city: 150 million euro's (College van Burgemeester en Wethouders, 2013).

(Data as extracted from document analysis transcripts)

This shows that the arts and culture activities within the city are interpreted by the official city branders as functional regarding the economic system of the city. The statistical figures from actors that shape the actions of other actors and in this way take part in the activities that exists in the city as a brand assemblage. The arts and culture sector as an actor serves an economical function to the city of Rotterdam as its performance captured statistically. The sector is measured by the size of the working population and by its economic valuation as a result of visitors spending. The main emphasis is placed on the cultural sector as targeted to outside visitors and the artistic activities are seen within the umbrella of consumption within the tourism industry. Culture here has a visitors function for it is seen as a visitor's attraction.

These statistics also show the performance of a city about which statements can be made on the economic position of the city. Again, the ANT perspective allows for these

relations to be seen within the network of the city as a brand assemblage. A sense making process takes place when the statistics are compared with the results of previous years or with statistics of other cities and Rotterdam's performance is set against the global trends and developments of the economy, contributing to the movement of the city brand network. By stating these comparisons, statistical evidence and facts can be used to define and support the city's position within the market. The numerical figures also serve as a starting point from where future proof decision can be made about policy and strategy plans. The economical figures also serve another function. Facts and figures about the city present information about the product that is the city. The business approach entails that to manage a company, detailed knowledge about the business and the product is necessary. The money streams in and out of the city are quantitatively measured revealing what the business or product entails. The different aspects of the city are divided into clusters that generate revenue and/or jobs. All the clusters together form a working business, the city. Hereby, the analysis is made that the network of city as a brand also includes the actors in the form of money and jobs as they shape again the movements of the city as a brand assemblage.

Furthermore, the financial structure that underlies this publicly funded arts and culture sector is directly connected actors to the branding strategy of the city. The arts and culture activities are judged on their impact and value on the city in relation to the Economic Vision that is set up by the municipality. The document analysis showed that this means that the money is allocated based on how well they fit Rotterdam's desired image that is captured in city policy documents (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2012). This again point out that the official city branding assemblage surrounds an understanding of the city from an economic revenue perspective. In the business approach that is taken within the brand assemblage, the main importance for the survival of the city is its economic health. The strategic underpinnings of the Rotterdam brand performance are thus mainly economical.

Citizens form another important actor within the city as a brand assemblage as analysis shows. Four of the fifteen documents analysed showed to use the citizens as a resource pool for information. These reports asked the opinion of Rotterdam's inhabitants and so formed a better image about how the city is perceived by its consumers. The following citation of the document analysis transcripts demonstrates this finding:

In 2030, Rotterdam wants to be the most important city port in Europe in the field of

knowledge and innovation. Rotterdam makes use of leisure economy as an inspiration for new business. Rotterdam will make space for entrepreneurs. Rotterdam will build in the existing urban area to provide for housing needs. Rotterdam will use its cultural heritage and architecture as a development asset.

(Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam, 2008, p.12, excerpt of document analysis transcripts)

The citation from the document analysis finds that Rotterdam as a brand is linked to the goals and desires of the city hall. In ANT terms this means that the city hall and the micro actors within this element are key actors within the building of the city as a brand network. They are highly influential to the shape of the city assemblage. The Rotterdam brand is used as a tool to support the economic visions set by the city hall. Monitoring the success of the city is done statistically capturing its developments and achievements.

All in all, the results discussed above show that the business perspective that effects the activities of the actors in the city assemblage are an important aspect of how the Rotterdam city brand assemblage is practiced. This shines through in the following section as well, where specific implementations of city brand assemblage practices are discussed.

4.1.3. Implementation of branding practices

Figure 7 summarizes the concepts by which the brand practices are captured by Rotterdam city branders and marketeers, as is derived from the document analysis method.

Brand and marketing strategy	
Corporate Identity	Rotterdam a young, international city along the water with a down to earth, driven mentality
Rotterdam Brand Values	Pioneering, No-nonsense, Cosmopolitan
Rotterdam DNA	International, Enterprising, Raw
Brand Tag	Rotterdam World Port World City
	Figure 7: Rotterdam brand concepts

This result shows that Rotterdam's brand is found to be produced out of an accumulation of the concepts 'corporate identity', 'brand values', 'city DNA' and a 'brand tag', summarized in figure 7 above. Some of these elements are congruent with Hankinson's (2004) development of a brand identity. He stated that the city should be performed with a certain personality that distinguishes the city from others. Rotterdam is described as ''young'' and international alongside the personality traits ''down to earth'' and ''driven''. These notions signify intangible attributes that are ascribed to Rotterdam's city brand. Within branding strategies this technique is used to convey a brand with which audiences can identify from an emotive point of view says Ekinci (2003). The articulated 'brand values', 'DNA' and 'brand tag' lead to a web of associations that are communicated with the brand. Together the four concrete concepts capture the city as a brand in the way the city branders want the city to be performed. Branding theory could have played a role in structuring Rotterdam's brand assemblage as the construction of a brand identity has been seen as a way to gain control over the city's reputation (Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). As such, the branding literature is again seen as one of the actors within Rotterdam as a brand assemblage.

The document analysis furthermore led to findings of more concrete examples of the way the city is assembled through mediated forms. A citation of the document transcription follows:

City branding principles we apply
1. *making mass together*
2. *partnering with region and beyond*
3. *made to measure & common thread*
4. *from incidental to structural*
5. *right tone of voice*
6. *the city as a décor*
7. *people experiencing the city*
8. *Rotterdam in the name*
9. *(free) publicity*
10. *ambassadors*

(Citation from the document transcription analysis)

The quote states that concrete ways to apply city branding principles follow the ten guidelines of the quote. Point six in the citation indicates that one way to express the brand values as captured in figure 7. Demonstrating this means that in the mediated communication about Rotterdam, the city's 'youth' or 'internationality' should be expressed in imagery in the media for example. The document analysis shows to textually capture ways in which Rotterdam as a city brand assemblage can be practiced. As actors the documents set into motion activities by other actors that collaboratively then produce the assemblage.

The third research method, participant observation provided results that compliment previous findings on the city brand assemblage. The on-sight observations showed that in the practice of performing Rotterdam as a brand a lot of Rotterdam's unique past as a city with a prominent harbour and as a city that was heavily affected by the Second Wold War, is used. For example, in communicating about the city, the emphasis on the city as an interesting architecture-city as result of the Second World War bombings is strongly stimulated. This way, the documents that textually capture the city's branding strategy influence the way the actors as Rotterdam Partners act and produce mediated communications that in itself actors that influence the assemblage of the city as Actor-network theory describes. According to the research data, staff city marketing of the Rotterdam municipality have chosen to incorporate the historical developments of Rotterdam in the construction of the city brand. The reconstruction of the city centre after the Rotterdam Blitz leads the narrative of the city brand that tells the story of a hands-on, no-nonsense, dynamic, atmosphere in the city. Rotterdam was rebuilt with modern architecture and this is used as one of Rotterdam's brand assets. Rotterdam brand purposely reflects back on the international working class people that the harbor brought into the city as a way of explaining the city brand's mentality as hard working, ''can do'' mentality. The historical events tell a story about Rotterdam that is an actor that is part of Rotterdam as a brand assemblage. Storytelling has a prominent place in ANT as stories form "the complex process of translation which forms a network also occasions some actors to emerge as spokespersons, articulating the views and wishes of other silent actors in the network" (Lela, 2009). Stories as part of the ANT approach thus shape the way the 'social' is constructed by actors and networks. The stories that are told within the city as a brand from an ANT perspective are thus a way of practicing Rotterdam as a brand assemblage.

According to Kavaratzis and Hatch (2005), branding allows for a demonstration of a place identity that embodies the city as it is currently or that of a desired city image. This

strategy is also applied within Rotterdam's city brand. On the one hand the city brand refers to historical events as they are perceived by the brand producers to continue to influence the city in its current days. The city remains to be associated with the harbor and the Rotterdam Blitz for example so brand managers decided to incorporate this past into city as a brand. On the other hand Rotterdam is performed as a brand that communicates a desired city image. Flyvbjerg (1998) argues that branding: "helps us to vision alternative futures" (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p.8, as cited in Jensen, 2007, p.215). In Rotterdam's city brand this is found true as research data shows that the brand value "Cosmopolitan" is a target value rather than a value that expresses the current Rotterdam mentality. The branding approach is used here to guide the attention of the audience into a desired direction.

However, the results show that though Rotterdam as a brand assemblage roughly matches with branding literature, the way Rotterdam as a brand is assembled, differs from what process based brand literature suggest. The city as a brand does not partake in a constant brand contestation or expression throughout conversations with the city's stakeholders (Hankinson, 2004; Rainisto, 2003; Kavaratzis, 2005; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). Instead the city as a brand assemblage is constructed of fixed concepts developed according to Rotterdam´s city hall´s economic goals. The city as a brand is thought of in terms of value propositions and revenue models meaning that the 'brand' is used as a strategic tool used by Rotterdam city hall.

4.1.4. Ways of practicing Rotterdam city brand assemblage

The three research methods that were conducted complement each other in revealing how Rotterdam city brand assemblage is practiced. All the actors discussed above, work together resulting in Rotterdam as a brand assemblage that is strategically communicated. The image of Rotterdam as a city is seen in a conceptualized manner by the actors in the city branding network and simultaneously in itself forms an actor within the city assemblage. The image of Rotterdam is captured in brand strategies and reports by several actors whom are important within the brand assemblage such as Rotterdam city hall, advisory boards and brand consultancy agencies and the micro actors within these elements. The image of the city as an actor is mediated and communicated through the associations of the city by its architectural features and as having certain personality traits. All of these activities are highly influenced by the business-orientated approach that is embedded in the actions of all

actors within the assemblage. Moreover specific ways of carrying out Rotterdam's story illustrate how the city as an assemblage is practiced. Though the ways of practicing city as a brand assemblage are not articulated extensively and are often abstract, concrete examples of how Rotterdam city brand assemblage is practiced are for example: the usage of the 'name' Rotterdam or using story telling imagery on the city. The actors, their activities and the relations among each other all contribute to the way the city is practiced as a brand assemblage.

4.2. Local artistic practices in connection to the city as assemblage

4.2.1. Embeddedness of the city in local artistic practices

From the results that followed from the three research methods, the findings from the interviews and participant observation methods are found the most relevant as these data collection procedures offer rich first hand data. The participant observation methods showed that the De Derde Dinsdag event as artistic practice quite literally takes a focus on the city of Rotterdam. The first result that offers explanation on how local artistic practices relate to the city as assemblage is presented here.

> *What is your connection with Rotterdam?*
>
> *What would you like to see disappearing from Rotterdam?*
>
> *What do you think the city still misses?*
>
> (Extract from participant observations field notes De Derde Dinsdag event)

At the DDD event this reoccurring set of questions are asked by the host as a way to get to know the special guest of the evening. The audience gets to know the guest through questions the interaction that takes place on stage between the host, the guest and the showcasing act. This fixed set of questions link directly to the city of Rotterdam as they provoke stories and opinion about the way guest, as part of the arts and culture community, perceives the city. As such, these field notes of the participant observation data show that the city sometimes quite literately is reproduced by the local arts and culture community. These questions demonstrate that during DDD the arts and culture community reflect on the city and reassemble the place as a way to understand their environment and the relationship they

have with the city. De Derde Dinsdag as an activity produced by the arts and culture community follows similar language as is used in ANT. The questions asked during the event reveal the way the artistic community constructs or would like to construct their city or 'social', in line with what ANT allows to be revealed. The guest (actor) shows the way he/she moves around in the city and acts in particular ways that is connected to other actors. For example, the guest that answers these questions most likely articulates his or hers interaction with the infrastructure of the city or buildings or other people that are all actors embedded in the network that is the city as assembled by the artistic community. This way bits and pieces are revealed through which way the artistic community members construct their social world during DDD (Law, 2009). Observing the DDD event these questions are part of the city assemblage of the artistic network as they reveal the articulation of the city in the arts and community's own language.

Participant observation furthermore allowed for the revelation that artistic practices are embedded with stories connected to the city that articulate the city as assemblage. As Lela (2009) mentioned, stories are an important concept within ANT. Stories reveal views on 'the social' as expressed through certain actors. An excerpt from participant observation analysis illustrates this:

During De Derde Dinsdag 18 March, 2014, special guest Bernadette brought with her a picture of the Fenixlofts [former warehouse that is being renovated into a residential building]. Bernadette expresses her enthusiasm about this project: nostalgia of the old warehouses that now will become mixed-use creative spaces. The lofts are empty so she gets to design the interior herself.

(Extract from participant observation field notes De Derde Dinsdag 18 March, 2014)

The special guest of the De Derde Dinsdag is asked to bring item with them that they would like to share with the audience. The items that are brought into the 'talk show' of De Derde Dinsdag (DDD) ranged from photo's to an interactive music quiz. The picture that Bernadette showed, captured a spatial space within Rotterdam that Bernadette find significant enough to show to the audience. In this case, the picture tells the story of Rotterdam as a place of new and old buildings that provide space for creatives to renovate this space in the city according to their own visions. The item tells a story about the city as seen from her perspective and shared with the audience of De Derde Dinsdag. The questions

and the item sharing illustrate that the structure of the evening spark conversations and stories that reflect how the city is constructed by the arts and culture community in Rotterdam.

Actor Network theory allows for all actors within a city to be viewed as equally significant in the production of city as assemblage. These items are important in the analysis of how the artistic community connects to the city during DDD; they have a role within the network as they add to the formation of the city assemblage in relation to other actors. Furthermore, the story that is seen as part of these items express and explain the way the city is understood by actors. From an ANT perspective, De Derde Dinsdag, structured through questions and story sharing activities, in itself creates a new story that acts within the network of relations resulting in the city as assemblage. ANT allows the perspective to arise that the De Derde Dindag event not only because of its content but also as a whole is, an actor that is connected to the city of Rotterdam.

4.2.2. How local artistic practices connect to the city as assemblage

The results that follow show the way local artistic practices express meaning and make sense of their relationship with the city of Rotterdam as understood through actors within the arts and culture network. This brings into effect the city as assemblage as produced by local artistic practices in Rotterdam.

Firstly, the participant observation method allowed for this research to see how the artistic community produces a certain view on Rotterdam by attaching certain characteristics and associations to the city:

Rotterdammers are stubborn, only if they feel like it they come to the theatre, they do whatever pleases them. In The Hague people are even harder to convince to come to the theatre but they are loyal. You can count on them. They say Rotterdammers are erratic, in Rotterdam they are somewhat hesitant.

(De Derde Dinsdag, 18 March 2014, Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, participant observation transcripts)

The Rotterdam mentality is just fine. We grumble but that is okay.

(De Derde Dinsdag, 15 April 2014, Maas Theater, participant observation transcripts)

These quotes refer to the mentality of the city's inhabitants, the 'Rotterdammers'. These quotes show that the artistic community of Rotterdam indicate the city and its people in specific ways as stubborn, erratic and positively whiny. The local arts and culture community describe their social world as characteristically stubborn with a sense of pride that is not extravagantly displayed. This means that the city is reflected upon in the conversations held during the De Derde Dinsdag (DDD). By doing this, the typical 'Rotterdammer' is distinguished from people elsewhere as happens in the quote above where the Rotterdammer is compared to people from The Hague. McMillan (1996) stated that identifying in and out-members of groups, in this case Rotterdammers are the in-group and people from The Hague are not; this indicates the process of community forming. This community forming is based on the relations between the people and the city as a geographical location (Benabou, 1993).

The event and the conversations held during the event helped produce a certain image about Rotterdam as seen through the eyes of the artistic community. From ANT perspective this is understood as effects that contribute to the network of local artistic city assemblage. More relationships are revealed though the interview method. The data shows that the community in itself also is subject to a specific articulation by artistic community-members.

[T]here are initiatives and groups that, by nature are very accessible and they also make very accessible art. There is a lot of freedom to do so – not always money, but a lot of freedom.

(Cynthia)

The interviews show that the community is generally characterised as an open and accessible group of like-minded people. The following quote by another interviewee agrees with this:

In Rotterdam you have less of that established order and less established institutions. So if you start something here, there isn't any real group that doesn't fit in or that does something in a different way that will compete with others. [Here] everybody has equal right to exist and equal possibilities to do things and I think that is different from Amsterdam. [...] You can easily start things here and such a community really helps with that and that is

how such a scene arises as well I think.

(Floris)

Again the community is articulated in comparison with other cities, Amsterdam this time. The quotes show that the community is characterized as accessible and open to others and entrepreneurial as opposed to established. The arts and culture community identify themselves clearly as 'Rotterdammers' and through this reflection on their sense of belongingness, they enhance this community feeling.

Secondly, the results show that artistic practices connect to the city as assemblage by evoking feelings of identification. Through the existence of artistic activity the connection to the city as assemblage becomes stronger as the interviews revealed. The following quotes illustrate this:

I am Rotterdammer. Born and raised Rotterdammer

(spoken with Rotterdam accent)

(Anna)

Rotterdam really is my city. I am not sure yet if I will live here for the rest of my life but for now it is still fun

(Cynthia)

The quotes show that the arts and culture perspective articulates the city as a place that they identify with. History plays an important part in this identification citizens feel with a place as it is established "from the intrinsic features and history of a given place" and leads to place attachment (Mayes, 2008, p.125, as cited in Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013, p.5). Place attachment as Derrett (2003) states is the emotive relation people feel towards a place (Lewicka, 2008). Both Anna and Cynthia indicate to have an emotional attachment towards Rotterdam. In search for a sense of belonging these people share their attachment with others within a community that offers them a safe place to express this identity (Hill, 1996; McMillan, 1996). This is also the case within the Rotterdam arts and culture community, is visible when Katelyn and Anna in the interview mention people from the south of Rotterdam:

Katelyn: *it would be nice to work together with theatre Walhalla [a theatre] or Lantaren Venster [a cinema] more things from south [of Rotterdam].*

Anna: *We don't have anyone from the south? Do we only have people from here?*

<div align="right">(interview transcript Katelyn and Anna)</div>

The quote shows that this identification is not only city bound but can be more specifically area bound. Katelyn and Anna feel that there is a difference between Southerners and themselves. The artistic community expresses a selective sense of the city as they differentiate between 'them' and 'others' as the interviews have revealed:

It is a village; it is very small or yeah a scene. It is, very quickly you know a lot of people via via, because everybody knows each other. In that sense it is small. It is also centred because here in Witte de With there is a lot and then on South there is also a lot indeed. I feel comfortable.

<div align="right">(Floris)</div>

This quote again hints on the different geographical clustering of the local arts and culture community in Rotterdam; 'here' and 'South'. Furthermore, the quote shows that the city is mainly seen in connection with the creative community. Positive emotions are attached to the city as a place for the local arts and culture community to express themselves. This affective reaction reveals that the way the interviewees as actors feel about the city that they live and work in. Floris indicates that he is attached to the place because he feels 'comfortable' whereas Cynthia quotes earlier that her affection for Rotterdam was strong enough for her to stay and live in the city. The interviews indicate that part of the place attachment is the emotive 'feeling at home' in a city. These feelings of happiness and a sense of belongingness are provoked that are very much city bound. These strong emotions that are revealed through the interviews and the participant observation method show that the connection that relates the actors of the artistic community to the city, is emotionally loaded. From an ANT perspective these feelings are embeddedness of into the activities of all actors and thus influence the city as an assemblage.

Thirdly, findings regarding the sense making process through which way local artistic practices connect to the city as assemblage. The following extract from the participant observation transcript illustrates this:

Thijs Kelder (artist) operates as graphic designer "Ruwe Data" and gives a preview of his latest art work during De Derde Dinsdag. The art piece called "Night Vision" forms the new façade for the cultural institute WORM in Witte de With street. The façade is inspired by the history of the street that was once the site of brothels, drug deals and other nightlife entertainment. The art piece embeds a crowd funding element as everyone can contribute to the façade by donating money and a word that they think describes Rotterdam.

(De Derde Dinsdag, 18 March, 2014, Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art)

The history of the city is integrated in the art works that are made by Thijs Kelder, part of the Rotterdam arts and culture community. Local arts and culture events hint at the past in the creation of their activities. De Derde Dinsdag shows that historical stories inspire local artists and historical references are often found in their contemporary arts and culture works. Borer (2006) explains that knowledge on the history of a city is found to help citizens to make meaning out of the place they live in (Borer, 2006). Through art and culture works, the citizens are reconnected to the history of Rotterdam. The artwork re-established the history and through this artistic production the arts and culture community make sense of their environment and assemble it as a city.

Fourthly, the artistic practices that take place within the city reflect upon the city as a space where the artistic community can express themselves. The participant observation method has made this clear:

Anna: *What should there still be added to Rotterdam?*
Minke: *a big pop venue, like Paradiso (in Amsterdam)*
Anna: *Is that a shortcoming that Rotterdam has?*
Minke: *Yes, that is absurd. How could we not have something like that in Rotterdam? It is the municipality; Club Watt [former pop venue] should have gotten more money. If you say A you have to say B. Now there is not a lot going to happen because there are too many different parties [...] A venue like that offers a space for people that want to organize parties or dance evenings. It is an incubator for new things. The city misses that at the moment.*

By pointing out what Minke feels is missing in Rotterdam, her view on the city becomes clear. The city is seen as a place where ideas should be able to be turned into reality, a playground for the artistic community. The local artistic community interprets the city as a place for arts and culture activities and events through which the arts and culture practices express symbolic meanings and creative ideas. This is in contrast to the business and economic approach the official branding perspective reveals. The creative community reflects on the city in similar ways as Mumford (1937) constructs a city. Mumford (1937) discusses the city as integral to the development of human culture and is understood as submissive to human interaction and human expressiveness. The city forms the foundation that supports social life which in the case of the local artistic articulation of the city means that the city is a place for community forming (Mumford, 1937). Another extract from the participant observation transcript strengthens the finding that the city is understood as a stage for artistic endeavours:

At De Derde Dinsdag, 18 February 2014, the guest Alma (female) praises the work of ZUS, an architecture agency that as squatters occupied an otherwise unused building. When the municipality of Rotterdam decided to demolish it citizens were mobilized to counter this because the building had been used by various creative start ups. At De Derde Dinsdag, 15 April 2014, curator of DEAF (Dutch Electronic Art Festival) introduced the topic of the festival themed "progress trap". As was explained, this theme explores the flaws of technological development for society. All the while Antoinette Laan former vice mayor of Rotterdam joined the De Derde Dinsdag and was openly contributing to the discussions that took place during the evening.

(Field notes De Derde Dinsdag 18 February and 15 April, 2014)

The extract from the participant observation field notes show that arts and culture activities can counter political or technological developments. Arts and culture events can open up debate and can lead to discussion about certain topics on the (political) agenda. The arts and culture community is a critical mass that through their practices analyse the society that they live in. Arts and cultural events are a way for the community to express their own sense of place. Markusen and Gadwa (2010) researched this notion in their study and indeed found that through arts and culture the producers can socially and politically critique the

world around. Arts and culture sparks debate, adds to the public discourse, touched upon the taboos in society and identifies cracks (Garoian, 1999). Through the message arts and culture activities express, they are able to holds up a mirror to society. As such, the city is seen as a place where artists have the freedom to express themselves.

Lastly, artistic practices are connected to the city as assemblage whereby functionality plays parts.

 [...] *for my work it is important. I would prefer to live on a farm in the middle of nowhere but that doesn't work because then, yeah it is not practical for my work so in that sense I think it is necessary [to live in the city] or you have to be that good that you get project assigned all the time. Then you can live nicely in the middle of nowhere but you will need to be active yourself, then it [living in the city] is easy.*

(Floris)

Floris articulates that the city is not just a stage where creative activities can be performed; it is also a place that is convenient to live because others live there too. This refers to the importance of the arts and culture community but it also indicates that the local arts and culture perspective formulate the city as crucial in the economic survival of the community. As previous findings have shown, networking events are the driving force behind the artistic community which, seen the experiential nature of arts activities is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Becker (1982) has analysed art communities in his researches before and came to the same conclusion. The social network and the collaborative relations between actors in the arts community are inherent to the way this community operates (Becker, 1982; Currid, 2007). The art practices rely on collaboration and a supportive network whilst at the same time being a social networking event in itself. The art practices are expressions of place culture whilst at the same time reinforcing place identity and attachment.

All these actors together from network of the city as assembled by the local artistic community of Rotterdam. The findings together form answer to the question how local artistic practices are connected to the city as an assemblage. The characteristics that are attached to the city by the community are embedded in the activities of the actors within the city as assemblage network. Secondly, artistic practices enhance the linkage actors have with the city through identification and attachment towards the city as seen in through the eyes of the local artistic community. The art or events enhance awareness about the city and is found to even enhance the attachment and identification of people with the city whereby the

connection between local artistic practices and city assemblage is evident. Thirdly, the sense making of the city and the social environment in which the artistic community operates show that artistic practices inherently are related to the place of where the art or culture activities are created and performed. This interconnectedness very much follows an ANT perspective as the sense making process resembles the networked view of the city by ANT. Fourthly local artistic practices connect to the city as they use it as their stage for artistic activities and freedom of expression. Lastly the city is related to in a function manner as the relationship with other actors, e.g. work, people, exposure through media, is the strongest in the city.

4.3. Linkages between city brand and artistic assemblage

Interestingly, the way Rotterdam is assembled through local artistic practices resembles the way the city is talked about by the official city hall brand managers. The city as a brand has captured characteristic associations in the 'brand DNA' whereas the artistic community are found to articulate similar characteristic of the city in the data analysis. Rotterdammers are performed in the brand as 'un-Dutch', 'non-bourgeois' and 'modestly proud' (in Dutch: niet-kneuterig, ingetogen trots). The down to earth mentality is also apparent in the city assemblage of the local artistic community. The former articulates this by capturing 'no-nonsense' as official Rotterdam brand value, whilst the latter performs Rotterdam as place where a lot is possible and where outsiders are welcome as long as they are hard working. The official city brand perspective linked this 'open-minded', diverse and dynamic mentality to the city's development exceeding its port-city reputation and post World War II recovery. The mentality of Rotterdammers that the local artistic community describes is likely to be a result of these events as well but this state of mind is not perceived to be a narrative that helps the city to be 'sold'. Both the official branding of the city and arts and cultural events perspective are rooted in the historical events of the city and this reveals that there is agreement about the characterisation of the city. This finding conveys that Rotterdam's sense of place is understood in similar ways by the two city assemblages researched in this study. Sense of place refers to the way people make meaning out of their environment and how they construct, produce or assemble their world (Florida, Mellander & Rentfrow, 2011; Latour, 2005). References to the history of a place help to create meaning out of these past

experiences in current city assemblage processes (Jensen, 2007; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). The official brand perspective has captured the city as young, down to earth, driven, pioneering, no nonsense, international and raw. The local artistic brand perspective agrees with this image when articulating the city as open, dynamic, diverse, down to earth and innovative.

In ANT terms this means that there is a connection between the two networks that are analysed in this paper. The associations Rotterdam evokes are embedded in some of the activities of actors from both assemblages from which a relationship between the two assemblages arises. However, the process of expressing and carrying out this sense of place the official branding and the local artistic community assemblages take different paths. As the following section will discuss, the assemblages are found to differ more than that they relate to each other.

4.4. Differences in the official city brand and local artistic city assemblage
4.4.1.   Branding versus anti-branding

The first difference between the two city assemblages is found to lie at face value. The city as a brand assemblage incorporates branding literature into the network formation whereas the arts and culture community strongly disagrees with the world view of the city as a brand assemblage as a whole. The participant observation method illustrates this as the topic of city marketing is discussed during the De Derde Dinsdag event.

Anna (female):   *This year Rotterdam was placed in the New York Times 'places to visit' list.The city marketing of the city Rotterdam should present itself as 'the architecture city'.*

Guus (male):   *Well I think the politicians are very happy with that but for me the city was already in the top lists. We have been the architecture city for years already right? Ever since the Second World War we were this. City marketing just means that we have to sell it more. I think we should be 'and, and', not 'just' architecture. We shouldn't bet on one horse, we have to celebrate diversity. Just like is done now with fashion, design and architecture in the merger of The New Institute [cultural institution: former Netherlands Architecture Institute, Premsela and Virtueel Platform]. When we think about the city in a new way, we should ask questions to the audience, make cross over's. Don't just focus on the classic big pillars.*

This excerpt from De Derde Dinsdag (DDD) event shows that a contrasting view is taken on the city in comparison to the official city brand assemblage. The fragment above shows that an almost anti-branding stance is taken, opposing 'Rotterdam as a brand assemblage' as produced city hall, discussed in section 4.1. This research shows that the arts and culture community dispute the notion of 'branding' that is associated with the overly displaying the city in a particular way. The way the city is articulated during DDD contradicts that the city should be captured in concise 'branding' concepts. The local artistic community does not feel the necessity of motivating their actions with a branding approach but rather they let their worldview arise naturally as they move around, work and live in the city. The way the artistic community assemble the city is only influenced by the artists are able to perform their artistic practices. As performing arts and culture is 'work', the artists see the city as a place necessary for their monetary survival however this does not lead to heavy business minded approach as was seen in the city as a brand assemblage, chapter 4.1. Instead the artistic community assemblage consists of an inclusive and emotional way of interpreting the city as a stage.

4.4.2. Citizen actor

A second difference that arises from the data analysis is the role citizen's play within the networks analysed in this paper. From the results show that within the city as a brand assemblage citizens are seen as audience actors whereas the city as assembled by Rotterdams local arts and culture community looks at current citizens within the network.

External audiences

The business perspective that the city as brand assemblage follows affects the role of the citizens in the network. Through data analysis this research finds that citizens are addressed as 'customers' enhancing the business minded perspective whereby branding practices are aimed at external audiences as potential citizens of Rotterdam. From both the interviews and

document analysis data the findings arose that citizens are addressed as customers as the following quote illustrates:

What is the reason to do it [branding a city] all? You do it for the happiness of your customers. Regarding [the standard of] living [in the city] you want them to rate [your city] with a minimum score of 8, you want for them to feel content, that they feel like they can blossom [in your city]. Then you are doing it right as a city.

(Robbert)

Robbert talks about the branding strategy as performed by Rotterdam Partners. Robbert (male) states that the aim of 'branding' a city is to satisfy the citizens of the city whom he calls ''customers''. The measurement of this satisfaction is in this quote meant metaphorically, based on a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 being perfect happiness. This quote clearly shows that the city as a brand world view sees the city as an entity that can be 'sold' to 'customers' with the aim to make them happy. The document analysis found that in performing the city as a brand strategic thought is put into how these customers can be approached. The document analysis shows that the city council follows the typology of target audiences that have also been recognized in branding literature namely visitors, residents and companies/investors (Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker, 2010; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009; Zenker, 2008). The Rotterdam city council and brand strategists and managers determined 'students' as additional fourth target audience (Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam, 2008). The reason for this fourth audience segment in the Rotterdam brand assemblage is found when linking back to the brand identity of Rotterdam as a brand. City's brand identity is captured as ''young, international city along the water'' explaining that in the performance of the city as a brand, city hall attempts to display the city as a young place. Students are then considered a suitable audience segment to communicate the brand towards. This shows that brand managers have thus articulated different meanings and goals alongside the performance of Rotterdam as a brand according to the four established target audiences.

The work of Rotterdam Partners as is found from data addresses mainly citizens of Rotterdam as one of the target audiences of the city as a brand. The city as a brand is aimed at the happiness of the city's customers who live in the city. The assumption rises that the

city as a brand is performed towards the internal resident as a 'consumer' of the city to improve their lives and through this to improve the city as the interviews show:

[…] improve the image of the city as a 'living-city' [as a place to live].

(Petra)

Again here, the city is performed as having an image that can be branded, a narrative that is used in most branding literature (Rainisto, 2003; Hankinson, 2004; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). The connection between branding literature and the work of Rotterdam Partners is again visible within the assemblage. Petra talks about the city as having an 'image' that can be improved and steered towards a 'living-city': a city that is nice to live in. Gardner and Levy (1955) discussed the image of a brand as the impression of a place in the mind of the audiences. Branding theory regards this image as something that needs to be guided and in this case the brand producers believe that the city should be seen as a good place to live (Anholt, 2010). This way, the literature as one actor can be seen as to influences the behavior of the actors at Rotterdam Partners. The interview method resulted in data on the way Rotterdam's official city brand marketer's work tries to influence the way the city is perceived. The following fragment explains some of the projects that are created to reach 'customers':

Rotterdam Partner's brand performance is directed towards the citizens of Rotterdam as ''target audience residents'' through several projects that Petra elaborates on. Examples of these projects are 'Livin-fair', 'Gluren bij de buren' and 'Staycation'. The Livin-Fair was an interior home fair that in the presentation is meant for locals who are looking into moving, decorating, etc. Gluren bij de Buren (Peeking at the Neighbours) was a project that invited those who are interested to visit locals that open up their house for the audiences to get a sneakpeak into what it would be like to live there. Project Staycation was a range of holiday offers for 'vacationers' to go on vacation in their own city.

(information based on interview transcription of Petra)

The data seemingly revealed that the city brand is performed inwards towards Rotterdammers with the aim to increase their happiness regarding living in the city. However, in exploring the relationship between the brand performance and the audience that this performance reaches, a different conclusion can be drawn as the following quote explains:

They [the people that the living-city projects are meant for] are of course people who study here or who want to come back to the city, former Rotterdammers who live outside of the city now, those who find it very interesting what is happening here. There are also interested people from outside who want to know what kind of cool things are happening in Rotterdam but you also just have curious people [who participate in the projects that Petra named]. And what you also see is that people don't move outside of their neighbourhood and when they then visit another neighbourhood [with such a project] they tend to think 'oh what is this nice', so in that sense it works too.

So we show them [with such projects they show the city], because if you enter the city you don't know these [locals who open up their house] kinds of things and it works really well. Last year we had people from Eindhoven, Groningen so from all over the country they came to see Rotterdam. That just gives a lot of boost and media attention.

(Petra)

Both quotes articulate the people that the brand managers want to reach with the Livin-Fair and the 'Gluren bij bij de Buren'-project. Seemingly these projects are directed inwards towards current Rotterdam citizens. However, though the projects themselves also attract current citizens of Rotterdam, the focus seems to lie on the performance of the city in the media and outwards towards new audiences. Rather than heightening the satisfaction of current Rotterdam residents these projects are aimed at promoting 'living in the city' outwards. The target audience of 'residents' is reached but the definition of the official city brand producers does not entail current residents as much as it articulates potential or new citizens from outside of the city. The official brand performance is targeted at attracting potential and new citizens, workers, visitors or students rather than enhancing the satisfaction of current citizens, workers, visitors or students. In ANT terms, the external audiences or the potential citizens of the city are important actors that influence most of the activities done by other actors within the network.

Another actor is seemed to play a part in the assemblage of the city as a brand that is different from the city as assembled by the arts community. Statistics play a role in the assemblage of the city as a brand for they are used to get to know the 'customers'.

At the end of 2007, after years of stability, for the first time an increase was measured of the percentage of Rotterdammers that sometimes attends a cultural performance. The results of

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2009 and 2011 show that this share remains consistently higher. For years, 75 percent of the Rotterdammers indicated to attend a performance but the last years this figure is around 80 percent.

(document analysis transcripts: Heessels & de Vries, 2011, p.5)

The quote above emphasises again that statistics are used within the branding perspective to reveal the performance of the different sectors of Rotterdam. The quote above shows that measurements are also important to provide information on the 'consumers' of the city and how they behave. Looking at the city as a business or product also means that you have to know your customers to see what they need, want or seek. Statistics can expose a lot of information about the customers of the city in the form of demographic information and employment rates. Statistics are considered then actors within the city as brand assemblage that have the specific role to expose information of other actors such as the 'customers'.

Internal quality of life

Contrastingly, the city as articulated through artistic and cultural practices is not directed at outsiders or potential Rotterdammers. This shows from the following quotes that discuss the audience of De Derde Dinsdag event:

Katelyn: *preferably [De Derde Dinsdag would like to attract] people who are already interested in culture because people who are not interested [in arts and culture] of course wont visit any performances [of the participating arts and culture institutions in De Derde Dinsdag] afterwards and they won't like to program [of De Derde Dinsdag talkshow] anyways so[with De Derde Dinsdag we want to attract] people who want to know what kind of activities take place in Rotterdam.*

Anna: *It's funny because that [the audience of De Derde Dinsdag] is of course very diverse. [the audience] varies, on the one hand they are friends of my little sister, she is 26, and on the other hand they are friends of my parents who dutifully come every time because they like it [De Derde Dinsdag].*

(Katelyn & Anna)

Katelyn and Anna describe the people that visited to De Derde Dinsdag event. These citizens of Rotterdam are not directly referred to as ''the audiences'' but indicated as ''those who want to know what kind of activities take place in Rotterdam'' (Katelyn). This contradicts with the way audiences are characterised by the city as assemblage where audiences are to be persuaded to 'consume' the city. The interviews show that in contrast to the way residents are talked about as 'customers' in the city as a brand, Katelyn and Anna anticipate that the citizens that are interested in arts and culture will visit De Derde Dinsdag voluntarily. The arts and culture community look their 'audiences' more loosely and consequently perceive Rotterdam citizens as people with agency that act on personal interests and behave according own motives. Instead of strategically thinking about the citizens of Rotterdam as 'customers' towards whom the city needs to be 'sold', the citizens of Rotterdam as part of the artistic city assemblage are respected for their diversity and own interests. Different from the external actors in the city as a brand assemblage, the current citizens of Rotterdam are important actors within the city as described by the artistic community as the interviews showed:

It is a real Rotterdam event because only cultural institutions and people from Rotterdam are featured. Something that won't happen is that somebody from Amsterdam will be invited to promote a performance in Amsterdam.

(Cynthia)

As Cynthia states, the event is aimed towards the locals of Rotterdam and as such the locals of Rotterdam are related to by other actors within the artistic network. This is in contrast to the city as a brand performance when Petra indicated that the brand was performed outwards towards potential Rotterdam citizens. The underlying thought of the brand and arts city perspectives differ. The former aims at attracting new 'customers' whilst the latter focuses on entertaining current citizens. This notion is part of the activities of people in the city as assembled by the artistic community. In the city as a brand assemblage the relationship with potential citizens depends on a commercial or business oriented approach whereas the artistic practices do not directly focus on this kind of relationship:

Well, I think the goal on the one hand is to let it [De Derde Dinsdag] be an evening on itself that you have to attend because a lot happens, because it is fun to attend so it is not only calling attention to this is then and that is then. Really a lot of entertaining things [performances] happen [at the event] and on the other hand it is of course really a business

card I think for the different things that can be visited in the field of arts and culture in Rotterdam.

(Anna)

The interviews showed that the De Derde Dinsdag (DDD) is aimed towards the locals to offer them entertainment. The evening is seen as an event that can be experienced as a leisure activity and as a live cultural agenda of the cultural offerings of Rotterdam. The event on the one hand aims to inform the audiences about Rotterdam's cultural activities whilst at the same time being an entertaining cultural evening in itself. The DDD can be seen as touching upon the quality of life of current citizens in the city by offering them a leisure activity that as a symbolic practice leads to feelings of happiness according to Markusen and Gadwa (2010). As the theoretical framework discussed, arts and culture practices in a city are found to relate to the general satisfaction of citizens with the place they live in as it provides a social and free-time experience (Garcia, Fernandez, & Zofio, 2003; Leyden, Goldberg, Michelbach, 2011). As such, the quality of life within the cities is believed to be enhanced by the arts and culture community as they enjoy participating in the cultural activities (Currid, 2007). The motivations in their actions are steered towards heightening the quality of life of themselves and of other actors through artistic activity. This is in stark contrast with the economical motivations underlying the actions those involved in the city as brand assemblage discussed above.

The business perspective of the city as brand assembalge vis-à-vis the quality of life perspective continues in the following difference between the two city assemblages that mark the lack of a relationship between the city as brand and artistic city assemblage. The next chapter discusses that though both assemblages rely on collaboration, the understanding of 'collaboration' is different for both assemblages.

4.4.3. Focus on collaboration

Another finding that reveals that there is little connection between the way the city is assembled by branding professionals and the arts and culture community in Rotterdam is the way collaboration is integrated into the network. The city as brand assemblage relies on collaboration against the backdrop of the business perspective to create an effective brand. In the arts and culture community collaboration arises naturally through the interactions that

take place in the city and is thus acted upon in a different way from the city as a brand assemblage.

Strategic partnerships

The way collaborations play a part in the city as a brand assemblage are discussed based on the following quotes:

Together we form the power of Rotterdam.

<div align="right">(Gemeente Rotterdam, 2013, p.1)</div>

Marketing the city brand is a joint effort and is in everyone's interest. The brand Rotterdam is a shared responsibility. One city, one story!

<div align="right">(Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam, 2008, p.1)</div>

The language used within the city branding perspective stresses togetherness and collaboration as the quotes above from the government reports show. The official branding strategy reasons that the city has 'one story' that is attempted to be captured within the city as a single brand entity. Within the brand assemblage ways are sought to incorporate the multiple assemblages of the city that are produced by various other actors through activities and practices. This shows for example from the following findings in the branding literature that acknowledge that the city is a multifaceted 'product'. Academic literature on branding theory has claimed that the city is a complex product existing of several dimensions with multiple stakeholders (Amin & Graham, 1997; Anholt, 2006; Kavaratzis, 2005; Mumford, 1937). This means that the brand managers are aware of the numerous other city assemblages that emerge next to the official city brand assemblage.

Rotterdam's city as a brand process have narrowed their focus towards the various other city assemblages down to the city as assembled by residents, business, visitors and students as these are confirmed stakeholders within the city branding production. As discussed above, these set of actors are perceived to be target audiences of the city as a brand, meaning that these target audiences are represented in the city as a brand.

The brand managers believe that stimulating collaboration between the city brand managers and these city stakeholders is a way to include the multiple ways of seeing the city into one coherent city brand. The concepts of "co-creation" and "cross-over's" are used in

Rotterdam's brand performance but also in branding literature an increase of stakeholder involvement branding research is found. Encouragement of stakeholder involvement in branding strategies is apparent in the branding models that follow a dynamic and process based approach, discussed in the theoretical framework (Hankinson, 2004; Kavaratzis, 2005; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Rainisto, 2003). These theoretical frameworks focus on the relational and networked perspective with the aim to include stakeholders in the process of branding. This shows however, that the emphasis on co-creation of the city brand remains fairly abstract and practiced on a theoretical level rather than in the implementation of the city as a brand.

The documents, as actors in the city as a brand assemblage, analysed in the document analysis also signified that various city assemblages are recognized. The research data was characterized by the numerous intertextual references that were made to other documents by other parties. Municipal reports, independent brand research and economic and cultural advisory papers are tied to each other for they build on each other. The brand strategy document by Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam (2008, p.12) for example directly refers to the official municipal documents: City Vision Rotterdam (2007) and the social and economic vision 2020. Also Gemeente Rotterdam (2013) draws on economic analysis documents and advisory reports to build its arguments. This demonstrates that the set of actors that are concerned with the economical performance of the city are recognized to assemble the city according to their own world view. This shows that the city as an official brand assemblage, tries to capture the city's economical and social point of view into the official city brand. The official brand assemblage suggests to see the city as one that exists on collaborative actions. The emphasis on collaboration within the city as a brand assemblage is understood to be a way to narrow down the multitude of narratives into one:

The municipality is part of the city and not the other way around. It cannot be that only the municipality is responsible for the city image. Totally not. They are an important player but they shouldn't have the illusion that they are the final responsible.

(Robbert)

The quote shows that in the official city branding performance the city itself is (or should be) the starting point from where all the narratives about the city arise. The city is the foundation from which all the stakeholders build their social world around. The quote indicates that though the city hall is not the only one to create a city assemblage, all the

different assemblages will benefit from merging the views into one 'city as a brand' story. The reasoning behind the performance of togetherness relates to the benefits the co-creation branding theory discusses. Stimulating more efficient communication between government, companies and citizens is a possible outcome of collaborative city brand according to Braun, Kavaratzis and Zenker (2010). Others articulate a more functional rationale as they believe that co-creation allows for the expression of a consistent message supported by all stakeholders (Zouganeli, Trihas & Antonaki, 2012). In order to achieve these positive results the collaborative approach is included in the performance of the city as a brand.

It's just, in potential there are 620.000 ambassadors and some of them couldn't care less of course, merely 20 or 40 percent maybe [would care]. There are a lot of people who, if you inform them what happens, could be potential ambassadors [of the city].

(Robbert)

In this quote, Robbert focuses on the stakeholders of the city brand as internal audiences as the 620.000 number refers to the amount of inhabitants Rotterdam has. The quote illustrates that these different voices are recognized as ''ambassadors'' that all involve in practices that assemble their social world. Data shows that "ambassadors" are pointed out and chosen by the brand managers to be spokespersons of the city to carry out the city as the official brand towards others. The document analysis shows that the Rotterdam residents are recognized as a city assemblers but their view on the city is not leveraged upon in the expressions of the official city brand. The city "ambassadors" are invited to perform the city as a brand as is produced by the city marketing staff at city hall and Rotterdam Partners.

Concluding, the strategy underlying Rotterdam's official city branding reveals to promote "collaboration" as a strategy to perform the city as a brand. The official branding strategies follows the approach that current branding literature promotes (Hankinson, 2004; Kavaratzis, 2005; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Rainisto, 2003). That is, they articulate the importance of collaboration in the strategy. In the implementation of this city brand however the focus lies mainly on the outliers, the talented citizens as actors rather than incorporating the everyday citizen of Rotterdam. The implementation of the branding as a collaborative approach is seen to be an enforced practice of establishing strategic partnerships, rather than one that allows for the city as a brand to emerge naturally from the co-creations and collaborations that take place within the city (Hatch and Schultz, 2010). In choosing to perform the city as a brand certain city assemblage productions are left out in the merger of

one single city 'brand'. As a result of this, this section shows, the city as assembled by the arts and culture community is one of the assemblages that is not clearly included in the city as a brand assemblage.

Natural collaborative network

Collaboration is also part of the city as assembled by the arts and culture community, though in a very different way than the city as a brand performance shows. In relation to the local arts and culture city assemblage, the following quotes show how collaboration is understood by these set of actors:

I think the directors, they have director meetings, they do talk to each other but this was also on the level of people and then the directors also joined sometimes but also people like the curator, programmer, or the artistic department who in this way also saw each other. So suddenly you recognized everybody and very simple things like that you would just know what everybody does and how you can find them much more easily. I think afterwards we with Rotheatre and TENT, have made 1 or 2 programs together and that went much more easily and definitely because we just knew where to find each other so that wasn't there before. After DDD, that was actually only one part of it but besides that other projects came into existence.

(Floris)

In discussing De Derde Dinsdag (DDD) Floris indicates that DDD brings together the institutions at Witte de With street. The event arises out of collaboration but also leads to new collaboration projects within the arts and culture network. Through the practice of arts and culture, the ecosystem of this community is sustained. Arts activities facilitate future arts practices and bring together the community whereby hierarchy in job positions is broken down as Floris indicates. This network can be seen as a collaborative scene related to Becker's (1982) description of the arts world. Becker's (1982) understanding of the world as is produced by the arts and culture community is similar to how the art community articulate their own world as Floris' quote shows.

The opening act of the evening is given by the Rotterdam Theatre performing their 'Yowsa Yowsah Yowsah' production. The preview unfolds as the audience is asked to write down confessions that are then anonymously presented by the actors on stage.

(De Derde Dinsdag, 18 March 2014, Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art)

This extraction describes one of the acts performed during one of the De Derde Dinsdag (DDD) evenings. The act presented at DDD display another dimension of collaborative practice. Through interaction with the public the theatre performance arises. The theatre performance exists because of its collaboration with the audience. The content of the evening demonstrates collaboration also between different disciplines of arts and culture such as dance, music and literature and by mixing with high and low arts and culture previews.

Thus, the collaboration that is visible in the city making process of the local artistic practices takes on different forms. The event is interactive and it brings people together from both the organisational and audience perspective. By being an evening to experience, the DDD expresses collaboration whilst these arts and culture practices are also an incubator for new 'projects'. Arts and culture practices are in their essence reliant on collaboration and through the arts and culture activities in the city, the collaborative approach is continued. Currid (2007) even goes as far to state that the arts and culture sector is dependent on collaboration for its survival. The data of this research complies with Currid's (2007) study on artistic communities where heavily reliance is placed on a supporting network or relations for job access. Collaborations are thus important in understanding the city as performance by the local artistic community.

All the differences discussed above, lead down to the conclusion that through both assemblages are build surrounding the same city, the motivations behind the actors within the networks differ from each other. The city as a brand assemblage focuses on ways to sell the city in accordance with what branding theorists and literature discuss whereas these practices are rejected by the local artistic community (4.4.1.). Another finding indicates that Rotterdam's citizens are important actors in the artistic city assemblage but in the city as brand assemblage potential citizens are considered more valuable actors in the network (4.4.2). Though both assemblages focus on collaborating and togetherness within the activities of the actors, the motives of this focus is different. The actors in the city as a brand assemblage are driven by the business perspective whereas the actors in the artistic

assemblage do not recognize the strategic aspect of collaboration but do find it necessary for the survival of the community (4.4.3). Thus, little connections are found between the two assemblages and the relationship between the official city branding and local artistic practices is marked by little connecting actors.

5. Conclusion

In this research, Actor-Network theory (ANT) guided the analysis of the Rotterdam as a brand and Rotterdam as emergent from the local arts and culture community. The city is referred to as an assemblage that is reached by all the activities of a set of actors that produce an understanding of the social world as they see it. The two answers to the sub-research questions of this research revealed that these two assemblages overlap only limitedly in the way they understand and produce the city but come together with a similar sense of place.

5.1. Rotterdam as brand assemblage

In tracing back the developments that led to Rotterdam's listing in two influential media travel outlets, New York Times and the Rough Guide, the path led down to the city marketing and branding strategies of the Rotterdam municipality. Rotterdam Partners as an organ of the city hall is responsible for the implementation of Rotterdam's city marketing but as Anholt (2007) stated, branding as a practice is a complex process. This research found that indeed Rotterdam's city branding involves a lot of governance and management bodies all contributing to the official city brand production that makes up the city as a brand assemblage.

Rotterdam as a brand assemblage is practiced based on the idea that the multiple world views that exist of and within the city are represented in a single entity, a brand, that is used to promote the city. In the communication about Rotterdam, the city is consistently performed through the expression an identity, values, DNA and a brand tag (chapter 4.1). These concepts evoke a story and associations that structure the way the city is thought of in similar ways to branding theory as discussed by Rainisto (2003), Hankinson (2004) and Kavaratzis (2005). This way the city as a brand assemblage is a constant conversation starting from the place culture as Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) have described in their model. A business perspective is taken on the city indicating a producer-customer dynamic between the producers of the city as a brand and its audiences. The 'brand' functions as a tool that is

used to perform the city in such a way that it leads to the desired economical and social goals that are set by Rotterdam city hall. Hereby the city is performed mainly outwards to attract new 'customers' to 'consume' the city.

In the practice of the city as a brand, strategic partnerships are aimed for in an attempt to incorporate the various views of the city into one coherent 'brand'. The residents of the city are seen as target audiences but also as co-branders that through collaboration with the official city branders, participate in producing the city as a brand. Though more than that this leads to an integration of the worldviews of the city as a brand and the city as assembled by the local arts and culture community, the business oriented and economy focused approach of the city as a brand is perpetuated.

5.2. Local artistic practices in connection with the city

The analysis of Rotterdam's local arts and culture community as producing a city assemblage showed that the practices of this community are inherently related to the city. The city assemblage that is discussed in this research emerged out of the De Derde Dinsdag event, one of the activities that that takes place as part of the arts and culture sector in Rotterdam. All the actors in this community are involved in articulating and ''reassembling'' the city in their own way leading to the 'making' of a city as whole (DeLanda, 2006). (Latour, 2005). The event is connected to the city as it emerged out of the typical culture of the place and is characterized by the mentality of the 'Rotterdammer'. The arts and culture activities are found to express 'place culture' that creates awareness about community boundaries through the differentiation between Rotterdammers and 'others'. Feelings of belongingness, place attachment and identification are reinforced and strengthened but besides this emotional relation to the city, the city also is found to serve a necessary function for the community. Artistic works are often based on collaboration with others in a creative network, congruent with Becker's understanding of the arts community (Becker, 1982). Artists are connected to the city through the social realm that the city is, the arts and culture community is intertwined with the city as it is the place where artistic endeavours emerge from that also sustains the community and simultaneously enhances the place attachment.

The city is understood and used by the local arts and culture community as a stage to express their creativity whereby collaboration with like minded others is established naturally within the community network. Through this assemblage of the city, the local arts and culture community are connected to the place where they work and socialize.

5.3.Relation between official city branding and local artistic practices

The theoretical implications of this research show that differences and congruencies and are found between the city brand and artistic practices that make up the relationship between the two assemblages. The theoretical implication The differences between the city assemblages identifies that the official city branding perspective has captures the city in a very concise and conceptual way compared to the more subtle way of reassembling Rotterdam as done by the arts and culture perspective. The artistic community sees the city from a much broader and inclusive perspective, regarding the city's stakeholders. The official branding perspective performs the brand for external audiences as a product that can be consumed by living, working or visiting the city. The city as a brand perspective builds on Rotterdam's city hall's economical and social policies and is underpinned by strategic decisions. The city as a brand is used to 'sell' the city with the city hall as producer and target audiences that consume the city. This business-like approach reveals that the city as a brand is used as a tool to improve the city's economic vitality. Contrastingly, the local artistic city assemblage shows a process whereby the city is articulated and expressed within the community rather than towards external audiences. The artistic city assemblage emerges from the natural workings of the arts and culture community of Rotterdam. The city discourse remains in the locality of the community and is not used to 'sell' Rotterdam's artistic practices to outsiders. This local city assemblage process is an intuitive process whereby the no economic interest is invested in the city.

That these city assemblages differ from each other to this extent is remarkable as the city branding approach aims to stimulate 'togetherness' by incorporating all of that the city comprises of into 'one story' (chapter 4.4.1.). The story that the city as a brand expresses does not resonate with the city as understood by the arts and culture community. This

counters the expectation of the city as a brand to capture the whole of the city into 'one story'.

However more than anything it is the connection with the city that draws the relationship between the official brand assemblage and the local artistic practices together. The interdependence with and amongst each other that all city stakeholders feel is visible in the for example the emphasis on collaboration (chapter 4.4). Though this collaborative sphere is expressed with different motives and goals, it still arises from the same resources on which the city assemblages are produced. The city as a brand stimulates collaboration between the brand producers and stakeholders in the city to carry out the city as a brand-message to a wider public whilst the local artistic city assemblage naturally builds on collaboration as part of the workings of the local artistic community.

Nonetheless, the relation between the two city assemblages is mostly characterized by the similar sense of place that they draw from. Both city assemblages articulate Rotterdam as a 'un-Dutch', 'non-bourgeois', 'dynamic', 'diverse', 'international', 'pioneering' city, with and 'down to earth', 'open' and 'no-nonsense' atmosphere and 'modestly proud', 'though but proud' crowd. These associations are part of the city assemblages from both the branding and local arts and culture view on their world. Actor-Network theory has enabled to expose the similarities between the two perspectives as they are both assemblages of the same city. The two assemblages exist next to each other and share certain characteristics because ultimately the city is foundational to the forming of any city assemblage process. The city that the assemblages emerge from is thus inherently reflective on the realities of the given place. Whether strategists aim to portray the city in a certain way or that citizens articulate the city according to their own language, the city's sense of place is deeply rooted in any city assemblage.

5.4. Research implications

From the branding practices perspective the findings of this research supported the views on the city as a product on a commercial market. However, the feasibility of involving citizens in this process is brought into question. Actor-Network theory that evaluated the city as assemblage enabled the revelation that in the empirical construction of the city branding

assemblage, stakeholder involved is difficult to achieve. A gap exists between theory on citizen involvement in branding practices and the reality of the participatory approach in practice. The Rotterdam brand practices attempt to include local voices into the Rotterdam as a brand entity but in practice it is found difficult to comprise the many perspectives of the citizens into one city brand. Actor-Network theory argues that the city branding is perceived as just one of the ways to portray the city rather than the only one. This way the official city branding strategy can be understood as the performance of the city from the selective perception of the city by Rotterdam Partners.

The findings of this research that have become visible could therefore serve the interest of the city branders as an understanding that is created on how the city is assembled by the arts and culture community as part of the target audiences of the city as a brand performance. This research could have relevance for both the ones involved in city branding practices and the artistic community in finding ways to form 'strategic partnerships' or to 'collaborate' with each other to the benefit of the city as a whole.

More generally, by shedding light on the way city branders and artistic communities interpret the city, these groups of people are better understood. All the various actors discussed in this thesis are actors which together make up the city brand and the artistic community of Rotterdam. By destructing the processes underlying the brand and artistic assemblage this research has given room for the individual actors and networks to be discussed. This thesis discussed the relationships between these various networks and actors in the city as an assemblage and takes part in creating awareness of the way cities are interpreted by different groups of people with different behaviours and motives from an actor-network theory perspective. This way this research adds to the theoretical school of actor-network theory.

5.5. Limitations and future research

As mentioned above, this study suggest further research on the desirability and effectiveness of the integration of the artistic community and the city's official branding practices. As the findings of this research reveal the difficulty for city brand practices to integrate local communities into the city 'brand', this study hopes to spark inspiration for future research on the involvement of residents into the branding process of a city. Hereby the limitations of

this research need to be taken into account. As actor-network theory allows for multiple assemblages to exist next to the ones that are researched here, this research has been limited in the understanding of citizens of the city. With Rotterdam's population being over 600,000 inhabitants, many communities are producing local city assemblages. Due to the scope of this research, the study has focussed specifically the city as assembled through branding practices and from the arts and culture community perspective. Even within the local arts and culture community this research only managed to capture a subsection of the whole community. Similarly, only a small sample of those who are responsible for the official city brand are included in this research. This provides material for future research on how the whole of the city assemblages relate to one another and could come together within Rotterdam's brand.

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Contents: Appendices

Appendix A: Interview guide Rotterdam Partners

Interview questions – Rotterdam Partners (RP)

Brief introduction of research topic and the recording of this interview

1. Introduction of interviewee

Probes

- Who are you
- Where are you originally from?
- How long have you worked for RP?

2. RP

Probes

- How would you explain your position at RP?
- What is the role of RP in Rotterdam?

3. City branding

Probes

- How are the roles within the city branding process divided?
- What parties are included in the city branding process?
- What is the role of RP within the city branding process?

4. Connection to city hall

Probes

- How is RP related to the city hall?
- How (in)dependent is RP on city hall?

5. Connection to citizens

Probes

- How are you reaching citizens with your city branding?
- How are you involving citizens within your branding?

- Why are citizens important in your city branding?

6. Connection to local arts and culture

Probes

- How is the arts and culture sector involved in your work?
- What do you understand as the arts and culture community in Rotterdam?

7. Characterization of Rotterdam

Probes

- How would you describe the typical rotterdammer?

Final question

8. Is there anything you think is worthwhile sharing but I did not ask in my previous questions?

Appendix B: Interview guide Rotterdam Festivals

Interview questions - Rotterdam Festivals (RF)

Brief introduction of research topic and the recording of this interview

1. Introduction of interviewee

Probes

- Who are you
- Where are you originally from?
- How long have you worked for RF?

2. RF

Probes

- How would you explain your position at RF?
- What is the role of RF in Rotterdam?

3. Local events

Probes

- What do you understand as a local event?
- How would you describe a typical local event?
- How are the big festivals different from the local events?

4. Connection to city hall

Probes

- How is RF related to the city hall?
- How (in)dependent is RF on city hall?
- What are certain rules or obligations that you have towards city hall?

5. Connection to the locals

Probes

- How are you reaching citizens with your festivals?
6. Connection to local arts and culture

Probes

- How is the arts and culture sector involved in your work?
- What do you understand as the arts and culture community in Rotterdam?

7. Community feeling

Probes

- Who are the event initiators in the city?
- Are there certain characteristics that bind these people to each other?
- What are the similarities or differences between the festivals that take in Rotterdam?

8. Characterization of Rotterdam

Probes

- How would you describe the typical rotterdammer?
- What makes RF really typical 'Rotterdams?'

Final question

9. Is there anything you think is worthwhile sharing but I did not ask in my previous questions?

Appendix C: Interview arts and culture community

Interview questions – De Derde Dinsdag (DDD)

Brief introduction of research topic and the recording of this interview

1. Introduction of interviewee

Probes

- Who are you
- How would you describe what kind of work you do?

2. Connection to Rotterdam
- Are you originally from Rotterdam?
- Would you call yourself a 'Rotterdammer'?

3. DDD

Probes

- What is it?
- What is your connection to DDD?
- How did it come to exist?
- Goal/aim/benefits?
- How important is it for Rotterdam?

4. Rotterdam

Probes

- How would you describe the Rotterdam?
- Do you feel at home in the city?

5. Arts & culture community

Probes

- How would you describe the arts and culture community here?

6. Witte de With

Probes

- How important is Witte de With for you?
- How important is the clustering of the scene for you?

Final question

7. Is there anything you think is worthwhile sharing but I did not ask in my previous questions?

Appendix D: Transcripts interviews & field notes (separate file)