

# ROTTERDAM AS A FLEXIBLE CITY

THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY AS A RESOURCE FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE IN THE INNER CITY OF ROTTERDAM



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## MASTER THESIS

Cultural Economics & Entrepreneurship

Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

Marije Bibianne van Horik

376450bh@eur.nl

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Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Anna Mignosa

Second reader

Prof. Dr. Mariangela Lavanga

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## THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY AS A RESOURCE FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE

### ABSTRACT

*A qualitative research method is performed to research if the creative industry is a resource for creative adaptive reuse of vacant buildings in the inner city of Rotterdam. For this research, two sample groups are formed: the professionals in the field of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector (N=4) and the young, creative entrepreneurs (N=4). Based upon the theoretical framework four topics are discussed: A New Identity, Creative City, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification. Using semi-structured interviews, the motivations of the two sample groups in relation to the four main interview topics are discussed.*

*The findings confirm a relation between the entrepreneurial climate and the characteristics and mentality of the city. Second, the findings discuss the relation between innovation, dynamics and the intertwinement with creativity in the city of Rotterdam. Also, it will challenge the presumption of city gentrification as negative. At last, the ideal of Rotterdam as a flexible city will be expressed.*

*Furthermore, the findings of the research criticize the power of creativity for a city and evoke the discussion if creativity is self-sustaining or controlled by the Municipality*

#### **Keywords:**

*Rotterdam, Creative City, Creative Economy, New Economy, Flexible, Innovation, Creative Adaptive Reuse, Entrepreneurship, Gentrification*

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*Almost two years ago I started with my master thesis. Although the topic of my thesis became clear real soon I chose to postpone the thesis and combine it while gaining work experience. And I am glad I did. Writing the thesis also became a learning process, full with self-reflexion and expansion of knowledge.*

*Combing the knowledge and findings of my thesis with my work experience gained during the second year of my master makes that in the field of Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship, I am well developed. The Master Cultural Economics & Entrepreneurship provided me the needed equipment as well as the freedom to expand knowledge in a specific field of interest, such as cultural management.*

*I am inspired and motivated to gain more experience in the field of creative entrepreneurship. This is mainly due to the inspiring conversations with the young, creative entrepreneurs and the professionals in the field of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector and the young, creative entrepreneurs. Also, the entrepreneurial mind-set of the interviewees inspired my and made me enthusiastic to work with my own ideas and projects.*

*Therefore I am very grateful for the interviewees time, enthusiasm and input. Although some of them were extremely busy, they still found time to have an inspiring conversation. I would also like to thank my supervisor dr. Anna Mignosa for being supportive, kind and patient. And at last but not least I would like to thank my family as they always support me to follow my dreams and my friends: putting together like-minded young, creative entrepreneurs can make special things happen and I am very grateful that I can experience this with them.*

Ten year ago, Rotterdam was known as a city where 'you do not want to be seen' due to a negative reputation. Today, the city has transformed in the 'new place to be', according to national and international media output. The growing interest in the city can be explained by the development of the city. After years of rebuilding the city of Rotterdam has time to enjoy and make a catch up in the field of arts, culture and creativity.

Rotterdam has become a popular subject amongst the media and many critics. The city shows a case of a city in transition and how to cope with this - without getting too overheated. In the past, Rotterdam pushed out young creatives or highly educated people. Simply due to a lack of places to recreate, be challenged or socialize with other like-minded. Consequently, this group flew out to cities such as Amsterdam. Now, they can find their place in Rotterdam. How does a city deal with a new group of people, which used to be rejected, are attracted by the characteristics and the mentality of the city? And how to meet the needs of young creatives?

Living in Rotterdam for five years and having completed my BA Arts & Culture studies provides me with a throughout critical view on the development of the city. It gives me the opportunity to be part of this transition and witness it with my own experiences: new bars, events and projects are coming off the ground due to a high demand of a new group of people that is attracted to the city characteristics and mentality.

Despite the sudden popularity, Rotterdam still has a high vacancy rate of buildings in the inner city: instead of seeing vacancy as a threat, creative entrepreneurs and professionals in the field of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector have to see it as an opportunity or chance. While there is a high demand of young, creative entrepreneurs to work with the unconventional, unusual unproductive buildings that has a potential to be creative, they still face many obstacles. This can be problematic. With an eye on the future prospects of the city, the needs of the young creatives need to be sustained in order to keep them in the city of Rotterdam, along with their cultural, educational and economic capital.

## **1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION**

The research aims to discuss if the creative industry is a powerful resource for adaptive reuse in the inner city of Rotterdam. Creativity can be a powerful resource if the demand and supply within the city would be brought closer together.

Furthermore, the research will discuss the relation between the mentality and characteristics of the city and creative adaptive reuse. At last, it will discuss how creative adaptive reuse could influence the landscape and the economic balance of the city. Therefore, the research question is as follows:

*To what extent is the creative industry a resource for adaptive reuse in the inner city in Rotterdam?*

The topic of my thesis is relevant as Rotterdam is in a transition right now. Based upon this transition, the topics that will be discussed in the theoretical framework will be related to a city in development and are as follows: Creative City, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification. Together, the theoretical framework will provide a solid base in order to examine these topics in relation to Rotterdam.

## **1.2 RESEARCH METHOD**

The aim of the research is to go beyond the quantitative data by performing a qualitative research. Four interviews will be conducted with professionals in the field of urban planning and policy, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector. Four other interviews will be performed with young, creative entrepreneurs, to better understand the role of both sides. Using semi-structured interviews, the motivations of the two sample groups in relation to the four main interview topics are discussed. The choice of two sample groups allows to criticize the research question from two sides and therefore to draw more valid observations. The four main interview topics are: A New Identity, Creative City, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification.

The motivation to choose a qualitative research method is due to the interest in the motivations of young, creative entrepreneurs and the professionals in the field of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector - to work with creative adaptive reuse. Rotterdam is a city in transition and the topic of my research is relevant now. Therefore, quantitative research will deprive the

research topic. This is because quantitative research cannot sense emotional motivations, as it does not show how the respondents feel or think about the research topic.

### **1.3 AIM AND RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

My aim is to show that the creative industry is a fundamental resource for the economic flourishing of a city. Stimulating creativity will attract a new group of people to the city: young, creative entrepreneurs. A group that needs to be sustained, as the output of the young, creative entrepreneurs will attract higher educated and people with a higher income, thus it is important to make sure that creatives and students don't fly out to other cities.

This way the results of the research hope to encourage young, cultural entrepreneurs to give their ideals and project a shot. But mostly, the research aims to encourage the professionals in the field of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector - to stimulate the creative entrepreneurial climate in Rotterdam. Together, the results of the research will contribute to how Rotterdam will flourish on the short, as well on the long run, using the power of creativity as a tool.

All interviewees asked to read the thesis when it is finished as a form of 'self-reflexion'. Therefore, the findings of the research could have relevance for both parties. The findings of the research might give the Municipality a better insight in the needs of a new group of people that is attracted to the city: young, creative entrepreneurs. Knowledge about this might bring closer together the cities supply and demand and might stimulate the creative entrepreneurial climate.

### **1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

The thesis will consist of five chapters: introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, analyse and conclusion. The first chapter presents the introduction of the research. The second chapter will present the theoretical framework. Here, a theoretical outline of the existing literature on the creative economy, creative adaptive reuse and the process of city gentrification will be provided. This will be divided into three topics: Rise of a New Economy: The Creative Economy, Adaptive Reuse and Creativity and The Process of City Gentrification and Creativity. Chapter 2 will present the Methodology. This chapter will motivate the choice for a qualitative



research methodology and explains how the data was collected. Also, it will give arguments why the city of Rotterdam makes an interesting case study. The third chapter will present the Analyse of the 8 semi-structured interviews with two sample groups. This chapter will be divided into four sections: A New Identity, Creative City, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification. The final chapter will discuss the major conclusions based on the Analyse and illustrate the limitations and recommendations for future research.

This chapter will provide an extensive overview of the existing empirical literature that is related to the relation between the creative industry, creative adaptive reuse and a city in development. The structure of the chapter is as follows: the first section will give more insight in the relation between a new, knowledge based economy and the creative economy. The second section will discuss adaptive reuse and the opportunities and risks it might bear. The third section will talk about the process of city gentrification. The last section will provide a short summary of the theoretical framework.

## 1 THE RISE OF A NEW ECONOMY: THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2001 John Howkins introduced his book *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas* and tells about the rise of a new economy: an economy that produces money out of creativity and ideas. According to Howkins (2001), a new economy 'marks a change in our lives' and 'changes the way people live'.

When Howkins (2001) introduced his book *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas*, technology had already become more important in our daily lives. Although, not as much as it does now. Due to these technological developments, we have become more innovative and mobile, but mostly, more flexible. This has changed a lot of things about the way and where we work, how we live and how a city functions. Thus, 'it changed the way people live' (Howkins, 2001). Not only does it change the way people live, but the new economy also marks 'a change in our lives' (Howkins, 2001). According to Howkins (2001), this change is driven by the mind of the individual as he argues how we became more innovative and flexible, the mind of the individual often thinks of new and surprising ideas.

Combining innovation, flexibility and the celebration of ideas, brings to us an economy that leaves room for creativity to flourish: the creative economy. According to Howkins (2001), 'ideas' are at the core of the creative economy and celebrate how

people use their imagination. Furthermore, Howkins (2001) argues how the creative economy has effect on how a city functions. With this, Howkins (2001) argues that by bringing like-minded creatives together, they are in the position to shape future prospects of the city.

The creative economy will influence the way we work, Howkins (2001) argues. The creative economy can replace the old economy by disrupting relationship e.g. by investors and managers. Instead of relying on the old system, the creative economy encourages the creative mind to flourish. Slowly, it is changing the nature of employment and jobs while stimulating start-ups and initiatives (Howkins, 2001).

Section 1.2 will explain how the creative economy is embedded in the knowledge-based economy. Section 1.3 will explain the power of creativity for a city, using the model of Throsby (2008). Section 1.4 will go deeper into the relation between creativity and the city by criticizing the theory of Florida (2005). Section 1.5 will discuss that creativity is not a magical solution to all problems and how cities can lose their authenticity by relying on this thought. This argument will be strengthened by the concept of Pratt of 'Idea-Repressors' (2008) where he uses the theory of Zukin (1982). Then, a conclusion will follow.

## **1.2 THE KNOWLEDGE BASED ECONOMY**

As introduced by Howkins (2001), the creative economy is embedded in a new economy. Within this new economy, ideas and innovation are celebrated. Just as Howkins (2001), Scott (2000) recognizes a shift in the economical system and output. Scott (2000) defines this new economy as a 'knowledge based economy'.

In 1996, Peter Drucker was the one to introduce the concept Knowledge Based Economy in his book *the Effective Executive*. Here, he made a distinction between the manual worker and the knowledge worker. The manual worker worked with his hands, the knowledge worker with his head (Drucker, 1996). 'Knowledge' is vague to define and therefore the knowledge-based economy becomes an economy that relies on the production of knowledge, information, ideas, skills and other immaterial in-and outputs (Nakamura, 2000) (Scott, 2000). In almost every developed country, this has been embedded in the economic theories and models and is strengthened through education and research (Vesela & Klimova, 2013).

The production of knowledge, information, ideas, skills and other immaterial in-and outputs is based upon 'intellectual capital' (OECD, 1996). Intellectual capital

celebrates intangible assets, such as the knowledge of your employees (www.investopia.com). Therefore, although it is not always easy to recognize, the knowledge-based economy has become part of almost the whole modern economic organization of production and consumption (Scott, 2000; Nakamura, 2016).

Mele & Nel-lo (2016) focus on the relation between cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the knowledge based economy. They go deeper into how the production of the knowledge based economy has affected, or is affecting, the economic system of a city. First, Mele & Nel-lo (2016) argue, the products, the industries and the innovations have a shorter life cycle (p. 212). This is because the products depend on certain market conditions (Davis & Botkin, 1994). This way, the products are spreading faster, but at the same time, become obsolete sooner (Golder & Tellis, 2004) (Mele & Nel-lo 2016, p. 212).

Second, in a knowledge-based economy, there is more competition (Mele & Nel-lo, 2016, p. 212). Zientara (2008) explains how, due to technological developments, cities have become connected to the 'globalised economic system' (p. 271). On a large scale, this means that cities can more easily trade products all over the world with each other. As this brings more connectivity, it also brings more competition: as a city you have to be authentic because this makes your products more attractive and original. This can stimulate the urban development of a city because along with increasing competition, comes the need to foster innovation, speed up technological change and enjoy the benefits of globalization (Zientara, 2008). On a small scale, within the city products can have competition, not only by price, more often by the multiple designs, customization and the variation of the same product or service (Scott, 2006) (Mele & Nel-lo, 2016, p. 212).

Third, the knowledge-based economy is driven by an exchange of knowledge through an interaction model (Mele & Nel-o, 2016, p. 212). This means a flow of interaction between producers and users and the exchange of knowledge. Just as globalization, the interaction stimulates innovation. Due to an interactive innovation model, on a large scale, the industry, government and academia can have a constant relationship. On a small scale, knowledge is exchanged between different industries, such as arts, design and science (Van Winden, 2010) (Mele & Nel-lo, 2016, p. 212). Mele & Nel-lo (2016) conclude that, within the knowledge economy, innovation in the city is becoming less a linear process but relies on the interaction between

entrepreneurs, companies, knowledge institutions, government organizations and end users (p. 213).

Based upon this, it can be concluded that the main product of the knowledge economy is intellectual capital and a strong reliance on skills. Drucker (1996) hammered on education and research as the main resource for the economy. With the introduction of the theory of Florida (2002) and this view on the Creative City and Creative Class, new skills made their entrance. Still, a formal diploma forms a solid base for the economy but skills that are not easy to be taught, such as solving up problems, to be creative, entrepreneurship, creative entrepreneurship and social aptitudes became a new necessity (Florida, 2002).

### **1.3 THE CREATIVE ECONOMY**

It was Lord Smith of Finsbury; the British Minister of Culture was to first to implement the creative industry in government policies around 1998. This way, the economic importance of creativity became highlighted (Vesela & Klimova, 2013). That creative skill, as introduced by Florida (2005), were a new necessity became clear during the economic crisis in 2007-2008. During the economic crisis, it was 'creativity' and the 'creative class' that offered an alternative type of economic growth in the post-industrial world (Vesela & Klimova, 2013) (Florida, 2005). According to Florida, (2005), the 'Creative Class' forms a group of people that is assigned to a new, economic function - the 'creation of ideas, technologies and creative content' (Florida, 2005) (Vesela & Klimova, 2013). Florida (2005) believes that the creative class is 'fundamental for economic growth' and is composed of scientists, engineers, architects, educators, writers, artists and entrepreneurs who are 'ready to change the world' (p. 5 as quoted in Vesela & Klimova, p. 415, 2013).

Throughout the years, the theory of Florida (2005) has been criticised by Pratt (2008), as The Creative Class would only concern 'privileged creative workers'. Despite the critic, it did bring creativity for every human being and creativity as a fundamental human right under the attention (Murgaš, 2011, p. 132). Just as it encouraged many professionals in the field of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector, to pay attention to the importance of creativity and the social and economic development. The importance of creativity for a city was strengthened in 2005. Here, the UNESCO recognized the important role of

the creative industries and the distribution of their goods during the Convention of the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005).

#### **1.4 THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**

Combining this with the popularity of Florida (2005), the creative industries have become important 'components of the modern economy and knowledge based society due to their enrichment and impact' (UNESCO, 2012). Although they were recognized in the UNESCO Convention of 2005, defining what is included and excluded from the 'Creative Industries' can be hard.

Simply said, the creative industries can be defined as industries that deal with the potential of cultural and creative goods (UNESCO, 2012). They are characterised by their dual nature and impact: a non-economic and economic impact (UNESCO, 2012). Or to say, an economic value and a cultural value: brought together as the overall public value (Throsby, 2001). In the core, the creative industries all have a creative or cultural idea. The activities of the creative industries make sure individuals get more culturally and socially involved into society, as well as being involved in promoting values and cultural identities – this stimulates the cultural development of a city as it makes the citizen more culturally involved. This way, non-economic impacts can be found in social cohesion and the development of cultural diversity (Matarasso, 1997), the affirmation of creativity and talent (Throsby, 2001) or the facilitation of creativity and innovation (Pots & Cunningham, 2008) (UNESCO, 2012).

Then, the economic value of the creative industry is formed by the market value through the output of cultural goods and services. They contribute to the economic development through employment, economic growth and wealth creation (Vesela & Klimova, 2014) (Florida, 2005). And, the creative industry offers a flow-through effect to innovation in other industries through the diffusion of creative ideas, skills transfers and movement of creative labour from the 'core' (Throsby, 2001).

To show the influence of the creative industries on the economic welfare of a city, the model of Throsby (2001) is most convenient. His model, shown in figure 1, makes a distinction between a core cultural expression, other core creative industries, wider cultural industries and related industries (Throsby, 2001). For this, the difference between 'cultural' and 'creative' is not relevant, as it does not concern a policy point of view (Throsby, 2008).



Figure 1 The concentric model of the cultural industry by Throsby (2008, p. 5) (UNESCO)

The model of Throsby (2008) implies that if you would imagine the creative industries as a series of concentric models, figure 1 will appear. In the core, you can find the core artist and art organisations. This is the centre of the model and the place where creative ideas, skills and talents are originated. Then, the circles around the centre represent increasingly commercial industries, starting from other core creative industries such as museums, to related industries such as advertising (Throsby, 2013).

The model of Throsby (2001) shows how the creative industry influences other forms of industry by creative ideas. Although the assumption that ‘creativity is a cure for all problems’, seems dangerous. Bilton (2010) argues that the model of Throsby (2001) fundamentally relies on the creative core. This core mainly exists of individual creativity, skills and talent. Therefore, the model of Throsby (2001) is a hierarchical model and would be a model where ‘heroic creativity sprinkles it magic dust on the economy at large (Bilton, 2010, p. 260)’.

With the creative industries as the heart of the creative economy, Howkins (2001) argues an important feature. Namely, the creative economy can be approached as any other economy, using the concepts of demand, price, profit and margins. Within the creative economy, there are jobs, output and productivity and people who are passionate about developing ideas and come up with new concepts.

In a sense, he says, people who work in the creative industries are so passionate, that they put a higher value on what their work means (Howkins, 2001).

## **1.5 A CREATIVE CITY**

So why is creativity so important for cities – and why is nurturing it important for economic success and making city life better? To come back to the concentric model of Throsby (2001), the model shows several arguments how the creative industry contributes to the economic growth of a city.

Landry & Bianchini (1995) were the first ones to really elaborate on the relation between creativity and cities. They argue that cities need creativity ‘to really be a city’ and state that, in times of urban crisis, creativity is there to rescue (Landry & Bianchini, 1995, p. 11). With this, they mean that creativity in a city allows the people to realise their ideas, begin projects to satisfy their needs or start up bottom up initiatives. Also, Landry & Bianchini (1995) argue how ‘creative thinking is a way of getting rid of rigid preconceptions and opening ourselves to complex phenomena, which cannot always be dealt with in a strictly logical manner’ (p. 16). With this, they strengthen the idea that creativity is needed to really be a city, and how in times of urban crisis, creativity offers new views and original ideas on a crisis or problem.

To be a creative city, Landry & Bianchini (1995) provide three key requirements for success, namely: new ways of talking, new ways of mapping and new ways of describing things (p. 55).

*New Ways of Talking:* according to Landry & Bianchini (1995), different people need to learn to talk and listen to each other in different ways. This way, normal debating routes will break down and networks will allow a more open system. This will let people from different forces and disciplines talk and listen to each other (p. 55).

*New Ways of Mapping:* according to Landry & Bianchini (1995), there is a need for new forms of local research and monitoring. This way, local aspirations, problems, trends and desires can be better defined (p. 55).

*New Ways of Describing Things:* according to Landry & Bianchini (1995), we need to describe problems, solutions and ambitions with less jargon. This is because the old language is inadequate to identify new resources, such as the cultural vibrancy and other characteristics of a city (p. 55).



To conclude, it is important to adjust to new developments and begin to change the system by embracing a shift where creativity is part of the cities economy (Landry & Bianchini, 1995).

## **1.6 CITIES AND IDENTITY**

In contrast to the work of Landry & Bianchini (1995), the work of Florida (2005) focuses on how cities can be 'made creative'. Since its popularity, the work of Florida (2005) has been implemented in many urban policies all over the world (Pratt, 2008). Being a Creative City became a cure for cities whose atmosphere, look and feel was low and not attractive or competitive anymore (Pratt, 2008).

According to Florida (2005), the Creative Class would lead to more economic success. This way, the popularity of Florida's (2005) methodology of 'ranking a city in terms of creativity' became clear, because, which city does not want to be referred to as the most creative city (Pratt, 2008)? Cities try to live up to these standards but therefore creativity almost becomes something 'forced'. With this, urban policy and planning actors tend forget to keep in mind that being a creative city, needs to come from within: creativity is something that has to happen naturally, and cannot be forced. As mentioned, the theory of Florida (2005) has been criticised by many. Pratt (2008) argues how the theory of Florida (2005) is a 'formula of elements that can be used to become a creative city' (p. 2). With the word 'formula', Pratt (2008) argues how creativity has become a cure for cities that aim to become more popular. And how the urban policy becomes a prescription to do so.

By doing so, one major consequence rises: the loss of authenticity of the city (Zukin, 1985). Based upon the theory of Zukin (1985), Pratt (2008) argues how cities can become 'idea re-processors'. By living up to the standards of Florida's Creative City (2005), cities can lose authenticity as they duplicate each other. As an idea re-processor, the city shows its desire to become creative - even if it is on the expense of his or her own identity (Zukin, 1985) (Pratt, 2008).

## **1.7 CONCLUSION**

To sum up the above, one of the main ingredients to fully enjoy the power of creativity for a city is to embrace the transition towards a new, knowledge based economy. Within the knowledge-based economy, creativity shows its power and importance for the development of individuals, but most of all, for cities. Although,

the necessity of creativity is not something to simply 'copy and paste', as this will lead to cities to become idea re-processors. It needs to come from within the city itself, on its own way. The next section will show how we need to comprehend the potential of the creative economy, as it contributes to a sustainable development.

## 2 NEW TRENDS IN URBAN REGENERATION: CREATIVE ADAPTIVE REUSE

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

To sum up the above: creativity is something that cannot be forced but needs to come from the city within. Along with a new economy come innovation, flexibilization and creativity. Therefore, buildings that were used for the old economy purposes, such as the office market, become vacant. By embracing a shift to a new economy, comes along a new, creative purpose for buildings that still have a use-value: creative adaptive reuse. In order to let creativity flourish in a city, there need to be space available for young, creative entrepreneurs to do so. Recently, Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) published their book *The Flexible City: Sustainable Solutions for Europe in transition*. They argue how instead of focussing on new buildings, the professionals in the field of urban planning and policy need to have a closer look at buildings that are already there, but are empty (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016).

Section 2. 2 will look how cities cope with popularity, using the theory of Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) and the demand of supply in a city. Section 2. 3 will discuss the concept of adaptive reuse and more practically, the use value of a building. Section 2. 4 will go deeper into some of the opportunities and risks that can occur with adaptive reuse. Then, a conclusion will be provided.

### 2.2 CITIES AND POPULARITY

When a city becomes more popular, there will be a higher demand of space to live and work. Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) argue how cities do not need to keep on new buildings but instead need to focus on the unproductive, but already existing buildings in the inner city. Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) strengthen this through explaining the friction between the oversupply of empty, unproductive buildings and the demand of for space of entrepreneurs. How can the oversupply of empty, vacant buildings and the demand for space to celebrate creativity meet in the middle?

Here, demand can best explained as the upward trend of people that aim to live, and work in the city. This upward trend happens when a city becomes very popular, or 'booming'. Examples of cities where this already has happened are Amsterdam or London. Examples of cities that are 'upcoming' and are coping with

this problem are cities such as Berlin and Rotterdam. When this happens, cities will face a struggle: the rise of a demand for affordable housing and working space and a need for a solution on how to accommodate this growth (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016).

For supply, Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) mean the oversupply of buildings that are already available in the inner city, but remain unused. Within the city of Rotterdam, there is an oversupply of buildings that already exist (Saddi, 2008) and are capable of being transformed into spaces that will satisfy the demand of a new group that is attracted to the city. Reusing old buildings that still have a use-value is could reduce 'pauperization', i.e. the loss of value of a building that therefore becomes less attractive to live or invest in. This could lead to more empty buildings in that area and eventually to consequences as a higher crime rate (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016).

In order to bring supply and demand more in line, urban policy actors have to look for solutions within the borders of the city and acknowledge that it would be better to not expand outwards. If they would expand outwards, it will probably not fit with the demand of young, creative entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs will most likely look for a space in the border of the city and will not be interested in establishing their organisation in sub urban areas, such as Vinex districts. Mainly because it will not attract a lot of people due to the effort people have to make to actually go there. Instead, urban policy actors have to look back into the urban neighbourhoods and inner city rings to accommodate the growing demand (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016; Zukin, 1985; Ley, 1996).

### **2.3 THE USE VALUE**

When a young, creative entrepreneur does so, the unproductive building that still has a 'use value' is being 'reused'. Meaning that the building will have a new purpose (Plevoets, 2012).

In order to define if a building still has a 'use value' and based upon the research of De Jonge & Remøy (2014), four different ways are proposed whether to decide if a building can be reused or not:

- First, the *aesthetic* of a building. This means that the architecture of the building needs to be appealing enough to reuse it. Is the architecture of the building appropriate for creative organisations? Can they 'work' with it? For example, the Slaakhuys in Rotterdam has been empty for quite some time and now is used as an artist atelier that host parties from time to time. This is

because the building has a lot of space and an edgy vibe: it fits the values of the cultural organisation in question.

- Second, the building needs to be *practical*. With this, De Jonge & Remøy (2014) means that a building needs to be easily visited, but mostly, it needs to be appealing for the user. As mentioned, young, creative entrepreneurs will be less willing to start up an initiative in a Vinex area than in the inner city, or other experimental spaces, such as old industrial buildings.
- Third, De Jonge & Remøy (2014) mentions how the reuse of the building needs to be *realistic*. It needs to be achievable for the professionals in the field of urban policy and planning, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector.
- Finally, De Jonge & Remøy (2014) questions the *financial feasibility*. How realistic is the adaptive reuse in terms of money? Here, it is important to keep in mind the costs of the reconstruction and rent.

De Jonge & Remøy (2014) see that these four points can function as an opportunity, as well as an obstacle for successfully reusing an unproductive building with a use value. Although, Plevoets (2011) argues that adaptive reuse is becoming more and more a fascinating challenge and creative. Before, Plevoets (2011) argues, that the main force behind creative adaptive reuse was mainly 'functional' and 'financial' in essence (p. 1).

## **2.4 OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS**

When a city becomes popular, it becomes a mix of functional and creative reasons to use adaptive reuse. By giving unproductive buildings that still has a use value, a new, creative purpose (Plevoets, 2011) several opportunities, or risks could occur.

### **CREATIVE ADAPTIVE REUSE AND URBAN REGENERATION**

To increase the sustainability of a city, creative adaptive reuse can be a tool for urban regeneration. Creative adaptive reuse has been integrated into creative strategies of urban regeneration and could therefore be a strategy that contributes to the creation of value for the city. Bruijning (2016) argues that the value of a city can be distinguished in two main categories: the social and the economic value.

According to Bruijning (2016), using creative adaptive reuse as an urban regeneration strategy, the economic and social value can increase. By successfully increasing these values, they will bring a 'positive image' to the neighbourhood. With social value, Bruijning (2016) focuses on the social interactions and social networks within the neighbourhood. She argues how it is important to form collective groups within a neighbourhood and to participate in these networks. Doing so, this will lead to a solid base of the community, a feeling of pride and safety: a feeling of belonging (Bramley & Power, 2009).

This 'community bonding', Bruijning (2016) argues, is the key for promoting the liveliness of an urban area and the 'image' of the urban area. The 'image' is something intangible: it is the feeling that you personally get when someone mentions the name of a specific urban area. Logically, places that celebrate a positive image, such as Katendrecht in Rotterdam for young, creative entrepreneurs, will be perceived as more attractive to live and work. By increasing the liveliness and the image of an urban area, the economic activities will also be encouraged.

Along with a higher social value, come a more positive image and therefore an increased feeling of safety. This way, people with a higher income and/or level of education are attracted to that urban area for living, working or start up their organisation, even in vacant buildings. Consequently, investors will be curious and appealed to the urban area that will become more attractive (Bramley & Power, 2009). Together, the social and the economic value both strive for what brings them together: 'sustainability' (Bruijning, 2016).

A downfall of creative adaptive reuse as an urban regeneration tool can be the process of city gentrification, unaffordable housing or that artist are being 'used'. This will be discussed in Chapter 3 Gentrification.

## **ADAPTIVE REUSE AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The need for a city to become more sustainable is due to the growth of the European economy and therefore the population, during the twentieth century (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016). Due to the growth, cities are no longer in the position to expand and solutions have to be found in the inner city. Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) argue how it is important that old buildings are improved or altered using adaptive reuse. This way, cities will meet future demands: a future city needs to become more sustainable (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016). Therefore, instead of adaptive reuse, Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) use the

term 'recycling'. 'Recycling' implies the assumption that adaptive reuse is sustainable and future proof, as recycling literally means re-using.

A downfall can be found in the argument in the book Zukin (2009) *Naked City: the Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*. Here, Zukin (2009) argues how 'we have become eyewitnesses of buildings losing their authenticity to get a new purpose' (p. 221). Authentic buildings are no longer used for their original purposes but have given a new meaning that is based upon the needs of the people and the growth of the city, such as tourism or entertainment (Zukin, 1985). Her theory implies that it is something negative to reuse unproductive buildings and give them a new meaning. Although, as argued by Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016), this does not have to be the case: especially not with a city that copes with a lot of unproductive buildings that still have a use-value.

According to Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016), providing knowledge about how to cope with adaptive reuse, could improve a feeling of belonging to the inhabitants. With this information, citizens will get the feeling that they have a voice and that they have influence on what happens to their city. Consequently, they will feel like they are contributing to the liveability of the city. Here, a small risk can be too much focus on adaptive reuse. With a high focus on reusing unproductive buildings there could occur a decrease in planning and build activity of other, new buildings (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016).

## **DEMAND DRIVEN MARKET**

Another opportunity lies in the market forces of adaptive reuse and the input of the young, creative entrepreneur. Due to the shift to a new economy, the young, creative entrepreneur has made a more present entrance on the market. The young, creative entrepreneur aims to start up creative bottom up initiatives. Therefore, they are looking for a building that fits their needs and the young, creative entrepreneur will exercise its influence on the market forces. This way, the market of adaptive reuse will become more demand driven, instead of just supply.

A small risk could be that the young, creative entrepreneur has a lack of experience and starting up an initiative can get a little risky as not all have the experience and knowledge to do so (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016).

## **MANAGEMENT OF ADAPTIVE REUSE AND FLEXIBILITY**

Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) argue how making adaptive reuse more accessible and therefore the city more sustainable can only be realised if the professionals in the field of urban policy and planning, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector, will be more 'flexible'.

With an eye on the future, decisions that are made regarding the design and urban planning of a city, needs to leave room for adjustments. This is because no one knows what will happen in the future. Meaning that the city environment not only needs to be attractive for the citizens of today, but also for the people that aim to live here in the future. Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) therefore argue how sustainability is a goal to achieve: an ideal that is subject to continuous change. This ideal can only be realised if the professionals in the field of urban policy and planning, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector, will be more 'flexible' and the management on adaptive reuse will in fact be more 'adaptive'.

### **2.5 CONCLUSION**

To synthesize the main point above, unproductive buildings that still have a use-value can be reused, using creativity and culture as a tool. With this, several scenarios could occur, most of them have to do with the social and economic development of a city. Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) explain how cities are growing and coping with popularity everyday. They argue, how instead of keep on building new buildings, unproductive buildings that still have a use value can be reused. This way, the demand of the young, creative entrepreneur and a building that fits its needs, and the supply of unproductive buildings will meet in the middle. By doing so, a city can become livelier, neighbourhoods can regenerate and market will become more demand driven. Together, a city will become more sustainable. In order to realise a sustainable city, the professionals in the field of urban policy and planning, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector, need to become more 'flexible' (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016). As creative adaptive reuse can bring a lot of positivity to a city, one risk is not yet discussed. Namely, the fear of one social and economic consequence: the process of city gentrification.



# 3 THE PROCESS OF CITY GENTRIFICATION AND CREATIVITY

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Many fear the word 'gentrification': a city process of revitalization that results in an influx of middle class or affluent people and pushes out the poor ([www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)). On the one hand, the economic development of a city is something to encourage and cherish. On the other hand, looking at London and Amsterdam, there is a collective fear of a city only become liveable for the richest as housing prices will increase.

As discussed in the previous section, creative adaptive reuse could give a city a more 'positive image'. By doing so, more people aim to live and work here and the neighbourhood will flourish. Eventually, the housing price will increase and people with a higher income will live here and push out those with a low income. This section will go deeper into the economic and social consequences of city gentrification and will highlight the relation between the arts and gentrification and discusses if the artist are being 'used'.

## 3.2 CITY GENTRIFICATION

This section will go deeper into the social and the economic consequences of the process of city gentrification.

### **Economic Consequences**

From an economic point of view, Smith (1988) explains the process of city gentrification. His theory is particularly useful in explaining why city gentrification has to ability to flourish in one neighbourhood, but not in another. He explains this using a demand and supply approach, by introducing the 'rent gap' theory. In essence, the 'rent gap' theory measures the difference between an unproductive buildings actual value, and, the potential achievable value, at best use. According to Smith's (1988) theory, if the overall rent gap in a particular area is large, there is suggested that this area will undergo gentrification. This is because the amount of investors and developers that are interested will increase as they see a potential area as an

economic opportunity to capitalize. Eventually, this will lead to an increase of the rent and value of property (Smith, 1988). The theory of Smith (1988) may work on paper, but critical points reflect on how it is hard to apply the theory in real life problems (Clark, 1992).

The people, who are attracted to come live in a potentially gentrified neighbourhood, or to say 'the gentrifiers', are seen as 'passive' in the theory of Smith (1988). This means that the motivations of gentrifiers to come live and work in a specific city area are overlooked. The gentrifiers are active as they enjoy a consumer preference, meaning that gentrifiers can particularly like one neighbourhood over another. These demand-side consumer preferences for buildings or areas that are becoming gentrified, are mostly demographic or cultural (Zukin, 1982). Take for example cities such as London and New York, two cities where gentrification has been their biggest downfall (Slater, 2008). Young, upper-middle-class individuals will move to places where it is affordable to live. This is because the young, upper-middle-class will not yet have a lot of money to spend on housing. Then a snowball effect occurs: others will follow with a desire to live there and eventually, housing prices will increase, making it impossible for the less fortunate to stay (Slater, 2006).

Gentrification could bear negative effects on a social and economic level and can be a nightmare for some cities such as London and New York (Slater, 2008). On the other side, it is arguable if gentrification is necessarily bad for developing cities. In essential, gentrification is a sign of economic growth (Yee, 2015). As money begins to flow into a neighbourhood, many aspects of everyday life are changed for the better: crime rates decline, formerly racially homogenous neighbourhoods will get an influx of diversity and historical buildings are being preserved (Yee, 2015).

### **Social Consequences**

But how about the social price there has to be paid? Yee (2015) questions if new and old residents will share the benefits of economic growth equally and, what the social costs are of economic growth. Hochstenbach & Musterd (2016) performed a research on the social benefits of city gentrification. Their research was published in the NRC Handelsblad, with the main conclusion that the benefits are not equally shared.

They found that the biggest downfall of gentrification for cities is a legitimization of a class difference between rich and poor. They argue that before the

consequences of city gentrification will influence a city, cities are mostly reserved for the poor. Then, when city gentrification makes its entrance, cities will make a switch and become focused on attracting and sustaining the rich. Due to the high housing prices, the poor are being pushed out, towards the suburbs. Hochstenbach & Musterd (2016) argue how, with a focus on the rich and the consequences for the housing market, one major social consequence will occur: future generations will be less likely to interact with children from other social classes.

They argue how children, who have parents with a low income, will be more likely to live at home instead of moving out. As they will stay with their parents longer, they will live more distinct from other young people. Children with parents that do earn a high income will be more likely to move out and mingle with children from the same social and economic milieu. Eventually, rich and poor will be living more distinct from each other and less interaction will occur. This will have consequences for the development of both parties: as they will never interact, there is not ability to learn from each other. Therefore, the class system will legitimate itself (Hochstenbach & Musterd, 2016).

### **3.3 GENTRIFIERS**

Based upon the previous, one could argue that the real problem is the displacement, not the gentrification. Most of the times, the fingers are pointed towards the young, creative class and artist as contributing factors to the gentrification of city neighbourhoods and the displacement of lower-income residents (Zukin, 1982). The role of the artist as a pioneer of gentrification is perhaps most strongly associated with the work of Ley (1996). In contrast to the supply side theory of Smith (1988), Ley (1996) focuses on the demand side of the gentrification process and elaborates on the power, or the agency of the gentrifiers.

Young creatives can be acknowledged as 'gentrifiers': a new group of middle class that is attracted to gentrified areas. According to Brown Saracino (2009), a 'gentrifier', lives up to the stereotypical media representation of what it should be. He argues how media representations, such as in *Girls* or *New Girl*, seem accurate. Within such a media representation, gentrifiers are depicted as white, creative people who presumably have a high education. Within this media representation, there is an emphasis on a distinction of the gentrifier, towards other people that are living in the city. Brown Saracino (2009) argues how the gentrifier does not only

celebrate a white privilege, but mostly, a celebration of a set of cultural orientations and motivations for engaging in gentrification.

This set of cultural motivations is explained by the theory of Ley (2003). As mentioned, Ley (2003) acknowledges that the artist is active in the process of city gentrification. Within this process, the 'aesthetic disposition' (Bourdieu, 1993) of the artist is very important. The place where the creative aims to live has to fit the needs. When it does, the creative is in the position to valorise this place (Ley, 2003).

### **3.4 AESTHETIC DISPOSITION**

The aesthetic disposition means that creatives have 'the ability to take an "aesthetic stance" towards everyday life objects', such as a living area. When an area fits their needs, they are in the position to valorise this place, as Ley (2003) quotes: 'Artist needs authentic locations. You know artist hate the suburbs. They are too confining' p. 211). He argues how creatives need to distinct themselves from other groups. Good examples are city areas such as Katendrecht, Shoreditch, Kreuzberg, or Brooklyn. Here, creatives can be seen as active agents in the process of valorising this place.

These examples also show how artist tempt to create a world of its own, within a large city. This way, they live close to the art market, and perhaps most importantly, close to each other. Ley (1996) argues how these places are most likely poverty areas. This is because these areas offer cheaper housing prices and will make it more attractive for creatives to live and work. Eventually, Ley (2003) argues, a network of like-minded people will rise. Due to the influence of the creatives who will give a more 'positive image' to the neighbourhood, the are can become too developed. Then, the urban area will lose their allure and uniqueness. According to Ley (2003), creatives will no longer find these redeveloped areas attractive and will look for new areas to live and work.

Bourdieu (1993) explains in his theory how the artist don't 'see' how they practice their aesthetical disposition in a city. What they do see is a normal living circumstance (Ley, 2003). The aesthetic disposition of the artist let them see 'normal' housing, i.e. Vinex areas, as a failure of personal taste, and is therefore preferably rejected. To strengthen the argument of the aesthetic disposition and areas to live, Ley (2003) compares Bourdieu's (1993) theory on the 'aesthetic disposition' with 'taste' in art. Living in normal housing is seen as ordinary and everyday, even

plebeian. This aesthetic rejection is similar with the artist view on commercialised art: normal housing and normal places that are stripped of meaning 'have nothing for the creative there' (Bourdieu, 1993).

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

For quite some time now, the finger has been pointed towards the creative, or artist as to blame for city gentrification. The creative, or 'gentrifier', fulfils the role of a pioneer who is able to discover new neighbourhoods who have the potential of becoming more attractive on a social and economic level. The creative is in the position to do so, due to its aesthetic disposition. Here, the creative is capable of creating a 'creating world within a large city' for other like-minded individuals.

But what was first, the chicken or the egg? Is it the gentrifier that leads the process of city gentrification, or the urban policies that encourage the process of city gentrification for economical purposes? Are artist to blame for gentrification?

To clarify the theories discussed in the theoretical framework:

<b>The Rise of a New Economy: The Creative Economy</b>	<b>New Trends in Urban Regeneration: Creative Adaptive Reuse</b>	<b>The Process of City Gentrification and Creativity</b>
<b>Howkins (2001)</b> The Creative Economy	<b>Bergvoet &amp; Tuijl (2016)</b> A Flexible City	<b>Smith (1988)</b> Rent Gap Theory
<b>Drucker (1996)</b> Knowledge Based Economy	<b>Plevoets (2012)</b> Adaptive Reuse	<b>Hochstenbach &amp; Mustard (2016)</b> Social Inequality and Gentrification
<b>Mele &amp; Nel-lo (2009)</b> Cities in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	<b>De Jonge (2016)</b> Use value of a building	<b>Ley (2003)</b> Arts and Gentrification
<b>Florida (2005)</b> Creative City & Creative Class	<b>Bruijning (2016)</b> Economic and Social Value	<b>Bourdieu (1993)</b> Aesthetic Disposition of the Artist
<b>Throsby (2001)</b> Concentric Models of the Creative Industry	<b>Zukin (2009)</b> Buildings, Cities and Authenticity	
<b>Landry &amp; Bianchini (1995)</b> Creativity and Cities		
<b>Pratt (2008) &amp; Zukin (1985)</b> Idea Re-Processor		

The next part will go deeper into the methodology that is needed in order to research if the creative industry is a resource for adaptive reuse.

## INTRODUCTION

To be able to show why creativity is important for a city, this section will provide an extensive overview of the methodology that is used in order to answer the research question: *To what extent is the creative industry a resource for adaptive reuse in Rotterdam?* By performing a qualitative research method, the research question will be viewed from two perspectives in order to get the image. The first group of respondents will be young, creative entrepreneurs and the second group will consist of professionals who are active in the field of urban policy, design and planning.

To get an image of why my research is relevant now, this section will start with 3.1: The Aim of the Research and will strengthen the position of the research in comparison to other, on first sight comparable, researches. This is followed by section 3.2 Why Rotterdam, and will provide arguments why the city of Rotterdam makes an interesting case. Then, section 3.3 will give an overview of the research population and motivate the choice of the two interview groups: the young, creative entrepreneur and the professional who are active in the field of urban policy, design and planning. In this section they will be individually introduced and why their input is indispensable for the research. At last, section 3.5 will discuss the analytic techniques that will be used to gather the data. Also, it will provide a short recap on the limitations and

### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research on the relation between creativity and the city is now new. Therefore, the first section will start with the aim and the relevance of the research. This will strengthen the position of the research in comparison to other, on first sight comparable researches.

#### Research Aim

This research on the topic of the power of art and culture and development of a city, started with the conduction of a thorough theoretical framework of the creative economy, creative adaptive reuse and the fear of gentrification. This theoretical framework tells how the creative economy celebrates ideas and creativity, and how

this celebration has influence on the development and identity of a city. Therefore, creativity became a powerful resource for cities, but has to deal with the limited capacity of space in the inner city. In order to bring the supply of unproductive buildings in the inner city, and the demand of young, creative entrepreneurs who aim to start up a cultural organisation, closer together, creative adaptive reuse can form the solution. Only, there is a fear that creative adaptive reuse could lead to the process of city gentrification. Here, the poor will be slowly pushed out of the city, and the gentrifiers will get the blame.

The main aim of my research is to pose the suggestion that the creative industry is an inevitable resource for the economic and social flourishing of a city. The creative industry is especially a powerful resource in cities that never stand still and are in a constant process of development and adjustment. Here, creativity and creative organisations will get the change to flourish and can have a lot of positive influence on the city's development process. A city that is still developing is not yet constrained by an establishment of regulations and orders. Such a city is only at the beginning of becoming a noteworthy city and therefore allows young, creative entrepreneurs to take a risk. The ability to take risk can be satisfied by reusing unproductive buildings with cultural revalorization. Consequently, this will allow and stimulate a favourable investment climate for new, young, creative entrepreneurs and eventually benefit the economy of the city.

The city that fits the bill is Rotterdam. Rotterdam offers a lot of opportunities for young, creative entrepreneurs to fulfil their needs and prospects. The next section will give arguments on why Rotterdam fits the bill and how Rotterdam perfectly fits the aim of my research.

### **3.2 WHY ROTTERDAM?**

This section will go deeper into why the city of Rotterdam makes an interesting case for my research. To begin with, the geographical area of Rotterdam will be explained. Next, I will provide several arguments why Rotterdam makes a good case for my research. It will tell why the research is relevant for Rotterdam, at this time and place.

#### **Geographical Area of Rotterdam**

The research will focus on the geographical area of Rotterdam. In general, Rotterdam is divided into 14 municipal districts. The focus will be on the inner city of



Rotterdam, which consist of the following areas: CS-kwartier, Oude Westen, Lijnbaan kwartier, Laurenskwartier, Waterstad, Cool, Hoboken, Nieuwe Kerk, Kop van Zuid.

OVERVIEW OF INNER-CITY NEIGHBOURHOODS



'Rotterdam – People make the inner city' p. 17

In 'Rotterdam – people make the inner city', the reason to focus on the inner city becomes clear. As an inhabitant of Rotterdam, I am aware that the inner city has never been fully exploited. This is mainly because the relatively small number of inhabitants the inner city currently accommodates. According to the research, in larger cities in The Netherlands, 10% of city dwellers inhabit the inner city (Engelsdorp-Gastelaars, 1998). In Rotterdam, this number is just over 5%.

But, Rotterdam is not standing still and a rising trend of people who aim to live in the inner city has occurred. According to the research, these inhabitants will hold a central position in the future. They argue how the people, who aim to live in the inner city, are not only enterprising characters but also entrepreneurs and creatives.

### **Rotterdam and Popularity**

'Rotterdam – people make the inner city' is just one of the many researches that is performed commissioned by The Municipality of Rotterdam. There is a new, growing interest and curiosity in the inner city by the Municipality of Rotterdam and related institutions, such as International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam. The International

Architecture Biennale Rotterdam posed the question: 'How do we make the city' on the biennale and shows the curiosities to explore what the possibilities are.

This new interest in the inner city is a consequence of growth that the city of Rotterdam is experiencing. The city of Rotterdam became popular in the media and therefore triggered the curiosity of investors, entrepreneurs, tourist, students and young professionals. As I have been living in Rotterdam for quite some time, I have noticed a growth in the city throughout the past 5 years and a change of the city environment. Also, I have noticed how this changing city environment has attracted new investors and entrepreneurs that aim to invest their money, work out their ideas or execute their projects in Rotterdam.

In the media, Rotterdam has been named the 'new Berlin'. Comparing Rotterdam to Berlin is based on the city characteristics, but also on the group of people who are attracted to the city environment and mentality. Bases upon the city characteristics, Rotterdam, just as Berlin, still has room to experiment, is a relatively poor city and has rebuilt itself after World War II as both cities have been bombed. Also, just as Berlin, Rotterdam knows a grey city landscape, and is a city that is industrial and never finished (Volkskrant; AD; NRC).

Based upon the group of people that is attractive to the mentality of the city, Berlin mostly attracts young, open-minded, creative people. This group is also coming to Rotterdam, as the rents are relatively low in comparison to other cities, there is a lot of space to live and work space and there is room to experiment with ideas and projects (ID Magazine, 2016).

Different media speaks out on the growth of Rotterdam but the thing that they all have in common is that they speak out the concern of how Rotterdam will cope with this popularity, and a fear for hipsterinflation and gentrification. The media mostly fears that Rotterdam will follow Amsterdam and will be a captive of his own success. In Amsterdam happened what the inhabitants of Rotterdam fear: 'it became a city for the rich' (Remie, 2016). Therefore, a rising trend of people that are moving from Amsterdam to Rotterdam occurred because of the affordable housing compared to Amsterdam (Remie, 2016)

These comparisons are provided to show how Rotterdam is a city that is in a constant process of development and adjustment. At the moment, Rotterdam is working with this new popularity and how to cope and consider this while working on the urban planning and design, with an eye on the future. With this eye on the future,

the city of Rotterdam makes a perfect example of a city coping with his new popularity and attracting a new, young, creative group and the fear of gentrification for many others who have been living in Rotterdam for years. On the one hand, this shows a positive economic grow of the city. On the other hand, among the inhabitants of Rotterdam, there is a growing fear that Rotterdam becomes the New Amsterdam. This means that Rotterdam will also undergo the process of city gentrification with an increasing housing price and will push away the poor.

This friction got feasible in a Referendum that was posed by the inhabitants of Rotterdam itself: the Woonreferendum 2016. The Woonreferendum is about the 'Woonvisie', where inhabitants of Rotterdam could vote for, or against the demolition of 20.000 social housing. People who voted yes, agreed to break down these houses in order to make Rotterdam more convenient for students and the middle-class. It will make Rotterdam more attractive, and will make sure that it will become more appealing for higher educated people to stay live and work in Rotterdam. People, who voted no, did so because this will help the process of city gentrification and 'veryupping'.

### **Rotterdam and Unproductive Buildings**

This all shows how Rotterdam is coping with a new creative class that is attracted by the climate of the city, and how it has to cope with this development. In 2016, the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam posed the question: 'What's Next?'. This question aimed at the New Economy and how to implement the new economy in the city of Rotterdam in order to make the city of Rotterdam sustainable. One of the posed solutions was to more actively work with the unproductive buildings in the inner city and reuse them.

Rotterdam is known for its vacancy and therefore a good case. The city has an over supply of unproductive buildings at A-locations that still have a use-value and are adequate for reuse (Tersteeg, 2014). This is a consequence of the new economy and 'flex' working, as the office market has become negative. The Municipality aims to motivate investors, entrepreneurs and projects developers with the covenant 'Aanpak Kantoren Rotterdam 2016-2020'. This covenant tells how the last few years, Rotterdam reused 300.00 square meters of unproductive buildings, but still has a vacancy rate of 19%. The covenant argues that is it a priority that there will be close

collaboration between the market and the Municipality in order to reuse, regenerate or restructure as many unproductive buildings as possible.

Table A: Availability vs Take-Up (Bak Property Research / Knight Frank)

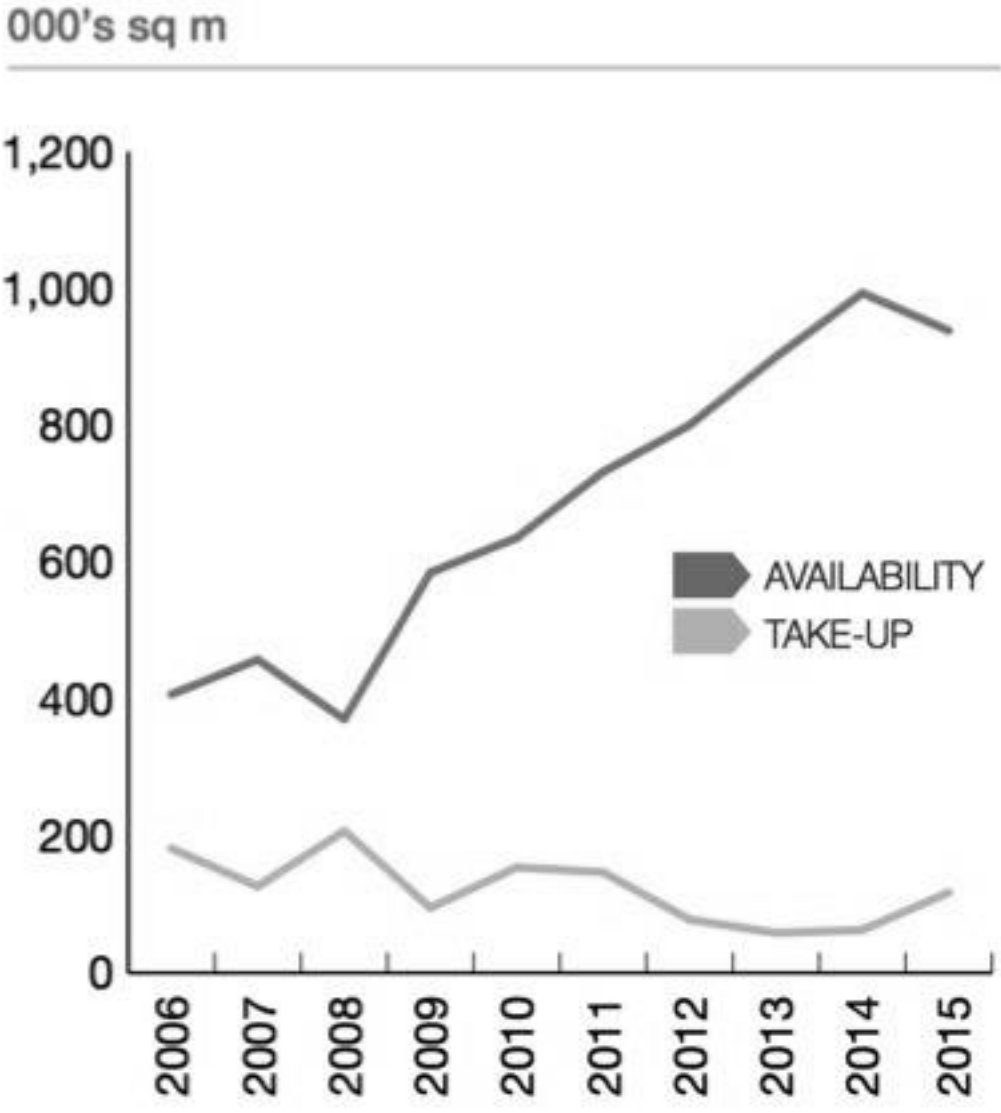


Table A: Availability vs Take-Up shows the relation between the availability of unproductive buildings that still have a use value and how many has been taken-up to reuse in Rotterdam. In other words: the demand and the supply of adaptive reuse. As can be seen, in the year 2016 the demand and supply curve are reaching out to each other again, since a long time.

Then, Table B: Availability rates by district, year-end 2015. As expected, the vacancy is the highest in areas that are far from the inner city, such as

Brainpark or Alexander. But, as can be seen in the Table B, there is also a high demand for space on locations that are near the Central Station or in the inner city (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2015). Also, as can be seen in Table A, the demand and the supply curve are reaching out to each other since a long time.

Together, this shows a higher demand for reusing buildings in the inner city and an increasing interest.

Despite this upwards trend, the vacancy in Rotterdam has been and still is, a very relevant topic to discuss. Recently, the NRC Handelsblad interviewed Gabor Everreart - which is also one of my interviewees - about the vacancy in Rotterdam. Gabor tells how we are at a peak of vacancy in Rotterdam. This 'peak' is positive. He argues that the vacancy brings a lot of new opportunities to begin something special. Gabor says: 'some years ago, the vacancy only caused a head egg for the Municipality of Rotterdam. Now it perfectly fits the high demand of a new group of people that aims to live and work in Rotterdam'. For example, the office building Euro point III at Marconiplein will be transformed into new apartments by 2020. Some strong creative examples are the King Kong Hostel, KINO, The Student Hotel and multiple galleries.

### 3.3 THE RESEARCH POPULATION

Now, that several arguments have been given to chose the inner city of Rotterdam as a case, the research population can be operationalized. The research population will consist of two groups: the first group will be the professionals in the field of urban policy and planning, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector. The second group are the young, creative entrepreneurs.

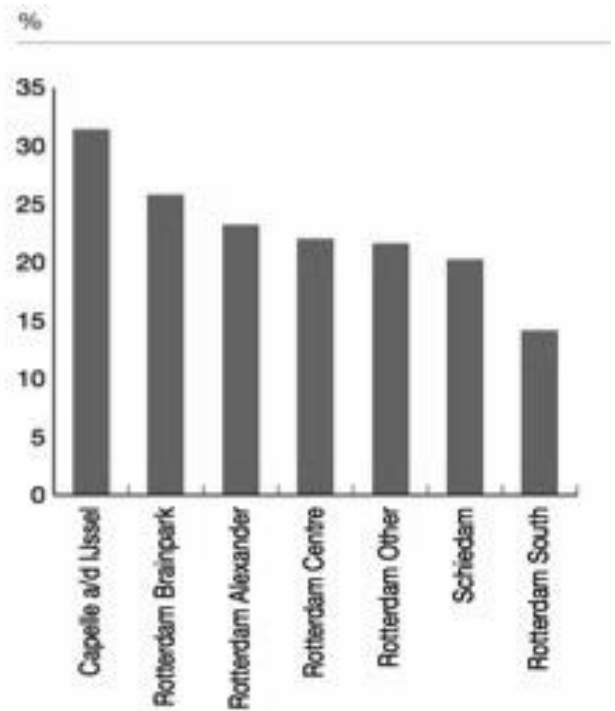


Table B: Availability rates by district, year-end 2015 (Bak Property Research / Knight Frank)

## The Professionals in the Field of Urban Design and Planning

The first interview population groups are the professionals in the field of urban policy, design and planning. Simply said, a professional can be defined as someone who has a lot of knowledge and connections in a particular field. Within the field of urban studies, there is one big difference between the concepts urban planning and urban design. Where 'urban planning' is related with the policy that shapes the urban development, the concept 'urban design' works with the physical form of the city (www.quora.com).

More interesting is to examine which strategies and intentions the professionals in the field of urban design and planning have by stimulating or propose a cultural or creative activity. And how they balance the economic, social and educational goals by pursuing cultural strategies (Grodach, 2007).

Zukin (1995) states that that 'culture is becoming more and more the business of cities' (p. 2). In reaction to this statement, Grodach (2007) questions if the intentions of the professionals in the field of urban design and planning that are encouraging cultural activities, become a mechanism for economic development. Therefore, deriving from the urban development literature, Grodach (2007) makes a distinction between three types of strategies the professionals in the field of urban policy, design and planning bear in mind by making decisions:

Strategy Type	Goals	Types of Cultural Projects and Programs	Geographic Focus	Target Audiences
Entrepreneurial	Economic growth through tourism, city image Catalyze private sector investments	Flagship cultural projects Spectacular events Promotional activities	Downtown, "prime city areas"	Tourists and Conventioneers Affluent residents and suburbanites
Creative Class	Economic growth through quality of life amenities Attract new residents/ employees in the "creative economy"	Arts and entertainment districts Collaboration between arts and private sector	Central city and historic urban neighborhoods	Prospective and existing residents Young urban professionals and "knowledge-based" workers
Progressive	Community development Arts education and access Local cultural production	Community arts centers Arts education programs	Inner-city neighborhoods Underserved neighborhoods	Underserved residential populations

Table 1. Cultural Development Strategies, Grodach, 2007, p. 353

According to Grodach (2007) the entrepreneurial strategy is mostly focused on enhancing economic growth by creating an attractive business environment by marketing the city as a 'place to play' (Feinstein & Judd, 1999 as quoted in Grodach, 2007, p. 353). Then, the creative class strategy is mainly focuses on the quality of life and lifestyle amenities to attract the creative class (Florida, 2009). These individuals are essential for the new economy to flourish and stimulate the growth of the local economy (Grodach, p. 354). And at last, the progressive strategy will focus on providing a wide distribution of benefits for citizens, so more participation in the arts or support of local cultural production (p. 355).

By performing a quantitative survey, he found that entrepreneurial strategies continue to guide the development and support of cultural activities in most cities (Grodach, 2007). In his research, the entrepreneurial strategy is most used to stimulate creativity in a city by the local government, and is picked up by entrepreneurs and organisations.

Two of the professionals from the field of urban planning and policy, both from the public and the private sector, are part of the Municipality.

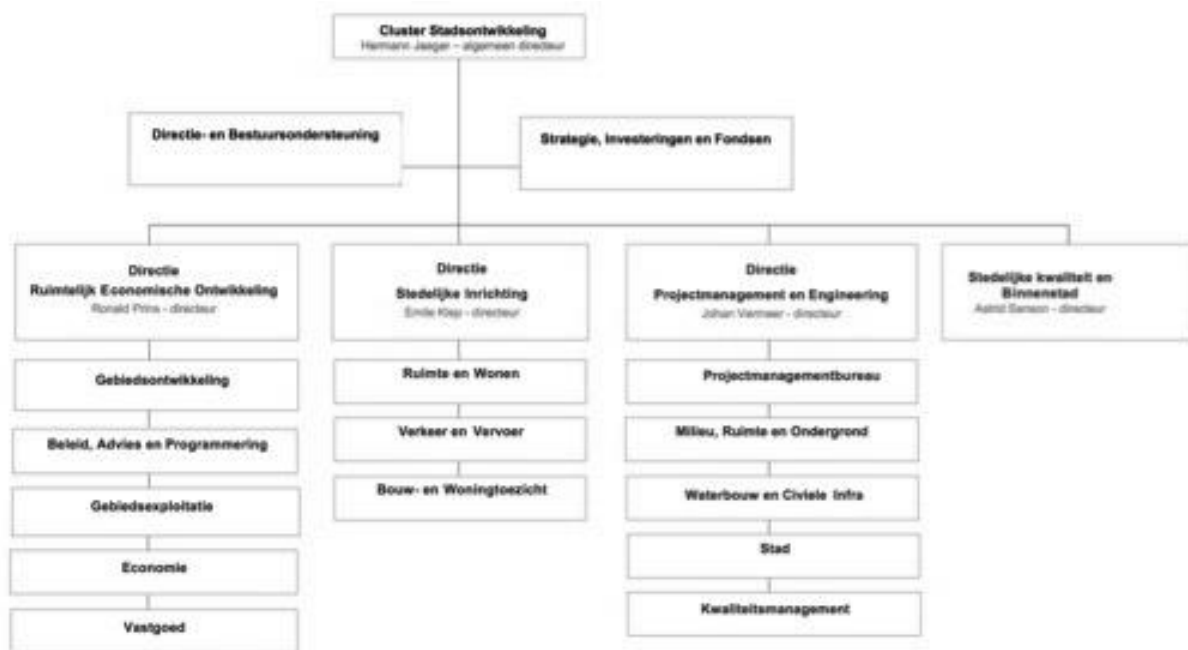
Organogram A shows the structure of the Municipality as a whole.  
 Organogram A ([www.rotterdam.nl](http://www.rotterdam.nl))



From this organogram, the following cluster is important: 'Stadsontwikkeling'. This cluster is responsible for the development of a strong economy and giving Rotterdam an attractive inner city. The cluster 'Stadsontwikkeling' is divided into three departments that are relevant for the research.



Organogram B shows the division of the cluster Stadsontwikkeling and their departments.



Organogram B ([www.rotterdam.nl](http://www.rotterdam.nl))

Within this cluster, the departments 'Vastgoed' and 'Pop-Up 010' brought to me two of the respondents.

### The Creative Entrepreneur

The second interview group will be the 'young, creative entrepreneur'. Simply said, a creative entrepreneur is an entrepreneur active in the creative field. Not to be misunderstood with entrepreneurs who aim to be creative in their thinking in order to be innovative and come up with original solutions (Mathews, 2007).

The British Council provides a clear definition on what a creative entrepreneur is. It states that a creative entrepreneur is active in the creative sector, but is able to show its business success in the classic terms of business growth



([www.britishcouncil.com](http://www.britishcouncil.com)). With this, The British Council means that a creative entrepreneur, just as any other entrepreneur, makes profit, has employees and a market share. As a creative entrepreneur, the production of your organisation must have a reputation amongst your peers, which is based upon the creativity, quality and aesthetic. Furthermore, according to the British Council, a creative entrepreneur has a passion for the creative sector and is willing to take risks, has corporate and interpersonal skills, is original and flexible and finds new, innovative ways to bring creative work to the audience ([www.britishcouncil.com](http://www.britishcouncil.com)).

This definition tells how the creative entrepreneur is a strong combination of someone who has a creative idea with a goal to stimulate creativity in the city and is able to successfully drive this idea forward. Within Rotterdam, there is not a real platform of every young, creative entrepreneurs in Rotterdam. You can find new initiatives through look up where they mingle, such as The Schieblock, or Gele Gebouw. Otherwise, they can be found in the Kamer van Koophandel register.

### **The Data Sample**

The choice to pick two interview groups is because it will lead to more valid results. It will give insight into the mind of the young, cultural entrepreneur and their motivations and perceptions on creative adaptive reuse, the creative entrepreneurial climate and the city of Rotterdam and ideas they aim to, or already have realised. Also, it will give insight in the motivations and arguments of the professionals in the field of urban policy and planning, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector to work with creative adaptive reuse in terms of accessibility to work with unproductive buildings that still have a use-value and in relation to the city of Rotterdam and their sudden popularity and the future prospects. If the research would only focus on one interview group, the results will provide a one-sided perspective on the topic. Then, this could be perceived as generalizing, and, or objective. Then, the results would question the trustworthiness of the research, as they reduce the conformability and the credibility (Bryman, 2009).

The two groups together form a total of 8 interviews. Ideally, the division of the groups will be 50/50. Four respondents will be part of the first interview group: the professionals in the field of urban planning and design. The other four will be part of the second interview group: young, creative entrepreneurs. To get a hand on the eight respondents, the sample is mainly formed through snowball sampling (Bryman,

2008). The choice for my respondents is thought through and they are chosen in a strategic way. This is due to the influential position the respondents have in the field of culture, or urban policy. Therefore, the respondents are in the position to propose other respondents who have the experience or characteristics that are relevant for my research. Here, the snowball effect occurs (Bryman, 2009).

The individuals to approach in order to let the ball roll are found through my own personal network in Rotterdam. I contacted them through e-mail, or called them. As I am living in Rotterdam for quite some time, I am aware of whom to contact and of who's input would really benefit my research. If I did not know them through my personal network, I searched them up on the Internet or made use of social network platforms such as Facebook, Linked In or Instagram.

### **Introducing the interviewees**

This brought together two interview groups who form an interesting mix of professionals who are currently working in Rotterdam. Not all of them are originally from Rotterdam: a significant number of three are originally not from Rotterdam. One respondent only works in Rotterdam; seven respondents live and work in Rotterdam. In order to motivate my choice, the following overview of the respondents is presented. Here, the respondents is introduced, and gives arguments why they fill up a gap in my research.

First, the interview group of the professionals in the field of urban planning and design will be introduced:

#### **Interviewee A**

Municipality Rotterdam: Department Pop-Up 010

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The first interviewee is a representative of the Pop-Up 010, as a part of the Municipality Rotterdam.

Interviewee A fulfils the role of a mediator between young, creative entrepreneurs and unproductive places that are ready to reuse. The choice for Interviewee I is motivated by the knowledge Interviewee A has about creative adaptive reuse and unproductive locations that are ready for reuse in Rotterdam. Furthermore, Interviewee A has a lot of 'street knowledge' of Rotterdam: up to date and knowing

what is going on concerning new projects, collaborations and initiatives. Interviewee A can provide new insights and information about how creative adaptive reuse functions and how young, creative entrepreneurs use creative adaptive reuse.

### **Interviewee B**

Municipality Rotterdam: Department Real Estate

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Interviewee B is representative for the city/spatial development department of the Municipality Rotterdam and is responsible for the approach of vacancy in Rotterdam.

Interviewee B is found through a policy proposal for my BA Arts & Culture Studies. Interviewee B is chosen due to the responsibility of the approach of vacancy in Rotterdam, viewed from an economic perspective. This way, creative adaptive reuse and the economic consequences for the city of Rotterdam becomes clear. Also, how these economic consequences could have an influence on a social level. Through the understanding of the economic and social consequences, a more clear view on gentrification will develop.

### **Interviewee C**

SKAR (Stichting Kunstaccomodatatie Rotterdam)

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Interviewee C works at SKAR Rotterdam. SKAR is originally an initiative of the Municipality Rotterdam for (temporary) housing of creative people/artist/creative initiatives.

Interviewee C is found through Interviewee A. Interviewee C is chosen because SKAR has an eye for scouting unproductive buildings with a use-value that are appropriate for artist to live and work in. Also, SKAR aims to show how these unproductive buildings, filled up with artist and creativity, can flourish up and positively influence an urban neighbourhood.

### **Interviewee D**

ZUS

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Interviewee D is an employee at ZUS (Zones Urbaines Sensibles), which is an organisation that performs research on and intervenes in the contemporary urban

landscape. They do so with productions that range from urban plans and architecture to installations and fashion in Rotterdam.

Interviewee D is found through a thesis meeting at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. Colleague students gave me a tip to contact ZUS. ZUS has a focus on the future of the city Rotterdam and the spatial design. Interviewee D could therefore bring insights on future opportunities of Rotterdam, using creative adaptive reuse as a resource, on the table.

Now that the first interview group has been introduced, the second group of 'the young, creative entrepreneur' will follow:

### **Interviewee E**

KINO

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Interviewee E works at KINO Rotterdam: a cinema, bar, restaurant and creative workplace. Interviewee E is found through my personal network. KINO is a breath of fresh air when it comes to the supply of cinemas in Rotterdam as it replaced the old Lantarenvenster at the Gouvernestraat.

Interviewee E is chosen due to the entrepreneurial mind-set: it is really interesting to find out what aspired KINO to fill up the Lantarenvenster gap, and how Interviewee E had an eye for this gap in the first place. Besides, the building in which they will establish is a great example of the creative, adaptive reuse and hopefully, something to encourage among other creative entrepreneurs.

### **Interviewee F**

Concept 56

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Interviewee F worked for Concept 56, which is a temporary project with the ultimate goal to host a party / art show at a vacant secret location somewhere in Rotterdam.

Interviewee F is found through my own personal network in Rotterdam. I'd choose Concept 56 because it is a really inspiring project. Originally from Jagermeister, Concept 56 is a project of 6 months with 6 young, creative, entrepreneurial like-minded individuals whose goal is to organise their ultimate art party in a secret /

temporary location. Therefore, Interviewee F has a lot of knowledge about vacant / temporary locations in Rotterdam, which are appropriate to use and the character of the buildings. Also, as the party took place a few months ago, Interviewee F is capable to make a case for showing how successful creative adaptive reuse can be, as the party was a big hit.

### **Interviewee G**

No Mans Art Gallery

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Interviewee G is a former employee of No Mans Art Gallery, which is a temporary pop up exhibition in secret / temporary locations worldwide, of which the most recent exhibition was in Rotterdam.

Interviewee G is found through personal network. I'd choose No Mans Art Gallery because it is a really great example of how to reuse a building that almost has no use-value anymore, with creative enterprises: it really shows how to think creative and see opportunities in buildings or places others have give on up hope.

### **Interviewee H**

The Performance Bar

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Interviewee H is the co-founder of The Performance Bar, which is a bar that hosts performances and has live painting every weekend, based in a vacant building in the Witte de With.

Interviewee H is found through a colleague student who is responsible for the marketing of The Performance Bar. I'd choose The Performance Bar because it is a renewing concept that thinks outside the box and makes the unthinkable happen. Again, they saw their opportunity on the market and did it. Also, the building they are using is really interesting: it was an empty garage and now it is filled up with nothing more than a bar.

## **3.4 RESEARCH METHOD**

Together, the respondents present a mixed group of professionals that live in Rotterdam and work in the field. The group will provide new insights and will undermine or strengthen each other's point of view. In order to get their insights and

point of views, a qualitative research method needs to be conducted. Since the aim of the research is to pose the suggestion that the creative industry is an inevitable resource for the economic and social flourishing of a city, it is important to actually talk to people.

### **The Need for a Qualitative Research Method**

Research on the relationship between creative adaptive reuse, urban regeneration and gentrification is not new (Florida, 2005; Zukin, 1995; Scott, 2000). Although, these research are often based on a historical overview (Zukin, 1995), or try to explain the creative milieu in a post-industrial city using sociology (Zukin, 1995; Ley, 2003). Or, these research topics are examined using quantitative data and numbers (Grodach, 2015; Howkins 2001; Florida, 2005). The choice for quantitative data is motivated that it is more reliable and transferable. Also, it can say something over a large sample group and a bigger picture (Grodach, 2015).

To go behind the quantitative data, the main focus will be on the interviewee's point of view on how they perceive the relationship between creativity and the development of a city. Instead of focussing on 'the bigger picture', the research will get a hold on the inner city of Rotterdam. Instead of using a zip code to be representative for a person (Grodach, 2015), actually talk to the people will be more fruitful. By simply asking the individual about how they perceive a situation, or process, a lot can be learned. This is because a city has to do with people. The research question is a one that happens in a city and its environment. This is something that is not only a consequence of the professionals in the field of urban planning and design, but also a consequence of social interactions (Ley, 1996).

In the research of Drake (2003), he asked individuals about the relation of place and creativity and the importance and influence it can have in the creative process. By listening to the interviewee's perception, Drake (2003) could link back the empirical findings to the real situation and helps to understand the relation between the two groups. By choosing this method, the research will go deeper into how my respondents think about the interview topic, but also on how they behave towards them. It will give insight on the relation between both interview groups, and how they anticipate on each other. Also, it will concern their personal motivations to execute certain actions and how they handle and learn from the consequences.

Nevertheless, it is a subject people like to give their opinion about. As stated before, the relationship between the arts and the development of a city has become a topic many write and talk about. Not only in academic literature but also in non-academic. In (professional) non-academic literature or newspapers, such as The Guardian or NRC Handelsblad, a lot is written about the relationship between the arts and the development of a city. Then, the topic spreads on social media, such as Facebook, and many people aim to speak their minds.

### **Semi Structured Interviews**

To fully understand the position of my interviewees, the best way to interview them will be by performing semi-structured interviews. The research topic has to do with people and their motivations and perceptions. A young, creative entrepreneur is not passive in the process of creative adaptive reuse, but it could be up for discussion if the professionals in the field of urban design and planning restrict him or her. To know why creative adaptive reuse is not yet a powerful resource for unproductive buildings and if the city of Rotterdam is capable of doing so, we need to understand the thoughts of those who are involved in this process. Therefore, semi-structured interviews will give information that will attribute to this field of interest and will provide motivations and in-depth insights on the topic, from a perspective of the working field.

The semi-structured interviews will be treated in the form of a social encounter (Murphy, 2012). This allows them to talk about the topics on the interview scheme but leaves room for discussion. It would be more like a conversation, hearing what the other has to say by simply let them do the talking.

### **Interview Scheme**

Within the semi-structured interviews, three topics are already established. These topics will have several subtopics and room for some deviation. The three main topics in the interview scheme will be: A New Identity, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification. As they are semi-structured, there is no such thing as a 'fixed' interview scheme – it will be more in the form of conversations or a social encounter and a focus on their perspective. The interviews will take approximately +/- 60 to 90 minutes and will be held in Dutch or English.

First, it is important to get to know the interviewee. Therefore, some personal questions in order to fully understand the motives, perspectives and frameworks of the interviewee. This will give a clear view on how they position themselves towards the city of Rotterdam. I want to get to know the gender, age, education and place of residency.

The topics that are included in the scheme are as follows:

**Topic 1** A New Identity

This topic will elaborate on the transition of the identity of Rotterdam that the city is experiencing at the moment. It will discuss the identity shift in relation to a new, knowledge based economy and the relation between innovation and creativity, based upon the theory of Howkins (2001). How do the interviewees experience this growth themselves? And what are, according to them, factors that contribute to this experience?

**Topic 2** Creative City

The second topic will elaborate on Florida's (2005) view on Creative City and the theory of Landry & Bianchini (1995) on which characteristics a city needs in order to let creativity flourish in a city. Do the interviewees see Rotterdam as a Creative City? What are the characteristics of the city and do they provide a base to let creativity flourish?

**Topic 3** Creative Adaptive Reuse

This topic will elaborate on how the interviewees perceive creative adaptive reuse as an urban regeneration strategy, based upon the theory of Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016). How familiar are they with the term and what are the interviewee's views on the possibilities with it? And can it contribute something to the economic/social environment of the city?

**Topic 4** Gentrification

The fourth topic will be more like a hypothesis: can creative adaptive reuse lead to a friction with gentrification? Based upon the theory of Ley (2003) the interviewees will be asked if they notice any changes in terms of a new generation 'gentrifiers' that is



attracted to the city. How do they perceive the concept of gentrification in relation to the future of Rotterdam? And is gentrification necessarily something negative?

### **Pilot**

Before conducting the interview with the interviewees, a pilot interview was performed. After this, the interview scheme was slightly shortened, as it was too long. Furthermore, some of the sub topics were converted to one question or sub topic, as the answers on these questions were quite similar.

## **3.5 ANALYTIC TECHNIQUES**

The interviews were in Dutch, as it were all Dutch-speaking respondents. The time frame of the interviews was between an hour and an hour and a half.

After conducting the interviews, almost all of them were directly transcribed. Besides the interview, off record conversations could lead to new, other insights as it become more personal and less academic. After the transcription, the data was printed out and read over and over again, on different times and days. This helped to really get a hang of the data and see things that you were not able to find out the other day. Not only did I perform my data analysis by hand, my transcribed interviews were also implemented into ATLAS. It helped to organize the data by using coding schemes and categories.

This way, it allows me to use the grounded theory. The collected, qualitative data is re-viewed and the codes that are a product of my theoretical framework and data, divide my data into groups and concepts. Eventually, these groups and concepts are turned into categories: these categories may become the basis for a new theory.

### **Ethical issues**

The ethical issue concerns the anonymity of the interviewees. Throughout The Analysis, the interviewees are categorized as A, B, C, D, E, F and G. This is in order to prevent that the interviewees can speak out their minds without being judged or find themselves in a critical position towards the other interviewees.

Chapter 4 presents the Analyse and is divided into four sections, namely 4.1 A New Identity, 4.2 Creative Adaptive Reuse, 4.3 Gentrification and 4.4 Future Prospects. The four sections are based upon the qualitative data derived from the 8 semi-structured interviews and form a joint subject where sub sections are discussed. The Analyse will conclude the main findings of the section and lead on a discussion.

## 4.1

## A NEW IDENTITY

The first section will do deeper into the transition of the identity of Rotterdam. This section will discuss what factors contributed to the shift in attitude towards the city, embedded in the historical background. Based upon the theory of Howkins (2001), this section will discuss the relation between innovation, dynamics and creativity in the city of Rotterdam.

### **Historical Background**

How did Rotterdam become the way it is now? How did the entrepreneurial climate develop? And, how to explain the shift that has occurred during the last few years? The historical background of Rotterdam lays the bedrocks for the identity and characteristics of the city. To go deeper into the change of attitude of others towards Rotterdam, we need to start with the roots. Where did Rotterdam come from?

This was the first concept investigated through the interviews. In fact, the first question was 'what words pop up in mind when thinking about Rotterdam'. In the answers the key words were: harbour city, hard working, a doing mentality, no nonsense, open and dynamic, multicultural and liberal. All these key words are based upon the historical background of Rotterdam with a focus on the bombardment in World War II. After the bombardment, Rotterdam had to rebuild itself with the top priority to make sure everyone had a place to live. Consequently, a lot of social housing was built.

'The people had to take care for each other and make sure everybody has a roof above its head. Now, the city has grown and improved a lot. There is time for activities and entertainment' (Interviewee A).

Interviewee A says that Rotterdam had to work hard to be rebuilt and is known for its hard-working and rolling up sleeve's mentality. All the interviewees agree that this mentality is something that differentiates Rotterdam with other cities in the Netherlands. The keywords 'hard working' and a 'mentality of rolling up sleeves' cannot only be explained by the bombardment but also by the fact that Rotterdam has always been a harbour city. Being a harbour city also explains the openness, multicultural and liberal mentality and the dynamic city landscape. The diverse nationalities present in Rotterdam are a consequence of the harbour. In a 'harbour city', ships come and go, and so did a lot of different cultures.

Based upon the mentality and characteristics of the city, interviewee B argues that the rest of the Netherlands had, or has, a 'hate/love relationship' with Rotterdam. Before, Rotterdam was mainly seen as a city with a high crime rate, poverty and known for its foreigners. Living in a multicultural society was something most of the Dutch were not familiar with. And as they say in Dutch; '*wat de boer niet kent, dat eet hij niet.*' This means that if the Dutch were not familiar with it, they didn't want anything to do with it. This caused a lot of negativity towards Rotterdam from other Dutch cities, as it was 'dangerous', 'plebeian' and 'edgy'. This hate/love relationship is also based upon the mentality of the people who live in Rotterdam. Interviewee B argues that Rotterdam is a city that works hard, is no nonsense and is known for its saying 'niet lullen maar poetsen'<sup>1</sup>. This attracts people who enjoy this mentality. And off course, also chases away people who don't.

But after all these years of rebuilding itself, interviewee A argues that Rotterdam now has time to enjoy. The city has time to catch up, especially in the field of the arts and culture, by celebrating creativity and ideas. By 'enjoying itself', a shift in attitude towards the city Rotterdam has risen.

### **Change in Attitude towards Rotterdam**

Now that Rotterdam has time to enjoy, the way Rotterdam is perceived by the rest of The Netherlands is changing. Interviewee E, who is originally from Amsterdam, explains:

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<sup>1</sup> Make it happen!

'After the bombardment, the experiments in urban planning made live poor and rich far from each other. Together with the immigrants, it is necessarily to create a unity in Rotterdam, where every citizen is welcome. I see that this works better in Rotterdam than every big city I have ever been to. Solidarity and optimism despite displacement' (Interviewee E)

The mentality of the city kept people away. Now, it is something outsiders aim to be part of. Interviewee E lived in Amsterdam East for over 30 years and has seen a complete change of the neighbourhood. Some were positive, such as more places to recreate. Due to this development one big downside appeared: all the activity and business on the streets. Interviewee E is not the only one who experiences this. According to the media output, such as NRC Handelsblad or Volkskrant, this business is more and more a push factor to move from Amsterdam, to Rotterdam.

'Rotterdam is at its peak point and is now where Amsterdam had its positive impulse 30 years ago' (Interviewee E).

Interviewee E argues how there is a trend of people moving to Rotterdam. This trend shows a change of attitude of the rest of the Netherlands towards Rotterdam. The trend of people moving to Rotterdam is also related to the media exposure the city experienced. Due to attention in the news, being mentioned in travel guides and other forms of media output, Rotterdam has become a more likeable and popular place to live. Interviewee B explains this trend with a personal experience.

'Ten years ago, if I told people that I lived in Rotterdam, they would say: 'huh, why would you want to live there?' Now, if I tell people, they say: 'Ah Rotterdam, the new cool city of the Netherlands' (Interviewee B).

This is confirmed by an article of the NRC Handelsblad (Mascini, 2017) on rising prices on the house market in Rotterdam. Due to the popularity, the price of a house will rise from 5 to 10% in 2017. This is due to the undervaluation of housing in Rotterdam and the undervaluation of the city itself. Now, people are willing to take a change and invest in Rotterdam (Mascini, 2017).

The transition from a hard working and relatively poor Rotterdam towards a Rotterdam that has time to enjoy and experiment attracts a new group of people. They find their desire to experiment and start up a creative business in Rotterdam.

'The city has grown in its self-confidence and is therefore more corrugated as a creative city. You can always find young people in a city but now people from Amsterdam are coming to Rotterdam. Does this make Rotterdam upcoming? I don't know, maybe it is more a logical consequence; Amsterdam is overcrowded and it is not a pleasant climate to be really creative.

There is simply not enough space. In Rotterdam, there is. And with that I mean that there is space on the streets, which gives you space in your mind. I think innovation and creativity flourish in a dynamic city as Rotterdam' (Interviewee A).

Here, interviewee A gives some interesting arguments for Rotterdam to attract a new, young and creative group of people. First, she acknowledges the transmission from an old to a new identity of Rotterdam as she tells that the city has grown in its self-confidence. This growth is attractive for a new group of people: creative people with an entrepreneurial mind-set. They are attracted by the 'space': the space for entrepreneurial projects and the space in their minds

First, the tangible space, or to say: unproductive buildings that still have use-value (De Jong, 2016). Despite the sudden popularity, Rotterdam still has a vacancy rate of 19%. Instead of perceiving this as something negative, Interviewee B sees it as an opportunity. This is mainly because there is not yet a strict and established regulation on the topic 'vacancy' and how to deal with it. On the one hand, The Municipality encourages and stimulates to do something positive with the vacancy. On the other hand, they are still trying to figure out how to cope with the unproductive buildings in the inner city. Also, the young creative entrepreneur will be attracted by the relatively low housing rents. This gives them the opportunity to have a live and workspace that suits their needs (Zukin, 1985).

'Space' can be interpreted as tangible, namely in the form of the unproductive buildings to reuse with new initiatives, or a suitable live and workspace. But, 'space' can also be intangible, namely the 'space in your mind', i.e. more clarity and room for

thoughts. Interviewee A argues how Rotterdam is not overcrowded yet and is a dynamic city: this combination provides 'space in your mind'.

This supports the position of Howkins (2001) and his view on the creative economy and new, surprising ideas. Interviewee A makes clear the relation between space in your mind and innovation. Here, 'innovation' is related to creativity and dynamism. Howkins (2001) argues that innovation and the creative economy are intertwined as the new economy relies on ideas and innovation. Being innovative could lead to new, surprising ideas for a city. And the other way around: new and surprising ideas lead to innovation in a city. In order to come with ideas and innovation, creativity seems inevitable (Howkins, 2001).

Innovation does not only lead to new, surprising ideas, it is also a key to a new, flexible way of working. A creative entrepreneur has to be flexible: mostly the job will not be from 9 to 5 (Matthew, 2007). This new flexible way of working gives the creative entrepreneur the opportunity to work when he or she wants, and with whom he or she wants. Consequently, this will lead to better forms of communication and will bring like-minded people closer together to start up something new, or form collaborations. Just as Howkins (2001), Romein & Trip (2009) stated in their conference paper '*Key Elements of Creative City Development: An Assessment of Local Policies in Amsterdam and Rotterdam*' that creativity and innovation seems intertwined and this seems confirmed.

## **CONCLUSION**

Rotterdam has found a lot of its characteristics and identity in its historical background. From rebuilding and regenerating, Rotterdam has time to enjoy and make a catch up in the field of culture, creativity and the arts. Due to this development, Rotterdam has experienced a shift in attitude. It has grown to be a city that is raw and dynamic and provides an attractive entrepreneurial climate for creatives through its relatively low rents and the availability of space.

Unproductive buildings that are ready to reuse - with a strong will of the Municipality to do something positive with it – and the opportunity to come up with new, surprising ideas due to the clarity in your mind. Together, they stimulate innovation and dynamics and form a solid base for creativity in a city to flourish.

## 4.2

## ROTTERDAM AS A CREATIVE CITY

The second section will discuss Florida's (2005) view on Creative City and the reshaping of the concept based upon the findings. Furthermore, the interviewees hammer on the characteristics of the city Rotterdam as the main reason for a creative entrepreneurial climate to flourish, the relation between these two will be examined, using the theory of Landry & Bianchini (1995). At last, the theory of Zukin (2009) and Pratt (2008) on cities as 'Idea Reprocesors' will be examined.

### **Creative City Revised**

The intertwinement of innovation and creativity seems confirmed. Florida (2009) argues how this relation can make a city, a Creative City. Romein & Trip (2009) & Pratt (2009) state that the term 'creativity city' is a trend. All interviewees are familiar with the term creative city and the theory of Florida (2009). The interviewees described it as hype, trend or fashion and a 'flat' and 'meaningless' term. Due to its popularity, a lot of attention was on facilitating a hummus layer of creatives in the city. This is mainly because the theory of Florida (2009) made believe that more creatives equal more economic success.

The interviewees had to revise the term 'creative city', and what it means to be one. The main critic is that the theory of Florida (2005) cannot be applied to every city, as every city is unique. Applying a term as 'creative city' on Rotterdam, 'creativity' becomes something artificial, according to interviewee C. Interviewee C argues how this is city marketing and branding. Unrealistic, interviewee C argues, as a climate where people will be more creative, will take time. It can take years. Throughout this time, Interviewee C argues how you will see that you need more resources that you thought to need.

'The Municipality will only have an eye for the outcome of their policy, but a creative city is something you really need to be. It is from the inside, something that is breeding and not something you can label in the hope it will come out right' (Interviewee B).

The 'heroic sprinkles' of creativity (Bilton, 2010, p. 260) do not automatically imply economic growth of a city. This is opposite of the theory of Florida (2009) which does argue for effects on a short term.

The term Creative City had to be revised. A significant number of respondents expressed a Creative City as a city where creativity is encouraged by the climate of a city and therefore has the opportunity to flourish. Taking this definition, a significant number of respondents answered with yes to the question if Rotterdam is a creative city. The main argument is the combination of the dynamics, rawness and space.

The factors are available, but in order to actually enjoy being a creative entrepreneur, the interviewees named an important condition: the motivations and personality of the creative entrepreneur has to fit the mentality and characteristics of the city.

### **The Characteristics of Rotterdam and the Entrepreneurial Climate**

The interviewees hammer the characteristics of the city Rotterdam as the main reason for a creative entrepreneurial climate to flourish. Analysing the answers, it is possible to identify some patterns between the characteristics of Rotterdam and the people, and a link to the Rotterdam creative entrepreneurial climate:

#### ***‘Niet Lullen Maar Poetsen’***

One of the most common expressions is the saying ‘niet lullen maar poetsen’. Literally this means ‘stop the talking and make it happen’, which also happens to be the new slogan of the Municipality of Rotterdam. This expression embraces the characteristics of the city: hard working, no nonsense, direct and stubborn. As discussed above, creativity works differently in every city, or environment. Here, the climate of Rotterdam encourages creative entrepreneurs to simply do it, and see where they end up, learn from it, adjust and keep on going.

#### ***‘Geen Geouwehoer’***

The second most common saying mentioned during the interviews was ‘Geen Geouwehoer’. Literally, this means: ‘No verbiage’. It tells how, by just simply doing it, you are allowed to make mistakes. If you make mistakes, you are not going to let your head down, but try again. Also, it shows that creative entrepreneurs stay open and direct. They will be down to earth and will not mock others as they will not mock you. This works in Rotterdam because making mistakes is not something to be embarrassed by, as there is less social pressure.



'It doesn't matter if you make a lot of mistakes here. This is because if you begin a creative process, your event or organisation will not immediately be overcrowded with all the 'hip' people in town. In Rotterdam, it needs time to find the right place for your cultural organisation, and when it has found its place, the right people will follow' (Interviewee 4).

As most of the initiatives are bottom up, a creative organisation will start out small and with an in-crowd of people. Thanks to word of mouth marketing, it will spread.

### ***'De Surinamer bij de broodjeszaak op de Kruiskade is ook een Rotterdammer'***

The inhabitant of Rotterdam is not restricted to a certain appearance. The title of this sub chapter literally means: 'The Surinamer, who works at the Surinamer bread store at the Kruiskade, is also a Rotterdammer.' This quote shows the how many of the interviewees mentioned Rotterdam as friendly, solid, optimistic, diverse, a melting pot of cultures, knows a lot of different identities and a social city.

Interviewee C introduced the concept 'Social City' during the interview. The concept is not explained in the theoretical framework, as it did not come up. Rotterdam is one.

'Rotterdam might seem harsh and stubborn, but in the end, it is a city that helps on another. There is a mix of highly educated people and people who have not had an education at all. The initiatives people come up with, are not for themselves, but have a strong social connection' (Interviewee C).

Interviewee C argues how, as a social city, the creative entrepreneurs can add an educational and social value to the city, such as a collaboration with schools in exchange for low renting prices of a work and live space. Here, artist could introduce young children from less fortunate neighbourhoods to art and creativity.

### ***'Openness in our DNA'***

A significant number of respondents mention the relation of Rotterdam with the harbour.

'Harbour cities are very special anyways. In general, the citizens are more open-minded. This is mainly because the sea man who entered the city. People are therefore always more open-minded towards newcomers. It's a different culture' (Interviewee 1).

'Rotterdam has met so many cultures and has had so many different people welcomed in the city. This makes us open and curious. It is like there is some kind of openness in our DNA' (Interviewee 4).

This implies that Rotterdam is positive towards others, liberally, dynamic, industrial, international and open.

***'Komen wij uit Rotterdam, ken je dat niet horen dan?'***

The mentality and characteristics of Rotterdam also has its downsides. The mentality can be too proud, or a little rude.

'When asked to think about the things that first pop up in mind when you say Rotterdam, is the real 'dye-hard'. These are mostly the 'boorish' inhabitants of Rotterdam: people who are less educated and work in the harbour or are a diehard fan of Feyenoord' (Interviewee 3).

These people are simply unavoidable in a city and do not necessarily influence the entrepreneurial environment. Meanwhile, being too 'proud' is something that can have an influence. Interviewee 1 argues that,

'It is important not to lend your identity to a place. In my opinion, that is not something to encourage. To be proud is ok, but sometimes it can be overdone in Rotterdam. Be careful: it will start to work against you' (Interviewee 1).

Interviewee 1 warns for being too proud because it could negatively influence the entrepreneurial climate. The quote 'Komen wij uit Rotterdam ken je dat niet horen dan<sup>2</sup>' implies that there is still a strong relation with the traditions and the language of Rotterdam. This can make Rotterdam 'too proud'. It could lead to less collaboration with other people and/or institutions and organisations from other cities. Interviewee E points to Amsterdam as a city that has overdone it and became 'too proud'. This created a culture in which every one wanted to be an Amsterdammer and they became a little 'cocky'. With the focus on Amsterdam as the centre of the Netherlands, a less open attitude towards others was created.

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<sup>2</sup> Can you not hear that we are from Rotterdam? A Dutch saying that implies that you can hear through the accent that they are from Rotterdam.

From the data, it seemed clear that the characteristics and mentality of the city and the creative, entrepreneurial climate are related: an open mind, hard working, 'just do it' mentality and no nonsense.

According to Landry & Bianchini (1995), there are a few conditions that are necessarily in order to stimulate a creative milieu (p. 31):

- Reassign success and failure
- New indicators of success
- Making the most of creative people
- Balancing between cosmopolitan and local
- Multiculturalism
- Active participation
- Rethinking urban management and developing creative spaces

Landry & Bianchini (1995) argue how Rotterdam is a good example of a city that has a creative urban development, going against the grain of narrowly commercial logic. In order to realize these conditions, a city has to have a solid base, where open-mindedness, no nonsense, hard working and a doing mentality form the key conditions (p. 31).

### **Bottom up Initiatives**

This way, a creative entrepreneur in Rotterdam has to be innovative, not afraid to take a risk, open towards others and not too proud and simply 'just do it.' Together, this forms to a form of creative entrepreneurship that uses these characteristics to the fullest: the bottom up initiatives (Tuijl & Bergvoet, 2016).

Interviewee H argues how the real power of Rotterdam lies in the ability to see what is missing in the city and fill up this gap. Interviewee D strengthens this argument by naming the example ZUS. The founding mother of ZUS was living in The Schieblock as she has squatted there with her husband. While living there, they looked out their windows and started to observe the people, the streets, the policies and the organisations. They had an eye on new developments around them and anticipated on what they saw. Therefore, they came up with ideas and a drive to do something with what they witnessed. They 'simply took the risk and just did it' when they created ZUS. Interview D finds it hard to describe the identity of Rotterdam, but acknowledges, by talking about ZUS, that the founding mother, 'rolled up her sleeves' and 'just simply did it' by founding ZUS.

Interviewee D makes clear that the Municipality also acknowledge the power of the bottom up approach. Encouraging bottom up initiatives will give the people who live in the city a feeling that they have a voice and can be heard. They feel that they have something to say about the liveability in Rotterdam (Tuijl & Bergvoet, 2016).

**Interviewee A** states that: 'If Rotterdam is a creative city, then the creatives are aware of this: It is not necessarily to put a label on it. It is something that needs to be happening from the bottom up and not something that has been imposed from the top down.'

Interviewee A strengthens the arguments of interviewee B and interviewee C. Creative City is something that has to come from within the city and by the people who live there: creativity is not something that can be forced. Interviewee A argues that the creative scene in Rotterdam is more 'underground' and 'individual'. Being more 'underground' and 'individual' means that there is not a real 'scene' you have to belong to in order to be perceived as a creative mind. Being a creative mind is not something that can be stigmatized. Being a creative mind is something the people who live in Rotterdam will find out themselves, through experimenting. This strengthens the position of interviewee A and B, who argue that creativity is not something that can be forced.

### **Idea Re-Processor**

One of the biggest downfalls of the theory of Florida (2005) is the idea that cities were no longer able to be authentic (Zukin, 1985) because 'creativity' is positioned as the motor of urban regeneration. Pratt (2008) went a step further by introducing the concept of 'idea re-processors': cities would copy each other in order to be creative, at the expense of the authentic identity of the city (Zukin, 1985).

The interviewees made clear that re-processing ideas and loss of authenticity is not something to worry about. Every city has its own character, is unique, aware of its strengths. A significant number of interviewees compared Rotterdam to two other cities, namely Amsterdam and Berlin, in order to strengthen the position or as what could happen in the future.

## **Rotterdam | Amsterdam**

Amsterdam is mentioned frequently in the data. Mainly because one of the interviewee is from Amsterdam, to compare Rotterdam with or to make a warning to not become as overheated. The entrepreneurial climate in Amsterdam is perceived as oppressed due to a lack of space and not a nice climate for creative entrepreneurs to work in. Furthermore, interviewee H says something interesting: cities differentiate each other through creativity.

‘At the beginning of 2000, every municipality began to focus on the creative class and trying to attract to the city. Amsterdam and Rotterdam both have a very unique way of using creativity but it seems to be tried to implement it in the same way. That is not something you want. Rotterdam has to come with their solution’ (Interviewee C).

That cities differentiate each other through creativity is supported by the research of Grodach (2015). He argues that fine arts mostly grow in stable neighbourhoods and commercial arts industries in rapidly changing neighbourhoods. When looking at Amsterdam and Rotterdam and their creative output, Grodach (2015) was mostly right. He found that the high arts are mostly associated with stable growth in neighbourhoods. Amsterdam has a higher concentration of highly educated people, and so, with higher incomes. Also, political expenses to stimulate the arts are higher in Amsterdam. Consequently, you will have more chances to find a job and work in the field of high art. This created the position of Amsterdam as the main producer of high art in The Netherlands and a city for the wealthier. But it is known for the high rents and a shortage of space. Together, this leaves less room for innovation and experimenting.

As discussed, Rotterdam has been a relatively poor city. With a higher concentration of low educated people, and less public expenses for art in comparison to Amsterdam. With less money to spend but more room to offer, Rotterdam encourages a ‘do it yourself’ climate, which led to a lot of bottom up projects and initiatives. Amsterdam offers more possibilities for high art and an established order and Rotterdam offers room for small initiatives and space.

## **Rotterdam | Berlin**

Furthermore, a significant number of respondents name Berlin to make a comparison to Rotterdam. According to the German newspaper Die Welt the city of Rotterdam and Berlin have some similarities: grey, cool, raw, pure, creative and never finished. Rotterdam and Berlin both have the character of a city that is re-built after the Second World War, and far from picturesque. Rotterdam has similarities due to its historical background but as Berlin is already advanced in the field of creativity, arts and culture, Rotterdam finally has time to catch up. Interviewee H makes a comparison between Berlin and Rotterdam as he argues that:

'Berlin derives its identity from such small initiatives. In that sense, Rotterdam has comparable characteristics as she does too' (Interviewee H).

Here, interviewee H argues that the creative entrepreneurial climate of Rotterdam and Berlin is comparable due to the cities characteristics.

## **CONCLUSION**

To sum up the above, the interviewees revised Creative City into a city where creativity is encouraged by the climate of a city and therefore has the opportunity to flourish. Furthermore, creativity is not something that can be forced but needs to come from the city within. The mentality and the characteristics of the city provide a solid base to be a creative city and confirm the theory of Landry & Bianchini (1995): open-minded, hard working, no nonsense and stubborn. Furthermore, the idea of cities as idea-reprocessors (Zukin, 2009) seems rejected as 'cities differentiate each other through creativity' (Interviewee F). This leads to a form of creative entrepreneurship that Rotterdam needs to benefit from: bottom up initiatives.

## **4.3**

## **CREATIVE ADAPTIVE REUSE**

The interviewees understood the meaning of the concept of creative adaptive reuse and referred to it as 'creative initiatives by creative entrepreneurs that fill up a space that still has a use value; cultural revalorization without force but comes from own initiative'. Although, two interviewees reacted sceptical to creative adaptive reuse as they referred to the concept, as 'putting artist in an old school and hopefully magic

will occur'. Based upon the theory of Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) and the interview data, the following opportunity and risk can be discussed.

### **Humus Layer of Creativity**

The first opportunity - as well as a risk - lies in the ability of creative adaptive reuse to increase the liveability and sustainability of the city or a neighbourhood, using the arts, creativity and culture as a tool (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016). Or to say, create a humus layer of creativity for the city. All 8 interviewees are a little sceptic towards this assumption: they do believe that creativity can have a positive influence but it is not something to fully rely on. Interviewee G argues: 'Can you just put some artist in an old school or a vacant building and it magically will happen?'

'Creativity can absolutely cause an upwards spiral for the city. Although, I also know places where artist are already living in a building for 15 years. Which is nice off course, but I cannot say that they truly did something for the neighbourhood...Creatives are not always capable of doing so. There is no 'holy recipe', or a 'success formula' that will tell: 'if we do this, it will work out' (Interviewee G).

With this, the interviewee implies that creativity is not a solution to all problems, and as concluded earlier, creativity is something that cannot be forced. Creativity cannot be a solution to all problems. Not on the short run, anyway. Interviewee C does believe that artist can have a positive influence, but sees this influence on the long run. Part of SKAR, the interviewee makes an important statement. The goal of SKAR is to see if there can be added a permanent value to the city by creating a humus layer of creativity, using the power of the creatives to fill up unproductive buildings. SKAR has multiple vacant buildings in property and tries to reach out to more. SKAR has a 'reserve pool', which means that SKAR can use one of the vacant buildings they own when they feel the time is right: this can vary from 10 to 20 years. In general, interviewee C argues that the 'time is right' when SKAR notices that an urban area 'needs' the power of the arts in order to flourish.

With SKAR, interviewee C also introduces the sustainability of Rotterdam. Instead of using the term 'reusing' unproductive buildings with a use-value, Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) introduce the term 'recycling'. 'Recycling' implies a model where reusing unproductive buildings has the goal to make the city more sustainable. Two

out of eight interviewees mention the term 'recycling' and argue that the recycling of unproductive buildings offer a lot of new opportunities. Not only for the unproductive buildings but also for the surrounding. Instead of demolishing and reorganizing these neighbourhoods, they let creatives do their job. The creativity therefore caused a self-fulfilling system of sustainability.

Based upon this, interviewee F tells that creativity has the power to 'make something out of nothing.' Meaning that creativity has the 'power' to bring new changes, opportunities and ideas that are beneficial for the city. Again, the hummus layer of creativity for a city seems important. By hummus layer, interviewee B means that creativity makes it possible for other things to breed and to feed itself with creativity. Interviewee B strengthens this argument with an example:

'It was quite a mess after Lantarenvenster left the Gouvernestraat. The street had a lot less visitors and it became impoverished. With KINO, we really want to give the neighbourhood a new impulse. And we notice that the neighbourhood is waiting for that too. We really hope to become the new magnet for this street, the neighbourhood and surroundings' (Interviewee E).

Moving Lantarenvenster to the Kop van Zuid had a positive effect on the revival of the economy in the South, but also had a negative influence on the inner city.

Another clear example of the influence of arts and culture on a neighbourhood in the long run, is the Vierhaven area. Interviewee F states that 'The Keileweg was a neighbourhood filled with whore's, pimps, junks and drugs. You wouldn't be caught dead in that neighbourhood.' Creatives began to see a unique opportunity and potential in this neighbourhood. It started with young creatives who began to live and work there on an ad hoc base, and a creative underground began to grow. Now, well-known parties such as Herr Zimmerman found their roots. Creatives attracted more creative initiatives and the neighbourhood began to flourish. Today, even Daan Roosgaarde is established in this neighbourhood with his worldwide famous design office, Interviewee F argues.

The self-fulfilling system contradicts the idea of a 'can of artist' being used in order to regenerate a neighbourhood. Although, the difference between the 'magical sprinkles of creativity when putting a can of artist in a poor neighbourhood' (Bilton, 2010) and the example of The Keileweg area is the free will: the creatives went to the



Keileweg themselves. A significant number of interviewees are sceptical towards the assumption that creativity is a solution to all problems, but they do acknowledge the importance a creative milieu as the hummus layer of the city. Again, there can be concluded that creativity is not something that can be forced. Creativity cannot happen overnight and needs time. You cannot facilitate creatives in a neighbourhood and 'force' them to perform magic, on the short run.

### **Give it Time**

All interviewees believe in the power of the arts and culture for a city but the main condition of creative adaptive reuse is that it needs time to develop. According to interviewee A, this is mainly because the city of Rotterdam is in a transition from an old to a new economy.

'The thing that encourages creative adaptive reuse is to become 100% more attractive for people to come live and work. And this has been happening the last 5 to 10 years. Before this development, there was no need of hip coffee places/bars, ateliers or places such as KINO. The city has grown and we start spending our money on more creative recreation. There is now time to do so. If you become more attractive as a city as a whole, people want to go out more. Old functions for a building such as offices disappear, and new ones come to exist, such as creative initiatives' (Interviewee A).

To give it 'time', interviewee A means that the real estate market and property owners still need to get used to the new economy, along with flexibilization, innovation and creativity. For now, it is not 'in their 'system' yet: meaning that it is not common for them to rent out property for less than 5 to 10 years. They need to acknowledge and embrace the transition from an old to a new economy and see how buildings could also be used for a shorter term.

### **Pop Up**

Effects of creative adaptive reuse on the short run are feasible in the form of 'pop-up'. Here, pop up implies a temporary fill up that is performed by creative organisations, initiatives or other related forms. According to Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) 'pop up' can be seen as a solution to some unproductive buildings with a use value on the short run.

Although Interviewee A works at the department '010 pop up' at the Municipality Rotterdam, the interviewee is not content with the term 'pop up'.

'Another word that is currently very popular is the word pop up. It is also in my work title. I am trying to let this word go. Pop up means temporary but everything in life is temporary' (Interviewee A).

With this, the interviewee implies that pop-up is only a solution on the short term and pushes forward the long-term solution. Interviewee A and B argues how it would be best to make a combination. Most efficient would be if creative adaptive reuse works with the structural vacancy but also mixes up with temporary fill up of unproductive buildings with a use value. With this, Interviewee A and B mean that structural vacancy can be filled up with creative adaptive reuse as a solution. Although, there needs to be at least one permanent fill up as a solution. Elsewise, as pop up only offers a temporary solution, the problem will be postponed.

### **Cannibalism**

Young, creative entrepreneurs tend to look at places already available and are less flattered by new, modern buildings. Interviewee E is one of them and argues that Rotterdam has a lot of potential to work with old buildings and creative organisations. This combination works really well, as he names some successful examples The Fenix Food Factory, ZoHo, Hofbogen and The Industriegebouw

Suggested by Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) and confirmed by the interviewed municipals, the Municipality feels a pressure to build. The last few years, new large, modern buildings found their home in Rotterdam. Meanwhile there are still enough old buildings to work with. One of the consequences is an oversupply of empty buildings: vacancy. Rotterdam still has a vacancy rate of 16% while it feels a pressure to keep on building. Interviewee D argues that you do not necessarily see the vacancy in the inner city anymore but it is still there.

'Rotterdam has to become more careful and have a good look at the city building something new. The Municipality is focussed on a desire to keep on building, while there are a lot of vacant office spaces. Then people who were established elsewhere, will be placed in the

new office space, and empty out the old ones. This is form of cannibalism that the government needs to keep an eye on' (Interviewee D).

Based upon interviewee D, interviewee C argues that a city should not be allowed to build new buildings while there is still vacancy. Interviewee D says that they have to find the right mix. ZUS thinks that certain buildings can be demolished, if it is for the better. They also think that new buildings can be built, if they add something to the city.

Interviewee D argues how the Municipality first has to see what is available in the city and start to build from this. Young, creative entrepreneurs will benefit from reusing unproductive buildings, as there is a low rent. Larger companies will benefit from new buildings, as this fit their need and space. This is confirmed by Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) as they state that entrepreneurs need to work with what the city has to offer and what fits their needs, instead of keep on building new buildings. This almost seems a contradiction but is strengthened by Interviewee D who already argued that some buildings could be demolished, as they do not have a use value anymore. Then, demolition and building a new building is the right thing to do for a city.

By doing so, you will give everybody a change to be an entrepreneur as there is a building that fits everyone's needs. You will get a right mix of the local component and bigger companies: computation of layers within the city. And this diversity is what makes a city, a city (Interviewee G).

### **Flexibility**

In order to do so, the Municipality needs to become more flexible. The Municipality already has a drive to do something with unproductive buildings but the process could be fastened if it would be more flexible with licenses and rules. This is made clear by interviewee F, who had troubles finding a suitable location for a creative event. The interviewee was aiming for a lot of unproductive buildings but was not allowed to use them, needed specific licenses, or could only be used till midnight.

'The target group for Concept 56 are young creatives. And young creatives are attracted to Rotterdam due to its rawness and vacant building such as The Slaakhuys. So, then it would be logical to work with this vacancy, right?' (Interviewee 2)

As the Slaakhuys has been reused as a gallery and artist live and work space, it is not allowed to use it for purposes that take place in the night. According to a significant number of interviewees, this is a problem. A lot of vacant buildings cannot be used for nightlife purposes, while nightlife can also be a form of creativity. As the nightlife with creative purposes is slowly growing (BAR, The Performance Bar, DAK) it still has more potential and is underdeveloped.

'Amsterdam is really ahead of Rotterdam when it comes to the nightlife. And this is a shame: there is so much more room to experiment here' (Interviewee A).

The function of interviewee A is to make these circumstances better. Interviewee A argues that, when it comes to the nightlife, a lot can be improved and unproductive buildings or places must be used more for this.

## **CONCLUSION**

To sum up the above, the interviewees confirm that creative adaptive reuse is a powerful resource for urban regeneration of an area and that they believe in the power of the arts. A creative milieu as the hummus layer of the city stimulates innovation and is therefore inevitable. Due to the shift from an old to a new economy old buildings will lose their function and will be reused with a new function, such as the office market. Therefore, the main condition for creative adaptive reuse is that it needs time to develop: the 'system' needs to change: they have to become more flexible. When a building does not have a value anymore, the building can be demolished and a new one can be built. Furthermore, adaptive reuse gives the opportunity for every entrepreneur to find a building that fits his or her needs and creates diversity in a city.

## **4.4**

## **GENTRIFICATION**

The fourth section will discuss the rise of a new group of people that is attracted to the city: The Early Adapters. Can this, in combination with creative adaptive reuse, cause a friction of gentrification? Based upon the theory of Ley (2003) it will be discussed if gentrification is a process caused by young creatives or a consequence

of the cities market system. Also, the presumption that gentrification is something negative will be rejected or confirmed.

### **The Early Adapters**

Interviewee B confirms the idea that there are mainly young, creative entrepreneurs who aim to work with unproductive buildings that still have a use-value. They will go beyond non-creatives, or as he calls them 'people whom only go to Rotterdam to shop in the Bijenkorf'. They will see more opportunities in the city as they go to other places, see more of the city and therefore can respond better to what the city needs. Interviewee F argues that,

'Due to the vacancy in Rotterdam, a lot of special, raw and unique buildings are unused. There is no longer a need for these vacant buildings due to a new flexible way of working. But there is a large question for cultural initiatives. Cultural initiatives don't have a large budget, and unproductive buildings have a relatively lower rent. 1+1=2' (Interviewee F).

Although it is not this simple, interviewee F gives voice to the needs of young, creative entrepreneurs.

The interviewee introduces a young, creative target group that the interviewee calls the 'Early Adapters'. The Early Adapters are attracted to Rotterdam because of the unique empty buildings and have a desire to do something with it. They 'kick' on the unconventional, unusual unproductive buildings that have a potential to be creative. The Early Adapters and the rise of areas such as Katendrecht or Charlois where artists like to mingle: they can be seen as potential signs of gentrification. The interviewees reject this assumption and do not fear the process of city gentrification. Gentrification, as had happened in Amsterdam, is not something 'that can happen in Rotterdam'.

First, an economic argument is that Rotterdam still has a relatively large group of people with a low income. A significant amount of interviewees do acknowledge that The Early Adapters make it more attractive for a new group of people to live and work in Rotterdam, namely people with a higher income and/or education. All interviewees tell that this is not something to worry about. In fact, interviewee A argues that this mix is necessary to sustain the economy of a city.

'You know, in a city it is always 'wikken en wegen.' You have to have something of 'everything' and 'everyone' in order to keep your economy going. You need this different target groups: so, also the people who earn a high income. But gentrification is not something that scares me: it is part of the deal' (Interviewee A).

All interviewees confirm that gentrification is viewed as a natural process and a consequence of popularity. Gentrification can be beneficial for the economic growth and development of a city. This argument stirs up the discussion if city gentrification is necessarily something negative. In its core, gentrification is a sign of economic growth (Yee, 2015). As mentioned, gentrification is also something that could bear its fruit: attracting people with a higher income and/or education. 'Veryupping' as interviewee E names it can be positive for the economic growth of a city.

'You need some of every class, or else the city would be really focuses on one-side: you cannot put low incomes together and let posh people who walk with their noses in the air live together. That would be a shame. I think the power of a city lies in the diversity and tolerance: the ability to walk through a door with each other' (Interviewee A).

All agree that is it only positive as long as there is a good mix of incomes. It is necessarily that the new group will not dominate within the city. This brings the social argument why gentrification will not happen in Rotterdam. Gentrification is a form of capitalism and social inequality but also part of the deal, interviewee G says. He warns that Rotterdam cannot only have an eye for a new group that is important on the short run, but also has to think of the people who have been living here for years and are afraid to be pushed out. Being 'pushed out' is not something that can happen in Rotterdam, as Rotterdam is not so 'rücksichtslos', according to Interviewee F and C. With this, they mean that Rotterdam is a social city, interviewee C argues, as people help each other and stand up for each other.

Based upon this, the interviewees all confirm that a 'true Rotterdammer' is not something that exists anymore. It is a mix of expats, internationals, 'yuppers' and what not. This is something to embrace. According to interviewee G, we are heading towards a 'New Rotterdammer': people from other cities in the Netherlands who feel attracted to the city but most of all, to the mentality the city dissipates.

### **Are artist being used?**

The interviewees confirm the theory of Ley (2003) as they mention urban areas such as Katendrecht and Vierhaven as examples where young creatives like to mingle. The young creatives like to live and work in authentic locations within the borders of the city. Also, places such as Katendrecht and Vierhaven started out as relatively poor areas, so the young creatives do not have to pay a high rent. Eventually, a network of creatives is creating itself.

A critical side note can be that creativity, and therefore the artist or creatives, are being 'used' to make neighbourhoods flourish. Here, the creatives fulfil the role of a pioneer. They can cause a positive trend for the neighbourhood, although as discussed, this is not always the case. When there is a positive trend, the housing price will increase and the creative will no longer be able to afford the rent and will have to move. This can imply that artist are 'being used' to flourish up a neighbourhood, and then are pushed out due to higher housing prices.

The interviewees do not agree with this critical side note. Interviewee B argues that this is 'simply the way the market works' and how the creative 'let him or herself be used'.

'Some artist or creatives ask me for a place to live and/or work with a rent price of 0 euros, as they do not have a lot to spend. This is possible in some cases but has risks that are a logical consequence of the demand and supply system of a city: if you don't have a lot to spend there is a risk that you will have to leave when it will increase in price' (Interviewee B).

Creatives are not being used but have to be aware of the demand and supply system of a city. Due to the cultural revalorization of the neighbourhood a higher demand of people who aim to live there could be a consequence. When this happens, Ley (2003) argued how young creatives will no longer be interested in living in this area. The urban area has become 'normal' and even 'plebeian'. The young creatives will go find new places to live and work that are still relatively poor and offer a lot of room to experiment with.

All interviewees confirm the theory of Ley (2003) as it is young creatives who are capable of thinking outside the box and go beyond to explore new places. According to Interviewee F such a new place to explore could be the harbour of Rotterdam.

'If you make potential areas as the harbour more accessible for a new group of people that is attracted to the city, Rotterdam can really get the image of a city where everything is possible. This can be super beneficial for the city' (Interviewee F).

Again, in order to realise the image of a city 'where everything is possible', the real estate system needs to embrace a shift from an old, to a new economy and become more flexible.

## **CONCLUSION**

Due to its time to enjoy, Rotterdam attracts The Early Adapters who are inspired by the unique empty buildings and have a desire to do something with it. They 'kick' on the unconventional, unusual unproductive buildings that have a potential to be creative. The theory of Ley (2006) and his view on the aesthetic disposition of young, creative is confirmed. Young creatives are not being used but are no longer interested when an area becomes 'normal'. The young creatives will fulfil the role of a pioneer and find new places to mingle. Therefore, the fear of gentrification is rejected. Instead, in Rotterdam gentrification offers more social diversity, economic balance and tolerance.

## **4.5 FUTURE PROSPECTS AND DOWNFALLS**

Section five will go deeper into the future prospects of the city of Rotterdam in relation to creative adaptive reuse and the humus layer of creativity. At the end of the interviews, all respondents were asked to think about the future prospects or downfalls for the city. Based upon this, the following points are concluded:

### **FUTURE PROSPECTS: A NEW ECONOMY**

All interviewees agree that the future prospects of creative adaptive reuse mostly rely on the shift to a new, knowledge-based economy. Interviewee A argues that we are witnessing a change in the economic system, which celebrates flexibilization, innovation, crossovers and creativity as interviewee B argues that the structure of our traditional perception of work and the economy is changing.



As mentioned, the fact that the real estate system needs to react on this chance is inevitable. The real estate system still relies on the old economy. Here, buildings are mostly rented for 5 to 10 years due to the guarantee of income. If not, they will remain empty. As discussed, there need to be a solution for the long run but this does not mean that buildings have to remain empty till then: they can be reused for shorter terms due to flexibilization or pop up. In order to accomplish this change in the system, the Municipality, investors and landlords need to become more flexible. They have to acknowledge that it is the best thing to do the city, instead of focussing on their own profit.

Interviewee F argues that is it a 'win-win' situation. Although the investors will not get the original price as they will get with a rent of 5 to 10 years, they still do receive rent instead of leaving the building vacant, which will eventually lead to an overall lower value of the building. Flexibility is also seen back in the ability to get investors and the Municipality to give the right licenses and permits. And as interviewee F confirms, the young, creative entrepreneurs and The Early Adaptors are ready to invest their creativity and take a leap of faith.

### **FUTURE DOWNFALL: DON'T GO WITH THE HYPE**

The downfall of the future of Rotterdam is not gentrification but that the city could get 'overheated'. Interviewee C argues:

'Don't go along with the hype. This optimism can be gone within a year and then you still need to function. So think about the long term planning. How to keep doing well and will not be forgotten' (Interviewee C).

With this, interviewee C argues how it is important not to follow the hype. Rotterdam can enjoy an upward trend on the short run but cannot lose sight of a long term planning. Going with the hype can lead to 'becoming the Next Amsterdam', interviewee E argues. Interviewee E argues that Rotterdam cannot overlook problems that will still be there on the long run, such as a relatively group of people who are still living in poverty, by celebrating the positivity on the short run. Interviewee E argues that,

'There needs to be a good mix and balance between the raw character and the new creative influx. Let people do it themselves, don't be afraid en especially do not look at a city that has thrown in her own windows by being too needy (Interviewee E).

According to interviewee E, this can succeed if Rotterdam becomes aware of his own strengths and benefits from this. Interviewee E compares Rotterdam with Berlin, a city that also has enjoyed a lot of popularity but still is authentic and did not go with the hype. Berlin embraces its strengths, i.e. staying a relatively cheap city with a lot of room to experiment so that creatives are attracted to the city. Rotterdam needs to embrace its strengths and benefit from this to become a strong, authentic city.

According to interviewee E the strength of Rotterdam lies in the celebration of more and more small, creative bottom up initiatives performed by young, creative entrepreneurs.

### **SOLUTION: ROTTERDAM NEEDS TO BECOME A FLEXIBLE CITY**

To synthesise the main point above: Rotterdam needs to become a flexible city (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016). Rotterdam needs to become aware of its strengths and embrace them. According to a significant amount of interviewees, this is to believe in the power of bottom up initiatives. To let these bottom up initiatives grow, the city needs to embrace a shift from an old to a new economy, along with flexibilization, innovation and creativity. Creative adaptive reuse is a resource to do so.

In order to realize creative adaptive reuse as a resource for unproductive buildings that still have a use-value and to embrace the strengths of Rotterdam, Rotterdam needs to become a flexible city. With this, Bergvoet & Tuijl (2016) mean that the city has to bring supply – unproductive buildings that still have a use value - and demand – the creative entrepreneur – closer together by 'recycling'. As noticed, there is a lack of flexibility, as interviewee C argues that:

'A lot of investors make a lot of effort to sell or rent vacant buildings for a lower price than the original price, and therefore choose to let it remain empty. This is a disaster for the city, which you should not allow' (Interviewee C).

The government should be more flexible and make unproductive buildings with a use value more easily accessible for young, creative entrepreneurs – on the short or long

term. The discussion around creative adaptive reuse is relevant right now. Just as the upward trend of Rotterdam. It is momentary and can change a lot over time. Therefore, the solutions have to be flexible and instead of keep on building, make what exist more sustainable (Bergvoet & Tuijl, 2016).

## 4.6

## CONCLUSION

Section six will give an overview of the conclusions draw from each previous section.

### *Section 4.1 A New Identity*

Through its historical background, Rotterdam has been shaped as a city that is known for hard work, openness and no nonsense. Now, with a roof above everybody's head, the city has time to enjoy and make a catch up in the field of culture, creativity and the arts. Due to this development, Rotterdam has experienced a shift in attitude. It has grown to be a city that is raw and dynamic and provides an attractive entrepreneurial climate for creatives through its relatively low rents and the availability of space. Unproductive buildings that are ready to reuse - with a strong will of the Municipality to do something positive with it – and the opportunity to come up with new, surprising ideas due to the clarity in your mind. Together, they stimulate innovation and dynamics and form a solid base for creativity in a city to flourish.

### *Section 4.2 Rotterdam as a Creative City*

To sum up the above, the interviewees revised Creative City into a city where creativity is encouraged by the climate of a city and therefore has the opportunity to flourish. Furthermore, creativity is not something that can be forced but needs to come from the city within. The mentality and the characteristics of the city provide a solid base to be a creative city and confirm the theory of Landry & Bianchini (1995): open-minded, hard working, no nonsense and stubborn. Furthermore, the idea of cities as idea-reprocessors (Zukin, 2009) seems rejected as 'cities differentiate each other through creativity' (Interviewee F). This leads to a form of creative entrepreneurship that Rotterdam needs to benefit from: bottom up initiatives.

### *Section 4.3 Creative Adaptive Reuse*

To sum up the above, the interviewees confirm that creative adaptive reuse is a powerful resource for urban regeneration of an area and that they believe in the

power of the arts. A creative milieu as the hummus layer of the city stimulates innovation and is therefore inevitable. Due to the shift from an old to a new economy old buildings will lose their function and will be reused with a new function, such as the office market. Therefore, the main condition for creative adaptive reuse is that it needs time to develop: the 'system' needs to change: they have to become more flexible. When a building does not have a value anymore, the building can be demolished and a new one can be build. Furthermore, adaptive reuse gives the opportunity for every entrepreneur to find a building that fits his or her needs and creates diversity in a city.

#### *Section 4.4 Gentrification*

Due to its time to enjoy, Rotterdam attracts The Early Adapters who are inspired by the unique empty buildings and have a desire to do something with it. They 'kick' on the unconventional, unusual unproductive buildings that have a potential to be creative. The theory of Ley (2006) and his view on the aesthetic disposition of young, creative is confirmed. Young creatives are not being used but are no longer interested when an area becomes 'normal'. The young creatives will fulfil the role of a pioneer and find new places to mingle. Therefore, the fear of gentrification is rejected. Instead, in Rotterdam gentrification offers more social diversity, economic balance and tolerance.

#### *Section 4.5 Future Prospects and Downfalls*

In order to fully enjoy the benefits of creative adaptive reuse Rotterdam needs to embrace the shift from an old, to a new economy and explore flexibility, innovation and creativity. The actors that are involved in the process of adaptive reuse, such as the real estate and Municipality need to become more flexible. The shift to a new economy needs to get into the 'system' so that it can react on developments on the short run, without losing an eye on the long run. Because, when the popularity will fade, where will the city be in 10 years? As interviewee E argues: 'Don't go with the hype, and keep a good mix between the raw character and the new creative influx' (interviewee E).

## 5.1

## FINDINGS

The research invoked a micro inductive approach to the behaviour towards the creative industry as a resource for adaptive reuse in Rotterdam by performing a qualitative research on the question:

*To what extent is the creative industry a resource for adaptive reuse in the inner city of Rotterdam?*

The main objective of my research was to pose the suggestion that creativity is an inevitable resource for the adaptive reuse of unconventional buildings as it stimulates the entrepreneurial climate, using bottom up initiatives. Moreover, the creative industry would especially be a powerful resource in cities that have a constant drive to grow and are in a process of development and transition. This opens a lot of doors for creativity and innovation to flourish. My aim is to stimulate young, creative entrepreneurs to realise their projects and give the professionals of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector insights into the limitations they face by doing so. But mostly, how the supply of unproductive buildings that still have a use-value and the demand of young, creative entrepreneurs with ideas and projects, can be brought closer together by making Rotterdam a flexible city.

Derived from a compact literature study, A New Identity, Creative City, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification became the interview scheme topics. The aim of the research was to go beyond the quantitative data with qualitative semi-structured interviews. In total, 8 qualitative, semi-structured interviews were performed amongst two different groups: the young, creative entrepreneurs and the professionals in the field of urban planning and policy, both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector.

The Analyse showed if the motivations and perspectives of both groups confirmed, or rejected, theories and thoughts about the topics A New Identify, Creative City, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification. In respect to both group's

behaviour and thoughts towards these topics, theories and the development of Rotterdam, new insights and conclusions were derived:

### *A New Identity*

Based upon the theoretical framework the first topic discussed with the interviewees concerned A New Identity. The interviewees concluded that Rotterdam has time to enjoy and make a catch up in the field of culture, creativity and the arts. Therefore, a shift in attitude towards the city occurred. Here, the main findings confirmed the theory of Howkins (2001) as it discussed the relation between innovation, dynamics and the intertwinement with creativity in the city of Rotterdam.

'In Amsterdam there is simply not enough space. In Rotterdam, there is. With that I mean that there is space on the streets, which gives you space in your mind. I think innovation and creativity flourishes in a dynamic city as Rotterdam' (Interviewee A).

Innovation, dynamics and creativity lay the bedrocks for a new economy to flourish. Furthermore, the importance of the intangible and tangible space is emphasised.

### *Creative City*

Originally as a subtopic, Creative City became an important discussion topic. All interviewees rejected the theory of Florida (2005). Instead, the term Creative City had to be revised and became a city where creativity is encouraged by the city climate and characteristics.

'The Municipality will only have an eye for the outcome of their policy, but a creative city is something you really need to be. It is from the inside, something that is breeding and not something you can label in the hope it will come out right' (Interviewee B).

The idea that creativity is the answer to all problems seems rejected. Creativity is not something that can be forced from the external parties but needs to come from within: a product from the creative scene.

The characteristics of Rotterdam – openness, hard working, and no nonsense – seem to fit the conditions of Landry & Bianchini (1995) on a creative city and tell how Rotterdam is a good example of a city that has a creative urban development,

going against the grain of narrowly commercial logic. This leads to a form of creative entrepreneurship where these characteristics are used to the fullest: the bottom up initiatives (Tuijl & Bergvoet, 2016).

### *Creative Adaptive Reuse*

Unproductive buildings that still have a use value need to be seen as an opportunity rather than a problem. Old buildings will lose their original function and need to embrace a new one.

'The city has grown in the last 5 to 10 years. By doing so, we started to spend more money on creative recreation. We know have time to enjoy. Therefore, creative adaptive reuse works best when you become more attractive as a city. Old functions for a building, such as offices, disappear. New functions, such as creative initiatives, come to exist' (Interviewee A).

Creative adaptive reuse will offer a self-sustaining creative scene and will eventually form a creative milieu as the hummus layer of the city where innovation can grow.

### *Gentrification*

Gentrification is a term with a negative connotation but the interviewees reject this presumption. For Rotterdam, gentrification could offer more social diversity, economic balance and tolerance - 'you need to have something of "everything" and "everyone" in order to keep the economy going' (Interviewee A).

Furthermore, the theory of Ley (1996) and his view on the *Aesthetic Disposition of the Artist* is confirmed. Young creatives are not being used but are no longer interested when an area becomes 'normal'. The young creatives will fulfil the role of a pioneer and find new places to mingle.

## **5.2 LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH**

### *Limitations*

Although my main objective was to show how the creative industry is an inevitable resource for the economic and social development of a city in transition - using the power of creativity – my main limitation concerns how these concepts are perceived.

Some of the topics of my research are often considered as 'a hype' and can be something momentary, such as Creative City and Gentrification. How to research topics that are feasible in the city right now without losing an eye on the consequences on the long run? This raises the question if this research has any long-term value and how topics that are feasible on the short run, can be researched on the long run.

Now, Rotterdam is popular and is transitioning to a new identity because there has occurred a change of attitude towards the city by others. As Interviewee C already argued: 'this optimism can be gone within a year and then you still need to function. So think about the long term planning. How to keep doing well and will not be forgotten'. As 'flexibility' or 'creative city' might be temporary terms, sustaining a creative milieu is an important pre-condition for innovation to flourish. Furthermore, in the literature little can be found on the effects of creative adaptive reuse and the relation with the entrepreneurial climate. Possibly, this is because vacancy is not a problem in all cities.

### *Further Research*

For further research, qualitative research on the motivations of the actors in the real estate market on Rotterdam as a flexible city. It will discuss how they perceive the new economy: is it something temporary – hype? – and do they foresee other developments to happen? Next, a qualitative research on the motivations of young, creative entrepreneurs that have moved from Amsterdam to Rotterdam will strengthen my research. It would provide a more fresh and objective view on the creative entrepreneurial climate and how the professionals in the field of urban planning and policy - both from the public (Municipality) and the private sector, meet with them. At last, based upon a recent article of Vers Beton *The Influence of Gentrification Pushed by the Municipality*, a qualitative research on the process of city gentrification could extend my research. It will go deeper into the discussion if gentrification is something 'forced' by the Municipality or that it is a natural process when a city becomes more popular.



### 5.3

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings show a desire to bring closer together the cities demand and supply. For the supply, the unproductive buildings that still have a use-value have a high rate on the market. For the demand, a new group of creative entrepreneurs and early adapters who are attracted by the new identify of Rotterdam and 'kick' on reusing unconventional, unusual unproductive buildings that have a potential to be creative and are available to use for bottom up initiatives.

Rotterdam has a solid ground to be a creative city: rawness, relatively cheap, the characteristics and mentality but most of all, space. Space for innovation and creativity to flourish in the mind but also space to experiment. This, in combination with the sudden popularity the city enjoys, a new group of people is attracted to the city. The early adopters kick on reusing unconventional, unusual unproductive buildings that have a potential to be creative and are available to use for bottom up initiatives. They like to fulfil the role as a pioneer, discovering new places to live or work. They do not form a threat of city gentrification. With their creative input they will meet the needs for a higher education group of people that are willing to spend money on creativity that is attracted by, or kept here instead of flying out. Rotterdam needs to sustain this new group that is attracted by the city and brings gentrification in a positive way.

In order to realise bringing closer together the city demand and supply, there needs to be an embracement of the shift from an old to a new economy. With a new economy come innovation, ideas, but mostly flexibilization. Old buildings will no longer fulfil the role of an office. Instead they can get a new purpose: they can turn into galleries, bars or ateliers. In order to do so, the market 'system' of the real estate needs change and embrace the new economy. There will no longer be much '5 year plans' for old buildings that still have a use value, due to flexibilization. The transmission to a new economy needs to get into the system of the real estate market: they need to be flexible.

In other words: creative adaptive works when a city becomes attractive for people to live and work. This has happened in Rotterdam for the last 5 to 10 years. Rotterdam needs to become flexible, become aware of its strengths and sustain a good mix and balance between the raw character and the new creative influx: don't get overhyped.

Vacancy is an opportunity for a city such as Rotterdam and can provide an unforced creative humus layer that feeds innovation and new ideas.

## **‘Make Rotterdam a city where everything is possible’**

Interviewee G

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## APPENDIX I

### Interview Scheme

#### Introduction

This part will contain an extensive overview of the three main interview topics: A New Identity, Creative Adaptive Reuse and Gentrification. All three main interview topics will be divided into several subtopics that will attribute to the research. As they are semi-structured, there is no such thing as a 'fixed' interview scheme – it will be more in the form of conversations and a focus on their perspective. The interviews will take approximately +/- 40 - 60 minutes and will be held in Dutch or English.

#### Get to know the interviewee

In order to contextualize the research, it is important to first ask some personal questions in order to fully understand the motives, perspectives and framework of the interviewee. How do they position themselves towards the city of Rotterdam?

#### First, can you please introduce yourself?

Let the interviewees talk about themselves. Although, the following topics need to be addressed:

#### Age:

How old are you?

#### Education:

Did you study in Rotterdam?

What is your profession now?



How did you end up in this position?

How long have you been working in this field?

### **Place of residency**

Where do you live now?

Have you always been living in Rotterdam?

Did you grow up in the city of Rotterdam?

What attracted you to the city of Rotterdam? If no, what retains you from living in Rotterdam?

## **Topic 1**

## **A New Identity**

This topic will elaborate on the transitions Rotterdam is experiencing at the moment. How do the interviewees experience this growth themselves? And what are, according to them, factors that contribute to this experience?

### **Sub topic 1**

### **The Identity of Rotterdam**

The sub topic Identity of Rotterdam elaborates on the new identity Rotterdam is trying to achieve and refers back to the motto of the city: Make it Happen! This part will elaborate on how the interviewees perceive the city of Rotterdam.

- 1.1. 1            If I say Rotterdam, what are the first words that pop up in mind?
  
- 1. 1. 2            Now, if you compare this with the Rotterdam of +/- 10 years ago. What are the main things that have changed?
  
- 1. 1. 3            How would you describe the identity of Rotterdam?
  
- 1. 1. 5            What makes Rotterdam unique in comparison with other cities in the Netherlands?
  
- 1. 1. 6            Rotterdam has changed its slogan into Rotterdam: Make it Happen! What do you think of this?

## **Sub Topic 2**

## **Creation of a Buzz**

The sub topic Creation of a Buzz will elaborate on how the sudden popularity of Rotterdam can be explained according to the interviewees and what factors have contributed.

1. 2            What do you think, where the main factors that have contributed to this sudden popularity of Rotterdam? If they mention media, I can elaborate on that.

## **Sub Topic 3**

## **Rotterdam: Creative City?**

The second sub topic will elaborate on how Rotterdam can be perceived as a creative city.

1. 3. 1        In terms of making things happens: What is the power of creativity for a city?
1. 3. 2        Are you familiar with the term Creative City?
1. 3. 3        Can you define this term for me?
1. 3. 4        According to you, is Rotterdam a creative city?

## **Topic 2**

## **Creative Adaptive Reuse**

This topic will elaborate on how the interviewees perceive creative adaptive reuse as an urban regeneration strategy. How familiar are they with the term and what are the interviewee's views on the possibilities with it? And can it contribute something to the economic/social environment of the city?

### **Subtopic 1**

### **Opportunity or threat?**

Vacant buildings have been present in Rotterdam for quite some time now. The sub topic Vacancy will elaborate on how the interviewees experiencing the vacancy in Rotterdam. Do they see opportunities, or a thread? And how familiar are they with one of the strategies that could be implemented to fill up vacant buildings: creative adaptive reuse?

- 2. 1 Vacancy is a problem in a lot of cities in the Netherlands but especially in the city of Rotterdam. As you are waking around the city, do you see any of this?
- 2. 2 If you see this while walking, what is the feeling that you get from it?
- 2. 3 Do you see new opportunities or a threat?

One of the strategies that can try to help to overcome vacancy is **creative adaptive reuse**.

- 2. 4 Are you familiar with this term?
- 2. 5 Can you define it for me?
- 2. 6 How can it contribute to the city of Rotterdam? / What can creative adaptive reuse mean for a city as Rotterdam?
- 2. 7 Do you have a role in this, and which one?

## **Sub topic 2 The implementation of creative adaptive reuse**

Based upon the interviewee's role towards creative adaptive reuse, it is interesting to get more in-depth insights on how they implemented **creative adaptive reuse into their strategies or organisation**.

Questions that are more appropriate for the **Creative Industry actors**:

Yes, because now I would like talk a little bit about your own creative industry.

- 2. 2. 1 What are the main values of your organization?
- 2. 2. 2 What value do you add to the city of Rotterdam?

- 2. 2. 3 How did you ended up establishing your creative industry in a vacant building?
- 2. 2. 4 What attracted you to choose for a vacant building and what can be, or are, potential downfalls?

Questions that are more appropriate for the **Urban Policy actors**:

Yes, because now I would like to talk a little more about the policy stimulation of creative adaptive reuse.

- 2. 2. 5 What are the main values of your organization?
- 2. 2. 6 What value do you add to the city of Rotterdam?
- 2. 2. 7 What do you aim to stimulate in the city of Rotterdam?
- 2. 2. 8 How do you try to realize this? What could be the downfalls?

### **Sub topic 3**

### **Cultural Revalorization**

Elaborating on the role the interviewee takes towards creative adaptive reuse, it is interesting to see if the interviewee is aware of the values creation it may bear. Do the interviewees notice any of these advantages and how do they position themselves in this?

- 2. 3. 1 **Creative Industry actors:** Have you noticed any changes in the neighbourhood since you established here?
- 2. 3. 2 **Urban Policy actors:** Have you notices any changes in the neighbourhood due to one of your projects?
- 2. 4. 3 Can you give a feasible example?
- 2. 4. 4 What are important values that can be created in a neighbourhood?

2. 5. 4            How do you perceive your role in this process?

### **Topic 3**

### **Gentrification**

The third topic will be more like a hypothesis: can creative adaptive reuse lead to a friction with gentrification? Do do the interviewees notice any changes in terms of a new generation that is attracted to the city, and the influence it has on pricing? And how do they perceive the concept of gentrification?

#### **Sub topic 1**

#### **Hipsterinflation**

The first sub topic will concern the concept of Hipsterinflation, meaning that a new kind of individuals are attracted to live in the city of Rotterdam, as they follow where it is 'cool'. This can lead towards an inflation of prices for housing. Do the interviewees notice any of these changes around them? And how do they feel they contribute in attracting a new generation?

3. 1. 1            How would you define a 'true Rotterdammer'?

3. 1. 2            Is there still something as a true Rotterdammer?

3. 1. 3            Have you notices any changes in people that are attracted to the city of Rotterdam?

3. 1. 4            Which people do you aim to attract coming to Rotterdam?

3. 1. 5            Have you notices a change in the amount of tourist that is visiting Rotterdam?

3. 1. 6            Do you notice a changing attitude towards them?

#### **Sub topic 2**

#### **Fear?**

The first sub topic will concern the 'fear' that is created around the word gentrification. Is it really truly a thing to worry about and is Rotterdam a city that can be influenced by it?

- 3. 2. 1        Are you familiar with the term gentrification?
- 3. 2. 2        Can you define this term for me?
- 3. 2. 3        Do you think that Rotterdam is capable of stirring the development into the right direction?

**Sub topic 3**

**Future Prospects**

The last sub topic will concern the future prospects of Rotterdam. Where do the interviewees see opportunities? And what will be the challenges?

- 3. 3. 1        What will be the main opportunities for the city of Rotterdam in the future?
- 3. 3. 2        What will be the main challenges?

*Could elaborate on the different views of inhabitants of Rotterdam: the ugliness of the city disappears.*

**Thank you for your time!**

