



Listening to the Street

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Listening to the Street – Urban Sounds in Hamburg-Altona between the “Right to the City” and the “Creativity Dispositif”

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Abstract

This study examines the complex relationship between music and cities. More specifically, it explores how, when and why distinct urban atmospheres and unique urban spaces are created through music, specific sounds or creative social practices such as busking. As Andreas Reckwitz has shown, it has become a social regime in accordance to the creativity *dispositif* to act creatively and to strive for originality and uniqueness. Busking and other creative expressions in public sphere seem to satisfy this demand, but at the same time, they also tend to symbolise practices of resistance against neo-liberal discourses. According to Reckwitz, this social aestheticisation can be observed especially in cities, for example, in neo-liberal discourses such as city marketing. To examine this ambivalent if not contradictory divide, this empirical study focuses on STAMP, an international street arts festival in Hamburg, Germany, and especially, on related music practices. It considers macrostructures, such as city policies, organisational and spatial politics of gentrification and micro-practices of creativity expressed in symbolic interactions or practices of participation, following specific sociocultural conventions. Using a mixed method research design including ethnography, surveys, qualitative interviews and soundscape analysis, this study explores the many different facets of urban sounds in the streets of Hamburg-Altona from different sociological perspectives. By considering not only different perspectives, such as those of the organisers of the festival, the city, local residents, audiences or musicians as well as cultural policies but also the sound of the festival, this study aims to answer the question whether such urban musical practices are at odds with or contribute to what Reckwitz refers to as “creativity *dispositif*” and related processes of gentrification or whether they can be related to what Henri Lefebvre has described as the “right to the city”.

Keywords: creativity *dispositif*; sound; intrinsic logic of a city; right to the city; culturalization; gentrification; Hamburg; street arts; live performing arts; festival

1. Urban Sounds in Hamburg-Altona: Introduction

Music contributes to the creation of distinct urban spaces, and, conversely, cities may become associated with a certain kind of sound. Studies examining the complex relationship between music and cities acknowledge the importance of the urban in the production, dissemination and consumption of music and, in turn, of space or the city for music practices. How, when and why music or sounds become intertwined with cities is, however, a very complex phenomenon that needs further study. Researchers agree (Barber-Kersovan et al., 2021) that spatial, economic, political, social or cultural conditions of cities affect musical practices, but it is not clear which of these have to be urban and to what extent. In other words, the question is which elements of music appear exactly as they are just because they are situated in a specific urban space? There is a variety of practices, symbols and structures that are commonly recognised as urban. These include, for example, city policies developed and applied to regulate music practices or to improve living conditions within city limits. A wide range of social interactions also only take place in urban environments. Economic hubs and networks likewise depend on urban infrastructures.

While the connection between these examples and the urban seems obvious enough, the relationship between music and the city in general and creative musical practices is more complex, especially when it comes to the creation of sounds and music unique to a given city or practices such as busking. Andreas Reckwitz's book *The Invention of Creativity* (2017 [2012])¹ demonstrates how it has become a social regime in accordance with the creativity *dispositif*² to act creatively and to strive for originality and uniqueness (p. 3). This social aestheticisation can be observed in cities, for example, in neo-liberal discourses such as city marketing and urban planning policies (Florida, 2003). Music can be a means to revive neighbourhoods, to create a distinct, perhaps even unique city image based on musical diversity or to promote social cohesion in community projects. The implementation of this political agenda often results in, to give but two examples, the festivalisation and stricter regulation of busking practices. In contrast, a wide range of musical practices, strategies, networks and initiatives have emerged in response to the neo-liberal reorganisation of urban spaces. Some of these have, for example, promoted the democratic "right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1968). Busking and other creative street arts practices have been interpreted as signs of resistance.

Music in particular and creativity in general, then, can have very different functions in urban spaces, perhaps several at the same time. To unpack some of these complexities, ambiguities and contradictions, this empirical study analyses the international street arts festival STAMP in Hamburg, Germany and related musical practices. STAMP, which takes place on a weekend in June and is part of the annual cultural festival *altonale* in Hamburg's district of Altona, provides a platform for street artists who "relate to the space and humans in their surroundings" (STAMP, 2019). It is not clear whether STAMP contributes to the aestheticisation of the city-

¹ There is a vast body of academic literature devoted to the topic of creativity, often in reference to Reckwitz (see for instance Henning, Schultheis & Thomä, 2019 or Beyes & Metelmann, 2018).

² Reckwitz thereby refers to Michel Foucault's term "dispositif" understood as a heterogeneous ensemble of discursive and non-discursive elements which function as a symbolic order regulating what is (scientifically) acceptable (or true) and what is not (or false) (Foucault, 1978, p. 124).

scape in Hamburg-Altona and whether it contributes as a festivity to processes of gentrification, a major problem in this area. The term gentrification³ is used for a process in which a diverse and, in many instances, working-class district is transformed by the influx of artists and creative individuals who are drawn to the area due to its distinct character and low rents (Naegler, 2012, p. 38). These are often followed by investors and companies, whose arrival results in higher living costs, which, in turn, forces original inhabitants to move to cheaper areas.

The process of gentrification can also be observed in the case of Hamburg-Altona, and it represents a development affecting visitors and residents in particular in the short and in the long run. To understand the impact of STAMP on this district in this respect and to examine how creative cities emerge, this study considers, on the one hand, macrostructures such as city policies or organisational and spatial politics of gentrification and, on the other hand, micro-practices of creativity, which are expressed in symbolic interactions or practices of participation following specific sociocultural conventions. Using a mixed method research design including ethnography, surveys, qualitative interviews and soundscape analysis, this study considers whether musical practices such as busking, which have often been deemed to be “outside of the system” and utilised in a fight for the “right to the city”, are at odds with or contribute to the creativity *dispositif* at this festival, which is both a community project as well as a city policy.

To answer this question, this study analyses perspectives such as those of the organisers and other people involved (local residents, audiences, artists), city and municipal policies affecting the festival and the sound of the festival. More specifically, it aims to answer the following questions: To what extent are the goals of the festival affected by and aligned with city policies? What part does the festival play in debates on and processes of gentrification? How is daily life of the residents affected by the festival? How do audiences participate in the festival? What are the reasons for musicians to perform at the festival? Is there a specific festival sound which then becomes associated with the district of Altona? What is the atmosphere at the festival and how is it created? Drawing on the insights of cultural sociology, sociology of culture and urban sociology and contextualising the questions listed above in theoretical debates about gentrification and the creativity *dispositif*, this urban music study provides new perspectives on the complex relationship between cities and music, showing that while creativity at and in the context of the festival is closely linked to processes of gentrification, some contradictory spaces and practices undermine this view on creativity.

³ In contrast to this specific understanding of the concept of gentrification focused on its relations to creative practices followed in this paper, a more standard definition of the term can be found in Lees et al. as “the transformation of a working-class or vacant area of the central city into middle-class residential and/or commercial use” (Lees et al., 2008, p. xv) focusing on the class dimension in gentrification processes. Tim Butler (2007, p. 178) extends this approach “as the concept of gentrification can elucidate some of the spatially and socially specific mediations between globalisation, the emergence of global cities (and their metropolitan hinterlands), and the construction of local identities”.

2. The Creativity *Dispositif* and the Right to the City: Theory

One major development in urban sociology in recent decades was the spatial turn, that is, the shift toward a greater critical consideration of “social production of space as a complex and often contradictory social process” (Bachmann-Medick, 2016, p. 214). Many approaches developed in this context have drawn on Michel Foucault’s concept of “heterotopia” (Foucault, 2006) or Pierre Bourdieu’s production of social space (Bourdieu, 2006). This study likewise defines urban space as produced in social practices and symbolic discourses. Here, these practices include not only musical ones, but also sound practices, for example, noise and silence.

Definitions of the urban and the city in the field of urban sociology are abundant so that they cannot be exhaustively dealt with at this point. Of course, the modifier *urban* implies research conducted in cities or a focus on urban spaces. In addition to this terminological debate, researchers have disagreed about how to conduct research on cities in general and comparative studies in particular. To be able to compare the manifold complexities between modern cities, Martina Löw, for example, presents and argues in favour of focusing on the “intrinsic logic of a city”, on typical characteristics (Löw, 2010, pp. 613–616) in order to be able to reduce “the multitude of urban practices ... to basic common meaning relations” (Löw, 2012, p. 303). By referring to a survey about the differences of the post-industrial structures of Manchester and Sheffield, Henri Lefebvre’s interpretation of the term *oeuvre* and other semantic attempts that try to grasp the heterogeneity and complexity of modern cities, Löw points out that every city as a research object needs a different approach (Löw, 2010, pp. 613-616). Heeding Löw’s call, this study uses a mixed method research design and focuses on different aspects, such as city policies to describe the “intrinsic logic” of the District of Altona.

By considering both urban and sound dimensions, this study contributes to an emerging field called urban music studies. While some researchers (e.g. Holt & Wergin, 2013) have focused on this connection before, it is the Urban Music Studies Scholars’ Network (Urban Music Studies, 2019) in particular, in which the authors of this article are situated in as founding members, which has sought to understand the complex relationships between music and the city and to establish urban music studies as a distinct interdisciplinary field.

Similarly, Thorbjörg Daphne Hall, with her article “Countercultural Space Does Not Persist: Christiania and the Role of Music” (2014) brings together musicology with urban studies. Drawing on Sara Cohen’s concept of a “local city sound”, Hall analyses music played in the clubs, at the street market, on street corners or at free concerts. In line with this approach and by analysing soundscapes from the festival, we examine whether or not there is a local sound of Altona which could be read as a signifier for an “intrinsic logic” of this part of Hamburg.

Discussing the development of the processes of aestheticisation mentioned above with regard to urban spaces, Reckwitz speaks of the “culturalisation of cities”, which, he argues, has had a major influence on political and economic programmes in cities and on urban society itself. The global phenomenon of culturally oriented cities emerged in the 1970s. It started in New York as a hybrid combination of living and working in the same space, where cities became social entities that “distribute *space* and coordinate artefacts and people within that space” (Reckwitz, 2017, p. 177). The process of aestheticising public space, similar to alternative

ideals, then became the goal of political urban planning in the 1980s: “Both the critical, counter-cultural urbanism discourse and culturally orientated urban planning have since been promoting an active culturalisation of urban space to counter the perceived alienation and standardisation of the functional city” (Reckwitz, 2017, p. 179).

Based on an initial desire to foster civil society, urban planning came to contribute to the revitalisation of symbolic qualities, i.e., to the appreciation of historical heritage, and, if necessary, to the creation of sensual-affective atmospheres of the urban. The resulting type is nowadays often referred to as “creative city” (Reckwitz, 2017, p. 180) that purposefully acts to reproduce this status (pp. 176-177). Thus, this process is mainly a state and political one and modern urban planning characteristics are important for the rise of creative cities. In the context of New Labour politics in Great Britain, for example, the “creative industries” emerged as economic prototypes of the concept at the end of the 1990s (p. 179).

This culturalisation of urban space constitutes one of the foundations of the creativity *dispositif*. In this respect, urban planning primarily involves governmental and political processes, which are commonly instigated by public officials, economic leaders or residents. In contrast, the culturalisation of cities is often incited by the presence and practices of artists and other creative individuals. This process of culturalisation is followed by one of gentrification, which, in turn, tends to marginalise groups from the culturalised milieus due to the influx of new residents and businesses (Reckwitz, 2017, pp. 186-189).

The culturalisation of a city, then, can be analysed as aesthetic socialisation of neighbourhoods on four levels (Reckwitz, 2017), which will be analysed in this empirical study: 1. subjects as creators (artists), 2. a creative public (residents, audience), 3. aesthetic objects (organisation of space through architecture, festival programming or sound) and 4. institutionalised regulations (policies). This systematisation allows us to analyse symbolic meanings of creativity, practices of culturalisation and organisational, spatial and political processes of gentrification at the same time, in order to get a full picture of the musical “intrinsic logic” of Hamburg-Altona.

After Charles Landry and Franco Bianchini have introduced the term “creative city” in 1995, Richard Florida is known for further developing this concept and expanding it with the notion of “creative class”. In his book *Cities and the Creative Class* (2003), Florida deals with the questions why creative people tend to move to specific regions or areas and why some cities are more attractive to them than others. The “creative class” consists of two groups: first, the “supercreative core” of scientists, artists, designers or teachers, who create something new, for example, innovative products or optimised processes and, second, “creative professionals” including managers, lawyers or doctors, who need to think independently and find creative solutions to practical problems at work (Florida, 2003, p. 34). In creative centres, the creative class “makes up more than 35 percent of the workforce” (p. 36). Florida points out that a highly developed economy, very good living conditions and other social aspects play a major role when choosing to relocate to a certain area. Highly educated individuals, such as the members of the creative class, are assumed to prefer lively, inclusive and diverse neighbourhoods located close to the city centres.

In 2009, Florida and Scott Jackson applied these hypotheses to spaces of “musicians and music establishments” in the USA from 1970 to 2004 (Florida & Jackson, 2009, p. 310). The results

of the study demonstrated a general concentration in certain spaces and only a “modest counter-trend” (p. 318) in response to this development. These findings could be explained by the fact that large metropolitan areas translate into bigger audience and higher probability for commercial success (p. 310). In contrast, while the internet and new media allow artists to choose where they want to work which would also allow them to avoid bigger cities, the majority of the musicians in this study did move to creative cities (p. 310). As all of these aspects might also be applicable to our research field in Hamburg-Altona, we will take a more critical look than Florida at all of these processes. This means that, while we do ask about processes of culturalisation and gentrification in Hamburg-Altona, particular focus is set on the question whether there are contradictory or negatively perceived urban spaces detectable that counteract neo-liberal positive views of creative cities.

Our approach is in line with several other works that are critical of Florida’s neo-liberal agenda which will now be introduced shortly in order to further explain our research interest. For example, in her article “Creative Class, Creative Industries, Creative City. Ein Musik-politisches Paradigma” (2007), Alenka Barber-Kersovan critically examines the economic dimension of creativity and the correlation between culture, economic growth and competitive ability of creative cities. Her findings show that the creative class and creative cities do have a symbiotic relationship. Our question is whether that might be also suitable to exhaustively explain the processes in Hamburg-Altona?

But how does that refer to subcultural movements that answer to these neo-liberal developments? Lefebvre’s manifesto *The Right to the City* (1968) continues to serve as a comprehensive postmodern and poststructuralist critique of state and governance structures in daily life (Ronneberger & Vogelpohl, 2014, p. 264). Lefebvre calls for better access for unprivileged populations to the city’s economic, cultural and material resources, for the acknowledgment of cultural differences in the city and for more democratic participation in urban planning processes. As a study of social tensions in (urban) space, it is not only relevant for contemporary urban sociology but also for practices of resistance and countercultural movements. While Lefebvre developed his concept in the light of the Fordist cities in the late 1960s, many (countercultural) movements worldwide used this concept to resist against processes of gentrification surrounding the creative cities debate from the 1990s on. The city of Hamburg is also attached to the discourse referring to Lefebvre’s right to the city in local debates about urban development (Recht auf Stadt, 2019). More specifically, processes of gentrification have sparked considerable resistance, for example, in the Gängeviertel in the Neustadt and Altstadt districts organised under the umbrella concept of the fight for the right to the city (Schäfer et al., 2010).

Hence, in order to analyse urban music practices and festivity sounds of Hamburg-Altona, we should also examine the contradictions taking place in those practices and sounds. To do so, this paper attempts to outline some contradictions in Altona in a Lefebvrian sense. Lefebvre himself specifies contradictory space as the result of the “illusion of a transparent, ‘pure’ and neutral space—which, though philosophical in origin, has permeated Western culture—[and which] is being dispelled only very slowly” (Lefebvre, 1974, p. 292). But are in Reckwitz’s creative cities really no such contradictory spaces to find? Or are contradictory spaces and practices of resistance rather only processes of culturalisation themselves?

On these grounds this study is going to show whether or not Altona and the urban sound of the STAMP may serve as examples of constructing a contradictory space in the creativity *dispositif*. When starting our research, we expected to find a divide between neo-liberal tendencies of the creative city and opposing countercultures lived out in the festival space that fight against the takeover of public urban spaces by multi-national companies. We will, however, demonstrate, how these seemingly countercultural practices mainly also belong to the creativity *dispositif*.

The anthology *The Sound of the City: Music Industry and Subculture in Berlin*, edited by Albert Scharenberg and Ingo Bader (2005) can offer some valuable insights as it deals with the development of the music industry and subculture, as well as with the relationship between the two. For instance, Bader discusses how a “policy of enabling” is needed for the emergence of subcultures or local cultural practices as well as of a creative city. We will demonstrate later how city policies and the organisation of the STAMP festival contribute to such a connection between processes of gentrification of the “creative city” and local cultural practices.

Consequently, when thinking about these issues in urban music practices, it is important not to forget about the organisational side of it. As for Timon Beyes “the idea of purity, of aesthetically non-corrupted spheres of life, is a profoundly strange one” (Beyes, 2016, p. 122), aesthetisation can not only be found in artistic practices but also in management discourses and organisational practices (p. 116f.). Organising and managing an event such as STAMP also involves the “return to the realm of sensori-emotional experience and ... a renewed interest in art and artistic practices” (p. 122). It cannot be understood in rational terms only, as it is “predicated on—and contributing to—the shaping, engineering or disruption of perception, moods and feelings“ (p. 115). Emotions and sensory faculties could potentially provide rich material for analysis (p. 117). This is why we also focus on the sound itself and the sensory perceptions of the audience as well as on aesthetics of organisation besides analysing, for example, the policies connected to the festival.

3. Listening to the Street: Methods

This study used a mixed method research design to examine the relationship between urban space, live performing street arts and music at the 2019 STAMP festival. Combining different approaches, for example, analyses of spatial structures, policies and sounds or interviews with local residents, members of the audience or musicians, this design acknowledged both the complexity of the phenomenon and the “intrinsic logic” (Löw, 2012) of Hamburg-Altona. More specifically, the organisational, spatial and structural dimensions of the festival and of the City of Hamburg were analysed by conducting two semi-structured expert interviews and by means of walking ethnography. In addition, we examined the opinions of local residents in a quantitative survey and views expressed by participating audiences and artists in qualitative semi-structured interviews. (Bodily) participation of selected audiences was then explored in a videographic analysis. This combination of surveys, interviews and videography allows us to correlate all perspectives with each other. Last but not least, the construction of urban space through sound itself at the festival was best researched conducting a soundscape analysis of

selected timeframes. In the following parts, each of these methods will be further sketched and the respective research fields at the festival will be outlined.

We first looked at the structure and the organisation of the festival and how these relate to the city of Hamburg, the district as well as the cultural scene of Altona. We especially focused on the question whether or not an image transfer in the sense of Florida's creative city is detectable or if there are other synergetic effects at work that offer a better understanding of the relationships between the three organisational players: festival, district and city.

The political and organisational interactions between the city of Hamburg and the STAMP festival were analysed through semi-structured expert interviews. Two interviews were conducted with different experts regarding two different positions towards the festival. One expert was Heike Gronholz, the managing director of the *altonale GmbH*, which is the convenor of the STAMP festival. The other interviewee was Enrico Lautner, the head of the *Department of Social Space Management* of the District of Altona. The method of a semi-structured expert interview was chosen because it offers valuable insights about the cooperation between the city of Hamburg and the STAMP festival from two different, if not opposing, points of view.

Ethnographic research with the specific method of observation can give a deeper insight into the role that the STAMP festival plays in the developments and debates around gentrification. A street festival like STAMP seems to be the perfect place for walking ethnography. Ethnographic research consists of a data collection in the field and a coding and writing process (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). The observation and data collecting, in the best case, should be carried out without any presumptions and as objectively as possible, but already with a focus on the question that is being researched. While walking across the festival space we took field notes. Analysing these spontaneously written notes and setting them into the context that online research provided offered a wider understanding of the spatial structures the festival is acted out in. The mentioned online research was mainly conducted to gather more information about the political, organisational and spatial history of the festival, its socio-cultural relations within the cultural scene of Altona and Hamburg as well as its connections to gentrification processes.

We also wanted to focus on issues of spatial organisation, its relation to socio-cultural practices and gentrification processes from the residents' point of view. In order to be able to relate Reckwitz' thesis of culturalisation of cities to gentrification processes in Hamburg-Altona, a half-structured questionnaire survey was deliberately chosen. The designed questionnaire was meant to look at the opinions of the residents who are living nearby the venue of the STAMP festival.

To accumulate data quantitatively can be a challenging task, especially if the approach simultaneously points at the qualitative investigation of subconscious attitudes regarding a particular subject. In the case of this research it has been clear that it would require a sample of at least 30+ individuals⁴ to provide vital information regarding the circumstance. It has been indeed

⁴ Although this number still seems to be relatively small compared to the overall participants in the 2018 *altonale* of 450.000 persons (*altonale*, 2019), we aimed at this number of interviewees in order to triangulate the findings with the rest of the results of our mixed-methods study.

relatively difficult to generate as much data as needed. Because of the STAMP being a walking event, where visitors constantly switch between different locations, the extent of willingness to participate in the survey was low. Nevertheless, by triangulating the findings of this survey with the other methodological parts conducted in the whole study, the results provide valuable data to answer the overarching research question as well as the sub-questions.

The questionnaire was structured into 20 different questions, ranging from the simple yes/no format to scale questions (1-6). By asking 20 different questions it was further guaranteed that the respondent took time to think about his or her current situation in terms of the abovementioned topic. The questions aimed to reveal the overall mood of the residents of Altona in general, and more specifically, to examine if Reckwitz' hypotheses offer an understanding of the empirical circumstances in Hamburg-Altona.

In exploring the relationship between the city and the creativity *dispositif*, it was also important to focus on the perspectives of both artists and visitors who are not residents but rather come to Altona to visit the festival on purpose. As key questions we asked what the artists wanted to address or communicate with their performances and whether or not they have achieved this task in their view as well as in the spectators' opinion. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were chosen to pursue these questions. Through these, we were able to make sure that all relevant aspects of answering our key question were covered. At the same time, we were free to spontaneously respond to hitherto less discussed aspects as well as asking individual or situation-dependent questions. All in all, we interviewed six different artists and, for each of these artists, also one to two spectators attending the respective performance. We use the terms "artist" and "creative" for interviewees who are responsible for the performance or the event. The term "visitor" describes the spectators or participants of the performance or event we interviewed in contrast to the above mentioned group of "residents".

However, the practices of the festival participants could not be analysed sufficiently through these semi-structured interviews. That is why, for analysing the audience's behaviour during certain concerts and performances – how they participate, react and interact with it – the usage of videography seemed to be an appropriate method to work with. Videography describes the video recording of certain situations for the purpose of gaining a quantity of impressions. Moreover, one does not have to rely on memory and field notes only, but has the possibility to re-live the performances again and again (Pink, 2007). This allowed us to take notice of previously unnoticed elements in specific situations. Especially when the research interest is focused on a larger group of people in an audience, a video recording helps to concentrate on more than only a few single persons in the audience as it offers the chance to focus on different persons in every repetition during analysis.

With the question of audience participation in focus, three different performances were analysed as objects of our studies in order to include a variety of performance types: a dance competition, an acrobatic performance and a concert. Even if the analysis of these three performances only gives us an exemplary insight into the whole programme presented at the STAMP festival, we can nevertheless gather sufficient information on the noticeable behaviour of the audience during those. All the observed acts took place on Saturday afternoon.

However, we were not only interested in the spatial, political and organisational structures and processes of the festival and its connections to urban space, nor solely in the practices of the people involved. The organisation of space through sound was also of great interest to us. In order to break down this huge topic into analysable bits, we decided to focus on how the STAMP festival deals with silence. For this, it is important to focus on the method of soundscape analysis. The concept of soundscapes was developed by the composer and sound researcher Raymond Murray Schafer in 1977 (Schafer, 1994). The term “soundscape” relates to the word “landscape” and it is defined as the acoustic environment of a person at a specific time and place (Organisation Internationale de Normalisation, 2004). Before the industrial revolution, acoustic environments were largely characterised by sounds of nature. During the industrial revolution, when the levels of sound (volume and quantity) increased, soundscape research was initiated. Now, acoustic environments were mainly characterised by the sounds of machines. This also led to an increase of acoustic information (Schafer, 1994, p. 71).

As Schafer was interested in the history of soundscapes, he started to analyse the changing soundscape and its effects. Schafer proposed to categorise sounds, so he divided sounds into nature sounds, speech, working and machine sounds and music. He realised that soundscapes are composed of a synergy of sounds produced in and through space.

Schafer then set apart lo-fi (low-fidelity) from hi-fi (high-fidelity). High-fidelity, describes a soundscape where sounds are overlapping at a low level, so single sounds can be differentiated like in nature. This acoustic soundscape creates a perspective with a foreground and a background and makes it possible to listen “into the distance”. Today, a natural hi-fi area is rare to find in the cities. In contrast, low-fidelity describes a soundscape that is overloaded with sounds. An example for a lo-fi soundscape could be a central station, where single acoustic signals are hard to find as they are overlapping each other. The result is a destruction of the perspective, meaning that only the nearby sounds can be heard, not those in distance. This also results in sounds turning into anti-information (Wrightson, 2000, p. 11). Anti-information is perceived as noise or not noticed at all.

For the subjective perception of space, lo-fi or hi-fi have a huge impact. Since the industrial revolution in central Europe in the 19th century, more and more areas have turned into lo-fi areas (Schafer, 1994, p. 43). Schafer revealed that there is already an atrophy in the human listening competence as an effect of these changing soundscapes. The tuning of music in hi-fi quality makes the listeners sense their environment in a lo-fi quality. Schafer instead calls for a balanced soundscape, where there is space for silence. Silence should not be seen as a vacuum that has to be filled with sound (pp. 253-259).

To answer the connected research question “is there space for silence at the STAMP festival or is silence a vacuum filled with sounds?”, we chose places that seem to be calm. We picked the food area at the Platz der Republik in front of Altona’s townhall, which has the function to recharge the people’s energy – so a place to calm down. Besides, the *Hummustopia* by Avi Rosenblum seemed to be an interesting place for our research as it is described as a “quiet oasis” (altonale, 2019) in the programme. As the performance *Hamonim* by Particia Carolin Mai relates to the word harmony, we were interested in how balanced the soundscape is here and whether there is also space for silence. In addition, we chose the *Poetic Dance* of Aziz

Boumediene which is inspired by *thai chi* techniques. As Boumediene uses relaxing techniques, we were interested whether or not he also plays with silence. Finally, we chose *Closetland* by the Third Hand Group as it promised to offer a “trip into alternative worlds” (altonale, 2019).

In order to record the soundscapes in representative clips for our research at those places during the festival, we used a Zoom H2n sound recorder. Listening to the recordings, we wrote down what could be heard and categorised the sounds using Schafer’s categories for soundscape analysis as a tool for our analysis.

4. Structures, Organisation, Symbols, Practices and Sounds of the Urban: Results

In this section, the results generated with each of the four methodological approaches will be presented. The first of these involved two expert interviews on the relation between the City of Hamburg, the District of Altona and STAMP: one with Heike Gronholz, managing director of altonale GmbH, and one with Enrico Lautner, head of the Fachamt Sozialraummanagement, the department that manages, among other aspects, public spaces in Altona. Both interviews revealed that the cooperation between the festival and the city is beneficial to both parties involved, primarily in economic terms.

The origins of the altonale can be traced back to a past effort of the District of Altona to organise an event for all residents of Altona and those of adjacent districts. The initiators of the altonale took up this idea and created an event that now stands for all kind of artistic interventions and performances in public spaces. The altonale has evolved along with the district, usually in close collaboration with local cultural organisations as co-initiators or supporters. For this reason, the festival has been widely accepted by the people of Altona and beyond.

The STAMP festival was founded in 2010 and has taken place ever since (except for one gap year) in a 48.000m² area around the train station, which spatially divides Altona into two sections. The festival aims to change the rather run-down image of the district through art, to interrupt the everyday lives of inhabitants and to provide access to the festival to anyone interested, including families. It has also become an important venue for local businesses and NGOs to present their work.

The festival is primarily funded by both the District of Altona and the City of Hamburg. Both interviewees described this process as a rather smooth one. More specifically, the city provides funds to the altonale and STAMP. The latter, in turn, functions as a role model and a showcase for citizen involvement for the district and the city. A conference during STAMP, for example, attracts a specialist audience from all over the world, and the art programme includes international artists. This aspect is important for the city officials, whereas those in Altona aim to create a cultural event where people can come together regardless of their background and celebrate the diversity and vibrancy of the district and where residents can deepen their connection to the area they live in.

Despite these differences regarding the outcome and the character of the festival, STAMP and the altonale enable the city to establish partnerships with cities such as Aarhus in Denmark, and to attract a high number of tourists and other people from the region. Both events can be

easily marketed, and they help the city and the district to project an image of open-mindedness and diversity and to foster a vibrant cultural sector. For the district, it is an easy means to involve citizens, since they can contribute their ideas to the festival.

While the two festivals have an important function for the City of Hamburg in particular, they were also described as factors contributing to gentrification. While Altona attracts more and more people who want to live there, STAMP adds to the benefits of living in the district. That said, the collaboration between STAMP and the City of Hamburg and especially the District of Altona was described as a win-win situation for both parties. The festival generates money and improves the image of the district, and the city benefits because it can use the event to market Hamburg and to attract tourists.

Along with the previous insights about the festival administration and funding structures, interactive data collected by means of walking ethnography, the second method used for the first approach, showed that the festival mostly takes place in the pedestrian zone of Neue Große Bergstraße and in a park area. As a result, different parts of the festival, such as the venues where artists perform, can be visited while walking down the street and into the park. That way, the full festival can be experienced and thereby analysed by taking a walk.

When walking down the festival, it quickly becomes clear that the festival is not only a local one but also one which could be separated into two parts in terms of content. The first part is Neue Große Bergstraße and its direct surroundings, and the second one is the area around Platz der Republik. Both these areas seem like distinct festivals. The main difference between these two parts is the style of art that is being shown. While the area around Neue Große Bergstraße mainly displays urban art genres such as hip-hop culture, the area around Platz der Republik focuses on small performing arts venues, theatres and cabarets.

The differences sketched above are mirrored by Altona's architecture and spatial formations: The area around Neue Große Bergstraße is a rather metropolitan one with large buildings and a pedestrian shopping zone. An IKEA mall was opened in 2014 and increased property value in the entire area, a development which resulted in the closing of many local shops. That said, the area continues to be home to a high number of very cheap shopping possibilities. This area of Altona is usually frequented by diverse people displaying their cultural heritage by, for example, wearing traditional clothing styles. The same can be said regarding the audience in this part of the festival.

Apart from shows related to performing arts such as dancing, cabaret or music, there were also many professional vendors travelling from festival to festival selling products from all around the world. These included international hand-made clothing which could be labelled as "hippie chic" and products such as belts or hats. Lined with low-cost fruit and vegetable vendors, the area of Neue Große Bergstraße was filled with people who seemed interested in what was happening, and it appeared that many who had come not just for the festival. The only performance which drew a crowd, comprised most likely to a large extent of parents from the area, was a drumming group from a local school. Apart from that, people were still going shopping, went to the IKEA mall for lunch or even used it as a free day-care, as people at the entrance indicated.

The festival zone around the park Platz der Republik showed a different picture. The place is usually used as a recreational area by both the mostly white middle-class people from Altona's Ottensen section and the more diverse people from the area along Neue Große Bergstraße as we observed in several shorter walking ethnographies conducted prior to and after the festival. During STAMP, it seemed that this urban space was designed only for the first group of people. The people attending were mostly people from Ottensen interested in small-scale performing arts and cabaret and also guests of the altonale, the festival one block away.

Most of the artists who were part of the festival were people travelling from festival to festival to make a living. The festival also featured non-professional artists from the area, although these contributions were limited to some parts of the programme. The area featuring urban art and hip-hop events offered a variety of participatory workshops, an open dance contest and the drumming group from a local school mentioned above. In contrast, there were no options for people to participate in the area around Platz der Republik, and it seemed that most of the people in attendance were fine with this arrangement.

The results generated using walking ethnography were complemented with those of the survey questionnaire focused on the Altona residents. Almost half of the respondents indicated that they had been living in the district for less than five years. Slightly more than half of the total respondents said that the number of cultural events had increased and that the public and touristic interest in the very district had grown in recent years. Almost two thirds stated that the living costs had also increased since they have moved to Altona. Asked to describe STAMP festival and the neighbourhood in three to five words, respondents provided answers that were then assigned to two semantic fields, "creative" and "critical urban". The former one included positively imbued terms, such as "creative", "fun", "living quality" ["Lebensqualität"], "diverse", "modern", "urban", "open-minded", "alternative" and "multicultural", whereas the latter consisted of terms with negative denotations or connotations, such as "gentrification", "consumption", "density", "clash of cultures", "expensive" or "rent increase".

Responses by artists and audiences to the survey questionnaire seemed to be affected by both the kind of performance they contributed and their understanding of art. For example, acrobats seemed to be more concerned with artistic feats foregrounding the human body, whereas the theatre plays *The Invasion* and *Harmonim* or the interactive installation *Closetland* addressed controversial social and political issues. In other words, not all performances or artists were meant as critical interventions, although when they did, it seemed that audiences were able to relate. In general, all performances and installations observed were well-received by people attending the festival, and the artists, in return, also described their audiences as positive.

Although respondents differed considerably in terms of their demographic background and their personal relationship to Altona or Hamburg, artists, residents and people attending STAMP agreed that the district appears to be open, tolerant and multicultural. The events at the festival significantly affected this perception. Respondents noted that contributions, such as the so-called "oasis of peace", where free food was served to facilitate open discussion of socioeconomic and political issues, or performances, such as the one featuring aliens upending norms of public life and encouraging people to break out of their everyday-conventional behaviour, had a positive influence on the open-minded flair of the district. Discussing an event called *Hummustopia*, a visitor from Hamburg's District of Harvestehude put it,

We make art or something like that in some way and for that you need ... openness, non-conformity ... free space simply. It's about what you wear or how weird you can be or how events can be ..., there's a lot of liveliness left in a part of town like Altona and you need it ... so if we did that in Harvestehude, sitting at such a table, it wouldn't work with strangers. (Avi Rosenblum, *Hummustopia: Visitor 2019*, p. 2)

Respondents not only described Altona as an open, lively and friendly neighbourhood but also as a space for people to come together (Patricia Mai, *Harmonim: Visitor B 2019*, p. 1). A long-time visitor stated that the festival, the altonale and the interactive installation *Closetland* in particular are means to get out of everyday-life, to take a break and “to refresh body, mind and soul” (Third Hand Group, *Closetland: Visitor 2019*, p. 2). To him, the festival has an immense, even defining significance for the district, since it has encapsulated for many years what the district is: colourful, diverse, very different and international in character. He summarised the significance of the festival for the district and its perception as follows:

In this sense, this festival is actually an expression of the living culture of this district and ... very important for Altona, because I think it's just like a business card ... for Altona. Meanwhile the event became known certainly beyond Hamburg, ... beyond the borders of Germany even, and therefore it became really influential, characteristic, a very important ... event. (Third Hand Group, *Closetland: Visitor 2019*, p. 2)

Turning to the results of our third methodological approach, an analysis of the videos of three performances yielded very different results regarding (bodily) participation by audiences, indicating that STAMP features a wide range of possibilities for people attending to interact with artists or their work. As all analysed performances took place during daytime on a sunny day, we could not detect any differences in audience behaviour due to different performance hours or weather conditions. The first performance, a dance competition based on dynamic “African House” music, received considerable attention. Some visitors smiled and clapped along to the beat for a few seconds, while others slightly moved to the music but did not dance. When a dancer struck a pose or showed stamina, a few people in the audience applauded shortly or cheered him or her on. The audience, which consisted mostly of people between 25 to 30, seemed very interested in and focused on the stage. Only a few women began to dance during breaks; the rest of the audience did not move to the electronic music.

The second show, which featured Italian acrobats, differed from the dance competition not only in kind but also in terms of audience involvement. This acrobatic fire attracted mainly young families and some elderly people. The majority of the audience smiled and seemed to enjoy the performance, shouting along and clapping, especially in response to daring feats.

The third performance analysed was a concert by a brass band. The audience was rather diverse and included people of all ages. The atmosphere in front of the stage could be described as carefree and positive. People were laughing, dancing with children, jumping and bouncing, whistling and singing to the music or talking to each other. Other people just watched or stared at their mobile phones. The audience kept a distance of approximately four meters to the stage, and the band encouraged the people in attendance several times to come closer. Except for children and a few adults, the people did not close the gap.

The recorded sounds collected for our fourth methodological approach of soundscape analysis were categorised into nature sounds, speech, working and machine sounds and music. In the next step, hi-fi and lo-fi features were distinguished to map the soundscape and to answer the question whether there were any spaces for silence at the festival. The results indicated that there were none. Instead, there were many different and overlapping layers of sound. For example, at the food area, the most dominant sounds were made by layered voices, and in the background, there was music and also muted individual sounds, such as sneezing, coughing, tinkling bottles or clattering cooking utensils. No nature sounds or machine sounds were found. In this lo-fi soundscape, the number of voices and the volume of the ambient noise were so high that it was not possible to understand what they were talking about.

At the event *Hummustopia*, the soundscape consisted of distinct individual voices in the foreground, layered voices, squealing kids, laughter, coughing, the sound of a camera shutter, clatter of crockery and cutlery and guitar music. In Schafer's categories, there were speech (one clear voice in the foreground), working sounds (the clattering of cutlery and crockery when clearing the tables) and music (sound of a guitar). Again, no nature or machine sounds and no silence in this lo-fi soundscape were to be found.

The soundscape during the performance *Hamonim* was characterised by the sounds produced by the fountains' rushing water, breathing sounds, layered voices and traffic sounds. One could classify the sounds into speech (layered voices) and machine sounds (traffic). Nature sounds, working sounds and music could not be perceived. In this lo-fi soundscape, most of the sounds overlapped, forming a dense layer.

During the performance *Poetic Dance*, the main sounds were one clear loud voice and music. The music was characterised by an intense drumbeat and a hoot in one performance and a strumming piano in another one. Layered voices, laughter and crying babies could be heard in the background. The soundscape was rich, and there were no silences. Following Schafer, the lo-fi soundscape included speech (clear loud voice, layered voices, crying babies) and music (intense drumbeat, hoot/strumming piano) but no nature, working or machine sounds. It was not possible to follow individual conversation.

At *Closetland*, the soundscape was characterised by loud drums, layered voices, a rattle, a whistle, shouting and applause. The soundscape was dominated by music (loud drums, rattle) and speech (layered voices, rejoicings). There were no working, machine or nature sounds. The sound of the drums volume was so loud that it was not even possible to understand the words of people shouting. In this lo-fi soundscape, there were no silences.

5. Gentrification, Creativity, Participation and Soundscapes in Urban Spaces: Discussion

Before answering the main research question of this study, that is, whether the practices, symbols and structures of the festival are in contrast to or complicit with what Reckwitz calls "creativity *dispositif*" and related processes of gentrification, this section will discuss the results presented above in light of the specific questions raised towards the end of the introduction. The first of these questions was whether the festival is in line with city policies and

contributes to their successful implementation. The results suggest that the cooperation between the City of Hamburg, the District of Altona, and STAMP is perceived as a successful collaboration between city government and a cultural project. The most obvious benefit for the city is the festival's actual and potential contribution to the ongoing effort to create and market a positive, supportive and open-minded image of Altona and, by implication, the City of Hamburg. The discourse on STAMP can be tapped for successful marketing and tourism strategies. This is, in turn, a major advantage for the festival, which is supported by, among others, the city. When the distinct sound of STAMP is, however, conflated with—in a marketing campaign, let us say—the sound of the larger urban entity, questions about control, power and appropriation are thrown into high relief. In this case, the music and sounds of local residents or artists might be used for ends that they might not agree with or even oppose. Simply rebranding these sounds as the ones representative of Hamburg might also not sit well with residents in both Altona and Hamburg in general.

STAMP is, as indicated by the results, of great value for urban marketing and for the development of a distinct image of Hamburg despite its origins as an event primarily for residents. This result is in line with Barber-Kersovan's ideas concerning the economic aspects of creativity. In the case of the altonale in particular, exploiting cultural practices for city marketing purposes is easy because the name of the festival echoes the one of the district. It is easy to link the festival to a very specific urban context and to create a close connection between the two.

Like most cultural organisations or events, the festival increases, as respondents indicated, the quality of life in Altona. At the same time, it also contributes to gentrification in Altona. It is not a driving force, but one of the multipliers. As noted in the theory section of this study, because culture can create valuable living spaces in urban areas, it is often used by cities to systematically reevaluate urban districts. The District of Altona, for instance, asks the altonale to bring art to public spaces in places in Altona that need an image design. This might not be the main interest, but it is still a welcome side effect.

Whether STAMP contributes to this kind of reevaluation of the area and, in this manner, influences a gentrification process or whether it merely strengthens the structures which are already there is an unresolved issue. To address this point, one can look at the organisational processes or, as Beyes states, at the organisational aesthetics (Beyes, 2016, p. 115f), in this case the ones of the festival.

An analysis of the data generated with ethnographic fieldwork showed that the festival consists, in fact, of two parts: the area around Neue Große Bergstraße, where the festival focuses mostly on urban and hip-hop culture, and the area around Platz der Republik, which focuses on small-scale performing arts and cabaret acts which attract very different audiences. This separation shows how STAMP seems to adjust aesthetically to a given area, to two distinct spaces. It is important to note here that the two areas are also separated geographically by the railway station; most visitors of the festival do not even get to see both parts of the festival. One could argue that this physical separation is also suggested by the aesthetics of the different spaces. Platz der Republik is a quiet, green park; hip-hop, a presumably primarily urban phenomenon, does not seem to belong here. Conversely, scheduling cabaret and other small performing arts acts in the economically distressed Neue Große Bergstraße would be, for most

members of the audience, a rather unusual decision from an aesthetic point of view. This categorisation seems to follow stereotypical assumptions of equating social stratification structures with aesthetic preferences, or as Bourdieu would put it, to put social positions in line with a certain habitus and taste (Bourdieu, 2010).

Presenting urban art and hip-hop culture in the diverse urban spaces might make sense from the organisers' perspective, as poorer populations, in line with Bourdieu, are more likely to be drawn to low threshold entertainment. This approach also seems to be reasonable given that the festival is meant to be "by the district and for the district". The same reasons seem to have played a role at the other part of the festival, where highbrow performing arts and cabaret acts attract local white middle- and upper-class audiences. In short, the different parts of the festival seem to be spatially arranged in line with aesthetic considerations.

However, the aesthetic and spatial division remains ambiguous as, on the one hand, the link between space and aesthetics is common and also true for the majority of our findings. That said, our results are not consistent, and it is possible that, for example, the spatial arrangements we observed are due to other processes. For instance, the festival area around Platz der Republik usually also attracts populations whose cultural preferences are assumed to include urban cultural practices. These people get excluded by the organisational divide of aesthetic space-making at the festival.

At first sight, this organisational decision seems to strengthen the separation of the district, a fault line which has been there before. A festival such as this is, however, not only eager to attract residents, who might be there anyway, but people from other parts of the city and tourists. When these two groups encounter the two different parts, they do not experience Altona the way residents would. The temporary spaces they enter are characterised by exoticisation and romantic transfiguration. Hip-hop and urban culture are presented in an ahistorical and depoliticised manner, and issues such as social inequality are glossed over. Instead, Altona is presented, often by artists who are not from the area, as a hip, creative district, a cool urban cultural hub. Perceived as diverse, multicultural and on the move, the area is marketed to investors, tourists, local communities and potential residents alike. What was described above as exoticisation and romantic transfiguration of the area and its people during STAMP could contribute to processes of gentrification in an area that is already being rapidly gentrified. Even if performances, then, were to invoke the right to the city, they would end up indirectly achieving the exact opposite.

To understand this contradiction in greater detail, it is also necessary to review the results regarding the daily life of residents and the effects of the festival and gentrification processes. These results can be explained with Reckwitz's argument concerning the culturalisation of the city. In urban space of Altona, both urban flows of gentrification and culturalisation can be observed. As many new residents arrive in the district, the economic, cultural and public life in Altona changes. STAMP is one of the best known cultural offers in the district and therefore greatly contributes to the culturalisation of this part of the city. As discussed above, residents described the district using terms and phrases taken from the "creative semantic field", which describes the processes of culturalisation discussed by Reckwitz, and the "critical urban semantic field", which, in turn, can be related to processes of gentrification.

These two very different semantic fields and the words contained therein are linguistic markers for interrelated urban spatial processes and, more specifically, the link between culturalisation and gentrification. What can be seen in Altona in general and during STAMP in particular is not a tension between gentrification and grassroot movements to fight for the right to the city and against gentrification, but a productive co-existence of city gentrification and city culturalisation with residents, artists, visitors, the STAMP festival, city and district policies mutually affecting one another in what Reckwitz refers to as a creativity *dispositif*. Practices of resistance such as movements for the right of the city, formerly identified as in opposition to processes and policies of gentrification, are not at odds with neoliberalism. Multicultural organisations such as altonale or STAMP might have originally been founded to support local communities and might have aimed to foster creativity in the local community as a means to strengthen citizens' rights and participation in a Lefebvrian sense. As processes of city gentrification and culturalisation become increasingly intertwined, local creative participation is no longer opposed to policies of the creative city; instead, they are at the core of these processes.

Thus, the symbols of creativity, negotiated by the residents of Hamburg-Altona and within the space of STAMP, cannot be easily separated from city developments and policies which lead to increasing gentrification of the district. These paradoxical and complex links in urban space in Hamburg-Altona can help to identify hidden neoliberal structures, which are characterised by this symbiosis not only at a symbolic level but also at the level of lived practices and socio-economic living structures.

To explain how symbols of creativity are negotiated in urban space, the results concerning the practices and motivations of artists and visitors need to be considered. As noted earlier, on the one hand, the festival reflects the culture of the district and its image; on the other hand, Altona's cultural infrastructure is the reason for the festival to emerge in the first place and for it to be accepted. Despite its international character, the artistic contributions have a connection to Altona, and they help to create the image of the district. In turn, the artistic intervention in the everyday cityscape made some visitors feel a sense of community in the neighbourhood. The strongest connection between the festival, Altona and Hamburg comes from the territorial adjacency between the festival and the district. This link was perceived positively without exception.

However, people mostly visited the festival as regular consumers of cultural events in Altona or due to personal relations with one of the artists, whereas most artists were booked and had no regular connection to the district itself. A further factor when deciding to attend the festival was the requirement that there would be no admission fee and that people of all ages would be able to enjoy harmonious coexistence together.

The primary goal of the artists during STAMP was to present their abilities and to entertain. A stronger political or socio-critical statement such as fighting for the right to the city could not be recognised during the performances and was not attempted by the artists. Above all, an aesthetic sense of art was to be conveyed to the guests. It can be said that the original goals of passing on positive feelings as well as entertaining the audience have been achieved. Again, the primary symbols negotiated at and connected to the STAMP festival were not related to a "critical urban semantic field", but they can rather be assigned to the "creative semantic field" of the creativity *dispositif*, of which the festival and Altona forms a prominent part.

These findings also correspond to the bodily participation of the audiences at the festival, which can be characterised as practices of creative and passive participation. During the dance competition, the audience was restrained and did not interact with the performers. The audience, rather than freely interacting, followed conventions and responded only to certain highlights. The audience at the acrobatic show became much more involved, also with the general atmosphere of the performance. Due to the comic elements of the show, reactions to the performance by the spectators were planned and desired for. Nevertheless, although participation was manifold and vivid, it was predictable. The audience did not do anything unexpected but again followed certain rules. The last performance, by the brass band, combined both situations. The overall atmosphere was casual, and the majority of the audience interacted with the band. There was, however, a barrier difficult to cross, resulting in an again passive participation.

Overall, the audience of the three performances did not do anything unexpected. They rather followed the sociocultural conventions of what is requested, what is within one's reach and what is disrespectful (Becker, 2008 [1982], p. 42). In line with the creativity *dispositif*, the audience displayed acceptable behaviour and was able to engage in creative practices of participation. These practices could be called creative, as they correspond to the rules of the creativity *dispositif* in Altona. Again, these do not have to be artistic practices nor do they have to follow a critical stance of resistance to neoliberal agendas. These practices solely have to follow the rules of culturalisation and show that everybody participating knows and conforms to the established conventions (Gaupp, 2020).

Finally, the practices which confirm the creativity *dispositif* in Hamburg-Altona contribute to the formation of creative urban spaces, i.e. the culturalisation of the city. Another important factor that needs to be taken into account when looking at the creative construction of space in a city is in the context of this contribution the sonic material itself, the sounds in Altona. This leads us to the question whether or not there is a specific sound atmosphere at STAMP that conveys an "intrinsic logic of the city" (Löw, 2012), asking whether or not the close symbiosis of a cultural scene of a city and the city itself affect the development of a "local city sound" (Hall, 2014). Focusing at silence as important part of sound allows us to detect this intrinsic logic in comparison to the majority of urban spaces that are dominated by soundscapes that do not offer much silence.

The collaboration between the city of Hamburg, the district of Altona and the STAMP festival may also be interpreted as a factor contributing to, in line with Hall's ideas concerning city sound, the development of a distinct sound for the district. The STAMP festival tries to reflect the cultural and musical diversity of Altona in its programme structure and with the selection of invited artists. By investing and supporting the festival, the city of Hamburg is also funding its own city sound, because it helps to promote the festival and to bring the sound to as many people as possible. By looking at the programmes of the STAMP festival over the past years, it is clear that Altona does not stand for one specific kind of music though. The sounds are rather diverse and so are the people living in Altona. Thus, the city sound of Altona is a mixture of all different kinds of genres, languages and music styles. This, in fact, is related to what Lefebvre calls the positive acknowledgment of cultural differences between urban citizens.

Nevertheless, all in all, there were no silences to be found at STAMP but rather only soundscapes in line with the usual lo-fi soundscapes of the creative city. As a result, the information sounds usually sent became anti-information or noise (see above). Furthermore, the soundscapes during the festival were not balanced. Music sounds, speech and traffic were the most dominant sounds to be heard in these soundscapes. At least regarding the soundscapes, there seems to be no intrinsic logic of Altona or Hamburg that includes silence as a prominent feature.

Following Schafer, to some people, silence is negatively connoted. They may associate sound with life, and silence with the absence of life, that is, death, or isolation. To come to terms with their fears, individuals may drown out silence with music or other sounds. To others, silence is, however, needed to relax and recover. Silence can heighten perception and make sounds more clearly audible (Schafer, 1994, pp. 256-259). This is why Schafer suggests an acoustic design of the soundscape as a way to improve its balance (pp. 237-252). In this suggestion we find one option of how the STAMP could contribute to a “local city sound” that characterises Altona’s “intrinsic logic”. Using noise-cancelling techniques, adding performances that experiment with silence or increasing the distance between venues could be options for integrating silence into the soundscape of the urban spaces of Altona. In this manner, urban space could not only be formed by sounds but by silence as well.

Changing perspectives like this could offer new ways of thinking not only about soundscapes but also about aesthetics of organisation, symbols of creativity and practices of participation in urban spaces. As such, granting access to the unprivileged, taking the diversity in the district as a chance and including the diverse populations of Altona in such participatory urban planning processes as suggested by Lefebvre will allow for more contradictory urban spaces to develop, meeting the goals of the right to the city rather than the ones of the creativity *dispositif* and its related processes of gentrification.

6. Summary: Conclusion

As shown with this empirical study of the STAMP festival in Hamburg-Altona, there is no tension between gentrification and what Reckwitz refers to as the creativity *dispositif*. Rather, the processes associated with these two terms overlap and intersect. At the organisational and structural levels, a successful relationship between festival and city policies may result in the exploitation of the cultural practices at the festival for city marketing purposes. As discussed above, this may lead to gentrification. The “culturalisation of the city” (Reckwitz, 2017) is fostered by the festival and its “organisational aesthetics” (Beyes, 2016). Hence, the “creative class” (Florida, 2003) collaborates and is complicit with the “creative city” (Barber-Kersovan, 2007). In the context of the festival, creativity is closely linked to gentrification, whether it is symbolically negotiated or expressed in practices of creative and passive participation along established sociocultural conventions of the creativity *dispositif*. Through these social practices and symbolic discourses the “intrinsic logic” (Löw, 2012) of the urban space in Hamburg-Altona is produced.

The sound of the festival itself further adds to the production of a creative urban space. Even though Altona's "local city sound" (Hall, 2014) can only very vaguely be described as a mixture of genres and styles and by the fact that there are no silences (Schafer, 1994), it is related to the symbols of creativity negotiated in the festival space. These symbols were not only summarised as "creative", that is, tied to the culturalisation of Altona, but also as "critical urban", which, in turn, can be assigned to the discourse against gentrification. Again, the symbiosis of gentrification and culturalisation becomes visible, further underlined by the regime of creative self-optimisation residents, artists and visitors alike have to follow (Reckwitz, 2017).

However, the results concerning these processes cannot be confirmed for all levels analysed. Some Lefebvrian contradictory spaces can be identified in this creativity *dispositif*. For instance, some results concerning perceptions of creativity showed that these were not always entirely positive. The festival organisers, residents, artists and visitors all mentioned problematic aspects of what was referred to here as the processes of culturalisation. Regarding the spatial organisation, not all findings fall within the clear architectural and aesthetic divide between the two parts of the festival. Social tensions in the urban space are not entirely alleviated or erased. It has become clear that the urban space of Hamburg-Altona is not "transparent" or "neutral" (Lefebvre, 1968). Instead, this urban space is constantly being produced through political structures, organisational processes, symbolic discourses, social practices and sound itself in complex negotiations. In Altona, the creativity *dispositif* is not destiny; given a different policy approach such as a "policy of enabling" (Bader, 2005), festivals such as STAMP could be public affirmations of the right to the city. In this case, creativity would be a means to counter neo-liberal developments.

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Sound recordings

- 190615-192210 Hamonim (Saturday, 15.06.2019, 19:22:40)
- 190615-201104 Foodarea (Saturday, 15.06.2019, 20:12:50)
- 190616-160124 Hummustopia (Sunday, 16.06.2019, 16:05:22)
- 190616-181249 Closetland (Sunday, 16.06.2019, 18:30:34)
- 190615-174013 Poetic Dance (Saturday, 15.06.2019, 17:40:52 & 17:49:00)

Interviews

Interview with Enrico Lautner, the head of the Department of Social Space Management of the District of Altona by Anna Rüpcke, 24 July 2019.

Interview with Heike Gronholz, the managing director of the altonale GmbH by Julia Mai and Anna Rüpcke, 12 August 2019.

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