

# **The Dance Floor as Our Work Floor**

**The Influence of Nightlife on the Career Development of Early Career Artists in  
Rotterdam.**

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# Abstract

Within the creative city of Rotterdam, creative networks are important not only to the city but function as the foundation for the artist's career. These networks are often formed and sustained through experiences and encounters in nightlife. Over the past 10 years, Rotterdam's nightlife scene has shrunk substantially. The declining availability of nightlife venues affects the artist's career development as their trusted safe spaces where creative networks intersect dissolve. Yet, most scholarly attention has been on the role of artists and nightlife in regards to urban regeneration and economic growth. Therefore, this research poses the question: "How does nightlife influence the career development of artists at the beginning of their career?" This study comprises an exploration into relevant literature around the topics of creative cities and networks, the economic and social aspects of nightlife, artists and their career development and in-depth semi-structured interviews with Rotterdam based artists at the beginning of their careers. The results of the interviews were grouped based on emerging patterns guided by the relevant literature after which themes were made in relation to nightlife's influence on the artists' career development. The main three findings address nightlife's influence on the artist's career development through 1) the creation and iteration of creative networks, 2) several forms of knowledge exchange and 3) providing location bound safe spaces. Overall, it can be stated that the artists main need in regards to career development is a safe space to express and experiment in order to discover their interests and to further develop their artistic style. To enable their potential and have their creative work experienced, networks of like minded actors in the creative industries are crucial. The nocturnal safe spaces essential to unlock this potential are difficult to facilitate and sustain as nightlife venues have to do with their own subsidy plan requirements, which leave little space for uncertainty around visitor numbers. The discussion of these three main findings leaves room for suggestions on how to shape and provide these specific beneficial nocturnal spaces. However, it found that trust in such safe spaces is crucial for their existence, which is in turn shaped through regular visits of the creative communities to these experimental safe spaces.

**Keywords:** Nightlife, Rotterdam, Artist career development, Networks, Safe Spaces, Social Production System

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# 1. Introduction

Over the past decade, Rotterdam's nightclub scene has shrunk from housing 16 nightclubs in 2008 to only 8 in 2017 (Van Spronsen, 2017). Since 2017, other venues have disappeared, which sparked many complaints around the municipality's policy approach towards nightlife. These complaints are mostly centered around the presence of long term nighttime license mismanagement (Geluk & Lewis, 2019), cancelation of plans due to bureaucratic mishaps (Eijck, 2019) and the overall impression of the municipality neglecting nightlife (Geluk & Lewis, 2019). For the Rotterdam based artists who do not have a conventional workflow, the places in and around the dancefloor are crucial. Nightlife functions as a safe space to

As the artists depend on the presence of nightlife as a career catalysator, ongoing urban regeneration poses a threat. The continuous changes in the nightscape are often met with resistance. For example, after the Rotterdam's municipality's decision to close down several bars and the plausible taking down of the Schieblock was met with protests offline and online and several guerilla actions to affirm the value of the Schieblock, like the printing out of the critical comments on the announcement post and placing them in the physical space around the area (Eijck, 2019). The diminishing vibrancy in Rotterdam nightlife affects Rotterdam artists' career development as it limits the trusted spaces where interconnected networks converge. Nightlife venues in Rotterdam are often built on "quicksand" or temporary business concessions, meaning that the creative entrepreneurs running such venues have very little security about their futures (Van der Poel, 2023). Often, nightlife venues are temporarily permitted in "to be developed" urban areas until the municipality, city planners and their stakeholders have a new plan for the designated area. The convergence of nightlife, cultural activities and artists has the potential to transform a location into a socially dynamic and appealing area. Hence, the motivation of the city planners to encourage the development of

nightlife venues and creative communities as they understand their transformative power and potential to generate economic growth (Currid & Williams, 2010). However, the artists' creative practices are used as a means to an end; the artists and their nightlife are used to generate liveable spaces i.e. gentrification. This temporality and insecurity in regards to the physical and symbolic space for nightlife in the city of Rotterdam results in disruptions in the natural flow of the social realm. The social realm is in a symbiotic relationship with nightlife as it offers the space to undertake or experience cultural activities as well as the chance to socially interact with known or new people. This symbiotic relationship between the social realm and the night time economy is perceivable across the globe. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic it became clear that the night time economy has been an integral part to the (re)launch of social and cultural life in the post pandemic period (Nofre, 2021, p. 5). These social interactions and the experience of cultural activities enhances one's sense of belonging and fosters communities. Vice versa, the social aspects form the character and ambiance of nightlife and hence impact the types of activities and venues that arise and sustain in a certain area. In this manner, the social aspects and the night time economy converge to form the social nexus for artistic communities. Especially for artists at the beginning of their career who are trying to penetrate existing or form their own networks, nightlife functions as a rich oasis of social interaction and network convergence. The overall benefits of attending nightlife are plentiful; community participation enhances one's sense of belonging and aids conflict resolution among the array of collectives and individual actors present (Elshater and Abusaada, 2022). With that, taking part in various cultural activities within one's community results in positive impacts on one's health and overall "life satisfaction and happiness" (Nofre, 2021). Furthermore, this encourages the very participation in community activities through fostering "social cohesion, community identity and multicultural understanding, and as well as by reinforcing the range of cross-social,

cross-cultural, cross-gender, cross-age, cross-ethnic and cross-religion relationships, networks and formal and informal norms (i.e. social capital) between different groups and individuals in the community that make neighbourhoods more resilient and stronger” (Nofre, 2021, p.3). This social realm is of importance as this is the place where artists meet, either planned or spontaneously. With that, nightlife and the space it creates for social interaction is where networks are established and reiterated, where new connections are made, new plans and knowledge are shared and the value of new cultural goods is determined (Currid & Williams, 2010). These practices are crucial for the existence and survival of artists and creatives of Rotterdam (Rijnaard, 2018). As the social realm and the networks that are sustained through nightlife and its cultural activities are essential to the creative practices and overall career of the artists, this qualitative research will collect data from interviews with artists at the beginning of their career where they will be asked about if and how they utilize nightlife.

This thesis researches the ways in which nightlife influences the creative processes of early career artists and further builds on the idea of nightlife as an accelerator to creative career development. Therefore, my main research question is as follows: “How does nightlife influence the career development of artists at the beginning of their career?” In order to answer this research question, a qualitative research approach has been chosen. The current research conducts 10 semi-structured interviews with Rotterdam based artists to uncover their perspective on the contribution of nightlife to the development of their creative practices and careers. The second chapter of this thesis consists of the theoretical framework. This framework will delve into the importance of networks and the night time economy in creative cities, followed by the specific economic and social aspects of nightlife that could influence the career development of artists. Here the negative effects of creativity led urban regeneration on the artists and the downsides of nightlife will be highlighted. Finally, the social production system will be discussed which elaborates on the intricate relation between



social networks, cultural creative actors or collectives and the urban environment. Chapter three will offer an overview of the research methodology, elaborating on the research design and strategy, sampling, data collection and analysis methods. In chapter 4 the results from the interviews will be presented and discussed in the form of three overarching themes. Finally, the final and fifth chapter will offer an overview of the findings, limitations and further research suggestions.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The logic of the present theoretical framework elaborates on three key concepts, and it does so in the following manner. The first subchapter uses the theoretical literature of Florida (2002) as well as Rodrigues and Franco (2020) to define the foundational concepts such as creative industries, creative cities, and networks. Secondly, ‘nightlife’ is conceptualized as an amalgamation of its economic aspects and psycho-social aspects within mainstream and alternative spaces. The conclusive third subchapter focuses on the labour market conditions within creative industries and the entrepreneurial skills crucial for artists to overcome these obstacles. With that, this chapter takes the lead of scholars such as Murzyn-Kupisz and Dzialek (2017) and Currid (2007) to articulate how artists relate to and navigate nightlife in the urban environment. This relationship will be further elaborated upon with the concept known as the social production system.

### 2.1 Creative Cities and Networks

The following section will elaborate on the current developments in the creative industries and highlight that the concepts of nightlife, networking and the overall social aspect of the CI have gained importance. The creative industries of which the nighttime economy is a part are

of importance to the city as ample literature affirms it's cruciality in regards to a city's urban regeneration and economic growth. They also seem to be influential in regards to artists' career development and opportunities. This could be attributed to nightlife's social nature and the networks and communities that it houses, which artists gladly make use of. Rotterdam has been the home to many cultural activities and therefore comprises a cultural industry as a creative city. Creativity and culture have been a point of attention in the city as in 2001 Rotterdam held the title of Cultural capital of Europe (Richards and Wilson, 2004). Divergent definitions have been given to the creative industries, which have impaired the development of a consensus universal definition. However, the UK Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport has defined the creative industries as those "which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property". Within the creative industries it identifies thirteen sectors: "advertising; architecture; the art and antiques market; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and video; interactive leisure software; music; the performing arts; publishing; software and computer games; and television and radio" (DCMS, 2001). These aforementioned sectors all offer their own cultural goods and services which are to be consumed or experienced at whichever time they are offered, this can be in the light of day or in the shadow of the night.

The creative industries have been closely associated with the idea of a creative city. Many researchers have defined the creative city as a "pluralistic and multifaceted place characterized by curiosity, imagination, creativity, culture, knowledge, innovation, and cooperation" (Rodrigues & Franco, 2020, p.1). The concept of creative cities has gained increasing attention in both academia and economic growth policies over the past years (Rodrigues & Franco, 2020). As suggested by leading scholars, this shift signals a move towards a new economy in which culture and creativity are pivotal elements of "urban

planning and economic growth based on urban competitiveness as a means of promoting urban regeneration” (Rodrigues & Franco, 2020). In the case of the city of Rotterdam, its status as a creative city has been shaped by its efforts to leverage its cultural and creative industries to foster urban regeneration and competitiveness (Ponzini & Rossi, 2010). This regeneration paralleled by competition can be further understood by exploring the phenomena of networks. Similarly to the concept of creative cities, the concept of networking in the CI has gained significant attention in academia and economic growth policies. As mentioned before, cooperation is one of the main characteristics of the creative city and is thus closely linked to the creation of networks. In turn these networks give rise to synergy and the exchange of knowledge, thereby making it a place for collaboration and enhancing the actor’s own and the city's innovative capacity (Rodrigues & Franco, 2020). As noted by Rodrigues and Franco in their systematic literature review, there is ample literature on the performance of creative cities focused on the role of creativity in itself (2020, p.1). Within the field, there is consequently a shortage of studies devoted to increasing the understanding of how these networks are created and sustained between different actors and institutions. This research fixation on the role of creativity in regards to economic growth overlooks the importance of collaboration and networks which are pivotal for the career development of artists and the performance of the creative city as a whole. (Rodrigues & Franco, 2020, p.1 /2) This is precisely where the present thesis fills in the literature gap.

The importance of networks and the social aspect of the CIs is recognized by Potts, Cunningham, **Hartley and Omerod (2008)** who argue for a market based interpretation of the CI. In essence, they argue the CIs to be defined as a class of economic choice theory where decisions on both production and consumption are determined by others in a social network. Because the creative industries are often new and unpredictable, decisions are influenced by the choices made by others. Here, social networks are seen as systems of value adherence in

terms of production and consumption. This interpretation is in line with workings of the “social production system” which will be discussed in greater detail in the third subchapter. In short, the “social production system” is a term coined by Elizabeth Currid (2007) which explains the relation of artists to the networks inherent in cultural activities and venues such as nightlife. The social production system concept highlights how new cultural goods are valued, discussed and reviewed between industry actors through their networks. As such, the creative industries are characterized by this social network choice. (Potts et. al., 2008, p. 169). As a point of critical reflection, the indications to exclusionary practices are noticeable (McRobbie, 2002) where network practices are described as ‘mechanisms of social closure to the creative sector, favoring those with high levels of social and cultural capital (Allen et. al., 2012, p. 440). This creates difficulty for early-career artists to penetrate these beneficial creative networks. With that, gaining an overview and selecting the correct social networks that are useful in regards to job prospectives is difficult in itself (Allen et. al., 2012; McRobbie, 2002).

In summary, the concept of the creative city and its benefits of having creative industries with their consecutive networks have been discussed in the existing literature. However, the relation between the artist and these networks are not only useful in regards to urban competitiveness, promoting regeneration and enhancing the city’s innovative capacity but more importantly they are crucial for the development of artist careers. The development and sustainment of these networks is the driving force behind the creative careers of the city's artists. With that, the actors present in these creative networks need a physical space to meet so the artists can indeed take advantage of the benefits for their careers.

## 2.2 Nightlife

The night time economy or cultural nightlife functions as a point of convergence for networks in the creative city (Elshater and Abusaada, 2022). Over the past decade, the night has been allotted more attention on a social, cultural, and legislative level as it has become the focal point of the “24-hours cities” paradigm (Chatterton & Hollands, 2003; Nofre, 2020). The night’s relevance is further emphasized by the ways in which many cities have designed and produced urban marketability and tourism promotion strategies that specifically highlight nightlife (Rodrigues & Franco, 2020). Through these strategies, nightlife has been demonstrably instrumentalized as a powerful tool to (re-)shape how tourists, visitors, and different segments of the local population experience the city (Nofre, 2020). With that in mind, cultural nightlife ought to be understood as one of the places where networking takes place and could thus be highly beneficial to the artists’ career development. There are different separate yet interlinked aspects that cultural nightlife is able to provide, in general and for the artists, i.e. economic, social, cultural and mental benefits (Drost, 2019). The following section sets out an overview of these aspects of nightlife. First, the economic aspect will be discussed which will lead into a section on the negative effects on the nocturnal communities due to a hyperfixation on nightlife’s economic aspects. Second, the social mental aspects present in nightlife, its capacity to strengthen community ties and the benefits for the artists are discussed

### 2.2.1 Nightlife’s Economic Aspect

Cultural nightlife offers a range of distinct yet interconnected advantages to both society at large and to those in creative industries. Nightlife as an integral part of the night time economy links to the earlier discussed concept of the creative city. Namely, cultural nightlife activities have gained significance in regards to urban development and been pointed out as a

source of innovation and economic growth by influential scholars, such as the creative class theory by Richard Florida (2002). The presence of a wide spectrum of different cultural day- and night-time activities is a crucial driver in regards to the economic growth of the creative city (Coslor, 2001; Florida, 2002; Zukin, 1998). To be specific, nightlife has been pointed out by several scholars as a stimulator for tourism and the hospitality sectors (Chatterton & Hollands, 2003; Roberts, 2009; and Roberts & Eldridge, 2012). Florida's theory on the creative class has been heavily influential in shaping urban development policies and has put a stronger emphasis on investing in cultural institutions, meeting places and dynamic public spaces to attract and retain the creative class (Florida, 2002). This symbiotic relationship between the creative city and nightlife demonstrates how flourishing nightlife functions as a driver of innovation and urban development. Even though this legitimizes the role of the artists and creatives, it only does so in regards to economic development.

While creativity-led urban regeneration indeed has a positive effect on economic growth, this is often not experienced by the artists as a part of the cultural sector itself. In fact, it results in the alteration of the socio-economic composition of the neighbourhood (Elshater and Abusaada, 2022). The creatives themselves are often dislocated as affordable studios and venues dissolve. This ultimately stems from the increasing rent and property prices that creatives are unable to afford. It has been argued that the creativity-led urban regeneration - which often mimics models of gentrification are to blame for these material and social conditions (Fasche, 2017). However, these economic conditions in particular also invoke resistance.

Cities that adopt these creativity-led urban regeneration policies leave limited opportunities for progressive movements to express themselves and are often met with resistance. Similar to the case of Rotterdam, these communities opposed the commodification of culture and made use of public areas and established unconventional initiatives centered on

community involvement and socializing (Molho, 2019). Notably, are the findings of the case study by Elshater and Abusaada (2022) who found that the sense of belonging in a community and unplanned visits of nightlife are hampered by interventions in familiar urban spaces. This links to how the unfamiliarity and lack of awareness of the behavioral norms present in a given place heightens the chances of aggressive behavior in nightlife activities (Elshater and Abusaada, 2022). Last, the disappearance of familiar nightlife locations results in the “destruction of different community networks of socialisation” also known as the loss of “nocturnal sociability” (Nofre, 2021, p.2). The effects of which are especially felt by the artists whose creative practices are often inspired by, created with, valued through and growing based on these networks of “nocturnal sociability”.

At this point, it is important to dichotomize the differences between mainstream and alternative nightlife. Although both share commonalities regarding their foundations within creative industries and nightlife, their downsides and benefits differ. These differences bring a more nuanced position to situate the final subchapter about artists specifically. Some of the negatives of urban nightlife are highlighted by the Grazian argument, where nightlife is taken as being characterized by “(1) race and class divisions, (2) gender inequities and the exploitation of women, and (3) exclusivity rather than inclusiveness or solidarity” (Anderson, 2009, p. 1). This argument connects to the earlier discussed exclusionary practices present in the creative industries where social barriers often advantage the individuals with greater social or cultural capital (Allen et. al., 2012, p. 440). Although beneficial to highlight the pitfalls of nightlife, Grazian’s argument is limited in its scope for it solely focuses on commercial nightlife. A counter argument for the positives of nightlife are highlighted by Tammy L. Anderson who critiques sociologist Timothy J. Grazian's perspective on urban nightlife. Anderson argues that the Grazian perspective focuses too much on mainstream or commercial nightlife and thereby overlooks the diversity and complex nature of urban

nightlife. According to Anderson (2009) urban nightlife is characterized by a variety of subcultures and scenes. She highlights that urban nightlife is a plausible place for connecting and social and political activism and emphasizes the need for a deeper and more intricate comprehension of urban nightlife that acknowledges the multiplicity of nightlife cultures and their capacity for social and political influence.

### 2.2.2 Nightlife's Social and Mental Aspects

As alluded to at the beginning of the present subchapter, the following section will address the social and mental aspects of nightlife in general and for artists. Much of the theoretical and empirical research conducted in regards to how innovation arises from the social realm has been focused on high technology and manufacturing (Fasche, 2017). In other words, most scholarly focus has been on the crucial role of the social realm in creating economic action, and not its pivotal role for the creative industry actors or artists themselves (Currid, 2007). The intersection of cultural production, artists and the social realm in urban environments in the case of New York City is explored in Elizabeth Currid book "The Warhol Economy". As Currid shows with the case of New York, the city's innovation dominance has its roots in this diverse group of strong and highly skilled occupational and industrial clusters, what Richard Florida coined to be the "creative class". (Currid, 2007). In addition to tangible effects of culture and creativity, such as generating employment and financial gain, are the intangible effects of attracting a diverse group of people and firms to a city, thereby leading to the acquisition of high-level human capital (Currid, 2007). The cultural activities available in nightlife attract the artists, while the venues become the physical manifestations of these interactions and consecutive networks (Currid, 2007). As such, the informal social interactions and networks formed in nightlife function as plausible career stimulators for the artists of the CI.



Given the plethora of literature on nightlife as a tool of urban strategizing, it is imperative to acknowledge the concept of “third places”. According to Oldenburg and Brissett (1982) nightlife venues serve as ‘third places’; a concept which describes places that are within a social setting but are not one’s home or place of employment (Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982). These third places are meeting points where a particular social or entertainment related atmosphere often occurs (Cabras & Mount, 2017; Currid, 2007; Drost, 2019). These places lend artists the opportunity to find like-minded actors in the field and allow them to create social capital while simultaneously improving their social and communication skills (Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982). Additionally, third places have been said to create jobs and the interactions which happen within them have the potential to give rise to novel ideas and innovations (Dijksterhuis, 2008).

These social dynamics present in nightlife have been said to be a crucial element for “collective identity and health” and an “antidote for anonymity” (Drost, 2019, p. 13). Additionally, nightlife holds the potential to be an “efficient time–space mechanism for social well-being, community-building and multicultural understanding and even psychological mutual support especially after the Covid-19 pandemic” (Nofre, 2021, p.1). In regards to the career development of the artists, beneficial influence of nightlife can be found in the development of social and communication skills as well as building social capital (Calafat et al., 2003).

The creation and iteration of the nocturnal social networks, arise in a “different type of institution—that of the club, the lounge, the rock and roll venue, and more intangibly “the scene”—that becomes embedded in the economic exchange of creative producers” (Currid, 2007, p. 123). Nightlife venues become the home of meaningful social interaction where through networking new ties are established and creative ideas are exchanged. Though casual and informal networking, knowledge and know-how is exchanged between the cultural actors

and artists in significant capacities. It's through these exchanges, that new collaborations, ideas and cultural product reviews occur. The value of the cultural good is in turn determined by the social cultural realm through the cultural actors discussing and experiencing the product, as mentioned before with literature on social network markets (Potts et. al., 2008). These nodes of creative exchange give rise to social and economic production which is beneficial for firms and especially to artists and creative workers. Next to the aforementioned informal social events, there are also formal social events such as gallery or exhibition openings which function to connect industries and support collaboration. The importance of the formal institutions of the museum and the gallery has been highlighted as the marketplace between the creative and commerce (Currid, 2007). These nodes of creative exchange function at two levels: “in a formal transfusion of information (the artwork, the opening, the movie premiere, the rock show) and as a place of exchange for the subculture that comes to the more formalized event” (Currid, 2007, p.132). With that she adds: “Both formal and informal, these spaces act as particular “scenes.” Scenes have dual purposes—on one level is their ostensible purpose (e.g., selling art, serving cocktails, being a live band venue), on the other is what happens within the social life surrounding the venue. In other words, scenes provide the site for cultural production” (Currid, 2007, p. 133).

Social agglomerations are present in all industries but they are the *raison d'être* for the cultural industry (Currid & Williams, 2010). The social value and influence of ‘third places’ on the career development of artists is plentiful from community building (Cabras & Mount, 2017; Drost, 2019), to increasing inclusivity, offering safe spaces for identity and idea exploration, group participation and raising the individual’s perception of the quality of life (Jeffres, Bracken, Jian & Casey, 2009). The existence of nightlife venues function as safe spaces and house communities as they create a comfortable atmosphere for the artists to meet like minded others, reconnect with their network, express their opinions and share new

ideas or projects. It is the combination of weak ties and social life that is most crucial for the artists and the CI. Artists often get into the cultural goods marketplace via these dense social networks. These are the same networks through which gatekeepers, artists and tastemakers interact and where it is decided what is good or original art, a system they fittingly title the “social production system” (Currid, 2007).

## 2.3 Artists: Who Are They and How Do They Work?

In order to understand the ways in which nightlife influences the careers of artists, it is useful to first look at who these artists are and how they develop their careers. The definitions of artists are plentiful, each with their own typology and criteria. With that, the previously discussed growing importance of the notion of creativity and its instrumentalisation has given rise to various potential definitions of an artist as either an individual or a member of a unique professional and social group, which renders the concept highly ambiguous. A widely adopted conception of artists is Richard Florida’s instrumental perspective which has, as stated before, inspired many urban regeneration policies (Fasche, 2017). In short, in “The Rise of the Creative Class” Florida describes the attraction and retention of highly skilled creative people, or “the creative class” to be the key to economic growth and development as they are the drivers of innovation. He describes the “creative class” as being attracted to a vibrant cultural scene and a diverse atmosphere (Florida, 2002). This definition of creatives, although widely accepted and implemented, focuses on the artists as a means to the end of economic growth, thereby overlooking the socially rooted needs of the creatives themselves. Murzyn-Kupisz and Dzialek (2017) offer an overview of definitions of artists and their occupations, concentrating on their unique characteristics and how they are perceived as a separate social and occupational group. Distilling many artist definitions into one, Murzyn-Kupisz and Dzialek (2017), describe the artists as a social and professional group

which is in particular inclined towards urban environments, especially larger cities with a richer cultural infrastructure, an active art market and a higher demand for creative occupations. With that, urban environments offer a setting from which artists can derive inspiration and develop their artistic activities, either mainstream or “alternative”. Therefore, on top of being taken as the creators of “urban ambiance, image and cultural offer”, artists should be taken also as sources of inspiration, active creators and consumers of urban amenities, direct and indirect contributors to the urban economy, employees, employers, and city residents (Murzyn-Kupisz & Dzialek, 2017, p.2).

### 2.3.1 Labour Market Conditions and Entrepreneurial Skills

As stated above, artists and their talents and skills can be useful in many different industries. Often, these creatives cannot fully sustain themselves through their creative work and therefore often work in other industries due to the labour market conditions of the creative industries. The labour market conditions will be discussed to assess whether nightlife has the ability to mitigate or overcome these obstacles. By identifying these challenges experienced by the artists, an understanding can be reached concerning the potential role of nightlife in overcoming the labour market obstacles. These CI labour market conditions obstacles will be discussed in the following section as they aid the understanding of the influence of nightlife on the overall career development of the artists.

The Creative Industries (CI) have the characteristics of fragile organizational structures and working patterns which consist for a great part of freelancers and temporary workers (Comunian & England, 2020). As the industry and its actors suffer from chronic unemployment and underemployment, different scholars emphasize the precarious labour market conditions of the CI (Bridgstock, Goldsmith, Rodgers and Hearn, 2015). Partly

underpinning this notion of precarity in the CI is the oversupply of creative workers and high competition (Bridgstock et. al., 2015).

To manage these structural challenges of the CI, the artists are often forced to upkeep several jobs in- and outside the CI (Bridgstock et. al., 2015; Comunian, Faggian and Jewell, 2011; Comunian, Faggian and Li, 2010). A large body of studies states that these career pathways are not necessarily chosen by the creative workforce themselves. Often, it is the above mentioned labour market conditions and the creative workforce's financial necessity that forces them to partake. A reason for these creatives to keep working in the CI despite the hampering conditions is the possibility of a 'breakthrough' (Taylor and Littleton, 2008). However, until they reach that point, the creative workforce will often 'self-exploit', meaning they work underpaid or for free (Bridgstock et. al., 2015; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010). To stay afloat, the creative workforce ought to develop career management skills and networking skills to build the crucial base of their potential employment opportunities (Bridgstock et. al., 2015). The following section offers a more detailed account of these career management skills

To battle the hampering conditions of the CI, there are several entrepreneurial skills the creatives have or obtain that are crucial for survival. Hanson (2021), adding onto Thoms (2016) theoretical framework of entrepreneurial skills for artists, developed the Arts Entrepreneurship Profile (AEP). The AEP is an instrument to support artists, students and their teachers in regards to artist's entrepreneurial development (Hanson, 2021). The AEP offers four crucial skills: 1) Opportunity Recognition - relates to new business opportunities and having an open and enterprising approach to conventional career paths, 2) Arts Leadership - relates to (self) management and (self) decisiveness, 3) Comfort with Uncertainty - "concerning ambiguity and a mindset of possibility amidst risk" and 4) Networking - concerns the comfortability in interpersonal social interaction in regards to

persuading others of your artistic value (Hanson, 2021, p. 318). These four skills together will make for a well prepared artist in regards to the entrepreneurial challenges within the CI and developing their career. In regards to developing their AEP skills, artists would benefit from interactions with their network to practice and gain confidence. As mentioned in the previous section, a rich social base is pivotal for artists' future employment prospects and here networking becomes the skill to enable the creation thereof (Allen et. al., 2012; McRobbie 2002).

### 2.3.2 The Social Production System

As discussed in the preceding subchapters, nightlife as a 'third place' has the capacity to form, sustain and strengthen relationships between different people and social groups and thus "bridging and bonding social capital" (Cabras & Mount, 2017; Drost, 2019). The social production system, a concept by Elizabeth Currid (2007) investigates the relationship between urban development, social networks and cultural production. In Currid's view, the creative industries (CI) and its cultural activities are not exclusively influenced by economic aspects but are rather more so shaped by the social interactions and network dynamics.

This larger "social production system" refers to the intricate network of institutions, collectives or organizations and individuals that devote themselves to cultural or creative undertakings, in particular in the context of an urban environment. The overall system includes actors such as artists, entrepreneurs, gallery owners, cultural venues and other actors involved in the creative industries (CI), with an emphasis on the social relations and connections between the actors that foster job opportunities. These are beneficial characteristics present within nightlife for the artists as their career development relies on this unsystematic social infrastructure that connects them to other creatives, like-minded or idea-sparking individuals, gatekeepers and potential new project offerings (Currid, 2007).

Currid states the social production system to be essential to the production and distribution of new creative ideas and cultural production. Social networks and the relationships it encompasses play a crucial role in sharing resources, knowledge exchange and the creation of job opportunities.

The social production system is an informal, adaptable yet efficient collection of “social synergies, networks and institutions that allow for knowledge, skill sets, projects, and evaluation processes to interact” (Currid, 2007, p.142).

Scenes, i.e. certain groups of like minded people meet each other at third places where they exchange ideas. This is where the producer meets the gatekeeper, where collaborations are made and where the cultural product is evaluated; the social production system at work. Even though this system is unsystematic and informal, its role in the production of art and culture is crucial. These meeting places i.e. nightlife, are fragile intersections of social networks. They arise spontaneously or by the habitual visits of actors involved in the ‘scene’ to certain places. With that, it is emphasized that the social production system is engrained in the urban environment and in turn influenced by its characteristics. The meeting points are “spatially bound and very much the product of the geography of the built environment and part of a larger social production system” (Currid, 2007, p.142).

The results of the social production system is influenced by factors such as the layout of urban neighbourhoods, the existence of cultural venues and institutions and the diversity of the actors involved in the social networks. This can be illustrated through the disappearance or adjustments of the locations which results in the loss of networks of “nocturnal sociability” (Nofre, 2021). Nofre (2021) elaborates “the disappearance of traditional bars, restaurants, clubs and discotheques (or their conversion into new tourist-focused facilities) also leads to the destruction of the different community networks of socialization. For many local adult partygoers, dramatic changes brought about by the touristification of the night have involved

the emergence of certain feelings of abandonment, lonesomeness, and a progressive unawareness of a formerly-well-known environment (the ‘traditional’ nightscape) that has undergone rapid change. Because nightscapes are not only formed by the spatial distribution of nightlife venues but especially by the multiple networks of ‘nocturnal sociability’ (some more ephemeral, others more durable) formed by numerous memories, experiences, atmospheres, emotions and affectivities” (Nofre, 2021, p. 2). Overall, the social production system concept by Currid (2007) emphasizes the complex relationship between social networks, urban development and cultural production. By grasping and comprehending fully the social dynamics of the CI, creative cities can foster a flourishing cultural creative networks that give rise to creative opportunities for the artists, innovation and economic development. If these nightlife as ‘third places’ physical locations keep changing, the flow in the development and creation processes of the artists is impaired and the network needs time to shape itself once more from the start. Thereby hampering the career opportunities and development of the artists involved. This is frustrating as the benefits of the creative workforce are not recognized in such situations as valuable or growth driving in the creative industries itself.

### 3. Methodological Design

#### 3.1 Methods and Research Question

The intent is to uncover elaborate explanations to the following question:

“How does nightlife influence the career development of artists at the beginning of their career?” To answer this question, the research design of this thesis will make use of a qualitative method as it is a way to gain a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural contexts and allows to examine and interpret the experiences of the participants and the meanings



given to them (Bryman, 2016). This methodology will be fitting as I intend to understand the meanings and values adhered by the artists to their nightlife experiences and what elements in nightlife are beneficial to them.

### 3.2 Five Aspects of Qualitative Research

In his work “Social Research Methods”, Bryman (2016) offers five key areas of emphasis for qualitative researchers. Namely, “seeing through the eyes of research participants, description and context, process, flexibility and lack of structure, and concepts and theory as outcome of the research process” (Bryman, 2016, p. 380). Before elaborating upon these five key areas of attention in qualitative research, it is beneficial to first address the sociological nature of this study and understand the difference between definitive and sensitizing concepts. According to Blumer, within social research it should be avoided to use definitive concepts as they tend to be rigid and constrain the ways in which the concept is understood (Bryman, 2006; Blumer, 1954). Bryman reiterates this point by stating the interpretation of the social world is hindered by definitive approaches. Therefore, to safeguard the depth and richness of interpretation of the social world of nightlife, this research shall focus on sensitizing concepts that offer “a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances” (Bryman, 2016, p. 388).

The previously described difference between definitive and sensitizing concepts is especially important to the present research as it seeks to explore the subjective experiences of Rotterdam artists with regards to nightlife and career development. These experiences are by nature difficult to express in an objective manner as they are more so rooted in subjective feelings. Therefore, the theory offered in the theoretical framework will be beneficial in providing a “general sense of reference” for the research where the authentic experiences of the participating artists are likely to differ from one another.

As previously stated, Bryman identifies five areas of emphasis within qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). The first point is “seeing through the eyes of the people being studied”. This study aimed to comprehend the influence of nightlife on the career development of young artists in Rotterdam. In order to do so, the researcher focused on understanding the perspectives and experiences of the diverse cultural activities involved, as highlighted by Bryman’s five areas of emphasis for qualitative research. By ‘seeing through the eyes’ of the participants, the social realm could be understood from their perspective rather than assuming their incapability to create their own reflections (Bryman, 2016, p. 399). To uncover the attributed meaning to the environment of nightlife by the participants, the researcher actively put oneself in their shoes and adopted their perspective.

The second point of emphasis in qualitative research is context. To gain a comprehension of the participant perspectives and experiences of nightlife of Rotterdam artists, it is most fruitful to gain contextual understanding of the behavior and opinions described by the participants. This supports sensemaking of behavior that might seem strange, irrational or negligence to individuals outside of those particular contexts.

The third point of emphasis is the identification and explanation of processes. Nightlife experiences and artist’s career development are two social processes that are continually prone to shifts as attendance demographic and the geographical locations of nightlife venues in Rotterdam change. Therefore, while researching these topics, attention was paid to the processes of emergence. Hence, qualitative semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviewing were used to gain information on the “processes leading up to or following on from an event” (Bryman, 2016, p. 402).

The fourth point of emphasis, as outlined by Bryman (2016), is the flexibility and lack of structure in qualitative research which enlarges the opportunity to uncover authentic perspectives of the research participants (Bryman, 2016, p. 403). In the present research, it

was important to limit the structure of the interviews to obtain insight into topics and processes that initially may have been overseen by the researcher. As the present research focuses on the experiences of Rotterdam artists in nightlife and how they perceive its effects on their artistic career, focus was put on their beliefs and perspectives as those hold value, not the questions of the researcher.

Last, the fifth point of focus is the development of “concepts and theory as outcomes of the research process.” Through focussing on sensitizing concepts instead of on definitive ones, a deeper understanding of the social world being studied can be attained. This understanding, rooted in the subjective experiences and perspectives from the empirical data obtained has the potential of developing new concepts.

### 3.3 Pitfalls Qualitative Research

Qualitative research has inherent challenges that would be valuable to address, such as the risk of subjectivity. Researchers could draw too much on their personal views and relationships with the participants which leads to bias (Bryman, 2016, p. 405). With that, the researcher’s personal characteristics have the plausibility of influencing their interpretation of the acquired interview data. For example, the researchers' own age, gender identity and personal experience could all affect their manner of interpretations (Bryman, 2016, p. 405).

With that, it is important for social researchers to be aware of their role as active interpreters who cannot switch off their interpretations of the world around them. Henceforth, this research acknowledges this work to be interpretative while simultaneously aiming for impartiality in regards to the participants’ interests through keeping an open mind to different perspectives and experiences than one’s own and reflecting on the plausible motivations for the participants to bring exactly those perspectives and experiences up.

Another notable challenge of qualitative research is fairness and partiality. Here, the researcher must be sure to take on a neutral perspective and ensure their participant sample is diverse enough to obtain a range of experiences and perspectives. As the researcher is a 24 year old woman who has been an active part of Rotterdam's cultural sector and nightlife scene for the past five years, fairness and partiality can only be obtained by the active effort to distance oneself from the opinions and relations created through their own experiences and instead taking on a standpoint of neutrality. The next challenge of qualitative research is that of the replicability of the study and generalization of results. As for qualitative research findings, the main aim is "to generalize to theory rather than to populations" (Bryman, 2016, p. 406). It is not the case that if participant 1 states that nightlife is not influential to their creative career development, that nightlife in general is not beneficial to anyone. If participant 1 argues that nightlife is not beneficial at all, the researcher must in turn examine their findings with the selected theory and consider whether it's beneficial to adjust. For this study the aim is to uncover elaborate responses on the opinions and experiences in regards to nightlife's influence on the participants' creative careers, which are by nature subjective. Therefore, these subjective findings can be a starting point for a broader theory but are still far from being generalisable across the entirety of Rotterdam. Thus, qualitative research is a viable strategy for obtaining a varied and widespread impression of both the experience of nightlife and its possible influence on the career development of Rotterdam's artists

Hereby, an overview of qualitative research challenges has been offered. Validity and reliability are less suitable criteria for qualitative research as qualitative research is utilized to uncover subjective meanings and opinions of different actors and is characterized by interpretivism and pragmatism (Bryman, 2016). Even though the information obtained is allowed to be imperfect it carries value nevertheless. Therefore, more suitable criteria are comprehensive understanding of the wider context of the research issue, including diverse

perspectives and experiences and extending the understanding of the subject (Drost, 2019).

Therefore, qualitative research is a viable strategy for obtaining a varied and extensive impression of both the experience and perspectives on nightlife and its possible influence on the career development of Rotterdam's artists.

### 3.4 Application

For this study, semi-structured interviews were selected as the primary data collection method. Preparatory to the conduction of interviews, a theoretical framework was created through extensive research. Following from this framework, a research question was established. Based on the theoretical framework and the developed research question an interview guide was created which aimed to leave space for the participants to bring up interesting points and allow for the conversation to flow naturally. As the research question looks into how nightlife could influence the career development of artists, the interview guide was divided into three topic areas that each delved into an important part of the research question. First, the career of the artists, where questions were aimed at gaining information on their creative process, how the artists acquire jobs and collaboration and what skills they deem important in regards to their career and overcoming obstacles. The importance of networking in regards to the career development of artists was an anticipated result informed by the first subchapter of the theoretical framework (Potts et. al., 2008). With that, the theoretical framework delves into the obstacles in the CI labour market and the AEP skills needed to overcome said obstacles (Bridgstock et. al., 2015; Comunian & England, 2020; Hanson, 2021). As such, the goal was to gain insight in the career path of the participating artists and to uncover the importance of their network and AEP skills without the use of leading questions. Second, the artist's preferences and motivation to attend specific nightlife activities was questioned and informed by the second subchapter of the theoretical framework

which delves into the economic and social aspects of nightlife and its potential to shape and sustain communities (Anderson, 2009; Calafat et. al., 2003; Elshater & Abusaade, 2022; Fasche, 2017). The smaller third section of the interview guide delved into the importance of location informed by the social production system, (Currid, 2007; Nofre, 2021). Throughout the interviews, several techniques as identified in Bryman (2016) were used to guarantee that the interviewees were comfortable and felt encouraged to offer an expansive response. These interview techniques consist of asking both direct and indirect questions, asking probing and interpreting questions while also leaving silences (Bryman, 2016). To ensure the accuracy of the data collection, both notes were taken during the interviews and the full interviews were all recorded using a phone audio recorder. To safeguard reliability, the interviews were reviewed and transcribed directly after which the transcriptions were cross-checked with the original recording to maintain accuracy. With that, to ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used for all interviewees and access to data was solely available for the main researchers and supervisor.

### 3.5 Methods of Data Analysis

A deductive approach was taken and qualitative coding through a thematic analysis distilled the data into findings. Here, the theoretical framework aided the process of separating the data, i.e. interview quotes into factions. Following the Aronson (1995, p. 2) who states “thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behavior”. In order to arrive at themes, recurring patterns and contrasts of the attitudes, perspectives and actions in regards to nightlife and the artist's career development were identified. The transcripts of the interview were uploaded in ATLAS.ti, a coding tool that allows for convenient coding and grouping and offers overview of the codes based on interviewee, quotation or codes. This allowed for insight to be gained throughout the coding process as

quotations were organized based on their assigned code. The initial round of coding adhered codes close to the meaning of the interview statement. After having coded most interviews, patterns started to appear and code groups were formed based on broader themes which resulted in 83 codes which after reviewing were distilled into 75 broader codes. These broad codes were reviewed and reworked based on similarity in effect on the career development of the artists and were grouped into sub themes which were then merged into the main themes of 1) Nightlife as network facilitator, 2) Knowledge exchange and 3) Community, safe spaces and the relation to location. The ways in which these findings are related to the broader theoretical framework are shown in table 1. In the appendix a coding tree can be found to illustrate this process. With the ontological and epistemological foundations of the present thesis having been situated in chapter 2 and 3, the results of the research question and the subsequent analysis of its scholarly relevance will be unpacked next.

**Table 1**

A table offering an overview of the findings at their relation to the theoretical framework.  
(Source: elaboration of the author).

Nightlife supporting artist's career development through:	Description	Literature
Network facilitation	Social interaction practices in nightlife used by artists to form and sustain networks, enlarge their social capital and job opportunities.	Richards and Wilson, 2004 Rodrigues & Franco, 2020 Ponzini & Rossi, 2010 Potts et. al., 2008 McRobbie, 2002 Allen et. al., 2012
Knowledge exchange	Knowledge exchange between the artists via observation, advice and sharing facilities and know-how.	Calafat et. al., 2003 Dijksterhuis, 2008 Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982 Jeffres, Bracken, Jian & Casey, 2009 Hanson, 2021
Providing location bound safe spaces	Over time trust is built in a certain nightlife venue which becomes a safe space, this increases the likeliness of unplanned encounters, one's comfort to express themselves and evolve their artistic skills	Molho, 2019 Elshater and Abusaada, 2022, Nofre, 2021 Anderson, 2009 Currid, 2007 Currid and Williams, 2010 Cabras & Mount, 2017

## 4. Results and Discussion

This chapter will discuss the results of the conducted interviews. Overall, the themes are in line with the theoretical framework provided in chapter two. The results will be discussed via



the themes of: 1) Nightlife as network facilitator, 2) Knowledge exchange and 3) Providing location bound safe spaces.

## 4.1 The Social Nexus: Nightlife's Influence on Creating and Nurturing Networks

This first subchapter of the results section will delve into the social nature of the career of artists and the ways in which nightlife offers a fertile ground in regards to the creation and nourishment of their respective networks. Throughout the interviews, several outcomes of networking were brought up by the interviewees which the upcoming section will discuss; meeting new people, nurturing existing connections, the importance of spontaneous run-ins and the ways in which genuine connections have the potential to lead to collaborations or paid jobs. As stated in chapter 2 and affirmed by the participants, nightlife offers a fertile ground in regards to the creation and nourishment of the artists' networks. Distilling their responses when questioned about their rationale for attending nightlife, all participants pointed to the social, informal networking as a main benefit. According to the participants, creating new connections comes from spontaneous moments where you discuss the event with a stranger as this is a common topic for both strangers to feel comfortable talking about. Often, the new connections are created through a shared interest in a certain cultural good, be that what is on the program that night or something else that they talk about at the nightlife venue. With that, there is also the option to be introduced to new people through existing connections. As Frederique, a visual artists, poet says when asked about her entrance into Rotterdam's punk scene:

“It is nightlife, at places where you come for your recreation and actually what I did a lot as well is to just start talking to a stranger. And then eventually you will walk into

them again and then they're like hey you once told me about what you do, how's that going? Are you still doing that? Or it's more like hey I'm going to this event next week, do you want to come? And yeah, that is kind of how I built up a network eventually that you will run into at the certain places you attend.”

The nightlife environment functions as a facilitator of social interactions and offers opportunities for personal development. Artists can increase their social capital by establishing these new connections which subsequently enhances the possibilities for collaborations and job opportunities. By actively engaging with nightlife, artists can develop and strengthen the skills of ‘opportunity recognition’ and ‘networking’ which are two of the four crucial entrepreneurial skills for artists discussed in chapter 2 (Hanson, 2021). Besides fostering new connections, the nourishment of existing connections through nightlife further strengthens the artist’s social capital and offers similar opportunities in regards to the development of ‘opportunity recognition’ and ‘networking’ skills (Hanson, 2021.) Nurturing these relationships happens through casual socialization processes where the participants describe having a chat with someone they are somewhat familiar with. The importance of ‘being there’ or showing your face is mentioned as well as it is a reminder for others that you are still active in your creative work. Nora, an aspiring fashion designer who works in retail mentions this process and the pressure that comes with it:

“With the creative scene, it's very much nurtured in the nightlife. That's where I see these people in real life and get to interact with them. Like a lot of these people go out to the same parties as me, so then I get to see them in the toilet somewhere and I'm like, Hey, I know you....That's why it's a hectic and busy lifestyle, you cannot skip and invite because if you're not there, you'll be forgotten”

Although simple, these interactions are pivotal to their career development as artists do not have a conventional workflow or office where they can share their work progress or colleagues can offer their help. By showing up to nightlife activities, the artists remind the actors in their networks they are still active and update each other on their recent creative endeavors. In doing so, by sharing their current projects they create openings for other actors in their network to offer help. With that, by listening to others they have the potential to spot new job opportunities. The spontaneous or unplanned nature of the creation of new and the nourishment of existing connections is emphasized throughout the interviews. Although the artist's intention can be to connect with others during their nightly activities, they are never fully certain who they might encounter. As the artist's networks contain connections that might not be strong enough to set up a planned meeting outside of nightlife it becomes important to encounter these actors spontaneously over a ciggie, a beer or even at the toilet. Sometimes a conversation does not need to be had, a wink from across the room or a smile and a hug goes a long way in regards to reconnecting:

“I mean, I think it's about the rapport that you're building with people. Like the relationship. Like, even if you're not besties, even if you're not even necessarily friends. But I think a big part of it is also just being there, Right? Of people seeing that you're out here, that you fucking exist. Like that alone can be a pretty difficult thing to do as an artist.”

Being present allows for these bonding moments to arise as the presence of a person at a certain event provides background information on their interests and lowers that initial boundary of starting a conversation. Being there at the same event signals you might be like-minded people and sharing an interest could give rise to a new genuine connection.

Networking in nightlife is more so based on natural flow and contributes to the overall feeling of community, as Ava, a performance artist, event organizer highlights:

“So, I feel like there's kind of a corporate type of networking. And then, let's call it a human type of networking for me is really this thing where I'm like, we are humans, we are communal animals. Our strength lies in community. Like even if ... you look at science, everything is building on the shoulders of giants like we have always and throughout humanity progressed through our community, through knowledge sharing, through resource sharing. And I feel like that is what, for me, the human type of networking is not necessarily or primarily like you're trying to sell your work itself. It can be an aspect of it, definitely. So, if you talk to people and then figure out, if it comes up naturally, cool. But for me, the human type of networking is to really just like get to know more people in the like geographical space that you live in”

These genuine connections in turn have the potential to lead to collaborations with others or even paid jobs. The connections are based on genuine mutual understanding, respect and appreciation. In regards to collaborations, Job, a 27 year old videographer and event-organizer, mentions they would ask someone they know and trust over someone who has done great work but are not personally connected with.

“I have asked people to work with me on a job that might not have the best skills, but I enjoy working with them. In the end, I prefer having a nice workflow with someone and creating something beautiful together over hiring someone that I don't like, even if their skills set is way better. If I don't like being in one room with them or discussing things together does not go easy, I'll be there the whole day with a shitty feeling. So I think that trust translates into good and beautiful work, that way after finishing the job we leave with a feeling of satisfaction and we tell each other hey we should do this

more often. I prefer that instead of after the job feeling like yeah we made great work but i didn't really like the way we worked together, communicated or it didn't flow. I'd rather have my own little group of people around me, people that I trust”

Through these responses it becomes clear that the level of an artist's skills is only as important as how well they are connected. With that, when making a decision who to invite for a collaboration, the genuine reciprocal relationship based on mutual appreciation, understanding and respect outweighs one's skillset. This further emphasizes the pivotal role nightlife and its networking opportunities as the career of the artist depends more on these connections than their creative skillset.

## 4.2 The Art of Knowledge Exchange: How Nightlife Fosters Shared Expertise and Unveils New Opportunities for Artists

Besides opportunities to develop 'networking' and 'opportunity recognition skills', nightlife also harbors inspiration and knowhow. Linking back to the previous section, a strong wide spanning network is beneficial in regards to transfer of valuable information and expertise, though it's not a prerequisite for knowledge exchange. The following section will address the ways in which artists learn from each other through nightlife.

Most interviewees mention nightlife as a big source of inspiration. Bianca, a visual artist, is in the last years of her creative studies and recently joined the volunteer team at Roodkapje. Roodkapje is a cultural venue that holds space for creative experiments and volunteers fill the supporting roles around exhibitions, concerts and workshops. As she says:

“I can be around other people, see how other people have like what their artistic vision and process is. So maybe I can also learn from them because I feel you can learn a lot

from other people. Um, I feel just like pushing myself to be around these people is going to help me into that...I feel it [Roodkapje] is bringing the artists that are around Rotterdam into a collective, into that safe space where they can experiment and where other artists can, you know, just go on stage or do their exhibitions. And for me, it's really like a place where all artists meet each other, do their creative stuff and so on, and it's just like a beautiful community. It's like, let's help each other because I think if you volunteer, you do help each other.”

Inspiration is derived not only from the environment around them but from the people present as well. Seeing others in their network attain a goal is inspiring and alleviates discomfort with the uncertainty present in the CI as it shows an example of a plausible career growth pathway. Other people's process, attitude and work are described by interviewees as a source of information and knowledge. Even though the knowledge is not directly transferred, solely seeing the ways in which others operate is teachable and career choice affirming. When asked how their community contributes to their career development, Timmy, a 24 year old hip hop dancer, visual artist and aspiring tattoo artist states:

“I think a big part of continuing to pursue this [ artist career ] is confidence and ego and, you know, self-trust and self knowing and self- belief. And I think that's not something you can learn through technical things or websites. That's something I get from the community around me. And when I see people achieve certain things, I tell myself like, Oh, like I could also get there, you know? Um, and that pushes me to keep working on developing my style and figuring out what it is that I want to do. Um, and also just seeing people doing what they love and like not being afraid to take that leap and going into a creative sphere as your career? Yeah, I think without seeing other

people doing that, I would never have the guts to believe that that's something that was accessible for me as well”

Nightlife supports the career development of artists via knowledge and expertise exchange, as affirmed by the interview exploration into the influential factors that support their growth as an artist and the development of their careers. This exchange occurs in several ways. First, the affirming effect of seeing other actors of the artists’ network work, process or attitude. Given the hampering labour market condition of the CI, artists encounter obstacles that hinder the development of their careers. Consequently, these conditions can instill a sense of self-doubt around their decision to pursue their artistic career. Engaging with nightlife and the cultural activities present within it, allows for the artists to perceive the process, attitude and work of their fellow artists. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, the possibility of a ‘breakthrough’ is a main motivation for the artists to keep working under such conditions (Taylor and Littleton, 2008). With that, the possibility arises to develop the arts entrepreneurship skill of ‘comfort with uncertainty’ (Hanson, 2021). Therefore, seeing other artist’s work, process or attitude is valuable when it comes to affirming the artist’s career decision.

Besides the above discussed knowledge exchange through observing, knowledge is also exchanged verbally. Through questioning the process of creation and the ways in which challenges are overcome, the participants mention their network to step in with advice when they discuss an issue or something they have been struggling with. Some interviewees mention that referrals are important knowledge exchanges too. While working as a sous chef to sustain themselves, they were dreaming of becoming a tattoo artist. Thus far they had been a visual artist and designing tattoo flashes, but it was not until recently that they dared to share their aspirations. During a night out at BIT, a club in the industrial area of Rotterdam

west, they bumped into their colleague. Through a casual conversation, Timmy shared their aspiration, and quickly the ball started rolling:

“My boss, who is the head chef, who’s roommates with a tattoo artist. We saw each other at BIT club and were just chatting... They're like Yo, we're hiring someone. He's a tattoo artist. You should really talk to him since you're trying to get into this. Like, you know, it would be really interesting for you. Yeah. And then he came and we just got along pretty organically, so that was super chill. And I told him that I wanted to do this and he said, okay, I Got you, Mom. Let's do it.”

Discussing their dream of being a tattoo artist with their colleague in the informal setting of nightlife led to them being connected to a tattoo artist willing to help. The knowledge exchange has the potential to transverse the initial two discussion partners as contacts are shared when one cannot help the other personally. This is often done based on how genuine the connection is. This way the network broadens and strengthens itself simultaneously. Here, the arts entrepreneurial skill of “opportunity recognition” is strengthened when other actors in one’s network spot opportunities for them (Hanson, 2021). If an artist’s confidence or self-belief is down, taking action themselves to develop their career further can be challenging. However, their network will recognize the opportunities for them if they are comfortable enough to discuss their career goals with others in their network they are genuinely connected with.

The most hands-on way of knowledge exchange is teaching each other acquired skills and know-how. Often, facilities and resources are shared with each other to attain a shared goal between the actors. Ava, as an event organizer and programmer sheds light on how facility sharing is coordinated between the different actors involved:



“I have some friends, I have like five DJs that are doing a good job and that have also played in the past, some of them at my parties. And then I hit them up. I check their availability. We have a separate WhatsApp group where we start organizing like, you know, who brings what equipment.”

Caitlyn, a 21 year old visual artist and aspiring DJ works as a barhead in club Poing to sustain herself. Poing is one of the main alternative yet very accessible nightlife venues in the center of Rotterdam. By working as a barhead in a nightclub, she is in physical proximity to the facilities and networks of valuable actors she needs to become a DJ. She mentions that the people in her network with the required skill set were willing to teach her one on one, letting them use their gear to practice with. Subsequently, it was through their same network that she was also offered her first performance opportunity.

“The people who are programming there, they're friends of mine. They can first of all teach you and also give you a little advice. And so they, if they know that I've recently started like fucking around a bit with deejaying and they'll say like oh there you go... It just came to being also because I work at the web radio, there's always moments where like, I have time to actually use the gear and practice after a shift or something”

Here, knowledge and facilities are shared between actors with similar career goals. Even though there is an oversupply of artists leading to more competition, the artists do not experience competitive atmosphere in their own network. Caitlyn states:

“They don't act in a way that like, Oh, we're in competition. It's more like, let's work together. We're all in the same thing. We're not going to hate each other because we do the same thing. Not at all. And most of them are friends.

As discussed in the theoretical framework the competition in the CI for artists is high (Bridgstock et. al., 2015). Although the competition is indeed present, the atmosphere experienced by the interviewees is not competitive. When an artist has found a supportive network, their network partners are willing to teach them their know-how, even if their career goals are similar. The expectation of and trust in mutual support and understanding allows for a friendly community based atmosphere. Overall, this section showed how the artist's career development is supported through the knowledge and expertise exchange with others of their network. While this socio-cultural exchange is essential for the career development of artists, the specific role of spatiality cannot be ignored. The next subchapter illuminates the significance of the spatial dimension.

### 4.3 Beyond Address: Uncovering The influence of Location on Safe Spaces and Community Ties

Physical space can hold opportunities for creatives to connect, it is the quality of being reliable and trustworthy, of that socially produced space which gives it the value of safety and potential for experimentation, innovation and expression.

During the interviews the participants were asked about their night time activities and the reason behind their choice of nocturnal activity. In response, the participants expressed their love for alternative spaces and shared their disinterest in commercial venues as contrasting illustrations. For the male identifying participants, their disinterest was mostly linked to the type of music played, where the female and non-binary identifying participants emphasized their discomfort and feelings of unsafety around the prevalent hookup culture present in commercial venues. Nicole, a 25 year old fashion designer and event decor designer who works on creating inclusive nocturnal safe spaces highlights one of her

experiences with commercial nightlife that exemplifies the feelings on unsafety shared by the other participants:

“In this case we were with a group of girls, it was as if hyenas were circling us, constantly waiting for a moment that someone is vulnerable. They will wait for the moment to get you, whether it’s going to the bar or one of us going to the toilet. And maybe they (men) do not realise it, because it’s part of that culture, but they are extremely intimidating and disturbing, they will ruin your night. They ruined that night for me”

Feeling safe in the nocturnal setting enables oneself to express freely. When asked about the criteria leading to their selection of safe nightly activities, the participants highlighted several factors. The expected audience plays an overarching crucial role in the artist’s decision making process as their experience depends on the social dynamics with others. In response to questions about how this audience expectation is shaped, several factors were mentioned. These included the door policy, which relates to the rules in regards to admission to the venue. With that, the code of conduct which prescribes expected behavioral and social norms and was mentioned by participants as a trustworthy tool to gauge whether that event is a safe space for them. Timmy exemplifies their decision making process:

“I mean the bouncer policies are a big one. If I know that a space has proper security, that they highlight safety and self-expression and that boundaries will be respected. I already know, okay, at least the people who are hosting this event, show the values that I share and it's facilitating me having a good time ... So, I think having those good door policies, even AMEN parties (alternative event collective), with the briefings when you walk in they ask have you been here before? Are you familiar with the rules? You know, I think that is a pretty good indicator for me that the kind of people who are

coming here will probably be the kind of people who are also aligned with these values.”

Overall, these tools signal the venue's safety and are determined by the event organization or collective who guide the social dynamics. Participants mention that having a connection with the people involved in the organization of the event lowers the barrier of attending as they have a certain level of trust in their connections. In short, alternative nightlife activities with the correct door policy and code of conduct are expected by the participants to attract people similar to themselves with whom they can socialize and express their creative ideas and projects. Initial visits to a particular venue will turn into regular visits that allow trust in the venue to be built over time.

“ I think people go there because they trust that event. They trust either that the music is going to be good, they trust that it's going to be a safe space, or they know that a certain kind of person that they like is going to pull up and or like over time, you go to the same thing again and again and you realize like, yeah, I do feel comfortable here. And I think if that wasn't facilitated there would not be all of these little run ins happening where I do end up seeing a particular kind of person like often at the same kind of venue. Otherwise it would just be kind of scattered and I think it would be really difficult to have those interactions.”

With that, four of the ten interviewees addressed their introverted nature as an obstacle to their artistic career development. Comfortable spaces where more actors of their own community are present gives rise to a comfortable setting to express their creative thoughts and ideas. Sjors, a 28 year old sound engineer, producer and performer highlights how networking is challenging due to their introverted nature:

“I think that because I am a bit more introverted sometimes, that networking is not necessarily the most important thing for me personally, more so because networking itself is something that stands in the way of me getting multiple bookings, because the more you get seen, the more people recognize you.”

Nicole, as mentioned before, works amongst other things on creating nocturnal safe spaces. Her own experiences as an introverted artist and difficulties in promoting herself to new people have sparked this idea. She mentions how seeing certain actors multiple times lowers the barrier to start a conversation:

“I just find it difficult to get to know new people, taking that initiative, because I have some anxiety. It’s hard for me to “praise myself into the heavens” [Dutch proverb] and I just need to get used to people. Then eventually I will feel comfortable around them and open myself up a bit more, then I can really be myself”

In turn, these community spaces could increase their confidence and support them outside the community spaces in a way where it's less daunting to overcome their initial introverted tendencies. Trust in the safety at a specific nightlife venue is built on the reliability in regards to which collective organizes, the door policy and code of conduct they use to create a safe nocturnal environment. This goes beyond the physical address, it is the collective memories at that place that makes it a trusted space of community. Trust is mentioned by the interviewees as the base for creating a safe space to express and experience and community building. As Ava states concisely:

“For me, primarily a safe space is or starts with trust. Um, a lot of trust.”

Once trust is established and the venue has become part of the artist’s nocturnal agenda, it increases the likelihood of unplanned encounters and spontaneous interactions with other

actors who trust that venue. In this way, nightlife venues become trusted ‘third places’ for artists to come together, knowing that the expected crowd will be present. These specific locations provide a comfortable safe space guided by door policy and a code of conduct upheld by the organizing collective and the artistic network actors. This reiteration of the nocturnal network solidifies the role of nightlife as a facilitator of social interaction and collaboration among artists as it serves as the anchor of the artists’ interconnected networks. These safe spaces, as conceptualized by the participants, where one’s community is present allows for an atmosphere of experimentation. Throughout the interviews, several artists called for a space for experimentation as it's an integral part of their artistic development. They describe such spaces as multidisciplinary where the programming allows for any type of creative expression and for the community to connect. Job, when asked about what he misses in the Rotterdam nightlife scape expressed the following:

“I think that we just need several places where it’s possible to experiment with what is present. Is it a nightclub? Is it a restaurant? Is it a community garden? Is it a theater? yes, yes yes and yes it’s all of those things and the combination of them.”

This need for experimentation is reiterated by Sjors who explicitly states that experimenting is crucial for their artistic development:

“When it comes to artistic development and self-exploration, for example developing your own sounds then a bit of researching, experiencing and experimenting is crucial.”

The exploration and development of the artist’s creative style and skills can be taken as a part of their career development, as it shapes their artistic identity, expands their repertoire and enlarges their plausible professional job opportunities. Accordingly, safe spaces where community actors are present, allow for new experiences, inspirations and for the artists

themselves to develop their artistic style further. However, these experimental safe spaces are difficult to foster and even harder to sustain. Caitlyn who is active on the organization side of nightlife and works as barrhead in Poing was able to give some insight into the difficulty of facilitating and sustaining experimental safe spaces:

“I think it’s the organizations and how the permits and subsidies work. Because of money, subsidies and permits they cannot just try something new, or risk the chance to experiment because they cannot afford missing a night of income. New concepts need the space to grow from four to 10 to twenty to 50 visitors and so on. But because of these subsidy restrictions and income issues there is no space to try new things and experiment and that’s a shame.”

Programming new or experimental events allow for inspiration and innovation for the artists but it brings uncertainty around income for the venue owner. As most cultural nightlife venues work with the municipality via subsidies and permits, the experimental space is hard to facilitate.

Beyond the social and spatial dimensions of nightlife, the interviewees show a critical awareness around the decline in nightlife venues for them to attend. They have seen their safe space change management in order to stay afloat or even close their doors in the past years and are aware it can and will happen again soon. These physical manifestations of their communities of informal networking and knowledge exchange are struggling to stay intact.

“I feel comfortable in a space because of the space itself, yes but also because of the people who are there. For instance, I used to feel really comfortable at mono [alternative nightlife space] because I knew a lot of people there. So it felt really supportive. And now that management is changing, it's not the same atmosphere when when I go there”

Some interviewees who next to their creative practice are also active on the organizing side of nightlife offer an interesting insight. Amongst them is Leonard, who is a music producer and DJ and works as an event organizer at club BIT. He mentions how the lack of trusted spaces results in a lack of creatives wanting to attend. Where one would expect the few places suitable for the artists' social undertakings to be in high demand, the opposite seems to occur.

“It's kind of ironic when you think about it because like going back to what I said earlier, there's less spaces you would expect that now, it's easier to get people in. Yeah, but no, actually, it's not. I think that's also because there's this huge part that just doesn't go out as much anymore after they notice adjustment or have interactions that they might not have expected at their usual spot.”

Once the trust that had been built around a certain venue in regards to the programming, the people present and the door policy is breached, cracks appear in the community as the actors of the community now have a difficult time finding each other. Sjors has lived in Rotterdam for the past 10 years and has seen several trusted nightlife venues disappear. When asked how this affects their creative process they stated the following:

“What I notice is that a lot of the people that I hang out with find it [the changing or closing of safe spaces] hard to deal with. Some of them have even moved. These are people that are inspirations for me so when I lose those people in my immediate surroundings, yeah next to the connections I also lose a lot of inspiration and that has quite a big impact”

The artists lose their community and network connections who inspire them and around who they felt safe to express their creative ideas and thoughts. As discussed in the theoretical framework of chapter 2 and addressed by the interviewees throughout, nightlife driven social networks are not solely created through their physical representations but especially by the



diverse array of networks it houses, i.e. networks nocturnal sociability (Nofre, 2021). These networks of nocturnal sociability are built on collective emotions, memories and experiences which the participants expressed as giving rise to trust in particular nightlife venues' programming, the people present and the door policy in place. According to the participants, it is these factors that in turn contribute to the comfortability, safety and sense of belonging which transform a network into a community. The physical manifestations of these networks of nocturnal sociability are the fragile foundations of the social production system which is pivotal for the career development of the artists. This is because those are the spaces where they share their new ideas, create new opinions and discuss these opinions with others in their network. Without this social production system, there would be no way for the artists to experience, share and be inspired by other's work, process or attitude. With that, the earlier discussed benefits of networking for the career development of artists would fall away in its totality. These communities are in their own right crucial for the career development of artists as the safety and comfortability experienced offers the space and opportunity to develop all AEP skills; Opportunity Recognition, Arts Leadership - relates to (self) management and (self) decisiveness, Comfort with Uncertainty - "concerning ambiguity and a mindset of possibility amidst risk" and Networking (Hanson, 2021, p. 318). A stable community contributes to the career development of the artists as the expectations of being understood lowers the barrier of sharing one's creative ideas that are usually personal to the artists.

## 5. Conclusion

The unstructured yet crucial networking base of the artist's career development has been researched to uncover the role nightlife and its venues have in regards to creating and sustaining networks. The present study posed the main question: how does nightlife influence the career developments or artists at the beginning of their career? This research has shown

the multitude of ways in which nightlife influences the career development of artists; nightlife's influence on creating and nurturing networks, nightlife as a space to share knowledge and expertise and the importance of community as a safe space with its physical manifestation in specific nightlife venues serving as an anchor for artist communities to persevere.

The main focus of creative city and network studies have been focused on the role of creativity instead of focussing on the intricate fragile workings of networks between artists (Rodrigues and Franco, 2020). With that, the research on creative cities and networks has its motivation in creativity-led urban regeneration which has detrimental effects on the artists themselves. The consequences of such fixation on the economic value and pecuniary gain through tourism and spill-over effects are noticeable for the artists as alterations of socio-economic composition of their artistic habitat, which ultimately dissolves their nocturnal networks of sociability. This is because it overlooks the importance of collaborations and networks which are pivotal to the career development of artists. Therefore the present research explored the genesis and workings of the unstructured and informal networking practices that serve as a base for early career artists. The present research insights could offer valuable insights as especially for the artists "mechanisms of social closure" or exclusionary network practices are hampering their development. As nightlife serves as a "third place" it holds the potential to connect and propel the establishment of social capital. While the literature mentions the importance of social aspects, there is a lack of attentive focus on the particularities of nightlife aspects and its subjective influence on the artistic workforce. The overly present economic perspective proves suitable as a base from which the present thesis adds the social fundamental aspect for artists, which is in line with Currid's (2007) theory on the "social production system". This perspective has often been undervalued due to its situational and subjective position as it is based on the positionalities and

perspectives of artists obtained through interviews. Besides this critique, the concept of “social production system” deemed itself suitable for the present research as it demonstrates the symbiotic relation between location, cultural production and the artistic workforce which gives rise to unplanned encounters and spontaneity inherent to the fragile social network system.

Qualitative research methods were employed to obtain an understanding of the experiences and perceptions of artists in regards to nightlife. By doing so, insight in the socio-cultural context of nightlife and its influence on the artist’s career development was retrieved. The participants sample consisted of ten artists at the beginning of their career and who work as visual artists, music producers and event organizers next to holding a part-time job in the creative and often night-time scene as well. Semi-structured interviews were conducted which proved appropriate as it left space for the participants to bring topics to the surface that were not expected. Such as the need for a safe space rooted in community that gives rise to experimentation, an activity valuable to the development of artistic style and arts entrepreneurial skills. The present research has several limitations that should be discussed. First, as the sample group for the semi-structured interviews was on the smaller side and rooted in the geographical space of Rotterdam. As the findings are specific to this particular context the findings will not be generalizable. With that, the study aimed to uncover personal perspectives and experiences of the artists to argue for the importance and vitality of nightlife instead of focusing on the policy making aspect that could overcome the problem of declining nightlife. Furthermore, as the research progressed a narrower focus became clear through the conduction of semi-structured interviews. Although this enabled in-depth investigation into the specificities of the influence of nightlife on the career development of artists, it may restrict the general broadness of the research. Further research could focus on expanding the scope by including a broader range of participants, including artists with established careers,

and including policy making suggestions to offer plausible solutions. In general, further research could enrich the understanding of the intricate relationship between nightlife, safe spaces, networks and artistic career development. Overall, the present study contributes to the existing literature by exploring the unsystematic social fundament of the career development of artists. The results found that nightlife supports career development by: 1) fostering and nurturing networks, 2) offering the option of knowledge exchange through observation, advice or hands-on sharing on expertise and know-how and 3) offering communities a trusted safe space to come together to explore new ideas and experiment. With that, the concept of safe spaces has been taken seriously and emphasizes the subjective experience of spaces and the importance of such spaces for artists. Additionally, the ways in which trust in certain spaces contributes to the establishment and beneficial aspects of networks has emphasized the relationship between social and spatial dynamics and the role it plays in forming artistic professional relationships.

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## Appendix I - Interview Table

<b>Code</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Creative Type</b>	<b>Current Job</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Length</b>
R1	Bianca	Visual artist	Museum guide	Face-to-Face	15-04-2023	1 hr 35 min
R2	Job	Videographer	Event Organiser/Programmer	Face-to-Face	17-04-2023	59 min
R3	Frederique	Visual artist and Poet	Bar	Face-to-Face	18-04-2023	1hr 09 min
R4	Leonard	Music producer and DJ	Event Organiser/Programmer	Face-to-Face	24-04-2023	1 hr 11 min
R5	Sjors	Music producer, performance artist	Music producer	Face-to-Face	25-04-2023	52 min
R6	Caitlyn	Visual artist and DJ	Barhead, Event Organiser	Face-to-Face	26-04-2023	53 min
R7	Timmy	Visual and Tattoo artist	Sous-chef	Face-to-Face	26-04-2023	45 min
R8	Nicole	Stylist and visual artist	Bridal stylist	Face-to-Face	01-05-2023	35 min
R9	Nora	Designer	Retail	Face-to-Face	01-05-2023	40 min
R10	Ava	Performance artist	Event organiser/Programmer	Face-to-Face	02-05-2023	1 hr 16 min

# Appendix II - Consent Form

## **CONSENT REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH**

### **FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, CONTACT:**

[Student's name, address, email address, and telephone number]

### **DESCRIPTION**

You are invited to participate in a research about [topic of the study]. The purpose of the study is to understand the role of nightlife in an artist's careers.

Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to be interviewed.

In general terms,

- the questions interview will be related to nightlife and its effects of your career development
- your participation in the experiment will contribute to the existing literature on nightlife
- my observations will focus on your creative process and needs to grow your career in regards to nightlife

Unless you prefer that no recordings are made, I will use a tape recorder for the interview.

You are always free not to answer any particular question, and/or stop participating at any point.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS** [alternatives A and B are presented below, but there may be further variations]

A. As far as I can tell, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. Yet, you are free to decide whether I should use your name or other identifying information not in the study. If you prefer, I will make sure that you cannot be identified, by measures that will be taken: pseudonym.

### **TIME INVOLVEMENT**

Your participation in this study will take around 40 to 60 minutes. You may interrupt your participation at any time.

### **PAYMENTS**

There will be no monetary compensation for your participation.

### **PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS**

If you have decided to accept to participate in this project, please understand your

participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you prefer, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise, your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

### **CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS**

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact –anonymously, if you wish—  
morea@eshcc.eur.nl

### **SIGNING THE CONSENT FORM**

If you sign this consent form, your signature will be the only documentation of your identity. Thus, you DO NOT NEED to sign this form. In order to minimize risks and protect your identity, you may prefer to consent orally. Your oral consent is sufficient.

I give consent to be audiotaped during this study:

Name	Signature	Date
------	-----------	------

I prefer my identity to be revealed in all written data resulting from this study

Name	Signature	Date
------	-----------	------

This copy of the consent form is for you to keep.

# Appendix III - Interview Guide

## **Starting questions to warm up**

Could you tell me who you are and what you do?

What is your creative practice?

## **Artists career, Creative Process and Job Opportunities**

How did you start as an artist?

What does your work week look like?

What is your process in creating?

How do you get jobs?

How do you get new ideas?

How do you create new collaborations?

What do you need to grow your career?

Could you describe some activities or skills that have a positive effect on your career/ process of creation?

What are obstacles in regards to growing as an artist?

How do you learn these useful skills?

How do you meet other artists/ people?

## **Nightlife, Where, What, Why that type of activity or venue, delving into social aspect, network aspect**

Which types of nightlife activities do you take part in?

Why do you take part in nightlife activities?

Why do you take part in those activities specifically?

How does networking arise for you in the context of nightlife?

Why do you think these moments arise during nightlife activities?

How do you know about these nightlife activities?

**Location, space**

How do you think location is linked to your nightlife activities?

# Appendix IV - Coding Tree

Themes	Subthemes	Codes	
Community as a safe space	Community	Community/ sense of belonging	
		Loss sense of community	
		People influencing nightlife experience	
		Motivation to attend nightlife activity	
		Expectation of certain people present	
		Collective enjoyment	
		Motivation to grow	
		Validating artist career choice	
		Effect of self-affirmation, identity affirmation, exploration, self perception	
		Competition	
		Mutual understanding/ acknowledgement	
		Physical safe space	Space to express freely
			Space to share and express
			Need to self express
			Calling for space for experimentation
Safe space increasing confidence			
Nightlife as network facilitator	Informal networking	Trust over time	
		Informal networking/ social networking	
		Exclusion	
		Meeting new people	
		Meeting like minded people	
		Sharing interest in cultural good	
		Nightlife as a space to nurture connections	
		awareness importance of relationships	
		Networks and people> Location	
		Being there	
		People knowing you exist	
		Importance spontaneous encounter	
		Connection to collaboration	
		Creative connection to job	
		Network as supportive environment	Us knows us culture
Mutual support			
Work/ art balance			
In between/ third place			
Genuine connection			
Extravert approach selling oneself difficulty			
Self promoting			
Opinions of others			
Intimidation			
Mouth to mouth			
Knowledge exchange	Direct exchange	Knowledge exchange hands-on	
	Indirect exchange	Inspiration by other people's work	
Relation location and community networks	Nightlife decline	Inspiration by other people's process	
		Inspiration by other people's attitude	
		Career support from people in nightlife	
		Awareness nightlife decline	
		Demotivation by nightlife decline	
		Coping decline nightlife	
		Selective about nightlife activities	
		Less space	
		Hard to attract people	
		Less chances to organise/ create yourself	
		Calling for citizen relation with municipality	
		Location matters	Door policy/ Code of Conduct
			Organisations/ collective influence on nightlife experience
			Opposing commercial clubbing
			Location bound
Different norms in nightlife cultures			
Social media to find suiting event			
Escapism			
Drug use			
Proximity to others			