

SLEEPING CITIES APPROACHING THE END OF THE TUNNEL

How musicians within Cultural & Creative Industries are coping with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and how this crisis exposes precarity.

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ABSTRACT

The principle motivation of this research is to show how musicians within the Cultural Creative Industry (CCI) have managed the measures taken during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Given the impact of the pandemic, this project must address how musicians and cultural workers have responded to government policies that effect the traditional modes of performance. Using semi-structured interviews artists and musicians from Rotterdam and Berlin were interviewed, as both cities have been one of the biggest centers for cultural activities and arts in Europe. This means an inter-European cross-national comparison was made in regards of government policies and responses from artists during this pandemic. Most of our respondents could identify with the various precarities within CCI's, that were already present before the pandemic. Financial instability and no guarantee for work were prevalent for the respondents and most of them were explaining numerous ways of making extra money on the side in order to survive. With respect to the reality of neo-liberal policies the research shows that they are indeed a key answer in to explaining the harsh conditions for creatives within CCI's. Furthermore, this research illustrates the great importance of innovation within CCI's. The interviewed artists are more than ever making use of different modes of digital and non-digital innovations within their creative processes. Lastly, this research also touched upon the psychological implications for artists. Deriving from the interviews it was evident that artists had some mental setbacks and struggles.

KEYWORDS *Cultural and Creative Industries, Neo-Liberalism, Policy making, COVID-19*



Image 1. Tunnel by the Maas Boulevard, Rotterdam (personal archive, 2020)

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In a recent conversation I had with a Dutch Hip-Hop artist, the topic of alternatives for live-shows was discussed. This particular artist, who was making a good amount of money from shows, had to actually find another job which had nothing to do with his art. Because of the situation, he was forced to partially give up his artistry, so that he can still be able to survive financially.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has made survival hard for many facets of society with public health as the top priority. However, the work and creative life of artists and musicians has been directly affected. Not only individually but also as a sector all together, the cultural arts and creative industry has been one of the most affected sectors during the global pandemic of 2020 and 2021. The affect has been felt, as closed venues and social distancing measures have become the norm for many countries (Flew & Kirkwood, 2020). As a consequence, also prevalent in the example stated above, the artist with whom I had a conversation with had to make a complete turn of his daily activities to still be able to make a living. The insecure income and labor conditions of creative workers within the cultural arts sector have always been recognized by academics (Comunian & England, 2020). According to Comunian and Conor (2017) this insecurity is mostly prevalent during times of crisis, comparable to the one we are living in at the moment.

1.1 Scientific and social relevance

The harsh reality for individuals in the creative field have always been recognized by previous researchers and is mostly prevalent during times of crisis. Such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which we are now part of. In addition, the changing dynamic of this pandemic makes it timely and appropriate to look at what the COVID-19 pandemics meant for artists and their artistic production. The ongoing lack of sensitivity for creatives by policy makers as discussed by Comunian & England (2020) makes empirical research on artists in the Cultural and Creative industry much needed. As an example of the ongoing situation for musicians

who are not able to perform, an article published in the *Toronto Star* in February, 2021, portrays the complicated circumstances that Canadian musicians have faced during the pandemic. The article is focused on three Canadian musicians struggling with the fact that their usual way of performing has come to a complete stop. This, according to the article, has sparked many new ways for the artists to still be able to work on their art or perform. As for instance, the musicians are now performing live on streaming platforms and are finding new programs that help them doing their art from home. (Bradley, 2021) The COVID-19 pandemic has put a stress on connections between continents, people and families. Due to pandemic restrictions, many forms of art and events were suspended. Art is known to fuel creativity, reduce anxiety and connect people. Therefore it is more than timely to talk about the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for individuals and artists within the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI).

1.2 Research question and expectation

The main research question of this thesis will be: ‘How are Dutch and German musicians responding to government policies that effect the traditional modes of performance during the COVID 19 pandemic?’. This question responds to the transnational nature and impact of the pandemic. As shown in the news article by Bradley (2021) many artist are trying to find new ways of sharing their artistic work, therefore the first sub question (SQ1) will be: “What performance practices are the affected musicians using to share their creative output?”. By also taking a perspective on modern day neo-liberal policy making in Europe, in particular at ‘neo-liberalism as policy paradigm’ (Evans & Sewell, 2013), the second SQ (SQ2): ‘What is the connection between neo-liberal government philosophies and their response to the creative sector during the pandemic?’ will also be explored. Adding to that, previous research on the COVID-19 pandemic has shown significant impact on people’s psychological wellbeing (Sood, 2020), therefore the third SQ (SQ3) is: “What is the psychological dimension to the impact of COVID 19 on musicians and performance cultures?”. Research into psychological effects that were created by the current pandemic can be very valuable, but actually requires an examination over a longer period of time and more detail. However, this thesis will need to briefly address the mental health impact that pandemic has had on performers.

Previous research on CCI's have always shown the precarious lives of artists (Comunian & England, 2020). By using the aforementioned research questions, this precarity will try to be explained. Adding to this, previous research uses neo-liberalism in the Western world as an explanation to why lives of artists are in general precarious. Therefore the sub questions also take a look at neo-liberalism and its impact on the CCI's. By gaining a deeper understanding of artists and musicians experiences, this research's objective will be illustrating the current landscape of the CCI's and how neo-liberal policy making and governance has failed this sector.

1.3 Summary of research plan

The principle motivation of this research is to show how musicians within the Cultural Creative Industry (CCI) have managed the measures taken during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Previous academic research has always acknowledged the insecure income and labor conditions of creative workers within the cultural arts sector (Comunian & England, 2020). Especially in times of crisis creative workers are in an even more precarious place. To study the CCI's, various academic theories will be used. Caves (2000) outlines specific principles that are relevant for understanding CCI's, these principles will be used to gain a deeper understanding of the various aspects of creatives' lives. Which in the case of this research will be 8 musicians from Rotterdam and Berlin. As previous academic research has shown, precarious lives of artists and creatives can be explained by neo-liberal policy making (Banks, 2020; Comunian & England, 2020). Thus, this study will assess how current Neo-Liberal politics and policies directly influence the real experiences from artists and cultural workers from the CCI's and how precarious their situations can become.

Furthermore, by taking a look at innovations within CCI's, this research will explore the various ways in which artists innovate their practices and their artistic expressions. Innovation has always had a big part in CCI's, especially in the last decade where a lot of art has become digital (Nobre, 2016). In times where events and gatherings are not allowed because of COVID-19 restriction, this digitalization is more essential than ever. Take for instance “@ Home fest”, organized by one of our respondents from Rotterdam. This online livestream event was organized during the lockdowns of last year and artists were given the opportunity to have somewhat of a performance.

Previous academic research has also shown the psychological and mental effects of the pandemic (Sood, 2020). Therefore, one interview question was explored to get a grasp of their mental well-being during the lockdown phases. The methodological approach for this research is qualitative. In total eight musicians, coming from Rotterdam and Berlin were interviewed to gain deeper understanding and knowledge of the participants views on their current situation and the state of CCI's. Both Rotterdam and Berlin have been one of the biggest centers for cultural activities and arts in Europe, as post-war Rotterdam focused on the cultural and creative industries since the 1970's (Buursink, 1997). The same accounts for Berlin, a city widely known for its cultural and creative sector. Musicians and artists were examined through semi-structured interviews ranging from 30-45 minutes, in which they revealed very interesting insights about their lives. Many of the interviewees talked about looking for new ways to do their art during times of lockdown and also looking for new ways of making money outside of their art. This in order to stay financially stable and be able to survive.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

The principle motivation of this research is to show how musicians within the Cultural Creative Industry (CCI) have managed the measures taken during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Given the impact of the pandemic, this project must address how musicians and cultural workers have responded to government policies that effect the traditional modes of performance. Artists and musicians from Rotterdam and Berlin were interviewed, as both cities have been one of the biggest centers for cultural activities and arts in Europe. This means an inter-European cross-national comparison will be made in regards of government policies and responses from artists during this pandemic. Additional questions that propel this research are “What performance practices are the affected musicians using to share their creative output?”. The project will also challenge contemporary neo-liberal policy making in Europe, in particular at ‘neo-liberalism as policy paradigm’ (Evans & Sewell, 2013). Although COVID-19 is an on-going global crisis, previous research has already shown the significant impact of the pandemic on people’s psychological wellbeing (Sood, 2020). With that reality in mind the last objective will be touching upon the mental wellbeing of the interviewed artists.

The next section will illuminate the theoretical concepts which will function as a theoretical framework for this research. It will illustrate the nature of the Cultural and Creative Industries, look at the precarious lives of cultural workers and the insecure positions in which they find themselves because of Neo-Liberal policies. Moreover, a current illustration of the nature of CCI’s will show how unequally distributed financial benefits and opportunities within the creative industries work.

2.1 The Cultural and Creative Industry (CCI)

It is vital to gain an understanding of the sector that is the key focal point of this research. Many researchers have touched upon the cultural and creative labor economy. As explained by Comunian & England (2020) different researchers have used various definitions and terminology when it comes to the description of this field of work. Within media studies and sociology researchers tend to have a preference for the term ‘creative labor’ (Smith & McKinlay, 2009). I will be guided by Comunian & England’s (2020) article about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on this particular field of work, I will use the term Cultural and

Creative Industry (CCI) to describe it. Within this paper CCI is used to ensure that a broad and comprehensive term that will help to understand and research creative and cultural economy. CCI is defined as the sector of modern-day economy where the creativity of individuals is used to create original cultural content, which can possibly have profitable value through product sales or in the form of intellectual property (Flew, 2017).

To understand the dynamics of the field of research about the Cultural and Creative Industry, it is essential to look at four important principles under which CCI's produce and operate (Comunian & England, 2020). The four principles are: the nobody knows principle, arts for art's sake, motley crew and time flies. These four principles are linked to what researcher Caves (2000) outlines as being vital for a relevant understanding of CCIs. Caves (2000) addresses the risks and uncertainty of the creative field, as demand for CCI is never guaranteed and markets are unstable. Caves (2000) calls this first principle, "nobody knows principle". Similarly, Banks (2020) discusses the already prevalent fragility of the CCI's which is even more exposed now that we are in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. Banks (2020) highlights the already existing "low immunity" of the creative work field within the United Kingdom (U.K.), explaining how, the impact of the global financial crisis in 2008 forced many individuals to find a new job within the CCI's or even in other sectors. The current COVID-19 pandemic can be seen as expansion of the already precarious situation and life's of creative workers within CCI (Banks, 2020).

The second principle vital to understand the way CCI's operate, is described by Caves (2000) as "arts for art's sake". Workers within CCI's are in general inclined to settle for lower wages because most of their care and energy goes in to the originality and quality of their work (Caves, 2000). Caves (2000) also focuses on how cultural production is interconnected through people with different sets of skills and knowledge sets. Caves uses the terms "Motley" and "time flies" to explain the connections that occur amongst artistic creators in precarious environments. The principle "motley crew" helps to describe the importance of combining an array of skills to succeed within CCI's and "time flies" explaining the limited and momentary essence of labor within CCI's (Caves, 2000). In practice, cultural production stimulates multi-skilled workers who have to be able to adapt quickly to the environment in which they are placed.

2.2 New ways of cultural production (i.e. digital innovation)

Innovation within cultural production is not a new term within research on Creative and Cultural Industries. Long before the current COVID-19 pandemic many creatives and cultural producers looked for new ways of cultural production, as innovation is an important part of the CCI's themselves. The fast and ever changing nature of technological innovation within the creative industries has had an important effect on how CCI's produce and will produce in the future. The innovation within digital media and digital convergence of preceding creative production ended some long-established barriers in the sector (Jaw, Chen & Chen, 2012). In practice, this could take the form of a singer who uses multiple platforms to promote their music. Equally, technological innovations within CCI's allow for this same person to create within multiple components of CCI's. The same musician who produces their own music may also produce their own music videos. Moreover, a few areas of the cultural and creative industry have attempted a transition towards a purely digital environment, by offering digital alternatives independent of physical existence (Nobre, 2016). In the course of the pandemic, this idea has become more essential than ever before. Cultural production has searched to a way to become independent from physical requirements and anchors. In practice, concerts are held where one can completely and virtually experience the concert, through various modes of digital innovations. According to Dumcke (2021), a big switch to online performance and digital content has been made by cultural producers. Banks (2020), supports this claim, when he explaining how artists have used many creative ways to create an abundance of online and virtual content.

In times of quarantines and high anxiety due to the pandemic, many people have come to rely on cultural production for entertainment and ways to escape the current reality. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the way the cultural economy works and operates. The largest participants within entertainment industry, such as Netflix and Google have made enormous profits during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as people have migrated to an exclusive consumption of cultural output from the comfort of their homes (Banks, 2020). To support this claim, research on the impact of COVID-19 on the Creative Industries in Slovakia has shown that the producers of software, media companies and TV channels were not so negatively impacted by the current situation (Majdúchová, 2021). On the other hand, conventional activities by cultural works were almost all stopped. In that environment, creatives had to find new ways of sharing their work through the online world.

For instance, many creators and cultural producers work with livestreams and have begun to focus on home-made content.

This sentiment of cultural production that reinvents itself and finds new alternatives can be seen in close relation to Deleuze & Guatarri's (1988) concept of Rhizome. This concept opposes the idea of a hierarchical conception of knowledge and stresses on the interdependence of non-hierarchical entry points within knowledge and reality building. Deleuze & Guatarri (1988) stress How their concept works within the context of culture, when they state:

(...) culture spreads like the surface of a body of water, spreading towards available spaces or trickling downwards towards new spaces through fissures and gaps, eroding what is in its way. The surface can be interrupted and moved, but these disturbances leave no trace, as the water is charged with pressure and potential to always seek its equilibrium, and thereby establish smooth space. (Deleuze & Guatarri, 1988)

As we are living in a time of disturbance and interruption of cultural production, it is interesting to see how, just as Deleuze & Guatarri (1988) explained, culture still finds ways to spread. Deleuze & Guatarri's (1980) concept of Rhizome can help us explain cultural production in times of a worldwide pandemic.

Moreover, the Cultural and Creative Industries have always found ways to display so called acts of 'resilience'. When it comes to resilience Comunian & England (2020) propose that there is a collective assumption that CCI's can adapt to governmental funding cuts and the overall precarities within the creative industries. As explained, new forms of resilience within CCI's were made visible after the global financial crisis of 2008, as self-employment within the sector grew in the years that followed (De Propis, 2013). Comunian & England (2020, p. 117) add to this notion with the statement: "the resilient response of CCW in 2008 was to work in more precarious conditions than they did before. Self-employment, precarity, freelancing and even entrepreneurship are therefore read by the established neoliberal framework as resilient behaviors." This fact illustrates that even if CCI's have always shown acts of resilience, it has never made their living situations and job market opportunities less precarious.

In the scope of this research analysis, the aforementioned findings are a clear suggestion that CCI's are always challenged to recreate and innovate their cultural production process, to either be able to make enough to survive or at least be able to share artistic work.

Take for example the aforementioned ‘At Home Fest’ organized by one of our interviewees. With the use of digital innovation, an online livestream event was created in order for local artists to still be able to perform. Through real life experiences, just like the ‘At Home Fest’, and feedback from creatives, this thesis will illustrate the ways actual artists and cultural workers are innovating and finding new way of cultural production.

2.3 The precarity of CCI’s

Previous research on CCI’s, as discussed above, acknowledges the insecure income and labor conditions of creative workers within the cultural arts sector (Comunian & England, 2020 ;Banks, 2020). Cultural workers and artists have had to experience different types of setbacks due to the nature and dynamic of CCI’s.

Through the use of Rodgers & Rodgers (1989) paper on precarity and Comunian & England’s (2020) four different elements of precarity, the significant degrees of vulnerability within the cultural sector can be highlighted. The first aspects illustrates the uncertainty within terms of employment, as work within CCI is generally project based and workers within this field are not always guaranteed A secure and stable number of projects (Comunian & England, 2020). The second dimension touches upon the notion that within CCI’s, the reality differs from other fields of work in the arts including film production. The lack of unionization and collectives destabilize working conditions and wages for the CCI are not optimized (Comunian & England, 2020). Third, Comunian & England (2020), note that the lack of regulatory frameworks which can help workers by protecting them from the precarious nature of CCI based work. Lastly, the final aspect discussed by Comunian & England (2020), is specifically about employment. Even if workers within the creative industries have a steady contract or guarantee for work, they can still be in a precarious living situation. This occurs because even the guarantee of work does not always translate to a sufficient wage, as there is a widespread use of low wage, unpaid, or even volunteer internships and people who undertake creative work just for the opportunities it can bring (Siebert & Wilson, 2013).

Closely related to the points mentioned above, de Peuter (2011), proposes that the modes of work life for individuals within CCI’s (freelancing, project based, short term contracts) enhances the on-going precarity. The inequality of wages within the CCI’s illustrates how a small group of popular creators make more money than the majority of

creators do (Murray & Gollmitzer, 2011). An already existing inequality can become even bigger in times of crisis, as the majority of creators cannot rely on projects to be well-paid. As these insights demonstrate, cultural workers are mostly hit financially when it comes to where the precarity becomes most acute. Researchers and those in the CCI's struggle to find a way to explain what is happening and search for a culprit that can be blamed for the existence of the precarity.

A key answer rests within the realities of Neo-Liberal policy making. With the diminishment of a post WWII "Welfare State" in the industrialized North and West, where regulations and safeguards were of paramount, neoliberal policy making has taken away these safeguards (Comunian & England, 2020). As Banks (2020) also discusses, that the true nature of a neoliberal economy is coming out as a lie, within the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic: "The true costs of four decades of instituted economic short-termism and instability, and a rampant and attendant inequality, have been revealed within the space of a month "... requiring emergency state aid, and the low paid and vulnerable were thrown into the firing line of essential work and increased exposure to risk." (Banks, 2020 p.652). Correspondingly, Banks (2020), argues that the current and already existing problems within CCI are a direct effect of 40 years of neoliberalism. The next section will specifically address the consequences of Neo-Liberalism and why previous academic research in general shows how it fails Cultural and Creative Industries, especially in times of crises.

2.4 Neoliberalism and the Cultural & Creative Industries

To gain an understanding of the current nature of CCI's and to look more profoundly into policies that have a direct impact on the CCI's, neoliberalism has to be assessed and analyzed. The term neoliberalism is one of the most used terms in contemporary economics and yet there are multiple definitions of the term; "'Neoliberalism" stands, first, for the late capitalist economy of our times; second, for a strand of ideas; third, for a globally circulating bundle of policy measures; and fourth, for the hegemonic force of the culture that surrounds and entraps us" (Rodgers, 2018 p. 81). Likewise, Ewans & Sewell (2013) address the different meanings and implications of the term neoliberalism. Moreover, Rodgers (2018)

illustrate four important facets of neoliberalism: as economic theory, as political ideology, as policy paradigm and as social imaginary .

Neoliberalism as economic theory represents a focus on the government assistance amplifying results of market trade, in addition neoliberalism as political ideology signifies a more broadly spread political philosophy that praises the prevalence of the market and how products, ventures, and private partnerships are privileged over the public provision for the common good (Ewans & Sewell, 2013). Neoliberalism as policy paradigm is based upon interrelated policies that have the intention to stimulate the role of the markets in directing economic policies (i.e. privatization of public companies) (Ewans & Sewell, 2013). Lastly, neoliberalism as social imaginary stresses personal wealth, individualism, and the unhampered quest for personal and consumer satisfaction (Ewans & Sewell, 2013). According to previous research by Jeanotte (2010) Neoliberalism as an ideology has had a thorough impact on policy making, including cultural policies. Therefore, understanding neoliberalism through its four facets is an important contribution to this research. As Banks (2020) and Communian & England (2020) explain, the disappearing of the welfare state, which has been authored by Neo-Liberal policies, has led to less safeguards and less guarantee for a living wage within CCI's.

When it comes to neoliberalism in Germany in particular, the way it is implemented has always differed from the classical neoliberalism as explained in the sections above. Since this research looks into German government acting it is important to look at how a neoliberal system has been implemented. This form of 'German neoliberalism' is also called ordoliberalism. The essence of ordoliberalism lays in combining neoliberalism with a strong state, meaning a state that keeps competition under control and makes sure that social and ideological prerequisites of economic freedom are in tact (Bonefeld, 2012). Ordoliberalism was a response to the capitalist crisis in the 1920's, as ordoliberals in Germany argued that the economy cannot be left to itself. Bonefeld (2012) explains how ordoliberals view economic freedom; "The ordoliberals argue that economic freedom needs to be ordered so that its freedom is not misused, as prices can be fixed, markets carved up, and competitive adjustment avoided by means of protectionism and manipulation of monetary policy; and workers can strike, the masses can revolt, and a proletarianised mass society can force the state to concede welfare" (Bonefeld, 2012 p. 638). A more ordoliberal approach towards the free market and towards neoliberalism itself could mean a more helpful state when it comes to keeping citizens safe from market economy. In the scope of our research it can be evident in the way Germany treats their creatives and the CCI's in general.

Within the scope of this research, neoliberal policy making will be shown to have failed the CCI's in times of crises. However, even before the pandemic, the neoliberal nature of policy making in Western-European countries had already created a burden for creatives. This was compounded by the fact that small and middle venture artists were forced to be on tour throughout the year, since the main mode of income had switched from album sales to shows due to the take-over of streaming platforms. As a result of the pandemic, musicians are trying to find new ways to build on their personal path without the much needed governmental support (Weaver, 2021). This is closely related to great inequality of wages and opportunities within CCI's. With this in mind, the project will explore the views that artists and cultural workers in CCI's hold about government policy in times of on-going crisis. The study will assess how current Neo-Liberal politics and policies directly influence the real experiences from artists and cultural workers from the CCI's and how precarious their situations can become.

2.5 Psychological effects

This thesis also aims to look at the different realities of artists and musicians with the current ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Although the previous sections have paid close attention to the economic effects of Neo-Liberalism and how that policy approach has failed the sector, it is important to pay attention to the kind of impact that these realities can have. Previous research on the COVID-19 pandemic has shown significant impact on people's psychological wellbeing, as lockdowns and quarantines can lead to depression, anxiety and even post-traumatic stress disorder (Sood, 2020). Within the scope of CCI's most research has focused on new ways for cultural production and acknowledgment of harsh living conditions of creatives (Dumcke, 2021; Comumiam, 2020). Therefore it is vital to assess what the emotional and psychological effects are for cultural producers, especially in times where they are not able to express and produce art in their usual forms. Even before the pandemic, cultural workers within CCI's have had to cope with loneliness through working as, for instance a freelancer in solitude.

Given the evolving nature of the pandemic, there is an ever increasing amount of research that has shown the link between psychological stress and realities of the current

COVID-19 pandemic. To illustrate this, Brooks et. al. (2020 p. 912) reviewed studies and found that there were a number of stressors that included “longer quarantine duration, infection fears, frustration, boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information, financial loss, and stigma.” These assumptions reveal a general trend in the studies that have currently been conducted on this topic. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to presume that the psychological implications are prevalent within the lives of creatives and cultural producers within CCI’s as well. This paper will look at these effects, briefly through interviewing artists and cultural workers about their current situation. Since the research for this project will be qualitative, the psychological impacts of the current COVID-19 pandemic will be discussed in order to gain a deeper understanding of each participant’s experience.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The main objective of this chapter is to highlight and explain the methodological approach applied for this project. Firstly, the research design and approach will be discussed. This will be followed by an explanation of the sampling methods and how data was collected. At the end of this chapter, the coding procedure, reliability and validity of this research will be discussed. The key motive for this research was to examine how Dutch and German musicians respond to government policies that effect the traditional modes of performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, this research will look at new innovations within CCI's and what performance practices are the affected musicians using to share their creative output. Furthermore, this project will look and examine the connection between neo-liberal government philosophies and their response to the creative sector during the pandemic. Lastly, the psychological dimension to the impact of COVID 19 on musicians will be touched upon.

3.1 research design

The methodological approach for this research was qualitative, as individuals from the music scene within the Cultural and Creative Industry were interviewed to gain deeper understanding and knowledge of the participants views on their current situation. Qualitative research allows one to research questions that cannot be put into numbers, such as human experiences (Babbie, 2020). According to Bryman (2012), interviews are useful to gain understanding of the participants experience and in-depth information can be pursued by the interviewee. In particular, semi-structured interviews were conducted. This means the same set of questions were used for every participant and additional question that derived from answers given by the participants were added, so that further insights and issues could be expanded and explained. In-person interviews were conducted, ranging from 30-45 minutes. The interview sessions were recorded, so that the interview material could be examined carefully and in detail. Most of the interviews were done and recorded through online meeting software ZOOM. The use of remote interviews through ZOOM was essential since meeting up in person is not the best thing to do during a pandemic.

After that, the recordings were used to observe commonalities between answers as well as to determine how the participant structured their responses, what they chose to keep

for themselves, and how they expound their views and beliefs. The fast moving nature of government action and the pandemic itself makes the everyday evolving subject too recent to be researched through, for example, object or content analysis. As an example of this, Biasutti, Philippe and Schiavio's (2021) article assessing music teacher's experience with remote classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, was based on semi-structured interviews.

3.2 Sampling procedure

In order to make a cross-national comparison, 10 individuals within the production of musical cultural products from Rotterdam and Berlin were selected. Since we looked at specific criteria of musicians and musical event producers, the sample was done through purposive sampling. The criteria were; musicians, artists and event organizers from Rotterdam and Berlin. The effectiveness of purposive sampling lies in having the ability to select information-rich cases, coming from individuals which provide an extraordinary arrangement about issues of focal significance to the purpose of the research (Patton, 2002). In particular, homogenous sampling was done since the sample needed individuals who share similar activities and occupations as musicians and artists. A homogenous sample is of essence, because the research question examines one specific group of people with the same characteristics. The first respondents were found through my own network of artists and musicians. This helped me find more respondents with the same criteria. Some musicians were recommended to me by the people I had already interviewed, therefore snowball sampling was an additional sampling method. Snowball sampling is also greatly applicable when examining sensitive and/or private matters, therefore it requires knowledge from insiders to get more interviewees (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981).

An informed consent form was provided so that participants agreed formally to take part of this research. Furthermore, since we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were done through online ZOOM meetings, so that no physical gathering is needed. The interviews were recorded through audio systems and transcribed, so that everything said and the way it is said is clear.

3.3 Data analysis

The research approach for this thesis is grounded theory, this approach is chosen because the data collection and analysis are used to come up with some sort of theory. Since semi-structured interviews were conducted the analytical approach will be an inductive but also narrative analysis. Narrative analysis helps highlighting important insights deriving from direct quotes from the participant (Bryman, 2012). Inductive analysis is based on the initial identification of ideas and themes that are to be found in the transcripts (Bryman, 2012). After the initial coding procedure, the existing themes and codes were looked at and more specific coding was done, this is also known as axial coding. The next step was selective coding: 'the procedure of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990 p. 116). From this process the following codes were established:

- Art for art's sake
- Artistic activity
- Convergence of creative production
- Financial instability
- Government support & funding
- Lack of government support
- Lack of unions & collectives
- Measures
- Mental setbacks
- Motivation
- Motivation & personal progress
- Motley crew
- Other precarities
- Private funding & support
- Tools for creation marketing & sharing
- Trying new things

When assessing responses from interviewees and after the coding procedure, different sets of themes were established and used. Five main themes were established from the interview data in which the codes above found their place: 1. the precarious life of creative workers, 2. dynamics of artist within CCI's, 3. Neo-liberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19, 4. Innovation within CCI's and 5. Mental state & artistic

expression during a global pandemic. In Appendix 1 of this thesis you find the codebook which shows which code belongs to which codegroup/theme

An example for the first theme is the fact that some of the respondents had to start another job outside of their art. Because we also looked at how the musicians life's are in general the second theme, dynamics of artist within CCI's was established. An example of this theme was the reoccurring notion that artists should be able to go beyond their usual mode of art and be proficient in an array of other skills as well. The third theme related to neo-liberalism within cultural policy making was established because interviewees explained that they felt a lack of government responsibility when it came to their market. The theme innovation within CCI's was evident when respondents explained about the various digital innovations they used to be able to perform from, respondent two gave a direct example of a special cable he uses to livestream good quality sounds through his phone. Lastly, many of the respondents talked about being in a 'slur' during the pandemic, they also talked about what it did to their mental well-being, in that way the 5th theme was established. Through the coding procedure sub-themes such as 'financial instability' and 'no guarantee for work' were established. Eventually there were 5 main themes which were used to guide the coding and 17 sub-themes were added.

3.4 Validity & reliability

To keep in line with the validity of this research, it is of great importance to make sure that the tools, procedures and data are appropriate enough to answer the research question (Leung, 2015). Within qualitative research reliability refers to the replicability of the procedure and the results deriving from data (Leung, 2015). Since the topic of the interview is a problem which can change every day, this replicability of results can be hard. Nevertheless, since the research is only able to catch a snapshot of the reality, I will still be able to relate phenomena and concepts to the general. Within qualitative research it is also important to mention and discuss the role of the researcher, myself. As I myself am part of the creative sector and do different activities within the music and events production, I am doing this research as part of the population that is being researched. This can be referred to as 'insider research' (Kanuha, 2000). The membership role of the researcher can give them legitimacy, this allows for a quicker and more thorough acceptance by the participants. Therefore resulting in participants becoming more open during the research, possibly giving a more comprehensive

understanding of the data (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). This was also evident during most of the interviews, once artists established some relation to myself it was easier to gain a deeper understanding of their thoughts. My position as someone who is deeply embedded in the cultural sector of Rotterdam gives me the essential grounding to both carry out insider research and provide a research orientation to this type of project.

Chapter 4. Results

The key principle of this research is to show how musicians within the Cultural Creative Industry (CCI) are coping with the measures taken during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The theoretical framework illustrated the nature of the Cultural and Creative Industries, looked at the precarious lives of cultural workers and the insecure positions in which they find themselves because of neo-liberal policies.

First, this paragraph will emphasize the findings and the analysis regarding the precarious lives of creative workers, by showing empirical evidence through respondents experiences. In an examination of neo-liberalism and CCIs, it became clear from the answers that the precarity of most artists has forced them to do other work than their creative work. This section will show that this precarity stems mostly from financial instability and not having any guarantee for work. Adding to this, the section will also discuss the lack of unions and collectives within the creative field. Then, I will discuss the dynamics and the basics of artists lives within CCI's, illustrating how creatives have to be adaptable and multi-disciplinary in the current creative environment. After that, the third section of this chapter will discuss the insecure positions in which artists find themselves because of Neo-Liberal policies, looking at government subsidiaries and policies. From there on, the next section will explore innovations within CCI's by looking at the various tools and programs the artists from the sample make use of in the creative work. Lastly, I will discuss the mental state of creatives during this pandemic combined with the things that have changed the most for their artistic expression and process during this time.

As explained in the methodology, before being able to analyze the conversations I had with the artist, the conversations had to be coded. The five main themes established from the interview data were: the precarious life of creative workers, dynamics of artist within CCI's, Neoliberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19, Innovation within CCI's and Mental state & artistic expression during a global pandemic. Sub-themes such as 'financial instability' and 'no guarantee for work' were established through the coding procedure. Eventually there were 5 main themes which were used to guide the coding and 12 sub-themes were added. Below you can see the main themes and the corresponding codes for them.

4.1 The precarious life of creative workers: Financial instability, Other precarities.

4.2 Dynamics of artist within CCI's: Arts for art's sake, Motley Crew

4.3 Neoliberalism in cultural policy making & government action during

COVID-19: Lack of unions & collectives, Government support & funding, Measures

4.4 Innovation within CCI's: tools for creation, marketing & sharing, Convergence of creative production

4.5 Mental state and artistic expression during a global pandemic: Motivation, Mental setbacks, Trying new things

4.1 The precarious life of creative workers

Previous research on CCI's acknowledges the insecure income and labor conditions of creative workers within the cultural arts sector (Comunian & England, 2020 ;Banks, 2020). Cultural workers and artists have had to experience different types of set-backs due to the nature and dynamic of CCI's. De Peuter (2011), proposes that the modes of work life for individuals within CCI's (freelancing, project based, short term contracts) enhances the on-going precarity. The inequality of wages within the CCI's illustrates how a small group of popular creators make more money than the majority of creators do (Murray & Gollmitzer, 2011). Respondent 5 explained how most of artists have to fight for eventually nothing but leftover 'breadcrumbs' from the industry;

"We have to rethink, rethink something because I mean, the pandemic is not the only problem we have, there are lots of other problems (...) we are fighting against each other to get like, really, bread crumbs at the end" (respondent 5).

In an environment where there is an unfair distribution of wealth, artists are facing desperation that eventually turns them against each other.

4.1.1 Financial instability

Most of the respondents explained that because of the pandemic and the measures stopping them from performing, they have had to find new ways to be able to make a living wage.

Respondent 5 in particular talked about needing help from state institutions to be still able to pay rent and food:

“So after, the summer, November, we had another lockdown here. And from that point, I entered in the Job Center. So now I get it monthly, they pay my rent and they pay 300 euro for food.” (Respondent 5)

This respondent explained that the ‘Job center’ is a governmental institution in Germany which gives money to people who do not have a permanent job, it is also called “Harz IV”. Most of the interviewed artists had a job besides their creative work already before the pandemic, since the wage from their artistic work does not suffice for a living. Respondent 6 for example is a DJ but also works as a manager at a bar in the center of Rotterdam at the same time. A Berlin musician, who works as a copywriter on the side also explains:

“I think it's also maybe I'm in a different position, I was basically trying to transition out of those jobs and more into really, making money from the music” (respondent 6). Artist not being able to have a living wage from their craft can have a bad influence on creative production in general.

4.1.2 other precarities

To highlight the precarious dynamics of artists life’s respondent 8 explained:

“I can even like, honestly say while having this job, it's kind of taken a bit of the the fire out of me, you know, that makes sense, I'm like, oh, I don't need to do it (music) right now because I will still have money to eat if I don't.” (respondent 8).

This sentence perfectly illustrates the view of most of the respondents on the current state of CCI’s and creative workers. Artist have been feeling like their contribution to society is undermined because of the scarce rewards they get. The frustration and resentment from artists and creatives was a common current in each interview. Respondent 5 explained:

‘it's very difficult, I've managed to do it because I have been here for 10 years already (...) but I see also friends and colleagues that are very struggling (respondent 5).

4.2 Dynamics of artist within CCI's

Many researchers touched upon the cultural and creative labor economy. As explained by Comunian & England (2020) different researchers have used various definitions and terminology when it comes to the description of this field of work. The two main principles vital to understand the way CCI's operate, is described by Caves (2000) as "arts for art's sake" and "motley crew". Workers within CCI's are in general inclined to settle for lower wages because most of their care and energy goes in to the originality and quality of their work, therefore 'art for art's sake' (Caves, 2000). Caves (2000) also focuses on how cultural production is interconnected through people with different sets of skills and knowledge sets. Caves uses the terms "Motley" to explain the connections that occur amongst artistic creators in precarious environments. The principle "motley crew" basically explains the importance of combining an array of skills to succeed within CCI's (Caves, 2000). In practice, cultural production stimulates multi-skilled workers who have to be able to adapt quickly to the environment in which they are placed. Below these two principles will be explored with direct examples from the respondents.

4.2.1 Arts for art's sake

In the theoretical framework of this thesis, the principles that were central to Caves (2000) method for understanding CCI's were explained. One of the principles is called "arts for art's sake". Art is known to fuel creativity, reduce anxiety and connect people. Workers within CCI's are in general inclined to settle for lower wages because most of their care and energy goes in to the originality and quality of their work (Caves, 2000). Respondent 5 explained that he refuses to give online classes since he cannot establish the same connection with the student as in real life. Therefore the classes lose their artistic value through doing online classes. He explains:

"What I actually do by teaching is, building a strong connection with the student, understanding his problem and understanding what he needs more than just okay, telling things about music is something, but there are also some things that are more

deeper, that you can develop one to one and it's for everyone different. Because we have a feeling with the music, we perceive it in a different way.” (respondent 5).

The main notion taken from this is with music a real-life connection is central to the creative expression, even in time where coming together is not possible. Therefore, artists start to feel that missing the real-life connection has a negative impact on their creative output.

4.2.2 Motley crew

Caves (2000) also focuses on how cultural production is interconnected through people with different sets of skills and knowledge sets. The principle “motley crew” basically explains the importance of combining an array of skills to succeed within CCI’s (Caves, 2000). Some of our respondents talked about the great importance of being multidisciplinary and having the ability to adapt. Respondent 4 explained:

“Yeah. I think this image of artists of artist changed, it was like they get the inspiration and they just drink and they take drugs and they just relax and they produce the art, no, artists have to be social media experts, artists have to be active. In my scene, it's like that, like, you are a businessman.”(Respondent 4)

As explained in this example cultural production stimulates multi-skilled workers who have to be able to adapt quickly to the environment which they confront at the moment.

4.3 Neoliberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19

As explained, the main issue of what can be blamed for the precarious life circumstance for most artist can be explained by modern day Neoliberal policies. According to previous research by Jeanotte (2010) neo-liberalism as an ideology has had a thorough impact on policy making, including cultural policies. The section below will dive deeper in to examples of government action and policies. Overall, respondents had much critique towards the government and cultural policies, feeling helpless and left out when it comes to governmental support.

4.3.1 Lack of unions & collectives

Banks (2020) and Communian & England (2020) explain, the disappearance of the welfare state, which has been authored by Neo-Liberal policies, has led to less safeguards and less guarantee for a living wage within CCI's. Neoliberal policies have left safeguards such as workers unions in the past, the lack of unionization and collectives destabilize working conditions and wages for the CCI are not optimized (Comunian & England, 2020).

Respondent 5 explains:

“We are we are missing a union. A place where we as artists can share ideas with the government. Like an organization that works for musician, and try to protect them in a way”. (Respondent 5) In this way he explains that is of great importance for artists to be able to communicate with the government and the people in charge. Respondent 9 adds to this: “There are associations that they're doing this and for sure, there is something toward this. But it's always something you have to find out. You know what I mean? So it's never big enough to be seen. It's easy to feel it as an invisible thing.” (respondent 9).

With this the respondent talks about how there are groups and associations that want to bridge the gap between the CCI's and the people in power, but they are hard to find and not accessible enough for everyone.

4.3.2 Government action

As far as government acting during the COVID-19 pandemic goes, respondents from both locations explained that each their respective governments set out subsidies for freelancers and artists in order to survive during these times. In general, I saw respondents from Berlin quite satisfied with the help that they received. Respondent 4 explained:

“I think Germany, did a good job. Like I don't criticize any, like the state that I'm talking about the state Berlin like also more for the music industry. Already last year, they gave everyone 5000 euros, everyone who has a freelance visa, they just got 5000 (Euros). And you don't pay back nothing. They just gave it to you. If

you're registered as a freelancer artists, you just had this money. And then one year later, they gave again, 3000 (Euros).”

This respondent also explained that he received more funding from the government through state projects intended for artists to invest in their work. Artist in the Netherlands were also eligible for help from the government but no real subsidies were set out for artists to stimulate their artistic work. Respondent 1 explained how, opposing to the way it works in Germany, private funds were set up coming from philanthropists and companies. He explains:

“C&A have started a Corona relief fund for artists (...) they may get some money from the government but I know most of these funds are company owned”(respondent 1).

He added to this that the funds were not distributed to all artists, if you had a stable music career and you were already known in the scene as a musician it was easier for you to get money from them. Because of Neoliberal policies and government acting it looks like people and companies are taking the responsibility of helping artists themselves.

As discussed, Banks (2020) illustrates how after many years of Neoliberal policy making the current pandemic has shown the great vulnerability of CCI's:

“The true costs of four decades of instituted economic short-termism and instability, and a rampant and attendant inequality, have been revealed within the space of a month “...” requiring emergency state aid, and the low paid and vulnerable were thrown into the firing line of essential work and increased exposure to risk.”(Banks, 2020 p.652). Most of the respondents had to find new jobs in order to make a living. Just like Banks(2020) explains Respondent 3 specifically said:

“I work at a Corona test-street now (...) the pay is fine and I know it is temporary (...) but yeah, if it wasn't for Corona I would have never started a job like this next to music” (Respondent 3).

To make ends meet, artists have been forced to respond to the availability of work. In certain cases, such as that which respondent 3 outlined, that work is intimately connected to the course of the pandemic.

4.3 Innovation within CCI's

Innovation within cultural production is not a new term within research on Creative and Cultural Industries. Long before the current COVID-19 pandemic many creatives and cultural producers looked for new ways of cultural production, as innovation is an important part of the CCI's themselves. Below you will find the different aspects of the innovation. The general trend showed that all artists made use of new innovations during the pandemic and are all inclined to find new ways of cultural production. Direct examples from our research is the At Home Fest organized by one of our respondents. This livestreamed event would not be there without the progression and innovation of technologies used within CCI's

4.3.1 Convergence of creative production & tools for creation, marketing and sharing

Especially in these times respondents explained making use of new programs and tools which allowed them to work together on music or do online concerts through livestreams.

Respondent 2 explains: "I have this new tool, it's a cable and it directly takes the sound from the Soundsystem, not through a mic and speaker, this allows for livestreams to have a clean sound". Adding to this respondent 1 explains: "I was already using different types of platforms (...) but because of the pandemic I have started to look further, TikTok for example".

As I already explained it is important within CCI's to be multidisciplinary. The innovation within digital media and digital convergence of preceding creative production ended some long-established barriers in the creative sector (Jaw, Chen & Chen, 2012). In practice, this could take the form of a singer who uses multiple platforms to promote their music. Equally, technological innovations within CCI's allow for this same person to create within multiple components of CCI's. The same musician who produces their own music may also produce their own music videos. And this is exactly what some respondents explained:

"Because you have to, that's the thing, you have to have a visual aesthetic as well. Or if you're performing you have to have kind of a show or theatrical something or I don't know, whatever, you have to add something. It's not just music."(Respondent 4).

Respondent 9 adds to this;

“ Nowadays, as a musician, you kind of have to be able to do everything, or at least the standard in the industry is everyone being able to do a little bit of everything. So I mean, I'm mainly a musician, but I can definitely record stuff as well. And I have some songwriter skills and online handling skills, so being able to promote yourself. And for instance, I built my own site. It was not that hard, actually. But still, I needed to put effort to it. Mostly because you can't always rely on hiring other people to do links for you. And nowadays, you have to just be able to do everything.” (Respondent 9)

In this way the respondent makes the notion that it is of great essence to be multidisciplinary within the current musical and creative environment as explained by Jaw, Chen & Chen (2012).

4.4 Psychological stress and artistic expression during a global pandemic

Previous research on the COVID-19 pandemic has shown significant impact on people's psychological wellbeing, as lockdowns and quarantines can lead to depression, anxiety and even post- traumatic stress disorder (Sood, 2020). Therefore the interviewed artists were asked if they have had any mental setbacks. Most of the respondents explained that the daily routine became a slur after a while and that the pandemic had some impact on their mental wellbeing. Respondent 6 explained:

“I mean, I was also a little bit depressed at one point, because it's like, I was just like going nowhere. I think a lot of people feel this like going through the routine. But yeah, like, for what?” (Respondent 6).

Respondent 1 adds to this notion:

“You land in a daily slur in which you cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel. You think okay, maybe soon, but no still nothing. As a musician you start to think. What am I going to do to keep my listeners and fans satisfies, am I going to postpone stuff? (...) after a while the creativity starts to decline as well”(respondent 1).

Not only did respondents describe having a hard time mentally, some also explained that the lockdowns had an impact on their artistic expression;

“I mean, music is never sort of magic that comes from the sky. It's always something that comes from human beings that are affected by the lives that they live and the society in which they are and the way they are and anything like that.”(Respondent 9).

On the other hand some of the artists explained trying new things and being motivated by new opportunities that have risen since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, respondent 10 talks about his future:

“I see the future with sunshine actually, the coming year I will have to go really hard. I know what I want, I planned it all out step-by-step. There are a lot of things coming up, like my own radio program. And it's time for me to come out of my cocoon. That's how I started viewing the Corona situation. Sitting in that cocoon for a while and popping out of it in the coming year, and see how hard we can go from here” (respondent 10).

Here we see the mental effect of the pandemic as for now, but it is of great importance for researchers to think about the future implications of the mental health impact of the pandemic on, not only artists, but also all human beings coping with lockdowns and forced social distancing.

The previous paragraphs showed that our results are in line with the expectations of this research and the already existing theoretical knowledge surrounding the precarious lives of artists within CCI's. As explained in the theory and also to be seen in the results, the art's sector is of great importance for the general public. Especially in times where most of us are left with entertainment within our houses, the production of cultural goods cannot be missed (Banks, 2020). Research on CCI's can be expanded and comparison on a greater scale can be made, so that a more comprehensive understanding of CCI's and Neo-liberal cultural policy making can be established. The next chapter will dive deeper in to further research and implications; most of our respondents could identify with the various precarities within CCI's. Financial instability and no guarantee for work were prevalent for the respondents and

most of them were explaining numerous ways of making extra money on the side in order to survive. Since the closing of venues, many of the respondents looked for new work. This is most definitely the overall sentiment for most respondents, who have felt like no real options for alternatives were given to them. Although respondents from both cities were not satisfied with how their respective government has been handling the pandemic and cultural policy in general, respondents from Berlin were quite happy with the help they received from the government. These and more implications will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

In this last chapter I will summarize this research, the research procedures, the results and discuss conclusions that can be made from this research. Furthermore, this section will outline ideas for further research, implications for the CCI's and the art sector in general. In line with the results, implications for cultural policy making will also be discussed. The main objective of this research was to answer the following research questions. The key research question: 'How are Dutch and German musicians and cultural workers responding to government policies that effect the traditional modes of performance during the COVID-19 pandemic?'. Furthermore the following sub questions were central to this research: (SQ1) : 'What performance practices are the affected musicians using to share their creative output?', (SQ2): 'What is the connection between neo-liberal government philosophies and their response to the creative sector during the pandemic?', (SQ3): 'What is the psychological dimension to the impact of COVID 19 on musicians and performance cultures?'.

5.1 Summary

To be able to answer the research questions, I interviewed 6 individuals from Rotterdam and Berlin who are musicians within the CCI's. Semi-structured interviews were conducted as space was left open for additional questions deriving from the interviews. As explained in the methodology, the analytical approach for this research was inductive but also narrative analysis. Narrative analysis helped highlighting important insights deriving from direct quotes from the respondents (Bryman, 2012). Inductive analysis is based on the initial identification of ideas and themes that are to be found in the transcripts (Bryman, 2012). Through coding-procedures the conversations could be analyzed and the results were established. In line with previous studies on the lives' of artists and individuals within CCI's, which acknowledges the insecure income and labor conditions of creative workers within the cultural arts sector (Comunian & England, 2020 ;Banks, 2020), most of our respondents could identify with the various precarities within CCI's. Financial instability and no guarantee for work were prevalent for the respondents and most of them were explaining numerous ways of making extra money on the side in order to survive. Since the closing of venues, many of the respondents looked for new work, most interestingly one of the responding musicians from Rotterdam started working at a COVID-19 test street. This

perfectly ties (Banks, 2020) paper, where he explains; “(...) the low paid and vulnerable were thrown into the firing line of essential work and increased exposure to risk.”(Banks, 2020 p.652). This is most definitely the overall sentiment for most respondents, who have felt like no real options for alternatives were given to them. Although respondents from both cities were not satisfied with how their respective government has been handling the pandemic and cultural policy in general, respondents from Berlin were quite happy with the help they received from the government. Apart from the ‘bureaucratic hell’(respondent 4) they have had to go through, the financial aid from the German government was satisfactory for the interviewed artists. As explained in the theory section, neoliberalism in Germany has always looked different from other countries. A system of ordoliberalism is applied in Germany. The essence of ordoliberalism lays in combining neoliberalism with a strong state, meaning a state that keeps competition under control and makes sure that social and ideological prerequisites of economic freedom are intact (Bonefeld, 2012). The data collected from German respondents showed that indeed state and city in Germany use a ‘strong state’ approach in which they do not completely let the market do their thing. As already explained the general census for the German state’s actions were more positive than the Dutch ones.

With respect to the reality of neo-liberal policies we can conclude that they are indeed a key answer in to explaining the harsh conditions for creatives within CCI’s. Neoliberalism as an ideology has had a thorough impact on policy making, including cultural policies (Jeanotte, 2010). I explained that the disappearing of the welfare state, which has been authored by Neo-Liberal policies, has led to less safeguards and less guarantee for a living wage within CCI’s (Banks, 2020; Communian & England, 2020). Respondents agreed that there is a lack of unions or collectives set up to guarantee better life’s for them, giving ideas of panels or other ways to have a better communication between artist and government.

In this research, I also highlighted many aspects of the dynamics of creatives’ lives. The respondents explained how important it is to be multidisciplinary and go beyond your own field of art. Furthermore, respondents explained the great importance of new digital (online) tools which can help them in the whole process, from production to sharing.

Lastly, The project explored the psychological dimension of this crisis for the interviewees. Some respondents explained that they have experienced light feelings of depression, most of them had a feeling of being stuck and not really being able to see the end of it. As lockdowns are slowly stopping and vaccines are being spread, the interviewed artist did have a promising look in to the future. Not believing it’s going to be the exact same, but with the idea that this crisis has brought many new possibilities and ideas.

5.2 Implications

In line with the results of this research a few implications for the practice can be discussed. Firstly, the importance of CCI's and the arts sector has never been greater, in a time where we are overwhelmed with current measures, the closing of cinema's, theater's and clubs. Deputy Dutch Minister Hugo de Jonge said this year that the cultural sector is 'not of essence' (NRC.nl, 2021) This research shows that it is absurd for a Dutch politician to say this. What is needed is a better communication between the government and the people within CCI's. Because of the great importance of CCI's for the general public, the states should take more responsibility and establish a better connection with the artist. As mentioned, the lack of responsibility and good communication with the people in power can be blamed on Neo-liberal policy making.

Furthermore, this research illustrates the great importance of innovation within CCI's, artists are more than ever making use of different modes of digital and non-digital innovations within their creative processes. The convergence of digital practices and production plays in an important role in this and can be of great importance for every artist within CCI's. Relating back to the notion of resilience within CCI's, artist are now finding a certain independence in the fact that they are most of the time left to their own. This feeling of abandonment will change how art is produced and distributed.

But what does this mean in the bigger picture? Can the pandemic have such a great impact on the CCI's which could lead to a decline in cultural production? As explained the cultural and creative industries have always been resilient and stubborn when it comes to setbacks. Just like Deleuze & Guatarri (1988) explained, culture will always keep flowing like a body of water no matter what comes. And this is also evident in this research, many artists are finding new opportunities and ways of cultural production during this pandemic and are looking for the best ways to comeback once things are going to be a little more normal.

5.3 Limitations & Further research

In this very last section of this research I will briefly go over the limitations of this research and talk about ideas for further research. Looking at my respondents I have to say that it is not so representative of all artists within CCI's, this mainly because all of them were male. Another thing that could have been a burden within this research was my position as a creative myself. Having the role of an insider might have sometimes led to me explaining my view on the topic as well. However, it still helped me form a better connection with the respondents as we could relate to each other as well.

The ever-changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic does not allow us to make concrete conclusions on where the future is going to bring us, therefore a longitudinal study can be interesting for further research. By looking at the same artists in a year one could research the further impact of the pandemic and how it has changed the current environment in CCI's. Since this research did not go too deep in to the psychological dimensions of this pandemic, it can be very interesting to get a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological impact this pandemic has for artists and for everyone else.

To conclude, this project has shown the importance of art for society. A society is judged by the art it creates and its ability to produce culture. Of course the main priority during the pandemic is money and public health, but as researchers it is important to examine the impact of this crisis on art and creativity.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Summary of codebook

Below you can find the summary of the codebook, the number represents the amount of times the code was used.

Name	Groundedness	Groups
Art for art's sake	36	Dynamics of artist within CCI's
Artistic activity	34	
Convergence of creative production	18	Innovation within CCI's
Financial instability	18	The precarious life of creative workers
Government support & funding	27	neo-liberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19
Lack of government support	31	neo-liberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19
Lack of unions & collectives	9	neo-liberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19
Measures	32	neo-liberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19
Mental setbacks	24	Mental state and artistic expression during a global pandemic
Motivation	24	Mental state and artistic expression during a global pandemic
Motivation & personal progress	10	
Motley crew	18	Dynamics of artist within CCI's
Other precarities	31	The precarious life of creative workers
Private funding & support	4	neo-liberalism in cultural policy making & government action during COVID-19
Tools for creation marketing & sharing	31	Innovation within CCI's

Trying new things	44	Mental state and artistic expression during a global pandemic
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Appendix 2: Overview of interviewees

- Respondent 1 : Mitchel Sam-Sin, Artist and cultural entrepreneur, Rotterdam, Male
- Respondent 2: Koen Landman, DJ/Bar manager, Rotterdam, Male
- Respondent 3: Jan Kraaij (Cry), Rapper/parttime corona test street, Rotterdam, Male
- Respondent 4: Baris Oner, musician/event organizer, Berlin, Male
- Respondent 5: Alex Rapp, Artist/musician, Berlin, female
- Respondent 6: Nicola Manzocchi, musician, Berlin, Male
- Respondent 7: Emidio Mazzilli, Musician/teacher, Berlin, Male
- Respondent 8: Bruno van Dingen, Rapper/history teacher, Rotterdam, male
- Respondent 9: Sebastien Warshaw, musician/performance, Berlin, Male
- Respondent 10: Luca Koemans, DJ/sound engineer student, Rotterdam, Male

Appendix 3: Abstracts Dutch interviews

Dutch Interview Summaries

Interview 1 – Mitchell

Mitchel is a creative from Rotterdam who operates as an event planner, cultural entrepreneur and hip hop artist. Under the name Sammie Sedano he releases music and works with other artist to make albums and EP's for his label cult North. He explains that Cult North is a city funded organization situated in the North side of Rotterdam. During the pandemic they have organized a Live streaming festival called At Home Fest, many local artist were invited to perform in front of a live performing audience. Mitchel strongly feels that livestreams are not a replacement for actual shows because a real life connection is missing with the fans. Furthermore, Mitchel talks about help from state for the creative industry, he tells me that many artists had to rely on private foundations for support and that the government should take notes of that. Lastly the interview is closed with a perspective on the coming future and the lessons that are being learned from this situation.

Interview 2 – Koen

Koen Landman is a professional DJ from Rotterdam. Outside of his DJ career, he is currently a manager at a restaurant/bar on the Witte de Withstraat in Rotterdam. He explains that the biggest change since the pandemic has been the amount of free time he has now to spend on doing 'home stuff' for his DJ'ing. He had also taken part in Livestream event, he explains that doing Livestreams feel more like doing a radio show instead of an actual show for a partying audience. He is especially missing the reaction of a crowd, which you could always

find in a club or a venue. During the lockdown he also bought a new cable which allows him to share his music in good quality through multiple social media channels. Koen furthermore explains how the pandemic led to almost zero income for performance because most livestreams were also done for goodwill.

Interview 3 – CJ

CJ full name Carvalho is a Dutch rapper and artist from Rotterdam. Before the pandemic he explains that his routine usually consisted of a lot of traveling to Amsterdam, going to the studios during the week and having shows during the weekend. At some point he was making enough of his shows to live from it. He explains that with the pandemic and the diminishment of live shows he was forced to find a job outside of his art. During the pandemic he started working at a Corona test location. He explained that he also got help from the government receiving a monthly check. Furthermore CJ explains that the pandemic changed his view on life and gave him lots of time to think about what he wants in the future. CJ will start attending school again next year and will do music more as a hobby.

Interview 7 – Bruno

Bruno, artist name Brunzyn, is a Dutch rapper from Rotterdam. Besides his musical career he is in school to become a history teacher, and teaches history to high school kids in a school close to Rotterdam. He explains that during the pandemic he had a lot of time for himself and experienced something as a ‘winter dip’ for the first time. This had led to him really having lots of time to work on his craft and progress artistically. He also explains that being a teacher during this time as an artist in a pandemic was really helpful for him because it gave him financial stability. He also explains how he feels about art and the creative sector in general and says that the Dutch government should have more responsibility over the creative sector. Lastly he explains that it is a must for all artists to go beyond their own skill set and also be able to craft other arts as well.

Interview 10 – Luca

Luca is a DJ and sound engineer and design student from Rotterdam. Before the pandemic he had multiple shows in clubs and other venues. His biggest change in his routine was that the pandemic forced him to do a lot more computer work from home, even when it came to making music. He got signed as a producer to a label and still most of his work was from home. He also explains that livestreams are not a good replacements for shows because the interaction between the artist and the audience is almost completely missing. Furthermore, he says that the city and government have never acted in the right way towards the creative industry, explaining that the city has not given out any 24-hour licenses to clubs in Rotterdam for the past 5 years. Even though the Dutch government gave out money to creatives for living he explains that the government should have done more to ensure a safer and better reopening of clubs and better regulations.

Appendix 4: Signed consent forms interviews

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

— ☒ ☐

Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

☒ ☐

I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live], will not be shared beyond the study.

☒ ☐


I give permission for the [specify the data] that I provide to be archived in [name of data repository] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒ ☐

Signatures

Luca

Name of participant [printed]

 15 aug 2020

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

☒ ☐

Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

☒ ☐

I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live], will not be shared beyond the study.

☒ ☐

I give permission for the [specify the data] that I provide to be archived in [name of data repository] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒ ☐

Signatures

Baris

BO

Name of participant [printed]

13-08-2021

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes

No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.



Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes



I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live], will not be shared beyond the study.



I give permission for the [specify the data] that I provide to be archived in [name of data repository] so it can be used for future research and learning.



Signatures

Koen Landman

Name of participant [printed]

____ K.L. _____ 12-08-2021

**Consent Form for Master's thesis research,
Hakan Gavaz**

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

☒ ☐

Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

☒ ☐

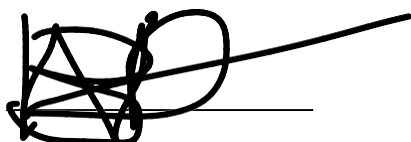
I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live], will not be shared beyond the study.

☒ ☐

I give permission for the [*specify the data*] that I provide to be archived in [*name of data repository*] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒ ☐

Signatures



Bruno, 14-08-2021

Name of participant [printed]

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

☒☐

Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

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I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live], will not be shared beyond the study.

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I give permission for the [specify the data] that I provide to be archived in [name of data repository] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒☐

Signatures

Alex Rapp _____ A.R. 12-08-2021
Name of participant [printed]

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

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Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

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I give permission for the [*specify the data*] that I provide to be archived in [*name of data repository*] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒☐

Signatures

Jan Kraaij (CJ)

J.K.

07-08-2021

Name of participant [printed]

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

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Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

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I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live], will not be shared beyond the study.

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I give permission for the [specify the data] that I provide to be archived in [name of data repository] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒☐

Signatures

Sebastien Warshaw

S.W.

10-08-2021

Name of participant [printed]

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

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Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

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I give permission for the [*specify the data*] that I provide to be archived in [*name of data repository*] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒☐

Signatures

Emidio Mazzilli

E.M.

04-08-2021

Name of participant [printed]

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

☒ ☐

Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for Research purposes

☒ ☐

I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live], will not be shared beyond the study.

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I give permission for the [*specify the data*] that I provide to be archived in [*name of data repository*] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒ ☐

Signatures

Mitchel Sam-Sin

M.S.

12-08-2021

Name of participant [printed]

Consent Form for Master's thesis research, Hakan Gavaz

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

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Use of the information in the study

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I give permission for the [specify the data] that I provide to be archived in [name of data repository] so it can be used for future research and learning.

☒☐

Signatures

Nicola
Name of participant [printed]

N.M.

03-08-2021
