Space For Artistic Practice: A Visual Ethnography of an Artist Community and Artistic Practice

Erzeybek, Dilara

Citation

Space For Artistic Practice: A Visual Ethnography of an Artist Community and Artistic Practice

Master's Thesis by

D. Erzeybek

Abstract

This study aims to shed light on the artist community Treehouse in Amsterdam as a space for artistic practice. By applying the concepts: place and space, community, artistic practice and artistic process, this study focuses on place and space as conditions in which artistic process can emerge. My goal is to explore the diversity of these artistic practices and spaces in which it is practiced. In terms of discussing the experiences of place and space, I would like to explore the perspectives of policy makers and the lived experiences of the artists within the place and space.

This study aims to offer a more focused navigation of artistic processes; and explores what (pre)conditions are needed for the artists to engage in their artistic process. It aims to shift the approach from exploring art as established institution, to art as "practice". Therefore, my aim in this article is to explore artistic practice and the role of place and space, and the artist-community in it (both physical and social). I used qualitative research methods and observational filmmaking as a research tool to generate empirical data. The results of this research are presented in a textual output (this article), and an audio-visual output (the film: *Space for Artistic Practice, 2021*), with both being part of the same overarching research. Two of my participants allowed me to study them more intensively on their artistic process. This provided insight in the small-scale aspects of their social reality, such as interaction, the forms of communication through art and their artistic processes. I introduce the concept of "creative sphere" as a mental space, which artists can experience when the workspace meets certain desired preconditions, and artistic process can happen. This approach discusses how the division and ordering principles of the space is part of an artistic interpretation and discusses different conditions in which art is made.

Place and Space for artistic practice and artistic process has a political side, but it also has a personal side. Therefore, this article is divided in two parts. In the first part, I explore artistic practice in relation to place and space in a macro perspective (political and community), and in the second part, I will discuss the role of space in artistic process (personal and in a more philosophical perspective).

KEYWORDS: Art, Artist, Artistic Practice, Artistic Process, Place & Space, Breeding Grounds

Contents

Part One: Place and Space for Artistic Practice in Macro Perspective

1 Introduction:NDSM and the Breeding Ground Policy

During the period from January till the end of March 2021, I have conducted fieldwork at the artist village Treehouse NDSM, which is situated in the northern part of Amsterdam. The arrangement of the colourfully piled up container-studios are some of its characteristics. The environment is as eccentric with such constructions and where towering cranes stick out above everything, and the paving stones are brightly painted. The graffiti artworks on the walls and the thumping bass emanating from arbitrary container studios, are some typical characteristics of the place. There are as many kinds of sounds and voices as there are types of people and artists in the place. In the evening, the atmosphere does not diminish, it does seem to become cozier due to the colourful fluorescent lighting in and outside the studios. This can be observed from the water when travelling by ferry. The unfinished, casual, and almost "post-apocalyptic" character of the environment radiates a sense of freedom according to most of my participants and can even serve as a source of inspiration.

During the 20th century, Amsterdam-Noord developed into Amsterdam's most important industrial area for shipbuilding companies. Now the old industrial halls and sheds have been redeveloped and rebuilt into offices and spaces to enhance creative activities, because of the municipality's breeding ground policy, the "broedplaatsenbeleid". I explored this topic by reading policy documents and interviewing one of the founders of Treehouse artist community. I learned that what we see happening currently, is that artists are more and more pushed towards such 'breeding grounds' by a municipality that follows policies that diminish the free spaces in the city like squatted offices and spaces, and place artists in soon to be developed areas as part of gentrification processes. However, to be eligible, they must meet certain conditions, which I will discuss in the following sections.
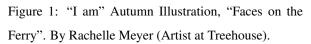
Figure 1: "I am" Autumn Illustration, "Faces on the Ferry". By Rachelle Meyer (Artist at Treehouse).

Figure 2: "Flirting With Danger" Summer Illustration,"Faces on the Ferry". By Rachelle Meyer (Artist at Treehouse).

Cameron Coaffee (2005), argue that the role of culture and capital are key drivers of gentrification and "both art and culture, and gentrification have been extensively used in public policy as instruments of physical and economic regeneration of declining cities, and the two are often associated in a relationship of mutual dependence" (46). One of the goals of Bureau Broedplaatsen is to make at least 10,000 m^2 of new incubators possible every year. Treehouse makes a substantial contribution to this with more than 2,000 m^2, as the emergence of breeding locations goes hand in hand with gentrification processes in the area. This applies to my research site in such a way that due to gentrification processes, the yard and the parts on the north side of the site had to be cleared according to the municipality. The Treehouse project-initiators proposed to the municipality, to transform the (squatter) Treehouse that they already know about, "which is not official", into an "official thing, with everything as it should be according to municipality regulations", allowing many possibilities to organize public events and to just be there.

Currently there are 60 locations in Amsterdam set up to provide a workspace for the creative minds in Amsterdam[1]. Among the breeding grounds, several creative communities – such as NDSM Treehouse - have been established in which artists can rent their own workshop, studio, or gallery. In addition, artists are encouraged to interact with each other and to stimulate each other. Like all policy regulations, these determine who may or may not belong (or par-

---

[1]Gemeente Amsterdam, 'Broedplaatsenoverzicht' https://www.amsterdam.nl/kunst-cultuur/ateliers-broedplaatsen/over-broedplaatsen/broedplaatsenoverzicht/, consulted at 13-08-2021.

ticipate) to the community, through top-down regulations. Artists eventually must leave after a few years, so it is only a temporary place. During an interview with the direction of Treehouse, I learned that Treehouse selects artists based on their interest in Treehouse as a community. "If you don't feel like being part of a community, don't come to Treehouse," says Adriaan Kole. Adriaan is one of the initiators who is still present and is now the managing director at Treehouse NDSM. He tries to select new members based on the personal ambition of artists to really get started with their project. The management is aware that people are looking for a network and community, but in their experience, the artists are ultimately responsible themselves to achieve such a result. Treehouse has tried to structure the design of the 'building' and the facilities in such a way, that "meeting" and "togetherness" are stimulated. "Think of the central W.C.'s, central water, the Cantina, but also the small spaces, shoulder to shoulder. It is almost impossible not to meet and hear your neighbours." The management of treehouse believes it is the artists' own responsibility to seek out and maintain that collectiveness and community. Later on in this article I will provide an example of how a large amount of Italian artists formed a small sub-community within Treehouse. I will discuss this in detail, especially because halve of my participants were Italian.

Figure 3: "NDSM site" at Amsterdam. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

Figure 4: "The square" at NDSM Treehouse Amsterdam. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

2   Treehouse: Political and Historical Analysis

Treehouse's aesthetic appearance on the outside is characterized by an artwork of neon words that say "ELITOPIA", "GLAMOGLOBALITY", "NARCYNICISM" and "INTROSPECULATION", made by artist Annaïk Lou Pitteloud[2]. These four words are written in Helvetica, a Swiss font designed for its neutrality and clarity. The words are the artist's vocabulary to describe the present time: a time in which the artist is often seen in terms of branding and the globalized 21st century, which can even be seen as the "century of the self", where the egoistic individual takes cynicism as a guideline over solidarity and the elite form the utopia [3]. As Beech (2006) states: "Here and elsewhere, institutionalization is taken to be a key feature of contemporary art" and this is one of the aspects of this study that I will take along to find out about how this institutionalization is perceived by artists, especially because it used to be a squatter community where individuals experienced more autonomy within the space and place. Therefore, an artwork as such, that reflects such ideas, can help us understand the experiential aspects of human life (MacDougall 2005: 95), in this case, certain ideologies.

Figure 5: "ELITOPIA, GLAMOGLOBALITY, NARCYNNICISM and INTROSPECULATION, artwork by Annaïk Lou Pitteloud" at Treehouse Amsterdam. Photograph by Dilara Erzeybek.

---

[2]An interview with Annaïk Lou Pitteloud about this artwork can be found on the followingwebsite: https://www.ndsm.nl/story/interview-met-kunstenaar-annaik-lou-pitteloud/.

[3]I retrieved this information from a sign that hangs under the artwork and by conversations.

Figure 6: "Treehouse by Night". Photo taken by Dilara Erzeybek.

Treehouse has a history as a squatters' community of about 11 years and was situated next to the shipyard along the canal at the NDSM wharf. The concept of Treehouse arose when initiators Koolen, M and Kole, A came up with the idea to buy second-hand sea-containers and to rent them out as studios to creatives and artists in the area. Their idea was to "scale up this last piece of subculture on the yard" into "Treehouse 2.0". In this section, most data comes from the vision and mission statement of Treehouse of 2018, which I was allowed to read. Besides that, I got the chance to interview Adriaan Kole (management of Treehouse) and participants.

The first version of Treehouse emerged in 2011 and it grew gradually into a squatter environment with a low rent and free from rules. Treehouse grew gradually into a place with 30 container-studio's, which were "tolerated" by the municipality's NDSM-werf Oost foundation (Stichting Beheer NDSM-werf Oost). Amsterdam has a history of squatter movements, which started in the 1960's and started out as a reaction to housing shortage in the city (Uitermark 2004: 231). Over the past few decennia, municipal led policy regulations caused the squatted places to disappear, which Treehouse is an example of.

According to Treehouse's vision and mission statement, the concept has been shared with the tenants of old-Treehouse and colleagues from other incubators. According to a market survey of

approximately a hundred potential participants, there were interests in various facilities and the "ideal" price levels. According to the results, there was also an interest in joint facilities such as a canteen, a project space, but also for a large degree of freedom in the form of presentation.

The Treehouse project received funding from municipal policy for establishing breeding grounds, which is known as Bureau Broedplaatsen. This breeding ground policy has policy money available to subsidize and ensure that affordable studio-spaces for artists do not disappear from Amsterdam. To receive funding, Treehouse became a foundation with an independent board in 2018, as the subsidy money does not go directly to a person. Treehouse foundation also had to meet multiple obligations in return, such as a board that must be accountable at all times, because the municipality are formally responsible, so they want to know what the organization's plans are and how the funding is being spent.

The institutionalization of Treehouse meant that the day-to-day management of the space and place was going to lie with the management. The Treehouse-NDSM Foundation is responsible for placing the studios and are then allowed for financial exploitation for a profitable operation. The foundation owns the studios and communal facilities and is responsible for the general course of business and the management of studios and grounds. Agreements are made about this with the owner of the land (Land and Development Department) and the manager of the surrounding site (the NDSM yard management foundation). The NDSM-Werf Oost foundation manages the site on which Treehouse was built on. They have a programming function, and they also have a responsibility to facilitate events in the field of arts and culture within the environment. They are also the institute that, for example, brings in all the major festivals on the site and part of their budget comes from what they earn from those festivals.

The board of the Treehouse foundation consists of at least three board members, from which one member is appointed on the recommendation of the Amsterdam's municipality, Bureau Broedplaatsen. The management of Treehouse reports to the board of the foundation and discusses the policy to be pursued. Direct contact and consultation between management and tenants is possible. On the (permanent) agenda are management matters, house rules, and a planning of events and presentations.
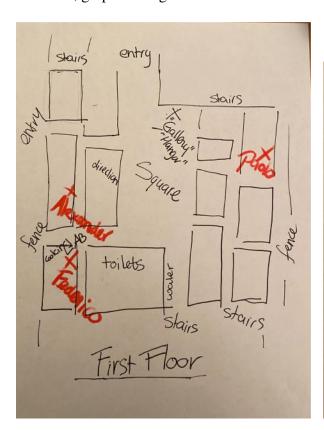
3   Personal Motivation and Societal Relevance

In this study I explore how we can understand artistic practice as an intention and as an empowering role and position within society, in relation to the space in which it is practiced. In anthropology, space is a central element of the space-time-culture dimension in which humans live, which are universal, but different cultures experience or/and perceive it differently (Aucoin 2017: 398) or cultures enable the persons that embody it to perceive time-space dimensions in different ways. Space is a physical geographical location and space turns into a place when specific meanings and connections are attached to the space. Meaning making processes are dynamic and they can change over time (Aucoin 2017: 397). As anthropologist, I find the emergence of breeding grounds an interesting social phenomenon to study and also because I have a fascination for art and artistic practice. Therefore, I try to connect these sides. Breeding grounds are interesting to study as they sometimes include individuals of certain behavior, that are rejected within a wider societal framework, and this can potentially be seen as a positive characteristic to have, or something that you can use, in the artistic community. Besides that, it is interesting to see in what ways a changing city is interested in artists. On the one hand the city changes and might undergo problems, on the other hand, the space allows creative minds to settle in, which might help to develop new ideas. I will support my argument by providing other examples of how artists relate to breeding grounds throughout this article.

4   Selection of Participants

Exploring artistic practice and exploring the role of place and space in it, has been the essence of my research and thus of this article. During my research I have observed and interviewed many artists at Treehouse whom I have chosen rather randomly. I had met some of them on the open container day on December 4, 2020, when several artists opened their studios for the public. Some others I came across by chance while walking around Treehouse, or through their connections with others I knew already. I have applied qualitative research methods and filmmaking as a research tool to perform several case studies to explore my participants' artistic practices and artistic processes in relation to place and space. Hence, my research question was: What do artists require of a workplace and space in order to enable them to fully engage with their artistic practice and process?

For this article, I reflect on some individuals more intensively. I will discuss the case studies of two male artists (Andrea and Paolo) and two female artists (Clothilde and Rika) more extensively in their individual portraits throughout this article. The selection of these artists is based on the intensity of research that I have done with them. In addition, the gender aspect has been important in establishing a balance between men and women in my study. Moreover, the selection is also based on how dedicated and involved the artists are with their practice and the community. These artists also showed a great devotion to their practice and the community, by coming to their studios in the cold wintertime. Especially because Treehouse does not have central heating and because the harsh winter cold caused other problems regarding material infrastructure in the place as well. In addition, there are other artists who play a role in my research, but which I will describe in a less detailed way. These are Alexander Paton, an artist who brings many people together within the community by playing music and collaborating with others; Federico Corona, a creative in Treehouse's experimental cooking lab; Raffaëllo Cuccuini, graphic designer and musician.

Figure 7: Drawing from journal (first floor Treehouse). By Dilara Erzeybek.

Figure 8: Drawing from journal (second floor Treehouse). By Dilara Erzeybek.

5   Treehouse and Community

One of my observations at Treehouse were the formations of smaller communities within the larger community. These sub-communities are not necessarily exclusive. On the contrary, they are more layered, as they are overlapping group formations. Several examples are group formations around initiatives related to music practices, organizing a joint exhibition or a joint project (collaboration). In addition, I was able to observe a small Italian community, whose members were also occasionally present in the other group formations. In this section I discuss the artist in relation to space from the artist's perspective; how the artists relate to policy; and how the artists enter a dialogue to get what they want and what they expect from the space.

Figure 9: "Party at the Square" at Treehouse. Photograph taken by Dilara Erzeybek.

Figure 10: "A party organized by a community member in the communal space/ Gallery" at Treehouse. Photograph taken by Dilara Erzeybek.

Figure 11: Studio shared by Andrea & Raffaëllo. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

Figure 12: Alex Tam & Alexander Paton during a music practice in Alexander's studio at Treehouse. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

It is remarkable that a large part of my participants are Italians and therefore it might be interesting to look at this sub-community and their roles in respect to the larger community. These individuals are Andrea Marino, Paolo Notaristefano, Federico Corona and Raffaëllo Cuccuini. I met these participants separately from each other and it was a surprising phenomenon for me, because from what I have observed, they already had a group formation and already knew each other. Alexander Paton, who is also an artist at Treehouse and who can be found within several sub-communities, refers to this group as his "Italian brothers". I thought this was a nice and

appropriate reference and I would like to use this to refer to them as well.

On a sunny sunday afternoon, I spent the day with the Italian brothers by meeting up with them at Treehouse. We sat on the shared balcony on the second floor of the container-assembly, enjoyed our free day and talked about many topics. The sun shone through the containers and Andrea explained how this made him feel like his "home", referring to Puglia, his home-province in Italy. All of them started nodding and reminiscing and that was when I started to wonder why Amsterdam is such a special city for them, because I feel that it is probably a very brave decision to migrate to another country to pursue one's dreams. According to their responses, I learned that they were mainly driven by finding a suitable place with an opportunity for a faster economic independence than it was possible in Italy. "If I was still in Italy, I would still live in my parent's home", Paolo said. Andrea added to this that having flexibility between working as a freelancer, being able to practice his own art and having a place for collaborations and social interactions was an important aspect of the "freedoms" that Amsterdam offers. "Also, the life process in Italy is generally slower", Andrea added with a laugh as he gave Federico a grinning look, "but it is a question of a level of comfortableness"

Figure 13: "Paolo, Federico and Andrea hanging out on their free day" at Treehouse. By Dilara Erzeybek.

The Italian brothers often organize "chill outs" to play records with other (Italian) artists. They sometimes organize a "primi disco"-broadcast at the Radio Treehouse studio, where they find pleasure in playing records. Arttu, also community member of Treehouse, who takes a lot of initiative to operate Radio Treehouse, and likes to organize ''Italian radio sessions" often with them. This project is operated from a workspace which is facilitated by the Treehouse

organization, but tenants who wants to use it take their own responsibility to make it function accordingly. Together with Alexander Paton, who joins them often, they like to play songs from their music collections during such broadcast. Artists are also welcomed to share stories about their projects, or to give a live performance as I saw Paolo do several times. Radio Treehouse is a self-started and self-funded project that emerged since last year and broadcast sessions can be followed from the radio website. Interestingly, Andrea has designed the logo for Radio Treehouse, which is being used now to present the radio channel. Andrea explained that the idea for the logo was a very quick sketch after becoming inspired by the "cozy ambiance" of the social interactions during one of the radio broadcast sessions.

Figure 14: "Logo of Radio Treehouse" designed by Andrea Marino.

Figure 15: "Federico and Andrea during their Italian primi-disco, operated with Arttu", at the Radio Treehouse Broadcast studio. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

I would like to refer to my earlier description of the organization's selection procedure of new Treehouse members. As Treehouse organization has constructed the place in such a way that artists run into each other, by which the organization is trying to encourage social interactions, it can be deduced from this observation as an example, that building communal spaces might result in the formation of sub-communities.

6 "Artists of Treehouse Unite!"

Treehouse's institutionalization and renovations have enabled the organization to rent out more studios to more artists. Rents have risen, more containers have arrived, and more artists have settled on the site. In this way, the organization generates more turnover to keep the place running. According to what I have learned through interviews and participant observation, this process has sometimes changed the lived experiences of some artists in in the community. Because of policy regulations, some artists have felt that they do not have the freedoms they would like to have, for example, they must ask for permission when they want to paint something on the container-walls or use a public space for a project. However, the management argues that since they now receive funding from the municipality, they must account for several measures. According to their views, there are conditions for fire safety, but also because they "have to ensure that everyone in the community creates an attractive location for potential visitors".

In March (12) 2021, several artists took the initiative to communicate their lived experiences of the space and place and their points of concern on the policy of Treehouse, to the management. One of these individuals was Andrea, from whom I felt that he took a political role within this group. A flyer was made and spread to community members, in which their points of concern on material and immaterial subjects were expressed. Other members were welcome to join the group and were encouraged to speak out their own views within the flyers as well.

The points in the flyer consisted of criticisms, with suggestion for a solution. To summarize and communicate all concerns, this group of individuals planned to continue and discuss the following with the management, which have been divided in four categories, both including material and immaterial needs: 1) Finances: Rent is too high, 2) Democratization and Transparency: More authority for the artists, 3) Material needs: Availability of tools and 4) Protest against the decisions and lack of action by the responsible organization. Adding to that, the artists who express themselves on the issues of policy regulations, are not against the institutionalization itself but want to gain even more advantages from it. This is especially important because Treehouse used to be a squatter community.

It is important to mention that despite their concerns, many artists still experience the community as positive. Even though there are several things that have changed, where they do not agree upon and due to which, they feel less "free", it remains a place where they are

positive about, because according to most of my participants, "the community feeling is very good". There are many likeminded creative individuals and opportunities for collaborations, which makes the place a supportive, creative and artistic environment.

Since I have not worked out the role of community so well with the other artists, I will come back to it later in this article, but not in this specific way. In the next section I would like to explore the concepts artistic practice and artistic intentionality and the role of artists.

CONCLUSION

We are going to ask for a meeting with Adriaan, Erwin and at least one member of the board a.s.a.p.

The following points will be discussed:

- THE RENT INCREASE.
- THE AUTOMATIC COLLECTION OF RENT.
- THE WAGE WHEN WORKING FOR TREEHOUSE (TENANTS AND STAFF).
- HELPING US TO GET FUNDING FOR PROJECTS.
- AND FUNDING FOR CORONA LOSSES. (ATTACHMENT)
- HELPING TENANTS TO GET CAWA PROVIDING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATIONS. (ATTACHMENT)

ARTISTIC

WE ARE DEMANDING TO BE IN CHARGE OF ALL THE VISUAL AND AUDIO ARTISTIC PROJECTS IN TREEHOUSE (OUR OWN ARTISTIC BOARD DIVIDED IN MUSICAL AND VISUAL ARTS).

- WE WANT TO BE THE DECISION MAKERS ABOUT PROJECTS IN TREEHOUSE.
- WE DON'T NEED AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR WHO IS NOT AN ARTIST HIMSELF.
- WE WANT TO HAVE OUR PROMOTION, INDIVIDUALLY AND AS AN ARTISTIC GROUP, DONE MORE PROFESSIONALLY:
- PAID INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK PROMOTION.
- PROFESSIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESS RELEASES ABOUT EXHIBITIONS AND CONCERTS, AT LEAST A MONTH BEFORE PREMIERE DATE.
- MAILING LISTS TO ALL PRESS (JORAM HAS THESE).
- WE WANT UNLIMITED ACCES TO THE UTILITIES HANGAR (PROJECT ROOM) TO BE ABLE TO WORK ON BIGGER PROJECTS, WOOD CARVING OR METAL WORKING.

MOST IMPORTANTLY

TOOLS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR TENANTS WHENEVER THEY NEED THEM.

THE MANAGEMENT SHOULD BE OPEN TO QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS. THE FEELING THAT THERE IS A STATUS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MANAGEMENT AND THE TENANTS IS WRONG. THERE WON'T BE A MANAGEMENT WITHOUT THE TENANTS.

IN DUTCH THERE IS A SAYING

DE KLANT IS KONING.

FIRST TREEHOUSE TENANTS UNION MEETING · 12TH MARCH 2021

Figure 16: Section from the flyer: "12 March 2021: First Treehouse Tenants Union Meeting".

7 Art and Anthropology

In this section I would like to support my interests in my research topic with examples from anthropology and art history. Both Gable (2002) and Graburn (2015) agree that all humans can enjoy aesthetic appreciation, "but their visual, aural, tactile, olfactory, and sensory preferences vary from place to place and over time" (Graburn 2015: 15). I see science and art both as ways of understanding the world and this is currently also part of discussions within anthropological discourse. Academics argue how art, artistic practice and anthropological methods/thinking can be linked (Wright, Christopher, & Schneider: 2020). As I am also searching for my own position between practicing anthropology and art, I find it valuable to explore ways in which artistic practice and anthropological methods and thinking can be applied.

This brings us to the discussions around who or what is perceived as an artist. One of the

central problems in the anthropology of art concerns the universality of 'art' as a cultural phenomenon. According to Graburn (2015), anthropologists assume that art is a human universal, "but have had to struggle with the cross-cultural identification of art, either by finding common forms and practices, e.g., painting, sculpture, and dance, or by exploring the aesthetic locus in each cultural system" (15). During the twentieth century, anthropologists tried to understand art in order to understand how a society functions culturally and "focused on formal features in objects which, without exclusively being 'artistic', have certain evident 'aesthetic' qualities."[4] Some examples of such anthropological works are Boas' Primitive Art (1927), Geertz's 'Art as Cultural System' (1983) or Claude Lévi-Strauss' The Way of the Masks (1982). According to Forge (2017) "the question as to how far it is possible to discern the meaning attached to a work of art produced by another culture, or even by a distant epoch of our own, remains subject to debate".

Many scholars argue that "the arts can play a unique role in challenging dominant cultural narratives, supporting empowerment, and fostering inclusive and socially just communities" (Mulvey 2015: 115). Farhat (2021) explains how a Syrian art movement outside the country, might be instrumental to future reconciliation processes within Syria (382). Kudaibergenova (2021) explains how the arts in post-Socialist countries have the capacity to become "more autonomous from state power and censorship and are thus able to deliver more alternatives to society" and in this way art may contribute to developments in society in different ways. Besides that, scholars describe the arts as a resource for individual and collective storytelling, healing from trauma, and for fostering intergroup dialogue on contested social issues (Mulvey 2015: 115).

I am fascinated by the intentionality of artistic practice that reflects on the state of the society in which it is created. In this way, artists can even provide us with an instrument that allows for a better understanding of a culture in time and space, by capturing its *zeitgeist*. The *"zeitgeist"* - literally "spirit of the times", is the characteristic way of thinking, acting, and believing, dominant by most of the members of a society in a particular period (Krause 2019: 1). In this way, art and artistic expression become a medium to think and communicate with, comparable to a language, which artists work on to develop and refine. Within art history, there were also artists who had the same ideology about a social or artistic issue, and they communicated with each other to explore new ways to express themselves, by reflecting on the

---

[4]https://courses.lumenlearning.com/culturalanthropology/chapter/anthropology-of-art/

changes they observed in society of their time. Some examples are *De Stijl* and the *CoBrA* movement. These were often artists who were eventually publicly recognized, but it took them often a long time to get to that point.

De Stijl, was a group of influential painters such as Piet Mondriaan, Theo van Doesburg and Gerrit van Rietveld who collaborated to radically reform the arts, which paralleled with technical, scientific, and social changes within the world in the early twentieth century. *De Stijl* was a response to the horrors of World War I. The members of the art movement viewed art as a means of social and spiritual redemption and embraced a utopian vision of art's transformative potential[5]. Interestingly, the community did not have a space where they came together; most artists knew each other but never met; and most of the communication went through letter contact and by publishing their views on modern art in their own magazine). Since their formation, the group has been oriented on an international scale, but the community had only organized two joint exhibitions throughout its existence. These artists analyzed society and looked for new aesthetic properties to present their visionary perspectives. In doing so, a *zeitgeist* can also be associated with certain aesthetic properties and a certain style. These can be distinguished from the way that "style" is understood within art history and so, it can have an afterlife as a style (Krausse 2019: 3).

That does not diminish the importance of space for artists in current society. Kudaibergenova (2021) argues how space is an important aspect for artists in post-Socialist countries. She explains that "the conditions in which contemporary artists seek autonomy within the states' institutionalization of the social and political order and within the neoliberal global order, the 'space' of art contributes in its value to generate new ideas, alternative views, protests, and criticisms that are not possible in other forms of social or cultural expressions in their societies" (93). Holly-Nambi (2021) argues how initiatives around artistic practice, created space for a "queer" community.

8   Artistic Intentionality

Artistic Intentionality is a fluid understanding. It has to do with who identifies as an artist and is a concept which does not have a fixed definition. This is especially important to understand the relation between artistic space and artistic practice. Treehouse selects artists based on the

---

[5]The Art Story, De Stijl. https://www.theartstory.org/movement/de-stijl/, consulted at 15-06-2021

management's own subjective interpretation on whether somebody is eligible and qualified enough to be part of the community, and the decision making is supported by a five-year plan in which artists must elaborate on their plans and approaches for the next five years in terms of their artistic practices and intentionality's. This selection process requires some form of "proof" on the artist's intentionality, for the artist to be eligible to become a member of Treehouse and can also result in exclusion of individuals.

Thus, as there is no consensus on a single, cross-cultural definition of 'art' in anthropology, Gell (1998) proposed a new definition of "art" to surmount this difficulty. This new definition sees art as "a complex system of intentionality, where artists produce art objects to effect changes in the world, including (but not restricted to) changes in the aesthetic perceptions of art" (Gell 1998). I will take this interpretation also with me in order to explore what this means for my participants.

Andrea and Alexander collaborated by making a clothing line with the messages: "No Lives Matter" and "Make € Not Art". The first one being a reaction to the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020, but "not diminishing the scale and importance of the movement. It was ultimately a reaction on that 1% who rule the world, but who don't care about the rest of the world population" Alexander said. The second project was inspired by the large graffiti piece on one of the buildings at the NDSM site which says, "make art, not€", but Alexander and Andrea turned it around to make a statement on "how some art-institutes only care about money and making profit, instead of caring about art" Alexander said. "Now it is also a nice moment to spread a message through T-shirts, because the mouth should be covered because of the COVID-19 situation", Andrea added.

Figure 17: "MAKE ART NOT€" at the NDSM site. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

Figure 18: "Alexander Paton wearing clothing from the 'MAKE€ NOT ART'-project". By Dilara Erzeybek.

From this example we can deduce that artists can give shape to developments in society, just as they can have an emotional power (Grabrun 2015). Here, I would like to use Andrea's philosophy of "building bridges" as an example, to further communicate my findings (from interview and participant observation) on his positionality within the community. Visual communication might be seen as an instrument of orientation and positioning himself in the Treehouse culture. During an interview, Andrea explained to me that he finds it important to promote the acceptance of cultural differences, and by collaborating with people on artistic, economic, and cultural levels, it might help to "build bridges between different cultures and ideas". He admits

that this can be difficult sometimes, but that this is the "only way". His work is less of the emotional search for the self that lead to artistic expression[6].

9 Observations on Artistic Intentionality of Participants

9.1 Clothilde

An example of an artist who is exploring her artistic intentionality and position by being in Treehouse, which she refers to as a "research", is Clothilde. Clothilde is an artist from France. She has studied fashion and fine arts and identifies with the term "multidisciplinary artist", and she likes to experiment with different ways to create art. Clothilde enjoys painting organic shapes in the form of little beans and presents these in different forms, such as collages, screenprints, clothing, postcards, and more. I asked Clothilde where the bean shapes she paints come from and she explained the following: "These shapes are what is coming out of me. It is my tool to express things inside of me, which need to go out. This tool also helps me to try new things and experiment with other forms of image making", she answered. Clothilde wants her audience to play with their imagination. "I do not care for explanations of artistic works, those are just words, which is a different way of resonating about something. My art leaves more space for the things as they are. People all see different things in my art and in that way, in this way, it is interesting to learn more about the person who you have in front of you".

Clothilde explained what her artistic practice means to her during an interview and participant observation: "Whatever it is that I am doing, for me, art is about playing like we were a child. I like using all kinds of tools, such as tweezers, tiny scissors, tools, and I like to play dentist for example when I am creating something. I don't feel like I am a painter per se at that moment, but I love playing with paper, finding the right tools, and organizing my space, doing repetitive movements, and process my movement while doing that. I like to shift into different personalities, so playing is something very big for me. Playing also means unconsciously expressing myself. In that moment, I am in that dimension where I can admit to

---

[6]Andrea's philosophy of "building bridges" is one that stuck with me and reminded me of the Dutch TV program 'Zomergasten', where the presentor and the Dutch Chief Government Architect, Floris Alkemade, discuss how issues about climate change are not explained in the right language, and how it should be cast in a different language, and that it must be done so through art. They discussed that by making the design of it attractive, it can point to a future that we can look forward to and as one we want to work on.

who I want to be. You can be twenty different persons in a day! That is the exciting part for me!".

From this I learned that the form of Clothilde's work reflects the content: the bean shapes give Clothilde the space to play. Another interesting aspect in relation to her artistic practice in the Treehouse place, as she has explained to me, is how creating a large graffiti piece on the containers at Treehouse "unblocked" her. This helped her to confirm her passion for painting as well. From this we can deduce that Clothilde has made use of the various possibilities that Treehouse as a place offers to her to "play".
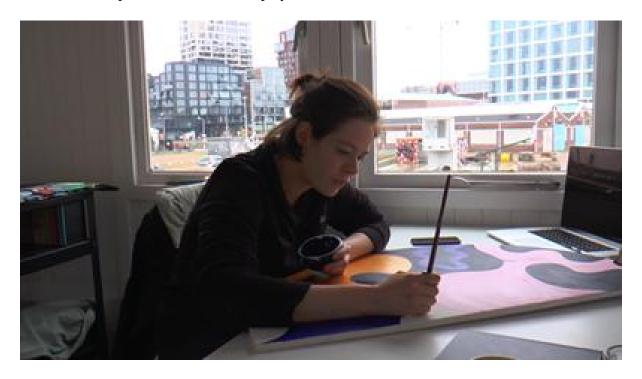

Figure 19: "Clothilde paints organic shapes and breaks the boundaries of proportion and realism" in Clothilde's studio at Treehouse. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

Figure 20: Clothilde working on the graffiti piece, photo by Clothilde.

Figure 21: The result of Clothilde's project.

9.2 Paolo

I will continue with exploring the artistic practice and intentionality of Paolo. Paolo is a young Italian artist who is specialized in painting and drawing. Paolo wants to do "art for art, something meaningful, nothing more", as he explained to me. Paolo was one of the first artists I met during the open container day in December. And later, during my fieldwork, I noticed that Paolo was part of the small Italian community, and therefore often present during observations or activities. Paolo was very invested in our collaboration and this form of collaboration was an opportunity for him as an artist to also reflect on his own position within the art world, as he once told me. Paolo works in a web design and graphic design agency and besides visual arts he has a passion for playing drums. His passions are perpetuated by a continuous parallelism between visual art and music. As Paolo explained to me, his artworks reflect his "inner time and space", which is a reflective aspect of his artistic intentionality, but also of his introspective personality. After Paolo finishes a piece, he reflects and communicates with the paintings, which is also part of his self-conscious personality. Farrelly-Jackson (1997) explains how art and artistic expression become a medium to think and communicate with, comparable to a language, which artists work on to develop and refine.

Figure 22: Paolo's artworks are built up with unstructured and liberated forms, which gives the audience the opportunity to create their own narratives. His paintings seem paradoxical at first sight, but it explores the co-existence of observation and perception, according to what Paolo explained to me. From *Space For Artistic Practice*.

9.3   Rika

This brings us to the next artist that I would like to present. Rika, born in Norway, is a visual artist and art teacher. Rika identifies also with being a "global nomad". Rika showed me her sketchbooks during an interview and shooting session. While going through the pages, she explained how "travelling around the world and exploring it" inspires her work. Rika likes to bring her sketchbooks with her almost everywhere she goes and as her artworks manifest from her daily experiences and she tends to sketch and write down her thoughts in them as well. According to her, with each new adventure, she finds new experiences. "I allow myself to embrace or let go of each experience by sharing a piece of it with others. My wish is that the observer might be able to pull their own experience from each painting." This conversation reminded me of an interview with Alexander in which he stated that ADHD is not a disorder: "You're not ADHD, you're just an artist! You don't need drugs to help you concentrate, you just need inspiration!" It was an expression that sticked to me throughout the research.

10 Conclusion Part One

So far, I have explored the roles of artists and place and space in macro perspective. I have tried to understand why and in what ways a city is interested in artists and how artists relate to this. Nevertheless, a space is created where people look at reality in other ways, which is needed in a city that is developing and facing new problems. The multitude of insights and world visions that emerge and enter discussion with each other, can be important aspects in this. Andrea and Alexander are good examples of an intentionality that has a social intention. Community and place and space play a role in this.

Treehouse is a breeding ground where different practices and intentionalities come together. It consists of people who also identify as artists but have no artistic intentionality. Therefore, it can be interesting and relevant to see how different intentionality's can support and find each other, and how this can promote self-identification. Treehouse is a breeding location in the sense that it is an environment in which individuals can explore how they relate to their artistic or creative intentions. The creative practice relates to individuals who don't identify with the term "artist", which are Andrea, Raffaëllo and Federico. They also consider their work as "creative". I have connected "artistic practice" with this to describe specific moments and processes in which a collaboration project or artwork is made and to better describe it.

Each artist has their own vision on why they do or do not identify as artist, which also relates to the form of their artistic practice, their way of communicating through art and their personal views on the terms they identify with. I find this important because an identity will speak to the artists in such a way, that they are able to and dare to claim their positions as artists and creatives within the place and space, which I will discuss further in the second part of this article. Kuoni (2021) "Being in an environment where one can act in solidarity within a constellation of like-minded groups or having opportunities to collaborate with others, will raise awareness of their positionality within a larger system that empowers the actors" (355).

Part Two: Space for Artistic Practice, a Closer Perspective

11 Visual Ethnographic Research: *Space For Artistic Practice (2021)*

In this part I will discuss the somewhat more personal experience of my participants about their artistic practice and processes in relation to space, but before that I would like to explain more about film as a research method within visual anthropology.

For my research, I used observational cinema in registering and studying my participant's artistic practices and processes, which are about sounds, gestures, atmosphere, colors, emotions, movement, spaces, which are all aspects that can be portrayed so well in observational cinema. In my view, this allows me to present and explore "everything at once", keeping in mind that images only present a particular view and cannot accurately represent a reality or truth (Marion & Crowder 2013: 3). Another point for making an ethnographic film is that I like to engage in creative practices myself and creating a film has been an activity in which I could explore my own interests in art and find ways "to forge a creative connection between form and content" Grimshaw (2001). In addition, as part of their artistic practice, Rika and Paolo have learned not to put things into words, for which film can again offer a good solution for a possible better impression of the lives of my participants. I used filmmaking as a research tool to further explore such things and presented these findings also in an audiovisual output: *Space for Artistic Practice (2021)*. The film and this article are part of the same overarching research.

My film fits into the aspects above especially because Paolo, for example, uses different spaces in Treehouse which changes the awareness of his work. Our collaboration was also interesting for him as he could observe himself again through my material, which resulted in interesting reflections from a different perspective. By communicating with Paolo through the audiovisual footage that I made of him, I felt that I started to learn more about him as a person too. I would like to continue by arguing the importance of visual research in current anthropological discourse.

"Visual anthropologists have traditionally used film to document physical spaces, artifacts, and images, analyzing representational processes linked to visible, tangible aspects of culture" (see Morphy and Bakns 1999: Rollwagen 1988; Ruby 2000 in Grossman eds. Suhr & Willerslev 2013: 199). According to visual anthropology, images can move an audience quickly and powerfully in ways that words alone may not (Marion & Crowder: 2013: 3). When filmmaking is undertaken before writing about emotive moments of fieldwork, it can help to develop a more evocative and situated written ethnography (Werbner 2011 in Lawrence 2020: 5). Besides using film as a data collecting tool, I argue that video is a "technology that participates in the negotiation of social relationships and as a medium through which ethnographic knowledge is produced" (Pink 2013: 183).

Inspired by observational cinema, I used long takes to film my participants, because it is characterized "by an intimacy rooted in close observation and in amassing with daily life" (Grimshaw 2001: 126). The term 'observation' is used to describe the filmmakers' sensitivity towards their subjects (Grimshaw 2001:130). The long take is "a way for allowing us glimpses into a pure being-with-others that cuts across the boundaries of culture" (Henley 2004: 114, MacDougall 2006: 4 in Suhr & Willerslev 2013: 10). I found this helpful especially in understanding Paolo's process for example. To convey the participatory aspect of my own presence, I interviewed him. "Interviews allow witnesses to say things to the camera that they wouldn't think of saying to their friends or family" and "they can also add a personal dimension" (Barbash & Taylor 1997: 30). This was especially true for the moments in which Paolo was painting and while I was filming. I interviewed him about the things that stood out to me at that moment, as the artwork was emerging. This helped me to empathize with what was going on in the situation and by re-watching the footage, it helped me to generate a better description of what was happening.

12 Paolo's Performance and Observational Cinema

Paolo performs his artistic process in several phases. First, he starts preparing his materiality and mentality ritually, and then he starts with his process of which the output has a visual and an audial segment.

Figure 23: "Paolo improvising" in Paolo's studio at Treehouse. From Space For Artistic Practice. By Dilara Erzeybek.

The first phase of the process always starts with an improvisation. Paolo explained to me that the improvisation part involves using his "subconscious" and explains this as how he feels at that specific moment in space and time. Guided by this experience, from what I have observed, he seemed very intuitive in his expression when he started creating the (improvised) strikes on the paper with an oil pastel in both of his hands. His movements are rhythmic, and his hand are sometimes in parallel movement and sometimes in opposite to each other. His facial expressions give me the impression that he is in a concentrated mental state and he also does not talk. Often this phase is also made using a microphone and a looper to record and play the sound of "the signs". This eventually evolves into an audio-visual performance[7]. The source of the sound is always a microphone which loops the sound of Paolo using his pastels on his paper. Instruments are used to include other sounds which are part of the performance, and these can be different each time. Sometimes there is more emphasis on drums and other times on the bass, and the choice depends on Paolo's own subjective interpretation on the situation.

---

[7]Paolo presented the first phase of this improvisation process by an audio-visual performance which he performed in the large communal space ("hanger"/ "gallery") in Treehouse. The documentation of his performance forms part of this thesis. I will discuss this in section 15.
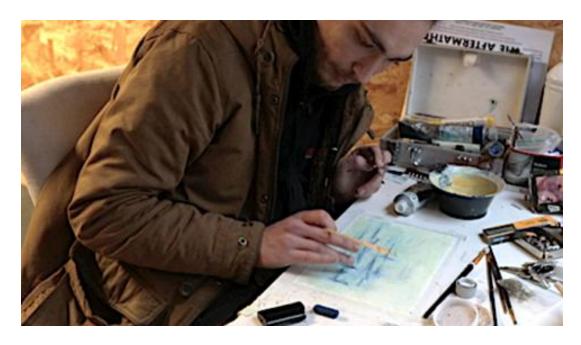
Figure 24: "Paolo in painting phase where he decides how to shape the landscape" in Paolo's studio at Treehouse. From Space For Artistic Practice. By Dilara Erzeybek.

When he has finished improvising, I sensed that he increasingly knows how to shape his painting and works towards a possible outcome. He explained to me how he determines where the light comes from, creates shadows, gives the clean lines more shape and uses colour. After adding these elements, the result will look like a dreamy surrealist land scape. Throughout his process, Paolo is in a different mindset, which can best be interpreted as a mental state in a more philosophical sense. During filmmaking, Paolo allowed me to witness and record his artistic process and by asking him questions at certain moments, I received explanations from Paolo. I was very aware of myself, and I tried to find a balance between disturbing Paolo for a question or to carefully observe and handle the camera. Therefore, I feel that re-studying filmic material has helped me to create a better interpretation of the complexities of Paolo's performance. Since I found Paolo's performance very difficult to interpret, I want to reiterate why visual research has been so important to me. In the following section, I would like to draw further upon visual anthropological discourse and why it is important that I reflect on my own presence and positionality in visual ethnographic research.
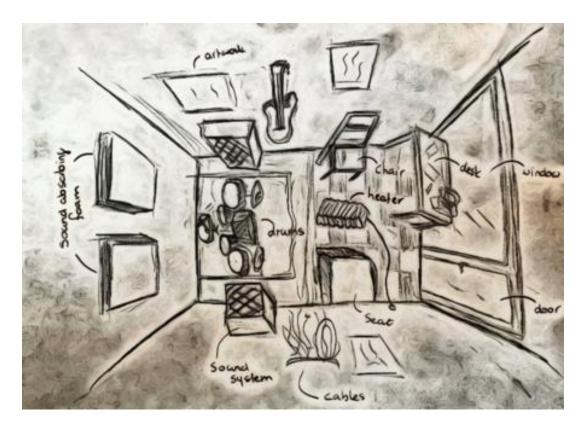
Figure 25: My interpretation of Paulo's workspace.

13 The Role of Space in Artistic Process

One of the aspects of my research that remained least accessible through conversation, was the role of space, how artistic process takes place and the conditions for each artist to come to that level of performing that art in the space (also in a more philosophical perspective). In addition, I would like to indicate that it won't be possible to give a full overview of what artistic process consists of, but in relation to two of my participants, I have done more in-depth research on how it took place for them, and what conditions they need in terms of space. In this section I will therefore explore the role of space in artistic process in a micro perspective. I will support my arguments by referring to the film, which is the audio-visual segment of my research output. Although those in Treehouse are marked as artists, some of them don't identify as artists. That's why, because my main aim was to understand the role of space in artistic process, I have focused mainly on two artists in my film, who definitely identify as artists, and whose process I was allowed to observe. These artists are Paolo Notaristefano and Rika Maja Duevel. In addition, the reason why I choose to discuss Rika and Paolo side by side, is because a comparison takes place, which therefore reflects the diversity of the roles and intentionality's of artists and

that argues even more for artists to not be seen as one thing.

To support my argument, I will use Bourdieu's theory on place and space (in hu:2013), to gain a deeper anthropological understanding. I think it is important to emphasize the role of an artistic space, and here I want to refer to a space as part of a location (place), but I will also refer to a space that that has something that can be experienced much more philosophically through a mental view. I perceive this as an artistic space that an artist experiences to achieve art internally within himself and I introduce the term 'artistic sphere' to interpret it. The physical space is certainly an important part of that, but that is not the same for every artist. The idea of *habitus* is that people appropriate a culture of all kinds through implicitly delivered forms. *Habitus* is produced by one's position in the social structure and it develops one's attitude towards society and influences the way an individual reacts to the world around him or her. Artists come to their studios, especially because they build a certain experience there. This can consist of how they build their *habitus*, by having their own way in which they organize their day. These ways also relate to their art, which is gradually taking shape there. Like Bourdieu argues, within a space, with the "toolbox" that they have been given, an individual is free to organize their own *"Habitus"*. However, the *habitus* of the artist's studio is in conflict with for example the home-*habitus*. Therefore, it is interesting to look at the preconditions of the artistic space, because the studio has a facilitating function.

14 Rika's Process

Rika explained that during her period in art school, she learned to not rely on space, but was encouraged to find a way to make what she wants in the space she has, so she used to paint on her bed. When she travels, she does not take a giant set of tools with her. She never takes utensils with her that need preparations, for example a pencil that needs sharping. When I asked how Rika segmented her studio, she explained how her studio had changed, because she wanted it to be broken up into two spaces. The front side of her studio is a mini gallery, where she can group her works differently, depending on how she wants to present her studio. Rika explained that she likes to segment things in her life, so for her studio, she likes it to be constructed in such a way, that she can step in one place to do something there, and eventually to step into another to do another thing there. This is a good example of how a *habitus* is built to facilitate certain

experiences. She explained that having her workspace in the back of her studio, away from the window and her other pieces, she is now able to work without breaking up her experiences with the piece she is working on. In addition, the space in the back is also used to store stocks of canvases, paint, and other materials. Rika likes things in her studio labeled, so it is easy for her to find the tools she is looking for quickly. In my film I'm following Rika during the day in her studio.

Figure 26: "Rika's Studio" at Treehouse. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

During an interview, Rika explained how she uses different spaces for different purposes: "I think when I'm teaching a class, it's different than when I'm here in my studio. But there are also a lot of similarities. First, I don't dress up, I wear something that I can get messy in, because I know in an art room, or in my studio I will run into paint. It will happen. One of the things that I am wary about is, is that I try not to make my own work around the kids, because I get into a tunnel vision and I'm less supportive of helping them, as I get very focused. I forget about everything else around me." From this I learned it is important to be in a space where one is indeed able to forget everything around and thus to have a habitus, in which such experiences arise. As explained before, Rika goes into a tunnel vision, "the zone" as she calls it. This process can best be understood by seeing the film. Having a little workspace in the back of her studio enables her to fully engage with her artistic practice without being too distracted or even disturbed. This also coincides with her idea that she wants to be sure about the lines she is drawing, where there is no room for going back, or even mistakes. Therefore, the space can help her to get into a state where she can leave out what has to do with daily life and other obligations. This also suggests that artists have diverse lives outside of being an artist, which again suggests not to see artists and their practices as one thing.

Figure 27: "Rika showing me her sketchbooks during an interview" at Treehouse. By Dilara Erzeybek.

Rika showed me some of her sketchbooks and allowed me to interview and observe her. I asked Rika if she would mind if I could observe her while she is painting. She agreed, which made me very happy, since she normally likes to paint undisturbed. In addition, this was also very beneficial for my research, as Paolo and Clothilde were one of the few artists who allowed me to observe them. Many artists want to make art in a quiet environment and prefer not to be disturbed by another person's presence.

From observations, interviews, and filmmaking, I learned that Rika's process usually doesn't starts directly on the canvas. She explained that she always has a clear idea of the design and the colors that she intends to use, before she starts painting. She does not always share what it is that she has painted, and she also keeps the titles ambiguous, because she also wants people to be able to see their own story within the painting. As far as I understood, to get into the mood to experience her interpretation of the artistic sphere, to what Rika refers to as "the zone", she often listens to music wearing large headphones. I got the sense that this cancels every noise from the physical environment around her, which might change her sensorial experience. She prefers large headphones because the vibrations of the music are "like getting kind of into your body", she explained, which I understood as a certain sensory experience within the body. "And

I will often listen to one song on repeat because it is more about the kind of feeling behind the music. But I also do this because I'm not getting distracted from the changing of the song", she adds. Therefore, such things are best perceived through the film, which will enable other ways of interpreting Rika's process. I interpreted such use of music in Rika's process as a form of "self-hypnosis" after I tried to apply it on myself another time. Rika explained that it is a trick that she had learned when she was writing papers and needed "some kind of white noise" to stay concentrated. Rika added that during a tunnel vision, she gets very connected to her work and that it becomes a part of her in a certain way.

When Rika is working on a big piece, and if she starts to feel like she is getting frustrated or is not as connected to the work anymore, she needs to start another piece and just leave the other one for a little bit. "If I'm not able to stay in the zone, then it's better to stop and to do something", she explained. "Because when you're in the zone, it's almost magic, it's a whole another kind of feeling. And if you're not in the zone, you can so easily just mess up what you're doing and break that connection you have with the piece. I think it's important to understand your own kind of zone and if something isn't working, then you just need to take a break", she added. "I know this as I will feel less interested in what I am doing, and everything just stops working. I will not be as excited about the color anymore, and normally I'm very excited about color", she explained. "But after I finish a work of art, it feels like state of euphoria and it feels like a gigantic weight is being lifted off my shoulders!"

Figure 28: "Rika in her *zone*" in Rika's studio at Treehouse. From *Space For Artistic Practice*.

Figure 29: "Rika reaching for paint in the process of painting" in the back of her studio. From *Space For Artistic Practice*.

15   Paolo's Process

Regarding artistic space, a *habitus* includes the organization of a space, and the materials in it are ways to shape and facilitate artistic processes. This organization, selection and ordering of materials within the space are highly personal and therefore don't always have to be so logical. In Paolo's studio, I observed that he used the back of his studio for his instruments and positioned his workspace where he paints in the front, against the window. Paolo gives his studio the freedom to organize itself by leaving the physical space up to non-ordering principles. Paolo once referred to his unorganized desk as "chaos", and by this I understood that he means not according to certain lines or rules. By natural thinking and free movements, the space will organize itself in its own way, which perhaps help him to access an certain mental state in which he can practice his art, or what I called *artistic sphere*.
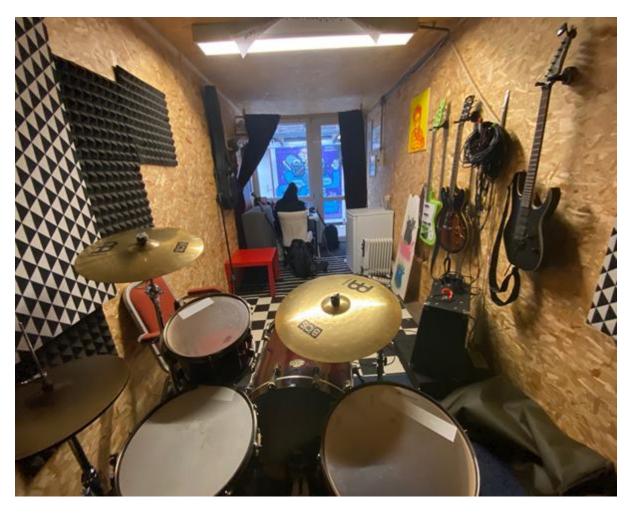

Figure 30: "Paolo working inside his studio" at Treehouse. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

In my film, I am also presenting Paolo's audio-visual performance in a larger space. During this performance, the improvisation part is performed exuberantly. Paolo refers to his expression as coming from an "inner self' and as "vibrations" and "signs". Both the visual representation and sonic representation of Paolo's artistic expression are sequacious and unified but are variable in terms of outcome and semi-positively controllable. Paolo refers to this process as subconscious and this is a reoccurring reference he makes, both regarding the process of painting, as when he is speaking about and interacting with his paintings later on. What this subconscious refers to is what he sees and experiences in his own paintings. These subtle details of the reciprocity between what Paolo calls "the subconscious expression" in relation to the space, are best understood by seeing it in film. Before Paolo begins improvising, he takes a moment for himself in which he seems to turn completely inward. At this moment, Paolo changes his concentration and his attitude and gaze stiffen, and he shifts into some kind of "tantra" as he calls it, which gives him an uncontrolled and free access to reach deep into his "subconscious". When he feels ready, he will intuitively use pastels to express what he feels, which results in what we could consider, an abstract expression. Paolo does not talk until he is finished during his performance. After Paolo feels that the paintings are finished, he starts a reflective process in which he communicates with his paintings. Paolo refers to his introverts as one of the reasons why artistic expression is so important for him. I learned to understand this expression as an impression that you should not explain your work so much. Reflecting and communicating with the artworks is part of his self-conscious personality.

Figure 31: "Paolo's Performance", in the communal space 'galllery"/"hangar"at Treehouse". From *Space For Artistic Practice*.

Figure 32: "The Hangar/Gallery", which is a communal space at Treehouse that artists can use for different purposes. Photographed by Dilara Erzeybek.

Paolo explained how he is practicing "letting go of the ego", which implies that he would like to become a "humble" person, but that it is very difficult in a competitive world like that of the art

world. Through interviews and observations, I observed that Paolo experiences a strange mix of power, which results in being bold and being self-confident in his paintings and at the same time sensing a deep uncertainty and humility. This tension between his artistic intentionality, his artistic expression and the process in which that happens, would not allow him to act as an artist and would also not allow him to reflect on his work in a more profound way. During an interview, Paolo explained to me that, as an artist, he "must" be "humble" in order to be more sensible to the world and in order to truly express himself. This causes him to struggle quietly and obscurely about his aspirations as an artist within a competitive artworld.

16   Summary Part Two

From these examples I suggest that the artistic sphere partly has to do with creating a *habitus* in which it is able to arise. Artists need, as I understood from my participants, to have a space where they can create their own *habitus*, that can lead them to experience or to enter an artistic sphere. It is something that is self-created. This sometimes required that they momentarily exclude themselves from others and looked for conditions that enable them to work well.

Within the artistic sphere, the artist enters a mental state to reach and explore inspiration and to enter in dialogue with the artwork that is produced and allows oneself to be in that space. Some artists explained that the sources of artistic processes lay within their subconscious and referred to this with different terms. Paolo uses the word "subconscious", Rika explained that she goes in to "the Zone" and Clothilde referred to it as "Playing, while shifting into different personalities". This issue of inspiration coming from a self not consciously known, is one that is very hard to explore as it is experienced differently by everyone. According to Chemi et al., "whether these processes are conscious or not is still very much debated" (2015: 81).

The artistic sphere is especially important for the intentionality of the artist because it confirms them in their practice and process in such a way that they dare to take that position. Inside, one dares to claim the space, and the artistic atmosphere will mean to dare to claim. To claim, means to overcome obstacles, procrastination, and confrontation within oneself. A creative sphere will allow the artist and the things that happen in their world to be allowed. This part is a deep psychological and therapeutic aspect of the artistic sphere. I learned that entering

an artistic sphere can be frightening and difficult. Hard work, the unknown, uncertainty about whether you are successful and whether that the artistic persona exists are interesting aspects to problematize this space with. Finally, there is also the process of getting out of it. When getting out of the artistic sphere, the art that is emerging partly serves to deal with what has happened inside the artistic sphere, becoming a mode for negotiation between space, rituals, and the inner world and time of the artists.

To be able to reach a certain experience in the artistic sphere from which such emotionally layered artwork can emerge, as far as I learned from my participants, artists need the right preconditions of the space and place in which this happens. Artists do this by creating their own *habitus*. Rika has a structured studio while Paolo designs his studio a little more freely. Rika prefers to work undisturbed in the back of her studio with headphones on, while Paolo works in the front of his studio with his workplace against his window overlooking his aisle. In addition, Paolo does not listen to music while he is painting but is absolutely not shy when someone knocks on the door. While Paolo is moving throughout his studio during his artistic process, Rika sits on a chair in a certain position for a long time and does not move much, besides preparing and using paint, having her tools right next to her. In further research it would be interesting to further explore these aspects with several more artists. The fact that it is difficult also makes it interesting to study and that is why I see this research as my contribution. In addition, it can also be interesting for policy makers and possibly contribute to the discussion of what artists actually need within a space as a condition for their practice.

17 Conclusion

In the first part of this article, I described Treehouse as space, community and political relations. This was important to be able to link the municipality policy, to how space and community function for artists in community building. It is important to gain insight in how artists relate to the implementation of the breeding ground policy to further understand their positions and experiences.

The NDSM's municipal "Broedplaatsenbeleid'- breeding ground policy, is aimed at providing space for artists to develop their art. My study showed that there is a relatively high number of

individuals in Treehouse that does benefit from the artistic environment and in the community relations, and whose studios are not specifically used to achieve artistic processes. Of all the artists who allowed me to study them more intensively, there are really only three that showed that they seriously used that space for artistic practice and artistic process. These are Paolo, Rika and Clothilde. These participants identify as artist and I have tried to explore what they experience as important to their artistic process throughout this article. I think Treehouse and its surroundings are clearly a breeding ground, namely because the environment offers space for the artists, where they can identify themselves and explore where they want to place themselves. By reflecting on this, we may be able to better understand their intentions and roles within society. The breeding ground as such, is an environment where you can explore and see how you relate to your artistic intentions. I also observed that the artists from Treehouse are not bound to Treehouse as their only community but have other networks outside of it.

Based on my findings within this research, the understanding of concepts "artist" and "artistic intentionality", satisfies most of the properties of my participants practices in the following ways: Trying to represent a view of the world; Independent of any commercial or commercial intent; Free art could indicate the trend in society and give could give it meaning. As I explained, artistic intentionality is a fluid understanding and my study has shown that intentionality is indeed something less "fixed", because all of my participants are so different within their roles and practices. By presenting yourself as an artist in such a Treehouse, you can also do a much better job of investigating your intentions, ideas and goals. In addition, of course, there are also people who are denied as an artist. In art history, there have also been times when the artist did not receive his title until after his death.

Interviewing my participants, filmmaking, and participatory observation has helped me to gain a better understanding of my participants' artistic intentionalities and on how they identify themselves. This is useful in exploring the relationship between artistic practice and artistic space. Through examples, I have argued how the form of Clothilde's art, needs room to "play", which I understood as meeting certain preconditions, which are place and space, in which artistic intentionality can be practiced or executed (freely). This is different for each artist. I have not been able to study Clothilde as intensively and often as the other artists. However, I would like to add that from all examples that I provided, I learned that there is a relationship between

having an artistic intentionality and a space in which one allows oneself to be present in that time & space, and to be in an artistic process. In this way, together with my observations of Andrea's creative practice, artistic practice identifies both creatives and artists.

Not ordering principles, but natural thinking and the opportunity to move freely is an example for how I learned to understand Paolo's artistic process and the role of space in it. On the other side, Rika had an approach that needed her workspace to be segmented according to her own preferences and rules, in order to enable artistic process. From these examples I suggest that the artistic sphere has to do with creating a *habitus* in which it is able to arise. Artists need, as I understood from my participants, to have a space where they can create their own habitus, that can lead them to experience or to enter an artistic sphere. The goal is to get into a mental state where everyday life and obligations can be forgotten, and artistic process can take place. This indicates that artists have diverse lives and that argues in favor of not seeing artists too much as one thing. With this I tried to better explain why it is so important for artists to have their own place where they can go to.

Using the "subconscious", "Playing different personalities", "Reaching a mantra" or "Getting in the zone" are examples of how my participants refer to entering a mental and spiritual space, where ideas start to flow (or are blocked). I introduced the term "artistic sphere", to explore and interpreted this with my observations and how their narratives describe their inner world. Artists need, as I understood from my participants, to have a space where they can create their own *habitus*, that can lead them to experience or to enter an artistic sphere.

For Clothilde, Rika and Paolo, art is also a means of "reaching" inwards, and their artworks often contain emotional layers and symbolisms. When trying to interpret these processes, it may best be explored by seeing it in the film *Space for Artistic Practice*.
I learned that being an artist is much more than creating works that look aesthetically pleasing or to fully express yourself. From the participants' stories I've presented so far, it seems like they live for art. Performing artistic and creative practices freely in a space, and by being able to create a *habitus* and artistic space, seems to be a necessity for these individuals. I feel like in this way, artistic practice slowly shifts to a "way of life".

Bibliography

Aucoin, P. M. (2017) Toward an Anthropological Understanding of Space and Place. In Place, Space and Hermeneutics (Contributions to Hermeneutics, pp. 395-412). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Barbash, I., Murray, S., Taylor, L., & Vaughan, C. (1997). Cross-Cultural Filmmaking : A Handbook for Making Documentary and Ethnographic Films and Videos (Reprint 2019 ed.).

Beech, D. (2006) Institutionalisation for All. Dave Beech tackles an old taboo. http://www.artmonthly.co.uk/ma for-all-by-dave-beech-march 2006

Boas, F. (1975). Primitive art (Unabridged republ. ed.). New York: Dover Publ.

Cameron, S., Coaffee, J. (2005) Art, Gentrification and Regeneration - From Artist as Pioneer to Public Arts. European Journal of Housing Policy, 39-58.

Chemi, T., Borup Jensen, J., & Hersted, L. (2015). Behind the scenes of artistic creativity : Processes of learning, creating and organising.

Farhat, F. (2021) SYRIAN ARTISTS OUTSIDE SYRIA Conflicts, Challenges, and Possibilities for Artists Working in Displacement. In C. Kuoni, J. B. Portoles, N. Khan and S. Moses ´ (eds.), Forces of Art. Amsterdam: Valiz. Pp. 359 – 401.

Farrelly-Jackson, S. (1997). On Art and Intention. Heythrop Journal, 38(2), 172-179.

Forge, A., Clark, A., & Thomas, N. (2017). Style and meaning : Essays on the anthropology of art (Pacific Presences). Leiden: SIdestone Press.

Gable, E. (2002). Beyond Aesthetics: Art and the Technologies of Enchantment. Visual Anthropology Review, 18(1 [U+2010] 2), 125-127.

Geertz, C. (1976). Art as a Cultural System. MLN, 91(6), 1473-1499.

Gell, A. (1998). Art and agency : An anthropological theory. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Graburn, N. (2015). Art, Anthropological Aspects of. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2, 15-20.

Grimshaw, A. (2001). The ethnographer's eye : Ways of seeing in anthropology. Cambridge [etc.]: Cambridge University Press.

Holly-Nambi (2021) CREATING SPACE FOR QUEERNESS. In C. Kuoni, J. B. Portoles, N. ´ Khan and S. Moses (eds.), Forces of Art. Amsterdam: Valiz. Pp. 247-280.

Hu, C. (2013). Habitus, Practice and Social Space: Bourdieu's Theory of Social Classification. Chongqing Youdian Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban)/Journal of Chongqing University of Posts and Telecommunications (Social Science Edition), 25(4), 120-128.

Krausse, Monika. (2019). What is Zeitgeist? Examining period-specific cultural patterns. Poetics (Amsterdam), 76, 101352.

Kudaibergenova, T. D. (2021) 'THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO HAVE THAT SPACE!' The Power of Art and Local Art Communities in Central Asia. In C. Kuoni, J. B. Portoles, N. ´ Khan and S. Moses (eds.), Forces of Art. Amsterdam: Valiz. Pp. 75 – 93.

Kuoni, C. (2021) HISTORIES OF THE PRESENT On the Political Agency of Art. In C. Kuoni, J. B. Portoles, N. Khan and S. Moses (eds.), Forces of Art. Amsterdam: Valiz. Pp. 354 ´ – 358.

Lawrence, A. (2020) Filmmaking for fieldwork: A practical handbook. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1982). The way of the masks. Vancouver [etc.]: Douglas & McIntyre.

MacDougall, D., & MacDougall, D. (2005). The corporeal image (STU - Student ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Marion & Crowder (2013) Doing Visual Reseach.

Mulvey, Anne, Egan, Irene M. (2015). Women Creating Public Art and Community, 2000–2014. American Journal of Community Psychology, 55(1), 115-127.

Pink, S. (2013). Doing visual ethnography (3rd ed.).

Suhr, C., & Willerslev, R. (2013). Transcultural montage (1st ed.). New York, NY: Berghahn Books.

Uitermark, J. (2004). Framing urban injustices: The case of the Amsterdam squatter movement. Space & Polity, 8(2), 227-244.

Wright, Christopher, & Schneider, Arnd. (2020). Anthropology and Art Practice. Routledge.