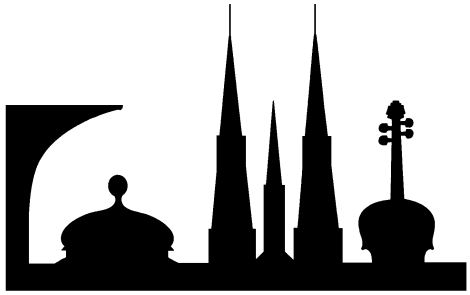
Street Music, City Rhythms

The urban soundscape as heard by street musicians

Jonathan Adam



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Institutionen för musikvetenskap

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Abstract

The soundscape plays a key, if often overlooked, role in the construction of public urban space. Street music – a conscious deliberate propagation of sound in public space – opens an entryway into comprehending the role of sound in the city, and what it reveals about the city's inhabitants. Ethnographic fieldwork in Brussels and Stockholm focuses on street musicians of all kinds, exploring how their music is shaped by their personal motivations, how their practices negotiate meaning in sound and in space, and how their rhythms shape, and are shaped by, the city. These explorations give reason to question R. Murray Schafer's philosophies on soundscape studies, particularly in the urban context. Drawing from Henri Lefebvre's notions of the production of space, and rhythmanalysis as an analytical tool, the urban soundscape is understood as an ongoing negotiation of individual actions, where dynamics of power, identity, and ideology become audible. Street musicians and their sound cultures feature not just as a topic worthy of study, but also as a guide of how and why to listen to and analyze the rhythms of the city.

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1. Introduction

14:30, January, Gare Central, Brussels. Walking over the square in front of the station towards the station's entrance leads you past a collection of people, all standing still for different reasons: the women checking their phones idly as they wait for a friend… the men waiting for a taxi… the group of teenagers chatting amongst themselves, not yet mobilized to head off to a specific destination… Closer to the door, you pass the musicians. The station's architectural peculiarity – how the grand central hall is entered through the side, rather than from the front – funnels commuters through a set of doors that feel disproportionately small relative to the overall space. In front of these inconspicuous doors, on one side, the musicians – a guitar, saxophone, double bass, and hammered dulcimer quartet – play an upbeat song; on the other side, a group of beggars sits behind a table with a sign soliciting for donations. The homeless men have stored some of their bags behind the musicians, and they move between either side casually, inhabiting the space. You, walking in, have to walk through this small crowd: through the Balkan music, through the small congregation of homeless people, through the swishing of the doors, into the hall. The sound of the band makes way for the deep reverberations of the hall, the wash of murmur and footsteps that blends into an indeterminate sea of sound, only punctuated by the electric chimes of the station announcement. The recorded train announcements, read by an anodyne woman's voice, become unintelligible through the reverberations of this space. You turn back to go outside, walking through the ocean of sound, back through the doors, back through the homeless crowd into the daylight. For a brief second, you are between worlds, the echo chamber of the grand station hall behind you, the melodic pulse of the Balkan band diagonally to your side. And then the door swings shut, and the sound around you is dry and outdoors, and the band plays on.

To hear a space constitutes an entirely different experience than seeing it. When conjuring up an idea of a space, the mind turns to its visual aspects: what shapes, what

structures make up its identity. Yet sound and hearing contribute greatly to the embodied experience of a space; through sound, the visual truth of a space can be reinterpreted, contextualized or even contradicted in myriad ways. For all the heavy lifting that sound accomplishes in creating space, in everyday life people tend not to pay too much attention to it and the meanings it carries. Moments like the experience described above are part and parcel to the urban experience, and so commonplace that it becomes hard to even view them worthy of study. Retracing steps, letting the sound work in on the body, however, reveal plenty to question, about space ("how do the acoustics of the station hall aid in its spatial character?"), people ("Why are these musicians playing here, why are they playing what they are playing, and why do they share this space with these homeless people?") and the city overall ("what narrative does this soundscape provide about the city as a whole?"). These questions align with the project of acoustic ecology that R Murray Schafer proposed in The Tuning of the World, where he argues "the general acoustic environment of a society can be read as an indicator of social conditions which produce it and may tell us much about the trending and evolution of that society."1 The assertion that one can listen to the soundscape and figure out how a society functions, and how it is evolving, is easier said than done, not in the least because it is not entirely clear what one should even listen for. While Schafer's work into soundscape studies and acoustic ecology in general aimed to educate people into being more attentive listeners, attuned to subtler cues in their environment, the reality is that the soundscape still acts as a cryptic indicator of a society's functions, rather than an open book.

This research began as an ethnomusicological inquiry into the lives and practices of street musicians in Brussels and Stockholm. Though in my fieldwork I encountered musicians of all possible backgrounds, musical activities and attitudes, I found there were commonalities in how their strategies of engaging with the city were negotiated through sound. In pursuing new leads in the fieldwork, or finding new informants, I found myself attuning to these strategies, trying to understand how to adopt their aural

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[1] R. Murray. Schafer, *The Tuning of the World* (A.A. Knopf, 1977), 3-5.

practices to understand the city. I realized that the common thread running through all the diverse ethnographic encounters was an aurality that did not easily fit into Schafer's model, but rather focused on the immediate, the personal, the negotiable and the spatially engaged. This thesis grew from a straightforward ethnography to an attempt to understand how street musicians shaped urban sound culture, and how their strategies could propose an alternative approach to understanding city life.

Research topic and scope

This thesis examines street music as a starting point to understanding sound culture in urban space. In proactively contributing to the soundscape, street musicians cultivate an understanding of a city's sound culture, and their ability to contribute to it or subvert it. Through a series of ethnographic encounters and analytical perspectives, I argue that their activities shed light on how sound spaces are made from the bottom up in cities, and how understanding the reasoning and thoughts that drive street musicians and their activities can lead to a deeper understanding of what to listen for, and how to listen to, in order to better understand urban space.

It is hard to clearly delimit musicianship on the street. The backgrounds of music-makers I encountered in my fieldwork range from virtuoso violinists who have won competitions, over freestyle rappers in the process of recording internet-distributed mixtapes, to young girls shakily singing a few Christmas carols, and homeless men attempting to coax some sonorous melody out of an accordion they got from a friend. Listeners will disagree on acts and individuals, deeming one act 'underrated art' and another 'the most off-key, loud, beggar.' Even the individuals themselves cannot arrive at clear delineations of what activity they are engaged in: busking? Begging? Creating and sharing art? To sidestep judgment calls I treat every individual who intentionally propagates musical sound in a public place, for others to hear, as a street musician. (Musical sound here being sound that contains content beyond simply verbal information - so while an actor recites lines for their semantic meaning, a rapper generates musical sound by virtue of their play with rhythm or implications of melody.) This definition is generous, but not excessively so: it attributes musicianship to

teenagers playing songs from their phone speakers, but not to someone whose phone repeatedly goes off as he takes calls in a station. It makes no qualitative judgments on the actual performances, lumping together classically trained oboists with beggars rhythmically shaking their coin cups. This broadness implies a huge internal diversity in lived experiences among these musicians, but levels the field such that we can find common ground and unlikely parallels between these divergent experiences. It also allows us to view all these various musicians' activities as similarly influential acoustic contributions to urban space. All of these musicians still have to contend equally with the din of traffic, shop radios, station announcements and the other soundmarks of the city; while their strategies and individual roles in the street may differ greatly, from a soundscape studies perspective their contribution is the same.[2]

This study centers the experiences of these musicians, sampling narratives from a wide range of street musicians. Throughout, their experiences are shaped by public policy, their interactions with workers, police, and the general public, and in this thesis these forces are brought in as they pertain to musicians' experiences, but are not explored as musical communities in full. Occasionally, I refer to a particularly salient comment by a passerby or listener, but this study does not attempt to comprehensively analyze audience reception. From the musicians' standpoint, there are myriad standpoints and perspectives, but these do all converge into patterns and trends. The audience on a street, however, is continuously changing and reconstituted, so attempting to find consensus is pointless. Instead, I paraphrase Jane Jacobs's invitation to her readers: "the scenes that illustrate this book are all about us. For illustrations, please look closely at real cities. While you are looking, you might as well also listen, linger and think about what you see."[3] Likewise, I invite the reader to think about

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[2] David W. Samuels et al., "Soundscapes: Toward a Sounded Anthropology," *Annual Review of Anthropology* (Annual Reviews), accessed May 15, 2018, https://doi.org/10.2307/25735115.

[3] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Vintage Books, 1992), i.

what they hear, reflect on their own reaction and consider how others' reactions might diverge.

Ethnographic Methodology

The period of fieldwork spanned the months of November and December 2017 in Stockholm, followed by a month of additional fieldwork in Brussels in January 2018. Spreading this research over two cities allowed to emphasize the commonality of experience that can exist in an activity of such diversity, as well as the specific reasons that these activities vary depending on local contexts. The timing of the research - cold wintertime, leading up to Christmas - greatly affected the statistics of my informants: in Stockholm, my informants were primarily (but not exclusively) Romani migrants and homeless people. In Brussels, my informants were in part professional street musicians, and in part marginalized groups: homeless people, teenagers with migration backgrounds…. Both in my current research and from anecdotal experience I am aware that weather can be a deterrent for many other sources of music in the public sphere: fanfare rehearsals take place inside, casual players who might in the summer take their guitar outside will not do so in winter, and novice street musicians will generally avoid the harsher climate. This research does not pretend to be a comprehensive view of street music as a phenomenon in these cities; I do not undertake any statistical analysis, and instead focus on the qualitative aspects of the ethnographic information as collected. I would argue that such a comprehensive analysis is if not impossible, unwieldy: almost all of the informants brought up how their life as a street musician was of a temporary nature, and they foresaw either moving on to other cities or other forms of occupation. With all these individuals continuously in flux, my approach is to hone in on specific aspects of the musicians' narratives, in the belief that collectively they become interpretable as variations on common themes.

I approached possible informants in the same way that Susie Tanenbaum did in her study of New York Subway musicians: "simply to find musicians and chat with them

when they took breaks."[4] A variety of ethnographic methods proved useful in understanding the practices of street musicians, including simple observations, short unstructured interviews, longer semi-structured interviews and prolonged participant observation, where I followed musicians through the city for the course of a day, varying my proximity and level of contact with them during the day. Informants were overall willing and happy to share their experiences, but each individual had different amounts of time or boundaries regarding sharing personal information, explaining why some ethnographic encounters lasted just fifteen minutes and others consisted of a full day, or repeated meetings. With the exception of some semi-structured interviews (for which a sit-down time was scheduled) the field notes were written down either as events were unfurling - in the case of observations - or immediately after the fact - so as to prevent my note-taking from inhibiting the flow. Conversations occurred in English, French, Dutch, Spanish and Swedish. Many of my informants spoke Romanian, a language which I am not conversational in; these interviews were conducted with a mixture of Spanish, Romanian, occasional Swedish or English words and the help of the Google Translate app. Transcribed, these conversations seem telegraphed and halting; this style is not an illustration of a lack of verbosity on the part of my informants, but rather a consequence of my lack of command in their native language.[5]

The varied nature of the ethnographic encounters that make up the research of this thesis require an ethical practice that is not predefined, but rather dynamically negotiated based on the realities of each given situation. Beyond some foundational principles – ensuring that all my informants are aware of their participation in a research project, and ensuring that my research does no harm to my informants – the practicalities of engaging with my informants were based on a case-by-case basis. In

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[4] Susie J. Tanenbaum, *Underground Harmonies : Music and Politics in the Subways of New York* (Cornell University Press, 1995), 2.

[5] Kate Sturge, "Translation Strategies in Ethnography," *The Translator* 3, no. 1 (April 1997): 21–38, https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.1997.10798986.

most instances, informants are cited with a pseudonym, except for a few cases in which informants explicitly asked for the name under which they perform to be featured in the text. Whenever possible, I have remained in touch with informants in order for them to be able to respond to their portrayal in my writing.[6] Due to the diverse demographics of my informants, and the diverse range of experiences that I shared with them, this closeness was not always possible. Overall, I have aimed to not editorialize the experiences of my informants, or imbibe them with interpretations that are not theirs. Particularly in the first two sections of the thesis, I have taken care not to project motivations onto people, and have instead only based myself on opinions that they themselves have told me.[7] I have also not aimed to editorialize the events of the ethnographic encounters; I have allowed myself to insert quotes from later interviews with informants within events so as to have their own words act as commentary to their own actions, but apart from that literary device I have remained faithful to the events as I recall them and as they have been written down in my field notes.

The ethnographic encounters form a conceptual backbone to this thesis. I have presented the events here faithfully according to my field notes, but selecting aspects to bring forward in order to illustrate how the ethnographic material informed various theoretical pursuits. The encounters act in part as events that can be deconstructed and analyzed, but take a larger role within this text as driving the argument: anecdotes are presented in order to demand a theoretical basis for the events as presented, but also in order to push the direction of analysis in new directions. They should not be read as field notes or figures, but rather as a different register of the argument in this thesis.

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[6] H. Russell (Harvey Russell) Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology : Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, n.d, 173.

[7] Peter. Metcalf, *They Lie, We Lie : Getting on with Anthropology* (Routledge, 2002).

Prior research and theoretical foundations

A partial motivation for this thesis was the relative paucity of research devoted specifically towards street music. Sally Harrison-Pepper's book *Drawing a Circle in the Square: Street Performing in New York's Washington Square Park* focuses on nonmusical performances, though provides insights into how performers structure their acts and how they relate to the city legislation;[8] for a similarly comprehensive view of travelling buskers, one must go back to Patricia Campbell's 1970 *Passing the Hat: Street Performers in America.*[9] I based my ethnographic approach on Susie J. Tanenbaum's *Underground Harmonies: Music and Politics in the Subways of New York*, in which the author attempts to test the model of street performance established by Campbell and Harrison-Pepper within the context of New York subway musicians.[10] These authors view street performers as morally and politically engaged with their work, challenging notions of legitimate culture, and enacting democracy by addressing the audience directly. Street performance reveals what is alive in the city at any given point: "Together, performer and audience articulate conflicts and hopes that exist in their city at that particular stage of its history."[11] In her work, Tanenbaum focuses on the ethnographic realities of these musicians. Beyond associating their experiences with racial, ethnic and class divides in New York, she devotes time into understanding the role of music to the subway's riders and workers, as well as to the working conditions of the musicians themselves. The book highlights how subway music has had to win its right in court to exist, and how musicians have had to deal with regulations and an increasing bureaucratization of their profession in order to play in the subway. While

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[8] Sally. Harrison-Pepper, *Drawing a Circle in the Square : Street Performing in New York's Washington Square Park* (University Press of Mississippi, 1990).

[9] Patricia J. Campbell and Alice Belkin, *Passing the Hat : Street Performers in America* (Delacorte Press, 1981).

[10] Tanenbaum, *Underground Harmonies : Music and Politics in the Subways of New York, 19*.

[11] Tanenbaum, 19.

Tanenbaum's ethnographical methods and scope are laudable, I see a space in her analysis to engage with the aural aspects of the music more, and understand the anthropological implications of their music sounding out in the subway space.[12]

R. Murray Schafer's work on soundscapes offers a rich set of concepts and models to consider the immersive environment of sound in space, though this thesis will assume a skeptical stance toward Schafer's acoustic ecology project as a productive way of analyzing city soundscapes. Written as a corollary to ongoing work regarding noise pollution, *The Tuning of the World* sets out a method of organizing the acoustic environment, describes how it has been changing over the years and what this signifies, and proposes training for an increased awareness of and intervention into the soundscape. Schafer proposes the concept of the soundscape, i.e. "any acoustic field of study,"[13] in order to "treat the world as a macrocosmic musical composition"[14] whose sounds can be analyzed, organized and curated. Soundscapes are composed of three key types of features: keynote sounds, the fundamental tone of the soundscape; signals, sounds that call for conscious listening such as bells or alarms; and soundmarks, sounds that are "unique or possess qualities which make it specially regarded or noticed by people in that community."[15] Schafer describes the evolution of the rural soundscape into an urban one as one of a hi-fi soundscape – a soundscape where individual sounds could easily be discerned – to a lo-fi soundscape – one that is muddled and cluttered with sound. The book argues for the emancipation of acoustic design as a discipline in which designers are taught how to "clean their ears," understand the soundscape and protect pertinent soundmarks while saving the soundscape from turning lo-fi.[16] Music here forms the template of an organized soundscape with well-considered elements working together in the formation of a

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[12] Samuels et al., "Soundscapes: Toward a Sounded Anthropology."

[13] Schafer, *The Tuning of the World, 7*.

[14] Schafer, 5.

[15] Schafer, 9-10.

[16] Schafer, 237-245.

soundscape; Schafer hopes to expand the spirit of composition beyond the realm of music, and into the world as a whole.

Schafer's projects on acoustic ecology and defining what soundscape studies can be has provided fertile ground for continuing work. Barry Blesser builds off Schafer's model in his book *Spaces Speak, Are you Listening* to propose the idea of aural architecture, "the properties of a space that can be experienced by listening."[17] Where his book turns towards the built environment, Blesser does elaborate on the aural architect as "someone who selects specific aural attributes of a space based on what is desirable in a particular cultural framework."[18] The argument I make in this thesis will begin with framing street musicians as aural architects with a particularly specialized set of skills or expertise, linking my perspective of their activities to concepts of soundscape studies rooted in Schafer's initial analysis. However, my analysis will rely on dismantling the context within which Schafer developed these ideas and only retaining the acoustic concepts that are helpful in explaining musicians' effects on the soundscape. Critiques of Schafer have focused on his judgmental approach to assessing soundscapes, based on a set of aesthetic values favoring the natural over the urban, the sonorous over the noisy and the escapism of organization over the chaos of reality.[19] These critiques easily act as personal attacks toward the role of the acoustic designer, a trained individual who can make global decisions regarding the state of the soundscape and the direction it should be moving to. I believe this incarnation of the acoustic designer stands at odds with the ethnographic realities of street musicians; though the ethnographic material bears out a high degree of understanding the soundscape and their role in it, these musicians do not resemble at all what Schafer had in mind. Their resultant interventions, too, would often antagonize the aesthetics

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[17] Barry. Blesser and Linda-Ruth. Salter, *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening? : Experiencing Aural Architecture* (MIT Press, 2007), 15.

[18] Blesser and Salter, 15.

[19] Jordan Lacey, *Sonic Rupture : A Practice-Led Approach to Urban Soundscape Design* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 28-32.

of the acoustic ecologists. In order to analyze what sound culture street musicians are promulgating, I invoke a different set of theoretical understandings.

A productive candidate for theoretical buttressing lies in the work of Henri Lefebvre. A French philosopher with links to the Situationists, much of Lefebvre's work centered around space and the social processes which produce space. In *The Production of Space*, he characterizes space as the product of social processes, including history, sociology and culture. Societies produce a particular spatial practice, which revolve around abstract space (the space of ideas), representations of space and concrete spaces which are lived within.[20] Lefebvre views social relationships, a concept of abstract space, as meaningless without an underpinning in the spatial which demands analysis.[21] One particularly appropriate tool for the purposes of this investigation is rhythmanalysis, the study of how space is produced through rhythms.[22] This mode of analysis emphasizes how processes repeat or diverge over time and space, and how these processes are embodied or felt rather than thought out.[23] Though Lefebvre discusses how political machinations use time and timetables to exert power, the mode of analysis applies not just to the powerful and skilled but becomes particularly pertinent to the everyday life, and to the aspects of life that are usually too menial to be noticed: "When rhythms are lived, they cannot be analyzed."[24] In its generality, its ability to cater toward a wide variety of backgrounds and its explicit link to music, I argue rhythmanalysis acts as a helpful tool in understanding the sound culture of street musicians.

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[20] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Blackwell, 1991), 38.

[21] Lefebvre, 404.

[22] Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis : Space, Time, and Everyday Life* (Continuum, 2004), 33.

[23] Lefebvre, 36.

[24] Lefebvre, 88.

Overview of the thesis

The three main sections of this thesis will cast thematically different foci on the practices of street musicians. The three sections each offer a possible perspective in understanding specific instances of street performance. Taken together, the sections put forward the notion that the practices of street musicians exemplify an approach to listening to urban sound cultures which sidesteps the judgment-laden perceptions of Schafer's acoustic ecology, and which uncover an aural-centered perspective to understanding city life.

The first section examines the personal motivations of street musicians, and how these personal motivations give rise to a series of strategies for musicians to engage with the space around them. Though Barry Blesser's writings on aural architecture aim to concretize the relationship between the Schaferian soundscape and the built environment, the notion of the aural architect helps to frame the specific strategies musicians adopt as actions that shape the acoustic environment of their city for their own purposes. While Blesser interprets aural architects as a role that all listeners take up in various modalities, this section argues that by virtue of their activities generating sound, street musicians are more skilled aural architects than average, making their practice an inherently spatial one. These strategies of aural architecture are not generalized phenomena, but rather point to a soundscape that is built up from individual and personalized actions and strategies.

The second section turns to the interaction between the cultural connotations of music and how these connotations play out in the spatial practice of street music. In some cases, musicians utilize space to validate or subvert the values of their musical genre. In other cases, music acts as a cultural indicator with profound implications for the semiotics of urban space. These ethnographic encounters eventually revolve around the notion that sound acts as a way for groups to claim their right to the city,

following thoughts of Don Mitchell's writing on public space and social justice.[25] Here, the thesis will reap the benefit of our broad interpretation of what defines a street musician, in order to argue that sound as a medium carries a rich set of meanings in staking a claim to public space, as the process of sound accruing meaning is in itself a spatialized process.

The third section brings in the city and its larger workings as a factor that shapes street music. Starting from examining city regulations regarding sound, it examines how these regulations are performed in practice. The discrepancies between legislation and implementation spur a rethinking of R Murray Schafer's value-laden conception of soundscapes as a productive model of understanding urban soundscapes. Turning to Lefebvre's ideas on the social production of space, in particular rhythmanalysis, street music is characterized as both a way to analyze the city through its explicit invocations of rhythm, as well as an activity that proves an instructive example in how to rhythmanalyze the city. The strategies described back in the first section here become examples of how musicianship can illuminate spaces and provide access points to the sidelined aspects of urban life.

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[25] Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City : Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* (Guilford Press, 2003), 19.

2. The Street Musician: Individuality and aural architecture

Inexperienced musicians: the beginnings of learning aural architecture

14:12, mid-December, Västerlånggatan, in Gamla Stan, Stockholm. It's hard to hear at first: a faint girl's voice singing, almost lost in the hubbub of foot traffic through the street. It's a busy Christmas shopping day, and pedestrians are criss-crossing between each other as they overtake individuals who have stalled in front of a shop front, or veer off in other directions. It takes a while to even localize the voice's owner in the busy street, but then suddenly there she is: a young girl, maybe ten years old, standing inconspicuously at a street corner, with a cloth cap in front of her soliciting for donations. From close by, you can hear she's singing Swedish folk songs: "Jag vet en dejlig rosa…" She is dressed for the weather – in a dark puffy jacket – but otherwise exudes an air of timid inexperience: her body folded somewhat inwards, her stance uneven on her feet, her vocal delivery uneven in volume. The tops of melodic lines bring forth a greater sound projection, leading passersby to briefly turn their heads, but were it not for those brief highlights and the hat in front of her, it would almost seem like she was merely singing to herself to pass the time. Passersby almost literally stumble into her before they notice she's performing. Some, however, are endeared by the performance. Every once in a while, a woman (it's always a woman) stops and listens, occasionally even mouthing along the words in silent song. About half of the time, they leave behind some money in the hat. These temporary audience members elicit no more reaction from the girl than the occasional smile.

One woman in particular stays around for a long time, filming the girl with her phone. At one point, she reaches over to adjust the girl's braid for a better image. The girl, unperturbed, finishes her third song and then restarts a song she has already sung: "Jag vet en dejlig rosa…" Lowering her phone, the woman looks further out into the street and then turns to the girl. "Erica!" she says, "let's find a better spot." As they walk a little further into the street I address them and confirm what slowly became

apparent: that Erica is this woman's daughter, and the mother is looking out for her daughter as she forays into street performance.

The mother finds a spot under an archway for Erica to stand in. Acoustically, the place is more favorable: the architecture amplifies her soft untrained voice. But now they are out of the path of foot traffic, in a side street, and while passersby on Västerlånggatan can still see her (and perhaps hear her better than before) nobody breaks out of their flow as a shopper to step into the street and give some money. After a round of picture-taking in the more photogenic location, the pair decide to move back to the main shopping street, where Erica might not stand out as much but can count on more regular exposure. Each time she begins her burst of three or four songs with the same line: "Jag vet en dejlig rosa…"

To an inattentive passerby, street music can seem an ephemeral phenomenon, governed only by the whims of individual musicians. Examining the closer mechanics of what motivates these musicians, and what they consider as they go about their activities in public space, reveals there are common factors that their decision-making. This first section examines my ethnographic observations through the lens of the individual, looking at exactly how individual musicians have developed their practice as a reflection of their personal motivations, and how these practices shape particular aural architecture. Street musicians act as skilled aural architects, whose activities propagating sound in particular spaces and times sonically shape the urban landscape at a level of sophistication beyond the average city-dweller. While the original conception of an aural architect contends that everyone is acting as an aural architect to various extents, the proactive nature through which street musicians shape the soundscape of their city makes them worthy of study, as their strategies illuminate larger trends in how aural architecture operates both in specific situations and in general.

The case of Erica, the young singer on Västerlånggatan, is in many ways non-indicative of many of the other musicians encountered elsewhere in this thesis: she is inexperienced, and the strategies on display in her performance while I was observing

were not fully formed or settled yet. But exactly this insecurity as a new street musician makes her a fascinating starting point in this study: her performance demonstrates the baseline from which street musicians begin developing their practice, and therefore illuminates the extent to which the practices of other musicians are constructed rather than natural activities.

The inexperience of Erica's performance manifests primarily in two aspects: her musical content and delivery, and her positioning in urban space. Musically, Erica shaped her performance around her inexperience and lack of classical technique. Performing only a small number of songs, she could curate her choices to feature songs that were both in her range as well as attuned to the performance space. Singing only a handful of Swedish folk songs and Christmas carols allowed her to appeal specifically to Swedish shoppers to whom the songs were identifiable and emotionally resonant.[26] This strategy had evident success in that it drew specific audience members to sing along with her and donate some money. In relying on a pre-existing emotional response to particular songs at a certain time (with one audience member even commenting how *mysig* – cozy – the singing was) Erica compensates her technical fallbacks with her ability to evoke a particular sympathetic emotional connotation. Arguably, her technical shakiness is key in establishing this audience sympathy. Rather than dominating the soundscape with a voice that carries above everything, passersby are instead charmed by the impression of "happening upon" this singer at a street corner. The volume fluctuations that accompany the rises and falls in melody expose her vulnerability as an a capella lone singer. The optics of her as a young girl by herself transfer to the aural vulnerability of a soft, innocent voice in the crowd.

While Erica leverages her musical inaccuracies as a way to enhance the audience's sympathetic response, she is not able to exploit her lack of experience to the advantage of her spatial placement. Her relative unobtrusiveness in the street scene as a young girl buttresses her portrayal as an innocent, vulnerable child, but this is not a fully

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[26] Thomas. Turino, *Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe* (University of Chicago Press, 2000), 161-189.

formed dramaturgical strategy. Firstly, Erica's mother remains nearby and in her occasional direct interventions – her adjustments of the singer's hair or suggestions to place herself elsewhere in the street – she breaks the illusion that Erica is by herself. Secondly, by being so unobtrusive within the larger stream of people, Erica no longer becomes a feature of the streetscape but an obstacle within it. Though people who stumble through the crowd only to run into her are occasionally charmed by the singer who they've suddenly come across, equally often there are pedestrians who seem annoyed at the unexpected obstacle in their way.[27] There is a discrepancy between the small acoustic space Erica occupies and the larger diversion she forms in the goings-on in the street, and this discrepancy causes a level of friction within the street scene. This friction pushes against the illusion of authenticity of her performance: on one level, there is something cozily authentic about a Swedish girl singing traditional songs in the middle of the Old Town, but on another level the way this performance subverts the usual pedestrian patterns antagonizes the performer against the street scene. As Erica and her mother cycle through various points in the street, and even venture off of it in favor of a less contentious spot, it becomes clear what the underlying tensions are that dominate this performance. Each spot, and each performance modality, come with negotiations between the optics and auralities of vulnerability that Erica presents, the ability for her to attract an audience, and her appearance of authenticity and natural belonging within the larger street scene. Moving from the main shopping street, to an archway, to back on the shopping street reveals how Erica and her mother are as of yet not proficient in navigating these negotiations. Were Erica abler to project her performance, she would be stronger in staking a claim in the soundscape of the street, and pedestrians might intuitively make more space for her. If she could track traffic flow better she might get a sense of where she would be able to glean the acoustic and optical advantages that a space might provide without compromising too much on

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[27] Serge P. Hoogendoorn and W. Daamen, "Pedestrian Behavior at Bottlenecks," *Transportation Science* 39, no. 2 (May 2005): 147–59, https://doi.org/10.1287/trsc.1040.0102.

audience. Yet in these instances, it was evident that these reflexes were not natural yet. Given the limited set of opportunities currently at their disposal, Erica and her mother seemed to perform more for the advantage of the phone's camera rather than fully cultivate a successful strategy for street performance.

Medborgarplatsen by night: performing aural architecture

23:23, Saturday night in November, Folkungagatan, at the Medborgarplatsen metro station entrance, Stockholm. It's a cold night, but not too cold yet to go out. The bars in Södermalm still have some outdoor standing room around space heaters, and crowds of people are making their way around the neighborhood, meeting friends, finding a place to have a drink. On this street corner, where Götgatan intersects Folkungagatan, the traffic lights dominate the rhythm of movement: cars and pedestrians are continuously on the move through the intersection. But tonight, the soundscape includes more than just the drone of car engines and footsteps. A downtempo loop, a guitar riff on endless repeat can be heard, and then, suddenly, a blast of distorted amplified voice raps over: "Wanna be the reason why you smiling when you feeling blue, yeah, cause this the reason why we vibing… cause this the chemical reaction, we smoking, but if you want to we can smoke it…"

A rapper is holding a microphone, linked to a small amplifier also playing the instrumental loop. Bobbing back and forwards, his left hand gestures while in his right he holds a sheet of paper which he occasionally glances at. When he looks up, he's not facing anyone in particular, and rather seems to address beyond the sidewalk, as if singing to the cars rushing by on Götgatan. That's not to say he doesn't have an audience yet: here and there, one or two people have completely stopped to take in his performance, standing at a respectable distance but still paying attention. Casual passersby, too, noticeably slow down as they pass through to the traffic lights as they size up the situation, and once they join the crowd waiting for a green light quite a few heads turn and listen as they wait.

The rapper is coming to an end, it seems: holding the paper lower, appearing a little more confident as he churns through the verses that he knows well. He looks to his

left, where a Filipino man, AJ, has been casually smoking. After the rapper gestures towards the man with his microphone, AJ slowly walks over to the amplifier, butting his cigarette out. The rapper, Robert, walks back too, snaking the microphone cable around him before placing the microphone down on the amp. He and AJ hug quickly: "Good job, man. You've got some bars," AJ says, then turns his attention to the iPhone also hooked up to the amplifier. As AJ scrolls through the music collection on the phone, the amp spits out the first few seconds of a loop before moving on to the next. Finding one he likes, he picks up the microphone again, tests it for sound and swaggers forward from the amplifier, as if the sidewalk were a stage. "Aight," he says. "Ah… ah.. I'm getting older, don't tell me that it's over yet, I'm waiting for the luck to turn and when it's over here, you know what's golden…" Robert is standing where AJ stood before, watching closely, bobbing his head along and smiling, listening attentively to the rhymes that AJ is freestyling. Next to him, a girl, Melania, is filming, sometimes putting down her camera to chat with Robert a little.

There's a shift in the mood of the intersection. At first, just a few stragglers were listening closely, and most of the audience had consisted of passersby on their way to something else. But now, with AJ at the mic, and a slightly later hour, more people were showing up and sticking around. A small circle forms of people just listening and enjoying the moment. Some headbobbing turns into some women completely dancing. Robert and Melania spot some familiar faces and go say hi, and around the amplifier a group of men gather and start waiting their turn to freestyle on the mic. Within minutes, the space has become an informal community, with people cheering each other on, applauding, dancing. A second mic gets plugged in and rappers perform back to back, riffing off of each other. It's cold, but nobody seems to mind. Passersby who are on their way to somewhere else now have to duck behind the amp to still get through unobtrusively. In very little time, the informal performance has turned into an actual event, a small destination of its own on this Saturday night. It's cold, but that's not stopping these rappers. One grabs the mic and begins: "We underground emcees we are the real kings / bringing it back to the streets where the music sings…"

Studying the Medborgarplatsen rappers reveals how even when resembling complete spontaneity, street musicians are often operating (sometimes subconsciously) from a place of informed decision-making regarding repertoire and strategies of occupying physical and acoustic space.[28] In my discussions, the group of three friends who had brought over the amplifier and started off freestyling that night (AJ, Robert, and Melania, or, collectively, Loyalty Tropa)[29] portrayed their activity as a spontaneous, fun thing to do between friends, but this self-characterization betrays the musical and aural-architectural knowledge they have accumulated over time. That is to say, this Saturday night celebration makes more of a dent in the status quo of Stockholm's street life than Erica on Västerlånggatan not randomly, but due to conscious musical and spatial decisions by the relevant actors.[30] Take, for instance, the time and location, at an intersection of two busy streets, late at night. Robert explained that the three had wanted to create an outlet for a shared passion in hip-hop, and had begun taking their amplifier out into the city on weekend nights. Their choice for the Medborgarplatsen intersection was inspired by the amount of nightlife in the neighborhood: "We felt that was missing, you know, this sense of things going on, of something that you could just bump into while you were out." This reasoning displays a more deliberate consideration of their role in the spatial fabric than Erica and her mother displayed: they are seeking out a place where their music will resonate beyond their own personal experience, and within a larger framework of space and urban rhythms. Also noteworthy is how once discovered that this was an advantageous place, Loyalty Tropa

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[28] Paul Simpson, "Chronic Everyday Life: Rhythmanalysing Street Performance," *Social & Cultural Geography* 9, no. 7 (November 2008): 807–29, https://doi.org/10.1080/14649360802382578.

[29] LoyaltyTropa, "Movement. We Freedom Fighters (@loyaltytropa) • Instagram Photos and Videos," Instagram, accessed May 16, 2018, https://www.instagram.com/loyaltytropa/.

[30] Danielle Goldman, *I Want to Be Ready* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010), https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.287881, 55-93.

returned to this same spot over a couple of weeks, accumulating both practical experience in terms of where best to stand and how to run their performance, as well as an audience and friends and acquaintances, who became slowly attuned to these performances being more than a one-time whim. The choice of standing at a junction acts as a strategic engagement with the flows of pedestrians and public transport users; particularly opportunistic is their placement close to a traffic light, where potential audience members often already have to wait for crossing anyway and are therefore ready to have their attention be grabbed.[31] What makes the rappers more successful in staking out a space of their own on the public sidewalk is that unlike Erica, their musical performance occupies an acoustic space equivalent to their occupation of physical space. Where the a capella singer's volume fluctuated in volume, concealing the singer's actual location, Loyalty Tropa's use of instrumental loops ensured a relatively constant flow of music into the space. At its peak moments, when the audience involvement in the performance took up the entire width of the sidewalk, there was visible annoyance from pedestrians who were just aiming to get through the street; however, the sound here projects with enough force as to alert oncoming pedestrians what the source of the disrupted traffic is, allowing them to attune to the reality of this altered situation. This phenomenon, whereby the performance of the street musician is a large enough factor in the overall soundscape to alter people's behavior within it, is a real-world manifestation of Blesser's summary of the concept of an acoustic arena – a space "centered at a sound source" which "has sufficient loudness to overcome the back- ground noise".[32] Here, the amplified music acts as a "sonic event" which creates a local "acoustic community," where the musicians "make

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[31] André Lepecki, "Choreopolice and Choreopolitics: Or, the Task of the Dancer," *TDR/The Drama Review* 57, no. 4 (December 14, 2013): 13–27, https://doi.org/10.1162/DRAM_a_00300.

[32] Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter, *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening? : Experiencing Aural Architecture* (MIT Press, 2007), 22.

a sonic connection to everyone within the arena" who can hear the event.[33] If this acoustic arena is too small, such as was the case with Erica in Västerlånggatan, it can be pushed aside as irrelevant within the greater soundscape; this disregard can amplify annoyance if there turns out to be a substantial intervention in physical space which was unannounced. However, as the acoustic arena grows, it plays an essential role in defining a new shared reality upheld by its community.[34] A final aspect to consider in the specific nature of this performance is the role of the musical style in establishing the community. Other than Robert, who used paper notes as a guide to his verses, the rappers were either performing from memory and freestyling over sampled loops. The musical structure, which allows for a continuous improvisation and rewards creativity and skill, allows for newcomers to the scene to jump in and take in as much or as little time as possible.[35] In practice, as soon as Robert and AJ had established a groove of handing the mic back and forth depending on who felt inspired, the space was open to friends and acquaintances to come by and take their space too; this could entail minutes-long riffs or just spitting a few verses in between more skilled rappers. Balancing different levels of acquaintance and skill embraces a far more inclusive sense of community instead of a closely guarded musical initiation. Put together, these connected factors – the way Loyalty Tropa occupies an advantageous time and space, how their musical output interacts with the urban space, the makeshift community they have managed to build up around them – explain how their performance can effect such a meaningful change in the urban streetscape.

Additional to these factors, there are personal motivations of the individuals involved. Loyalty Tropa's actions on the street act not just as a moment of cohesion between a loosely assembled collective of individuals interested in freestyling, but also reinforces the friendship between the three. Having met in a nightclub, Robert, AJ and

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[33] Blesser and Salter, 26.

[34] Blesser and Salter, 26.

[35] Tricia. Rose, *Black Noise : Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (University Press of New England, 1994), 48.

Melania had little on paper that would keep them in common: Robert, an American on a three-month holiday in Sweden, considered his stay in the country – and his role in the hip-hop scene here – temporary; AJ, a Filipino immigrant in Sweden, balanced his musical ambitions with the obligation to contribute to his household and support his children; and Melania didn't even rap herself, but fashioned a role as "social media manager/promoter" to justify her inclusion in the group. Loyalty Tropa, as an entity, therefore acts as much as a reason to enjoy each other's company as it does as a legitimate musical structure. The three also exemplify the more deeply personal implications of their actions. To Robert, the street performances are a way to overcome his shyness, and force himself to work on his raps; as of yet he feels too unskilled at freestyling and does not always manage to find the motivation to finish his verses at home. The pressure of presenting his work in whatever form on the streets provides him with the context that helps him bring his work to an end, and grow overall as a musician. AJ, meanwhile, views his work on the street as part rehearsal, part promotion for the recording of his album. From his perspective, the street performances become not just an activity that suffices in and of itself, but a facet of a larger musical project where bringing his music to the streets authenticates it beyond its life as a studio object. The personal motivations here intersect with interpreting the musical performance on a cultural and spatial layer – these modes of analysis will resurface in subsequent sections.

02:22, Saturday night in November, Medborgarplatsen metro station, Stockholm. It's a cold night, but not too cold yet to go out. On the metro platform, crowds of people are either just arriving to make their way around the neighborhood, meeting friends, finding a place to have a drink – or they have done so and are now looking to return home. Through a portable amplifier, a tinny drum machine loop projects into the space and reverberates against the tile walls. A guitarist, hunched against a pillar of the station, plays some open chords over the beat. People walk by him as they ascend or descend the stairs, sometimes giving him money. Nobody positions themselves as to watch him closely – nor does he seem to expect them to.

The guitarist, Johan, is crouched over his instrument, almost absentmindedly going through the music. He does have an audience, though: not just the turned heads of the metro riders coming in and out of the station, but particularly those who are waiting for their ride home will look over at him, tap their foot absentmindedly, bob a little in recognition. Many here have seen Johan here before; he's become a regular feature of the scenery. He plays at Green line stations, at night, when the crowds are out.

As a complement to the above-ground performances of Loyalty Tropa, Johan's practice demonstrates how different choices result in very different-natured performances. Instead of the open arena cultivated by the rappers, Johan consciously chooses to perform solo on the street – "It's a thing I do for me. I play in bands too, but my late nights, they're for me." His music choice, a mix between classic folk-rock songs and half-improvised songs of his own, equally caters more to his own taste than any audience demands. His positioning, downstairs on a metro platform, adjacent to the flow of passersby but not physically in it, body language indifferent to frequent interaction, overall suggests he is not particularly interested in confrontational interactions with listeners. Rather than disrupting the city fabric (by blocking the traffic flow, or being eye-catching in any way), Johan's strategies aim to blend in, occupying spaces with little public stake. Instead of exploiting the acoustic arena of his music to alter the city, his purpose in creating is it for it to seem obvious within the larger urban cityscape. His own words reflect this attitude is central to his activities: "I'm too old to really enjoy going out, but I do like being there around the people going out. So I just play music for them, here. And it can be like a soundtrack to the start and end of their night, something to keep them in the mood." This music is not meant to be prominent, but rather as a commentary to the temporo-spatial circumstances. Analyzing it as commentary makes clear why Johan's particular strategies have evolved so as to seem as unobtrusive as possible.

The opera singer: aural architecture in the hands of a professional

16:04, Place d'Agora, Brussels. "Ave Maria..." Over the clatter of the café's silverware, the shuffling footsteps and the creaking bikes whizzing by, an operatic voice soars. Only when listening closer does the synthesized orchestral accompaniment, played from an iPad through an amplifier, hit the ear. Both the singer, Nicola Mills, and the amplifier, are placed at a corner of the central rotunda of the square; directly in front of her, two (car-free) streets join into one leading towards the touristic center of Brussels. Projecting her voice outwards, her posture upright and formal, the elevated sidewalk jutting out between the two streets transforms into a thrust stage. Pedestrians catch on to her performance and form a wide semicircle at a respectable distance, following the curve in the streets as natural guidelines. While in her sight lines, over the course of a few arias ("O mio babbino caro" next, followed by "Brindisi") an attentive audience forms of about fifty listeners (mostly tourists), passersby directly behind her are also affected by her musical contribution to the space. Her audience listens closely; one woman clutches her chest in admiration, several step forward to place some money in her amplifier case. Behind her, some gently sing along (some mockingly), and at a more upbeat moment, two girls even briefly begin dancing.

Nicola knows her audience. She's been singing opera on the streets for a while now, and has honed her act over time. Observe how she deliberates what song to sing next, how she steers away from too many slow pieces in a row, or injects a musical or pop song in if the crowd seems to lag. (Sometimes, she'll sing a song on a whim, only to have people afterwards tell her it's their favorite song, or reminded them of a recently deceased family member, as if she magically knew to sing that song for that crowd.) Notice how she breaks the phrasing of an ascending melody towards the climax of an aria, as if this time, that note might just be out of reach. Listen for the small break she makes when someone brings her money, or comes up to thank her (or in one instance even kiss her on the cheek!), to silently acknowledge their gesture. And is it possible that the way in which she projects her sound upwards at specific points, making the notes reverberate off the building facades, is a deliberate play with the architecture? About fifteen songs later, Nicola concludes with an operatic version of Lennon's

"Imagine." The crowd – some of the faces have been here from the beginning of the hour – give her a final round of applause that continues as she begins packing up her belongings; some approach her to greet her. Based on some of the bank notes that were dropped into her suitcase during her performance, the singer will have earned about 120 Euros this day. Not bad, considering she had only spontaneously decided to perform during a stopover in Brussels. Hopefully Newcastle will treat her as well when she gets there tomorrow.

While the shaping of performance strategies by personal motivations can occur as a subliminal process of trial and error to many amateur street musicians, professional street musicians often exhibit a skilled command of how they want to present their work to the street audience. Nicola's placement alone exposes multiple levels of consideration. Like the Medborgarplatsen rappers, she can take advantage of the traffic flows codified by the street junction to enjoy a funneling of foot traffic in front of her act, and additionally benefits from the cafes spilling on to the square as a seated audience.[36] Her appropriation of the sidewalk as a thrust stage acts as the first step in emulating a classical concert experience. The buildings she is facing function as an acoustic screen, constraining the acoustic arena and through its resonant properties playing into an impression of an outdoor version of a concert hall.[37] Together, these architectural qualities bridge the gap between the concert hall connotations of the operatic voice, and the outdoor realm. The way that audiences form a circle following the existing curvature of the streets reads at first as organic, but upon inspection is the result of the deliberate placement of the singer in the cityscape. From here, the audience becomes automatically inclined to treat the performance as a typical recital, with a setlist and applause after every song. Nicola's ethos of bringing "opera to the people" relies on how she establishes an aural architecture suitable to the operatic

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[36] Hoogendoorn and Daamen, "Pedestrian Behavior at Bottlenecks."

[37] Emily Ann. Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity : Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933* (MIT Press, 2002), 62-106.

voice within a pedestrian context.[38] This aural architecture is just one facet in a performance that relies also on repertoire and delivery in an ambition to bring the world of opera to non-operagoers; the next section of this thesis will revisit this motivation, to examine how Nicola's practice relates the urban space to her formation as an opera singer.

Beyond the explicit motivation of democratizing opera, Nicola's allusions to the classical world also stem from personal experiences. Her impetus to begin performing on the street came from a spiritual experience during a séance: "an ancient spirit told me that I had to sing as a soloist, that time is running out, that there was more for me in the future." Her part-time job as a chorus singer in the Flemish Opera left her schedule open enough to begin performing in public: "The first time, I was so nervous, just shaking in my boots. I needed to do it, to work on my stage fright. And I got on my box, and the stage fright melted. And that very day I got another work offer to sing." Over time, she left the chorus and devoted herself fully to her work as a freelancing street musician, a job in which she felt that she was freed from the constraints of classical singing within the institutions: "I've realized that I was more talented, creative, doing it my way. I'm in charge. I don't care if it's perfect – people are already amazed that you can sing. It comes from an internal competitive mindset, whereas the professional mindset, it pushed out all the creativity, and the joy in it." From the beginning of her career as a street musician, therefore, there is an element of breaking away from the constraints of the institutionalized world of opera, and reconstituting it into a form that plays to her strengths. This reconstitution not only takes place in her use of space, but also in the repertoire that lies within her choosing, and her delivery of that repertoire, in which she takes licenses with some of the conventions of the operatic genre to lower the barrier of entry. These kinds of strategies are not just relevant to Nicola's case, but an essential feature of every

[38] Nicola Mills, "Nicola Mills | Opera For The People," accessed May 15, 2018, http://iamnicolamills.com/.

professional street musician's practice: how they make the practice of street performance "their own."

Romanis, street music strategies and begging repertoires

20:30, Saturday in November, Slussen. "Such dramatic music," a girl says to her friend as they walk past the Romani drummer in front of the metro entrance. Samir, a young man under twenty years old, is beating a fast rhythm, in a 3-3-2 subdivision, sometimes singing out above it. At times, he abruptly stops, as if bored with the ostinato he's playing. He blows on his hands a few times – it is an exceptionally cold night – before beginning another beat, something in 3/4 , something with an odd time signature, a song that's just a capella, whatever comes to him. As people pass by, only a few drop a few coins in. But with a night this cold, and at an hour of the night where people are still feeling generous, some women go out of their way to buy Samir a sandwich or a coffee at Pressbyrån nearby. He's been here two hours, and the cold and boredom are getting to him – it's not looking like he'll earn as much as he'd have wanted to. Soon, he'll walk back to T-Centralen, where he'll find a place to sleep for the night. He blows warm air on his frozen hands. Just a few more weeks, and he'll be leaving Sweden, going back to Romania. Whether he'll ever come back to Sweden again afterwards – maybe not in winter.

16:30, Friday in November, Drottninggatan at Sergels Torg, Stockholm. As Mihael plays "Hit the Road, Jack," two little girls start dancing in front of his saxophone case. Invigorated, the saxophonist starts swinging his instrument side to side, shifting from foot to foot in a makeshift dance. When he learned the song, five years ago, in Romania, he was unable to play the top notes in tune, so he's learned the song with an alternate melody that stays within his range. These little girls don't seem to mind though, nor do they mind how the backing track from his amplifier has room for improvised verses, but all he does is play the head over and over again; when he's done playing, the girls get some coins from their parents to put in his saxophone case. He flicks through his phone looking for what song to play next, and checks messages

from his friend Boldo, whom he lives in a caravan with in Jordbro. Boldo plays accordion on trains in the city, and he's apparently having a decent run today. They'll have enough money to come back to Romania for Christmas with enough for their families. Behind Mihael, a group of Romani beggars has just left the Kulturhuset lobby, where they've been warming up for a bit before getting back to work. He glances at them as they assume spots again across Drottninggatan, before choosing a song. He'll bring back "Hit the Road, Jack" in a short while again. But now he bursts into "The Girl from Ipanema," another crowd favorite, again only playing the head over and over again – that's all he's learned, and all he needs to get some money from it.

15:32, Thursday in November, Green line Metro, between Slussen and Medborgarplatsen stops. A man walks through the carriage, slowly rattling a small paper cup with some coins in front of seated subway passengers. The coins form a regular rhythm: three staccato beats followed by one beat of rest. This all the way through the carriage. Overlaid, he intones: "Tjenaa…. Tjena kompis…," the second syllable rising up in pitch. A small child looks at him in curiosity, but otherwise nobody lifts their head up in reaction. The metro PA system plays a downward arpeggio and announces the next stop. The beggar waits at a door, and towards nobody in particular, rattles the cup again. Three short jangles of the coins. A beat rest. The doors open and he steps out of the metro.

Romani street musicians, taken as a subset, vividly illustrate how musicians personalize their performative strategies, and shape their own aural architectures; even when there is a shared background, a shared purpose and a similar set of circumstances, there is a high degree of individual license in how musicians occupy space, present themselves to audiences and play to particular strengths and weaknesses. At their core, the Romani populations living in homelessness in Stockholm (either chronically or temporarily) aim to make a livable amount of money from their activities in the streets. Only a small number of them sing or play music as a money-making method, and even those that do use it only as one method: like the general homeless street worker in Stockholm,

musicians also named collecting bottles for deposit money as their main source of income.[39] The musicians within that group run the gamut of skill in musicianship, and by extension, street musicianship and the aural architecture that entails. There are musicians such as Samir, who have no lack in technical proficiency in their instrument per se, but whose lack of experience in the street places them on a par with less experienced musicians all-around due to their misjudgments in organizing place, repertoire and delivery. As was the case with Erica, the singer at the beginning of this chapter, the blatant inexperience can also bring advantages in the form of sheer sympathy, to a larger extent than other street musicians experience: while all informants discussed audience members feeling sorry for them at times, it was only the most inexperienced, obviously new musicians whose performances were regularly interrupted by material donations from passersby. There are musicians who strategize their presence based on exposure, relying on long improvisational structures with a large acoustic arena; these kinds of musical output allow for prolonged playing while remaining in the confines of their technical skill.[40] And then there are the musicians who, like the non-homeless street musicians, structure their performances as outdoor recitals, considering aspects such as their setlist, their spatial orientation, their interaction with the audience, and so on.

These variegated strategies apply beyond just the music-playing Romani, extending towards their approach to begging as well. There are marked differences between people's approaches to begging, ranging from being completely silent and ranging in visibility (from tucked into a warm corner, to ostentatiously in the middle of the

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[39] Anne Britt et al., "When Poverty Meets Affluence Migrants from Romania on the Streets of the Scandinavian Capitals," accessed May 13, 2018, https://www.rockwoolfonden.dk/app/uploads/2015/12/When-poverty-meets-Affluence.pdf., 55.

[40] Carol Silverman, *Romani Routes : Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*, accessed May 15, 2018, https://global.oup.com/academic/product/romani-routes-9780195300949?cc=se&lang=en&, 21-58.

shopping street) to speaking out loud, addressing passersby or metro passengers or calling attention through repeated rhythms.[41] Most Romani rely on a network of family or friends who they collaborate and pool resources with in order to survive, and particular close networks will by and large adopt a similar set of strategies in their money-making endeavors.[42] That is to say: a woman who begs in silence will often turn out to be working together with a group who all choose to maintain a lower profile. The musicians interviewed for this thesis worked and lived in collaboration with other musicians, or with people who take more assertive, performative, approaches to begging. There is an exchange of not just monetary goods, but also of information and advice in these networks that leads to particular groups assuming special "styles" of engagement.[43] The shaping of engagement strategies is of quintessential importance to how these communities fend for themselves within the city.

Social isolation in the city and irrational aural strategies

16:30, Saturday in November, Drottninggatan, Stockholm. On the busy shopping street, within an alcove of the front entrance of the H&M, a man in a beige jacket sings. His gesticulation is grand and dramatic, but his voice often falters for phrases on end. His tone is that of someone imitating an opera singer: rich in harmonics but unsupported. His songs are improvised tunes, that often approach recognizability, before veering into an unexpected harmonic direction or faltering. When he gets any reaction from passersby, it's one of bemused humor. When someone tries to give him

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[41] See Stephen E Lankenau, "Panhandling Repertoires and Routines for Overcoming the Nonperson Treatment," *Deviant Behavior : An Interdisciplinary Journal* 20 (1999): 183–206, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/016396299266551?needAccess=true.

[42] Britt et al., "When Poverty Meets Affluence Migrants from Romania on the Streets of the Scandinavian Capitals.", 74-79.

[43] Britt et al, 74-79.

money in the hat in front of him, the singer lurches back, startled, before quickly stooping down and quickly grabbing the money and shoving it into his sleeve. "I don't know him to well, but I think he's lonely," Mats tells me. Mats, a singer who performs a little down Drottninggatan in a motorized wheelchair, is all too familiar with Erik, the singer at H&M. "He's here almost daily. I don't think he has family left. This might be his way to still be in contact with people, but I don't think he's alright in the head." Suddenly, Erik lurches forward. A balloon, blown through the street by the breeze, has bounced in front of the H&M and now, the singer is chasing it. With a glance back at his hat in between steps, he reaches the balloon and violently steps on it. The explosion makes two women gasp in surprise; alarmed looks turn to the source of the sound, but when they see it's just a balloon explosion, the street turns back to normal. In a huff, the singer returns to his original spot at the pillar in front of the H&M entrance, his beige jacket blending him in again to the surroundings. Mats, beside me, just gives me a look and shrugs.

17:28, Gare Central, Brussels. A man is lying down completely on the ground of the station, his head propped up against a pillar. As people walk by on their way to a platform, he sings, slurring his words together. He's obviously heavily intoxicated, and when he tries to address people directly is unable to coordinate his movements; his arm swings in a big loop over his chest, throwing him off-balance before slumping down again in his passive position. He goes back to singing, mostly to himself, too unintelligible to even discern a proper melody. The moaning voice, insistent between the station announcement, and the reverberating sounds of footsteps of hundreds of passengers, attracts the attention of two police officers on patrol. Approaching him, they tell him: "Listen, you're upsetting the people here. So, take it easy. Keep calm, sober up. But don't cause any trouble." After they leave, he is silent for a little while, and then slowly, to himself, begins humming again.

The street musicians in this chapter differ greatly in musical backgrounds, lived realities and performance styles, but aural architecture lends a tool to understanding these

performances as personalized strategies that link individual musicians' motivations to their concrete actions. Personal motivations shape the form and content of the performance, creating a bond between musician, their music, and the performative choices they make in bringing it. Viewing these motivations as actions of aural architecture, rather than as phenomena to be classified within a taxonomy of soundscape objects, illuminates how sound culture in the city is a process of continuous construction that begins with individualized actions. Nevertheless, these actions resonate beyond the personal and portend cultural and spatial connotations as well. The subsequent chapters of this thesis will shift away from analyzing street music as an exclusively personal activity, and will evolve toward examinations of how these performances interact with larger cultural trends, and how they in their collectivity build into analyzable spatialized rhythms of the urban landscape.

These two final ethnographic moments in this chapter highlight the importance of throughout maintaining the idea that these activities are still, on the micro level, individuals with individual stories. In these cases, the strategies that other musicians have managed to build up and elaborate on with time seem obscure, irrational or even nonexistent. Conditions of mental illness, abject poverty or generalized social isolation have led these individuals to adopt strategies with disruptive or unusual effects on the larger soundscape. In subsequent chapters these acoustically unusual events, which call attention to themselves by virtue of their misshapenness, will be interpreted as examples of arrhythmia: rhythms which do not "lock in" to the larger rhythms of city life, and therefore point to fundamental problems within the larger rhythmical system. These ethnographic instances easily fit into such a mode of analysis: the presence of these arrhythmic phenomena leads the way into questioning cities' homelessness policies, or the place in society for mentally disabled individuals, or the elderly and isolated. As this thesis ventures into these considerations, it is crucial that these abstractions do not take obfuscate the embodied realities of these individuals, lived out in public, but not always in the public eye.

3. Spatializing the negotiations around the meaning of sound

Musicians performing on the street channel more than just their personal motivations: in their commitment to their instruments, their genre, and the performance strategies they adopt from external inspirations, they align themselves with pre-existing cultural forms of expression. In this section, the ethnographic encounters highlight how musicians engage with the cultures they are connoting and adapt them to their spatial contexts, leading to expressions of genre that are tied to the production of urban space. Other, less genre-defined ethnographic encounters also illuminate how space produces meaning in sound, suggesting how the process of sound accruing meaning might in itself be inherently spatialized. Establishing sound as an inherently spatial medium of expressing meaning paves the way to understanding sound's role in expressing one's existence or asserting one's rights to the city.

Hip-hop and the cultural negotiation of urban space

23:43, the street corner of Folkungagatan and Götgatan, Stockholm. The crowd that has circled around the amp and the mike-wielding freestylers becomes so dense that the pedestrians crossing the streets have to find ways around it. AJ takes the mic*: "aight, one-two one-two, yeah… people ask, why I rap, love, … ah… critical, individual, beating in the South side, conventional, commitual/*

and hasta la vista, sayonara, Swedish fish
I wrote my first words in my first verse cause my life just got worse
I just tried it cause I verse perfectly
I just had therapy and it killed my thirst for
creativity, yo it's a part of me
cause when the music speaks from the heart, you see
oh it meant a lot to me, as if a struggling emcee
meant to be revolutionary, meant to be the armor in my infantry, yeah

it's like bullets that could harm you if you vibe with me

but I have a strategy don't wanna ride with me

better start small, I spit balls

yo it's killing my delivery, the flow controlled by my lyrical abilities

I stayed underground to develop my skills, you see

that's what music means to me

so hasta la vista, sayonara swim with the fishes see,…"

After he hands off the mic to Robert, I ask him why he began performing on the street. "This music came from the street, it has to come back to the street, man. I guess this isn't really usual here, that's why we're getting all this attention here. But it feels natural, man. Look at everyone here, just doing it for the music."

Hip-hop culture represents a special case in the relation between musical culture and public space. In her seminal book on the development of hip-hop culture, *Black Noise,* Tricia Rose argues hip-hop's constitutive features of "flow, layering, and rupture simultaneously reflect and contest the social roles open to urban inner-city youths at the end of the twentieth century;"[44] hip-hop's musical characteristics are informed by its spatial history. Hip-hop, she argues, derives its stylistic characteristics from its symbolic appropriations of urban space. These appropriations tie together the content of the music – the sampling, the lyrical references to subways, economic problems, the use of static – with the inventiveness in claiming territory on the urban domain – the casting of street corners as dance spots, the rigging of powerlines to create impromptu DJ booths, and the use of hip-hop events to substitute the absence of institutional community centers.[45] To the background of the demolition of youth centers, and the built environment at large in communities of color in Brooklyn, hip-hop "emerged as

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[44] Tricia Rose, *Black Noise : Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (University Press of New England, 1994),22.

[45] Rose, 22.

a source for youth of alternative identity formation and social status,"[46] transforming from a series of localized interventions into a larger cultural movement. These appropriative features of hip-hop culture reminisce of the strategies employed by musicians as described in the first section of this thesis, but here they have crystallized and fused together into key features of a larger culture.

Hip-hop surfacing at a traffic intersection in Stockholm, performed by a Filipino immigrant in Sweden and his white friends, speaks to the culture's ability to inspire well beyond its Brooklyn roots, not just in musical quality but also in its attitudes towards urban space and performance. The lyrical content of their verses and their responses to my questions about their motivations reveal a commitment to honor the origins of hip-hop, even as the context – racial, geographical, socioeconomic – in which they perform diverges entirely from the original. In then performing the musical features of hip-hop - the "flow, layering, and rupture" of spitting verses, tag-teaming, playing over looped samples, a portable gear setup that allows for quick exchange between musicians – the members of Loyalty Tropa reverse-engineer the founding conditions of hip-hop to create their own iteration of the open-air community center. The urgency in their intervention does not rely on participants' oppression or subjugation in Stockholm's urban fabric, but a shared commitment to the aesthetics of hip-hop, even within contexts where these aesthetics no longer carry their implications of subversion.

One of the most blatant cases of adopting hip-hop's aesthetics is in Loyalty Tropa's attitudes towards the police. With lyrics extolling the virtues of marijuana and the occasional reference to "the po po" (the police) in their freestyling, I was wondering whether they had experienced any concrete run-ins with the police. All three members had no criminal backgrounds or reasons for antagonizing the police, and their last interaction with agents patrolling in the neighborhood had simply been a polite request to move their performance a few meters to the right, so as to not block the metro entrance. In adopting classical hip-hop tropes of performance and lyrical content,

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[46] Rose, 34.

without necessarily having lived the circumstances which give way to those tropes in the first place, Loyalty Tropa is navigating their own route through their musical influences, their personal narratives, and larger questions about musical authenticity.[47] This navigation transcends the specifics of hip-hop, and supports the view put forward by ethnomusicologists like Louise Meintjes, who in her work portrays the proceedings in a South African recording studio to characterize sound and sound culture as sites of negotiation rather than pre-established categorical expressions of identity.[48] Negotiations of authenticity go further than explaining AJ's performance of hip-hop tropes regarding police, poverty, and public space without having personally been affected by these issues. They also surface amongst other street musicians whose genres have embedded connotations of space, such as singer-songwriters. Tracing their cultural lineage to protest singers and folk singers, or even Medieval troubadours, these musicians impose requirements upon themselves over what constitutes an authentic live performance.[49] Many informants felt that they should present self-written material in order to "truly" qualify as an artist, but others discuss the difficulty in presenting exclusively original work, due to their repertoire being not large enough, or due to the audiences of passersby responding better to known songs. Even choosing from the known repertoire comes with its perils, as musicians realized their choices will reflect upon their own musical values as well as it does upon their audience's.[50] They must therefore develop a repertoire of songs that relates in spirit to their personal preferences in music, while providing an opening to the audience. Some

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[47] Rose, 92.

[48] Louise Meintjes, *Sound of Africa! : Making Music Zulu in a South African Studio* (Duke University Press, 2003).

[49] Philip Auslander, *Liveness : Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (Routledge, 2008), https://www.routledge.com/Liveness-Performance-in-a-Mediatized-Culture-2nd-Edition/Auslander/p/book/9780415773539, 73-92.

[50]See Antoine Hennion, "Music Lovers," *Theory, Culture & Society* 18, no. 5 (October 29, 2001): 1–22, https://doi.org/10.1177/02632760122051940.

musicians resolutely choose to appease the audience in song choice, working on arrangements of songs recently in the charts. (At the time of fieldwork, several street musicians spread over Stockholm and Brussels were featured their version of Ed Sheeran's "Shape of You" during their performances.). The negotiation here takes place in the level of personality and musicianship that musicians bring to songs that are not theirs, inflecting known tracks with their own takes on instrumentation, performance and style.

The negotiations around authenticity lead to deliberate considerations of musicians as they hone their craft and adapt it to the street. Musicians might debate whether to improvise on the spot (and if so, what level of musical risk to take without alienating the crowd, or bumping into their own musical limits) or rehearse a solo beforehand; whether to play acoustically or with amplification ("you need that almost shouting voice to be heard outside," one singer-songwriter tells me, "that Dylan-esque wail,") and how specific to tune their niche of musical genre – a balancing act between personal artistic identity and larger audience appeal. Though some of these questions might be answered before the musician begins their endeavors in street performance, these questions about musical and cultural identity find invigorated questioning when laid bare in public space, and musicians find themselves questioning and rethinking their decisions with each performance they carry out.

Opera, renegotiated in a new spatial context

The negotiations of space, personality and musical authenticity that pervade sound culture in general, and street music in particular, manifest with enhanced clarity when musicians seize the opportunity offered by the urban space to fundamentally revise the cultural practices they align themselves with. As I interviewed Nicola, the opera singer, her comments revealed her desire to revitalize opera from the ground up, starting in the street: "Part of it was me getting out of that stage fright, and overcoming it. And part of it was being able to bring opera back to the people, you know. And I liked that phrase, and it's come to encompass everything that I do, when I sing at parties, on the street, for special events. I go singing to schools for free, just so they

can hear this voice, this classically trained voice, and go home to their parents and say 'I just heard this incredible thing!' Opera, to me, is not doing it. You're a cog in the wheel. I'm a lot more talented, creative than opera made me think I was. And I come from a working class background – I'm from a family of plumbers and butchers, music found me – and it's nice that I can bring this music back to my roots.

"I created this song menu, of songs that people would like. They love Andre Rieu here in Belgium, Bocelli. Some people are scared of classical music, they're worried about what to say, it's all very intimidating. So I feel like I'm organizing my own events. Tell stories about myself, and about the music. And it makes people not that intimidated. I think it can really make their day." This interview was cut short when Nicola had to leave for her singing lesson; she would be working later that day, singing on Oxford street, but was first spending some time learning new repertoire and finessing her technique.

Previously in this thesis, Nicola's strategies of aural architecture act were shown to emulate the concert hall aria experience, yet reconfigured to suit her needs and desires as a performer, particularly with regards to the issue of stage fright. In his ethnography of an American conservatory, ethnomusicologist Henry Kingsbury analyzes stage fright as a corollary to Western classical music education's notions of talent and virtuosity.[51] Rites of passage such as the ensemble audition, or the final recital of a formal degree in music, are structured such as to invoke stress in the performer; talent and virtuosity are partially tied into overcoming this stress, and performing at a high level under duress. Imposing pressure on the performer to perform with virtuosity and immaculate technique, Kingsbury argues, is as essential to the culture of Western classical music as Rose argues the appropriation of urban public space was to hip-hop. Nicola's aims to overcome her stage fright, and to democratize the experience of classical music to her audiences, are thereby dimensions of one overarching project in rewriting some of the tenets underpinning classical music culture today. Urban public

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[51] Henry Kingsbury, *Music, Talent, and Performance : A Conservatory Cultural System* (Temple University Press, 1988), 104-168.

space enables this negotiation of classical music by virtue of its ability to be molded by Nicola's aural architectural strategies on the one hand, while remaining familiar and accessible to the lay passerby on the other. Nicola herself ventures that street performance is the crux of her project: "I think that's where it all comes back to, that very direct link. Even when I'm performing at a gig or a special event, or whatever – I've been flown in to perform at French chateaux! – I think where I do my best work, and where it's all important, is just going out there, and meeting working class people, and getting them to get to love this music."

Ideologies through sound: Protests and preachers

14:30, November, Drottninggatan Stockholm. It's Black Friday, and the shopping crowds flood the streets. But, exiting the T-Centralen subway onto Sergels Torg, it's obvious there's something more going on. People are holding signs, not shopping bags; women are all wearing the same black t-shirt with white letters declaiming "NOT FOR SALE." The square is packed with protesters, taking pictures together, holding up banners… On the steps up to Drottninggatan, three men are packing up a set of microphones on stands and an amplification system – the protest is over. Right next to the sound system, a circle of four West African drummers are still playing, while three women, laughing and cheering, are dancing along. "This protest was my sister who organized it," Andre, one of the Senegalese drummers tells me afterwards. "Of course I had to be there for it!" The protest calls attention to the recent news reports of refugees being sold in slave auctions in Libya. The square is indeed packed with an African presence: women are dressed in headscarves or colorful kaftans, or dressed in all black. The protest, having ended, makes way for the joy of being together: people are taking selfies, laughing and whooping; the organizers are posing for a group picture. And the drummers, they drum on for about an hour after the end of the protest, discussing which rhythms to play – sometimes demonstrating unclear rhythms to each other - each time with different people joining in with the chanting and dancing.

The negotiations around sound and music in the public space do not exclusively revolve around musical culture itself; often, music appears in public space as a representation of a larger idea or ideology, and the negotiations around its production occur in conjunction with discussions of the greater ideology. In the case of the Libyan slave auction protest, the drumming circle performed negotiations at various levels of interpretation. On one level, the diverse set of drummers and dancers discussed their familiar and unfamiliar rhythms, in search of an African musical language that was shared to all of them.[52] This discussion dovetails with the larger discussion of the protest as a whole, which condemned events in Libya but which emotionally affected Africans all over the continent; just as the music entangled itself through its various iterations of African identity, so were the events that had spurred the music tangled within the geopolitical realities of Africa as a whole. But this protest as a whole also meant to call attention within Sweden of Sweden's relation to Africa, and consequent responsibility in taking action in these cases.[53] Within this urban space, the insistent drumming, and the overwhelming African presence pressed home the point that many within Stockholm had a personal stake in the matter, and these people would not allow the city to forget that they existed, and they too laid claim to this urban space.

Just like manifestations employ visual tactics to promote a certain message, the strategic deployment of sound forms a potent aspect of collective action. From collective moments of silence to mark mourning to large group chants, sound, governed correctly, can instill a collective experience in large crowds that makes individuals unite in a participatory performance for their common message.[54] Protests often will employ large chants and music not just to proclaim their ideological message, but also to bring in a festive atmosphere to the occasion, as if hearkening back to a

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[52] See Meintjes, *Sound of Africa! : Making Music Zulu in a South African Studio, 122-123*.

[53] See Darlene Clark Hine, Trica Danielle Keaton, and Stephen Small, *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*, n.d., 201-237.

[54] Thomas. Turino, *Music as Social Life : The Politics of Participation* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), 189-225.

celebratory parade. In her study on the history of large crowd dance events, Barbara Ehrenreich posits humans are biologically and culturally engrained to pursue "collective joy" through events involving dancing, costumes, and music.[55] The use of banners, flags, and music in protests invokes the feeling of collective joy in name of a common goal, ascribing political power to the elation of the crowds. The ability for public space to be the venue of a loud, raucous protest without the threat of repercussions speaks to the freedoms of speech that are embedded in Western democratic norms. Ehrenreich documents how history has experienced cycles of oppression towards experiences of collective joy, often with violence towards the participants. In large numbers, crowds enjoying music can pose a threat to institutional power, one that can and must be crushed with great force.

16:32, November, Drottninggatan, Stockholm. In a tight circle, almost a huddle, in the middle of the street, a small group stands together, all looking down at a piece of paper they are holding. The street is anything but quiet: shoppers are strolling by, the nearby costume shop's music is faintly audible in one direction, and the upbeat dance tracks of a clothing store audible in the other. Eyes still fixated on the page, Felix raises a hand and begins conducting the group. The circle starts singing, searching for a common tone but overall sounding a little dissonant. They sing through a hymn, look up at each other, wish each other well, and then spread out over the street to begin handing flyers to passersby. "We sing as a tribute to God," Felix tells me. His eyes glance at a member of the congregation who has positioned herself in front of some shop doors in the hope of catching some of the warm air blowing out. "When we sing in our church, we sing for God. When we sing here, in public, we are channeling our love for God out in public. God sings through us, and His love spreads out to everyone who passes us by."

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[55] Barbara. Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets : A History of Collective Joy* (Metropolitan Books, 2007), 22.

Bringing music into public space in name of an ideology affects both the ideology internally, and that ideology's place within the larger public space. Felix's explanation about the shifting relationship between song, worship and God respective to the location revealed a theological thought process being negotiated in real time. But the explanation also alluded to the role that sound can play within the public debate, as a vector through which ideas can be put forward indiscriminately from person to person. Susie J. Tanenbaum relates how in the 1980s, New York subway musicians affirmed their right in court to practice their art under the United States' Constitutional First Amendment free speech rights.[56] Here, the court formalized the connection between street music and the ability to engage in social and political discussions.

Sound and music consistently prove to perform meaningful roles in asserting opinions and clinging on to subjective expressions of thought. Sound studies, as an academic field developed by scholars such as Jonathan Sterne, has refuted the notion that this association between sound and person is one derived from sound's natural phenomenology, arguing that listening, like the other senses, is a construction with a distinct cultural history of techniques and associations.[57] Ana Maria Ochoa, amongst others, have instead proposed a sociocultural explanation of listening and aurality as a complex, engaged multilayered process where the attributions of privilege towards sound and voice derive from ongoing constructions around the culture of listening.[58] What the ethnographies in this chapter suggest, along with the historical precedents documented by Ehrenreich's history of celebrations and their suppression and Tanenbaum's ethnography of musicians fighting for their right to free speech, is that

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[56] Susie J. Tanenbaum, *Underground Harmonies : Music and Politics in the Subways of New York* (Cornell University Press, 1995), 23-25.

[57] Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past : Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Duke University Press, 2003), 17.

[58] Ana María. Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality : Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*, n.d., 37.

these constructions of listening can be inherently spatial. The act of listening and establishing meaning around sound can therefore assume very grave stakes over space and how public space is inhabited with opinions and ideologies, stakes which democratic public space must cater to or fold into suppression.

Sound as a tool to claim public space: sounding the right to the city of the undesirables

16:34, Gare du Nord, Brussels. Five teenagers sit at the large windows at the front of the station. One holds out his phone, which is playing music French hip hop at full volume, the low-quality speakers making the production sound tinny, cutting out the bass and ringing out the hi-hat hits. They're not doing much of anything, just hanging about: "They don't want us anywhere. The police looks at us suspicious wherever we are. Now in the metro stops in Molenbeek they won't even let us be in groups bigger than three people. They see a few black guys together, or a few Moroccans, they think we're doing drugs. So then, we come here. Almost like a 'fuck you' to the police. We aren't doing anything wrong here, so what can they tell us?" The phone owner changes the song. One of the girls bounces up and down to the music, letting her braids slide across her face.

The use of sound as a subversive practice in public space is not unique to large protests or intensely ideologically motivated groups. Here, the teenagers are using sound not as a personal expression. Their aural architecture strategy is not one of shaping a use for their sound, but rather one of interfering with other aural architectures, as an assertion to their right to public space. Compare for a moment to the practice of visual graffiti, which, as territorial markers of gang turf, David Ley and Roman Cybriwsky framed as "indicators of attitudes, behavioral dispositions, and social processes in

settings where direct measurement is difficult." [59]The phone playing music could be interpreted as a type of aural graffiti, were it not for a number of key phenomenological differences. Firstly, its temporariness and portability make it a more flexible marker of territory, allowing the teenagers to create but also destroy a sonic arena wherever they choose without leaving a trace.[60] This impermanence lends sound well to subversions by individuals or communities who find themselves unable to claim their own agency over a physical space for a long enough time to stake their claim on it. Though sound is unable to act as a permanent marker of territory as graffiti is, quashing it in one place will not preclude it from popping up undeterred in another. Secondly, the physical nature of graffiti makes it easier to quash without notice. Graffiti can be painted over without direct confrontation of its tagger. As Ehrenreich's history of violence towards collective joy points out, however, sound does require either a direct confrontation, or an aggression in the form of a sonic arena meant to mask the subversive sound.[61] In public space, neither of these options are entirely desirable; direct confrontation could only be possible given a large enough public support against the subversive sound, and an escalation in the friction of the soundscape could possibly alienate a larger segment of the populace. Part of maintaining a pleasant soundscape for all requires a high enough fidelity in the soundscape to enable individuals to claim some acoustic territory as their own, for their own purposes of assertion.

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[59] DAVID LEY and ROMAN CYBRIWSKY, "URBAN GRAFFITI AS TERRITORIAL MARKERS*," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 64, no. 4 (December 15, 1974): 491–505, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1974.tb00998.x.

[60] Lacey, *Sonic Rupture : A Practice-Led Approach to Urban Soundscape Design*.

[61] Barbara. Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets : A History of Collective Joy* (Metropolitan Books, 2007), 43.

22:32, Friday night, Stureplan, Stockholm. A homeless man sits at the 7-Eleven, holding a radio in his hands. As well-dressed groups of women pass by, he listens attentively to the static-infused music, trying to play it louder and louder. As people walk by, they make an effort to not pay attention.

19:00, Wednesday, near Medborgarplatsen, Stockholm. A man still holding his violin in hand, no case, is walking down Götgatan. He's meeting a group of homeless men there as they round off another day on the street, sharing experiences before the night. A policeman forcefully bumps into the man, and in doing so grabs his arm. A look of tense concern flashes over both faces. The policeman, curtly: "Do you have a place to stay tonight?" "Yes, I have a bed at a shelter." "Good to know." The agent lets go of the man's arm, and they walk on in separate directions. The homeless violinist seems unfazed by the short encounter.

19:04, in December Drottninggatan, Stockholm. Maria had been guarding the bags and the accordion and drum while Nikolai had gone down to the store, bought some bread and something to drink. Together, they head to MAX, a fast food chain located on Vasagatan. It's a cold night, and after hours of playing music they need to find a place where they can warm up. This MAX has an L-shaped interior: about half of the tables are out of the direct sight lines of the staff behind the counter. There is a marked difference in demographic between the two sides of the room. In front of the main counter, the crowd resembles a typical slice of Stockholm's city dwellers, sitting by themselves, or seated in company around a table. Around the corner, the people look more worn out, their clothes more ragged. Most are not eating anything, but just drinking coffee out of a MAX cup. Some sit crouched in their seats, but others lean over to other tables, laughing along or discussing loudly, in foreign languages, with someone seated some tables away. Nikolai and Maria leave their bags outside, enter and sit at a table close to the door, out of the main hubbub of the group, but still connected to it. Nikolai pulls out the bread he bought in the store and shares it with Maria, as they begin to discuss with the man at the next table how their day was.

Suddenly, a MAX employee comes to their table. As the couple is eating their own food and not buying anything from the restaurant, they have to leave. Nikolai and Maria do not put up an argument, but the man next to them gestures at the woman, telling her something in Romanian that she cannot understand. The employee stands firmly in place while the three of them stand up and exit the restaurant. They wait outside, as some of the men still inside chuckle and stay put as they warm up. Where they will go to next, is not yet clear. It's late, and it's time to find a place to sleep.

Working off the writings by the French Situationists, Guy Debord and Henri Lefebvre (who will return later in the thesis), Don Mitchell elaborates on the slogan of the "right to the city": "the right to the city implies the right to the uses of city spaces, the right to *inhabit*."[62] The right to the city derives from Marxist thinking that the city should not be a place ruled by the bourgeoisie, in which the conditions for living are framed as possibilities for monetization. Instead, the city and its public spaces should be places where social emancipation is possible, or where the "use-value that is the necessary bedrock of urban life would finally be wrenched free from its domination by exchange-value."[63] There are multiple layers in which this argument is pertinent for musicians in urban space. Matt Sakakeeny invokes Mitchell's right to the city as an interpretation of how disenfranchised Black communities in New Orleans stake a claim to urban spaces through parades and jazz funerals.[64] Even in the ethnographic encounters above, with teenagers staking a claim to a space simply through their phone's music, sound characterizes itself as a radical flexible choice to assert one's right to the city.

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[62] Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City : Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* (Guilford Press, 2003), 19.

[63] Mitchell, 19.

[64] Matt Sakakeeny, "'Under the Bridge': An Orientation to Soundscapes in New Orleans," *Ethnomusicology* 54, no. 1 (2010): 1–27, https://doi.org/10.5406/ethnomusicology.54.1.0001.

Another layer in which Mitchell's theories are pertinent to the musicians in these ethnographic encounters is the link between these musicians and the more directly socialist standpoint Mitchell takes in his argumentation: "In turn, and highly germane to the current American city, where we are reduced to arguing over whether one has the right to public urinate if he or she is homeless (Mitchell 1998a, 1998b), the right to inhabit implies a *right* to housing (Lefebvre 1996 [1968], 179): a place to sleep, a place to urinate and defecate without asking someone else's permission, a place to relax, a place from which to venture forth."[65] In the ethnographic encounters involving homeless musicians, it was often evident how sound articulated more than just an assertion of existence or a means to an income; at its most chronic, sound in urban space can be a reflection of a lack of spaces for these basic rights to inhabit, and therefore a necessity to bring these out in public. These ethnographic encounters are also replete with instances in which privatized space (such as a fast food chain) assumes the role of public space, and public space (such as a train station) reacts to undesirable presence with the impulses of a private space. It can be easy to lose track exactly of the increasing hostility that spaces exert against disenfranchised individuals or communities. As these people lose their status in society, and become unwanted guests even in places deemed public, sound can become one of the last resorts they have to make their presence in a place known, in the hope that they will be heard.

[65] Mitchell, *The Right to the City : Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space, 19*.

4. Street music and place: towards a rhythmanalytical approach

By definition, street music exists by virtue of the spaces it inhabits. The first section examined how personal motivations informed spatialized practices, the second explored how sound's negotiations of meaning are enacted in spatial circumstances. This final section turns to urban space itself, and how its soundscape too is socially produced and constructed. While Schafer's soundscape project seems at first to align closely with the ambitions of city governments to regulate their acoustic environment, this model crumbles when it interacts with the dynamic, fluctuating strategies of the musicians it is supposed to regulate. Instead of the static implications of the soundscape designed by an acoustic designer, Lefebvre's theories on social production of space and rhythmanalysis provide insights into how to view urban space as an ongoing process of abstractions becoming concretized through embodied actions. By the end of the chapter, the concept of rhythmanalysis will apply not just as a model of analysis towards street musicians, but also as an activity that they are continuously engaged in throughout their lives in the city.

City policies and regulations: Stockholm

Urban spaces are more than a physical space: particularly in the 20th century, as industrialization and urbanization and their acoustic consequences led to a greater cognizance of sound and noise, sound became scrutinized as a phenomenon to be regulated. More so than machines, laws targeted personifications of sound sources, such as street musicians.[66] These regulations illuminate a city's attitude towards sounds, and the sound cultures that exist within them; John Picker analyzed the argument surrounding organ grinders in Victorian England as an illustration of changing

[66] Tanenbaum, *Underground Harmonies : Music and Politics in the Subways of New York, 16*.

perceptions around work culture,[67] and Susie Tanenbaum relies heavily on the rules of the New York subway authority to explain the conditions in which subway musicians perform.[68] For this study, the two cities in which all the ethnographies were collected were Stockholm and Brussels, whose regulations demonstrate different attitudes towards sounds within public space; these attitudes then actively shape the potential performances that occur in these cities.

Stockholm's city regulations around street music are minimal and pragmatically oriented towards improving general life quality in the city. Street music appears in the city's health and safety regulations, a document which otherwise occupies itself with sanitation, soil, and groundwater protection. The rules specify street musicians in certain locations - the touristy Västermangatan in Gamla Stan, or Drottninggatan, a central shopping street - are confined to playing within certain hours : either only in the afternoon, between 14:00 and 18:00, or from 12:00 to 14:00. One street, Riksgatan, is off-limits for street performance at any time, as this street cuts right between the Parliament buildings. The rules forbid amplifiers and microphones, and groups of musicians larger than four people. Given police permission, these rules can be overridden.[69]

What characterizes these regulations is their acupunctural approach to creating order in the sound world. Specific areas of the city are targeted in function of where there might be an issue, and the language blanket banning systems of amplification is immediately followed by the assurance that this ban can be exempted too. Stockholm's geographical location and urban planning goes some way into explaining how they get away with such a sparse set of rules for an issue that other European cities have needed

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[67] John M. Picker, *Victorian Soundscapes* (Oxford University Press, 2003), https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195151916.001.0001, .

[68] Tanenbaum, *Underground Harmonies : Music and Politics in the Subways of New York, 148-169*.

[69] Stadsledningskontoret, "Lokala Hälsoskyddsföreskrifter För Stockholms Kommun," 2013.

to consider more closely: Stockholm's relative remoteness within Europe, colder climate, and higher prices make it a less favorable destination overall for professional street musicians;[70] and the city's urban layout is comparatively large and features less densely frequented than many cities of comparable populations. The amount of places that cater to the typical engagement strategies of musicians – enough foot traffic, enough space to perform, already in use in a variety of functions – is relatively limited, so city officials can target just a short list of places as worthy of regulation, leaving the rest of the city in freedom.

Beyond the geographic particularities of Stockholm, the regulations demonstrate how the debate around urban listening culture is as of yet dominated by health and safety concerns. When scholars like John Picker analyze sound ordnances, they do so in order to uncover larger debates around class, race or free speech issues, indicating social attitudes from that soundscape.[71] In the case of Stockholm, these socially contentious issues do not seem to be driving the legislation. Zooming out at large, it is evident that discourse in Sweden has focused on the ecology aspect of acoustic ecology; an indicative publication from Henrik Karlsson focuses on Sweden's soundscape with relation to sound pollution, effectively framing the debate around sound in space – as Schafer does – as one of environment versus industrialization.[72] These attitudes eventually led to an adoption of a manifesto for a "better" sound environment by the Swedish Musical Academy, led by Karlsson.[73] Not only

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[70] "GUIDE: Så Blir Du Gatumusikant | Gatumusikanterna," accessed May 16, 2018, https://gatumusikanterna.wordpress.com/guide-sa-blir-du-gatumusikant/.

[71] Picker, *Victorian Soundscapes*.

[72] Henrik. Karlsson et al., *Svenska Ljudlandskap : Om Hörseln, Bullret Och Tystnaden* (Kungl. Musikaliska akademien i samarbete med Institutet för framtidsstudier, 1995), http://www.musikaliskaakademien.se/verksamhet/publikationer/publikationer/ljudmiljo/ljudmiljo/svenskaljudlandskap.135.html.

[73] Kungl. Musikaliska Akademiens styrelse, "Manifest För En Bättre Ljudmiljö," 1995,

Stockholm's regulations focus on the ecological; debates in Gothenburg over curtailing street music also centered the importance of creating a livable environment for the neighborhood.[74]

One reason that cultural-political dimensions maybe have not featured as widely in Sweden's sound discourse is that these dimensions have simply not been mapped onto the soundscape yet. The last few years has seen an increase in debate over the legality of begging in Swedish cities. One city, Vellinge, has proposed a citywide ban on the activity, a decision sparking both outrage and a desire for replication around Sweden.[75] If music were a larger aspect of the Romani presence in Swedish cities, it is likely that the issue of street music would be pulled into this discussion as well; but as discussed in the first section, only a small minority of temporary migrants adopt music as a money-making strategy. Therefore the link between them and sound disturbances is too weak for sound-regulating legislation to truly impact their place within Stockholm's streets.

Brussels: regulating the soundscape

15:30, Thursday in January, Skype interview in Brussels. "They make you do an audition," Nicola says. "It wasn't tough – it's two or three judges from the department, and I think they really let everyone through. I guess it's just a way to maintain the quality somewhat. And I like that to a degree. It gives all the rest a better name."

Where Stockholm provides street musicians with a particular degree of leeway, Brussels's license-based street music policy exemplifies the growing trend in European cities to establish a formalized framework around musical performance in public space.

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http://www.musikaliskaakademien.se/verksamhet/forskning/tidigareprojekt/ljudmanifest.301.html.

[74] https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=1646&artikel=2934922

[75] "Vellinge Vill Ruska Om Med Tiggeriförbud - Sydsvenskan," Sydsvenskan, 2017, https://www.sydsvenskan.se/2017-08-29/vellinge-vill-ruska-om-med-tiggeriforbud.

There are two possible ways to qualify for a license in Brussels: either a performer can put forward a university-level diploma related to their performance type, or they pass an audition held at the city's Department of Culture. Once approved, a musician can pick up their license at the Department, in person. A license is valid for one month only, and one person can obtain a license only four times in the year. The Department of Culture justifies this time limit by referring to the climate in Brussels, reasoning that winter months in Brussels herald a reduced street activity, limiting street performers' possible earnings in that time. In a television interview, a department official stated that the limit also encouraged full-time street musicians (with no other sources of income) to travel to various cities, meet new people and grow their craft by gaining new influences.[76] There are monthly caps on the number of issued licenses: fifty for performances featuring sound, and about sixty more for silent performances. With such a license, performers can play at certain locations determined by the city: some of the major train and metro stations, a few major tourist locations and a number of squares in the city center. Performance spots are first-come first-serve (no two acts may be going on simultaneously in the same place) and only accessible on even hours (from 10 to 11, from 12 to 13, and so on) between 10:00 and 21:00. Further restrictions apply in specific zones in the UNESCO-protected zone of the city, limiting performing hours to only the morning or the afternoon.[77]

There is no consensus over the value of the licensing system. Musicians and officials agree that the rules complicate the ability of making a living playing in Brussels, but disagree on whether this is a complaint or an opportunity to growth. Musicians find the audition process either arduous or futile, stating that a five-minute performance in front of three people hardly corresponds with performing outside for an hour – but

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[76] "Brussel Pest Straatmuzikanten Weg on Vimeo," dewereldmorgen.be, accessed May 15, 2018, https://vimeo.com/67045259.

[77] Cabinet De Mme, Lalieux Kabinet, and Mevr Lalieux, "Besluit-Raad van 16/06/2014," accessed May 15, 2018, https://www.brussel.be/sites/default/files/bxl/Straatartiesten 2014.pdf.

they do appreciate that the overall level of musicianship in the city has raised. While musicians complain about the bureaucracy of the regulations, almost all profess to loving playing in Brussels; officials, in their turn, claim that the rules have led to a better working environment overall, with both musicians and neighborhoods benefiting from a higher level of musical quality, and resultant better audience responses.

The Brussels regulations in their latest iteration date from 2014, though aspects of this system were already in place a few years before. The revision of the rules can be traced to two societal trends at the time, which jeopardized buskers' legal footing. Firstly, a law in January 2014 widened the scope and severity of county-issued fines ("Gemeentelijke administratieve sancties", or colloquially, "GAS-boetes"), leading to a public perception that minor issues were being targeted for punishment.[78] Secondly, cities around Flanders had experienced widely mediatised community initiatives against noise complaints. In 2011, a judge had ruled that playing children in a school in Bruges gave rise to a valid noise complaint to the neighbors;[79] in 2012 and 2013, the traditional Sinksenfoor carnival in Antwerp was the target of neighborhood initiatives against noise complaints, and the city was required to find a new location.[80] City governments all around the country were put on notice and felt the need to take seriously, or at least re-evaluate, noise-related issues; this explains the timing of the Brussel ordnance, as well as why it coincides in timing with busking regulations in other Belgian cities such as Ghent and Hasselt.

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[78] Eddy Eerdekens and Jan Nolf, "Top 100 van de Absurdste GAS-Boetes: Een Klucht Zonder Weerga - België - Knack.Be," Knack, 2013, http://www.knack.be/nieuws/belgie/top-100-van-de-absurdste-gas-boetes-een-klucht-zonder-weerga/article-opinion-120656.html.

[79] "Bonte Stoet Om Brugse Crèche Te Steunen," deredactie.be, 2011, http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws/regio/westvlaanderen/1.1078807.

[80] "Omwonenden Willen Sinksenfoor Weg - Gazet van Antwerpen," GVA, 2012, https://www.gva.be/cnt/eid140736/extern-omwonenden-willen-sinksenfoor-weg.

Where Stockholm's regulations are more explicitly framed within the context of sound pollution, the background and implementation of Brussels's legislation resembles an attitude towards city sound that resembles the agenda put forth by R Murray Schafer in establishing soundscape studies.[81] Having the Department of Culture act as an issuer of licenses, as well as a location for auditions, validates street music as a cultural entity worthy of attention, and therefore also worthy of curation. The auditions give the department the authority to determine what kinds of sounds should be featured in the Brussels soundscape. The rules around time and place feed directly into the creation of Schaferian soundmarks in the city; as an auditory corollary to landmarks, soundmarks ascribe a sonic identity to a particular place due to their specificity in content, time and place. Viewing the regulations as an exercise in soundscape composition or curation also explains some of the friction between the city and the musicians around the determined spots. Musicians are aware that certain spots are better than others, and that some of the official designations are not at all conducive to attracting a good audience or making a living. To the city, however, assigning these locations can aid in the cultivation of Brussels as a cultural, lively city beyond its tourist hotspots. From the standpoint of the soundscape composer, the economic realities of the street musician come second to the establishment of a city-enhancing soundmark.

Performing the regulations: discrepancies between theory and practice

16:00 sharp, Place d'Agora, Brussels. Nicola gets up from the bench she had been sitting on, and sets up her poster, her collections box with visiting cards and CDs, and her amplifier. Despite a temperature of around 3°C, she has been waiting on the square since just before 14:00; when she arrived, she had found another musician already set up and ready to play for the hour. "This is one of the best spots," she tells me afterwards. "If I can't snag this spot, then I'll try at the Bourse, that's also a really good

[81] R. Murray. Schafer, *The Tuning of the World* (A.A. Knopf, 1977), 189-202.

one. If both of those are taken or there are too many other musicians, I might try La Monnaie, right in front of the opera, just to be able to sing that day. But I've only had to do that once." Nicola doesn't have a license this month in Brussels: living in London and only visiting for a day, she figured she could count on being a recognizable face in the street music community to perform impromptu. The licenses are also a hassle: "you have to pick them up at the office - it's like they've never heard of mail." A few minutes later, she's ready to go. Pressing play on her iPad, her accompaniment track starts. A few bars in, she starts to sing: "Ave Maria…."

16:00 sharp, Place d'Agora, Brussels. Two men sit on a bench, watching Nicola set up her poster, her collections box with promotional materials, and her amplifier. It's a grey, cold day, but at least it's dry. One of the men holds a guitar case, revealing why they're waiting around: they were hoping for a place to play some music, out in public. Nicola had approached them when they had arrived around 15:45, telling them that she had been here since the last slot, and was therefore the next person in line to perform. ("You can quickly tell who's at a spot to play. You look for the amplifiers, the instruments, the clues that they're also in line. And after a while you start recognizing them.") The men agree, and keep the guitar in its case. They talk to each other, about what their plans for the rest of the evening are, making no plans to move yet. A few meters from their bench, Nicola begins to sing. Ave Maria… The hour ticks on, with the men wondering whether they should think of a better spot to go. Eventually, around 16:45, they stand up and head towards La Bourse. There, the square itself is being occupied by a crew of breakdancers on a vinyl carpet. Undeterred, the two men sit on an metro air vent, and take the guitar out of its case. They face each other as one man plays, and the other sings, switching roles every few songs. At a few minutes to 17:00, the breakdancers pass their hat around the crowd that has been watching them, and, rolling up their vinyl mat, point at the clock above them, shouting: "We have to stop!" On the other side of the square, the guitarist/singer pair continues to play. A few friends join them on the air vent, and they chat, laugh, and intermittently take turns playing songs or improvised riffs on the guitar. It is past 17:30 when I leave,

by which time some of the friends have left already, but the guitar playing carries on unabated.

Beyond regulating who can play, and at what times and places street music can occur, the legal framework that Brussels has imposed on their street music scene has brought about shifts in the working practices of musicians both within the legal framework as outside of it. The scenes described above demonstrate how the daily negotiations of street musicians in situ adhere to, contravene or expand upon the law in at least three ways: firstly, the adherence or non-adherence to the timeslot system; secondly, the casual disregard of the licenses; and thirdly, the establishment of a queueing system at popular spots.

The varying degrees to which the timeslot system is respected or disregarded illustrate the mixed degrees to which the regulations are perceived to aid or hurt musicians themselves. Many informants viewed the rules as confusing and contradictory. Limiting the hours from 10:00 to 21:00 makes sense from the perspective of nighttime noise complaints; however, less musicians sympathized explicitly with the rule specifying performances could only occur in the even hours, as it scrapped times in which musicians could attract sizeable audiences. In practice, though, musicians have adapted to the time slots by incorporating them into their performance practice. In contrast to other cities with less stringent limits on performance times, musicians in Brussels can think of their time slots as "sets" with a beginning, middle and end, creating an attention arc for listeners to stay for prolonged periods of time. A clear example of such a routine is Nicola's preference to begin her set with *Ave Maria*, both as a way to ground herself and as a continuing sense of ritual throughout her performance practice. Ending a performance, meanwhile, can entail calling one last time for monetary donations, this time motivated by their performance "having to" stop. The rules here act as a clear scapegoat: performers pointing at clocks and apologizing for their sudden endings feed an impression of performers' generosity towards their surroundings, cut short by a malicious external force. This impression of being cut short is just that: an impression; in reality, the musicians and breakdancers

related that the hour-long playing times ensured that they would not get exhausted playing over long periods of time. Particularly vocalists without amplification enjoyed having ordered breaks in their acts. Musicians are also keenly aware of the balance between them and their surroundings, and consider the hour-long slots an acceptable compromise between them and restaurant owners or inhabitants. In the event that the local environment perceives a musical act as disturbing or not to their taste, there is the relief that it will take only an hour before they are gone again. The motivation to file a noise complaint therefore diminishes considerably, allowing musicians to get on with their business and the local community with theirs.

The difference between these practices and Stockholm, in which time slots are not an organizing feature of street music, manifests most clearly in the musical output. With no perceived limits on the length of time a musician can play, many of the Stockholm musicians tend to maximize their audiences by playing for as long as they physically find themselves able to. While the musicians in Brussels rarely, if ever, repeated a song that they had played, musicians in Stockholm operated more under a principle that their listeners were more transient, and therefore they could get away with repeating songs and mastering a smaller repertoire overall than in Brussels. Songs also tended to be longer, and often more improvisational in structure, allowing musicians to prolong or contract their claim to acoustic space as they deemed fit. Improvisational music also occurred in Brussels, but fit more tightly into a song structure with improvised verses; in Stockholm, both accordionists riffing on i-v-i chord ostinatos and freestyle rappers spitting over 4-bar loops implied musically how they could go on forever, leaving the musician as the curator of an endless stream of music.

Looking at the practical implementation of the licensing system further demonstrates how the regulation of street performance in the city is not an exclusively top-down affair, but a site of negotiation between official instances and the street music community on-site. On paper, the regulations are set up in a curatorial structure, acting as gatekeepers allowing only "qualified" musicians to access sanctioned spots. In practice, the regulatory enforcement stresses a more editorial approach: anyone *could*

play, but the regulations grant power for the authorities to shut down any undesirable activity. This shift in perspective from an authority which determines what *is* permissible on the street to one that occupies itself with what should be banned from the street explains why the actual content of the audition process is so meagre, why licenses can be revoked instantly, and why neither the police or the Department of Culture even tries to keep track of who is a license holder at any given time. Holding a license becomes important in that it formalizes the process of disallowing a particular street performer. Nicola's performance without a license presents a specific instance of musicians' general *je m'enfoutisme* towards the system, accepting performers not for their paper credentials but for their demonstrated ability and contribution to the community.

The adaptations of the regulations in daily life do not always necessarily subvert the system; at times, a vernacular set of rules grows, organizing musicians from the ground up. The unofficial queueing system at popular spots is such an example. At popular spots, the musicians have come to an understanding that they can wait their turn for a free spot, keeping in mind the musicians who have been there before them. This is not explicitly specified in the city regulations, which state that spots are occupied on a first-come first-serve basis. The queue system does more than help musicians in securing a playing time; due to its formation, musicians have the opportunity to meet fellow street musicians and gain a community. "It can be quite lonely, this work. My only immediate colleague is myself, so meeting others can be very social," one singer-songwriter commented to me. The formation of this community, in turn, allows for a decentralized regulation amongst musicians, letting musicians play without a license (such as in Nicola's case) or moving to a more systematic distribution of musicians around the city. These kinds of systems of organization form connection between the formal and the informal circuits of street music in Brussels. A similar set of unspoken rules exist among the hip-hop scene and teenagers in the city, who even in defying local authorities negotiate amongst themselves who can occupy what space. At certain locations, such as the stations, where the official street music circuit coincide with the more informal activities of breakdancers and freestyle rappers, it is this set of

vernacular agreements, not the licensing system, which maintain order and good collegiality between the musicians.

Given the reality of how the Brussels - and Stockholm, for that matter - regulation system plays out in real life, invoking Schafer's philosophy of composing soundscapes through regulation becomes questionable. Examining the rules in themselves, the picture of the city government as a soundscape composer emerges quite clearly. But if the composer's "score" (as an organizational tool for sound, the regulations act as a score) becomes contradicted, expanded and problematized in practice, beyond the purview of the original thought, the matter of agency in determining who is composing this soundscape becomes incredibly complicated. Expanding the conventional model of composing a soundscape to exist as an entity beyond the purview of any single actor (one listener, or one composer) leads to a breakdown in its usefulness as a concept.

Instead of continuing with Schafer's ideals of a soundscape being composed, with all the connotations of Western musical composition that implies, this situation of adapting the rules in real time in concrete situations fits more closely with Lefebvre's writings on the social productions of space. Lefebvre proposes the abstract space as a place where ideas live, that is as of yet ungrounded but informs physical space through social values.[82] In his writings on the city, he casts urban public space as an abstract space, one that permeates cities such as Brussels and Stockholm but cannot be cast to a specific place.[83] The sound regulations hereby act as a document of this abstract space, and how on an abstract plane sound is organized. When musicians then follow these regulations, but also adapt them into something new, the musical space of sound regulations transforms into a concrete space, one which musicians can occupy and effect change in. As this thesis has argued, this transformation from abstract to

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[82] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space, 49-53*.

[83] Henri Lefebvre, Eleonore. Kofman, and Elizabeth. Lebas, *Writings on Cities* (Blackwell Publishers, 1996), https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Writings+on+Cities-p-9780631191889, 83-124.

concrete space happens via route of personal motivations, cultural influences and the abstract space proposed by the city.

What also becomes clear from the viewpoint of the production of space is a warning about street music in general. A common thread in sound studies research is the belief that studying sound often correlates to studying sound legislation, as sound that accrues cultural meaning should leave traces through being codified, even if just for being an unwanted source of sound. This argument lies at the foundation for Picker's work into Victorian organ grinders, or Corbain's analysis of church bells in rural France.[84] Particularly street music studies assume this strategy as de facto correct: "Much of the history of street performance… is found in laws that prohibit it."[85] However, this ethnography demonstrates once again that legislation is not as black and white as it purports to be, and that it's actual enactment is subject to interpretation, improvisation and subversion. In studying abstract space, concrete space does not necessarily reveal itself in full; the transformation of one to the other is worthy of study in and of itself.

Rhythmanalyzing street musicians/ Street musicians as rhythmanalysts

11:35 Wednesday morning, Green line between Slussen and T-Centralen, Stockholm. An accordionist jumps into the train, and begins playing "Champs-Elysees." One stop later, he's gone again. Boldo doesn't come out earlier than this: "Morning, people going to work, too early, they're too mad. They don't give money.

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[84] Alain. Corbin, *Village Bells : Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside* (Columbia University Press, 1998), https://cup.columbia.edu/book/village-bells/9780231104500.

[85]Sally Harrison Pepper, in Tanenbaum, *Underground Harmonies : Music and Politics in the Subways of New York, 15*.

Come a little later in the day, you can get some money. And then in the evening, when everyone goes home? That's another good moment to play."

16:53, Wednesday afternoon, Red line between T-Centralen and Tekniska Högskolan, Stockholm. True to his word, Boldo is riding the rush hour trains back and forth, playing "Champs-Elysees" over and over again in each carriage.

17:02, Wednesday afternoon, Gare du Nord, Brussels. On the large staircase up to the station hall, an accordionist sits, waiting. He can't play anymore – the last hour was a playing slot, and 18:00 to 19:00 is again. The accordionist sits still, watching indifferently as the government offices around the station empty out, and the commuters march past him into the train station.

As much as street music shapes, and is shaped by, its existence in a physical space, it also exists within patterns of time and rhythm. In his book *African Rhythm*, Kofi Agawu begins with an hour-by-hour analysis of the rhythms that constitute the day in the Northern Ewe people, to explain how these rhythms pervade in speech patterns and eventually in music.[86] These ethnographies imply that in the case of street music in Western Europe, the reverse is true, though perhaps not in a literal note-by-note sense. In the ethnographic instances above, musicians cater their performances to the commuting rhythms of office workers. These rhythms are not a one-to-one mapping: note the deliberate avoidance of the early morning rush hour, or the artificial absence of music at a peak rush hour due to city regulations. But taken as a whole, the existence of this rhythm of street music provides a commentary on what is going on in the city; in their accumulation of performance strategies, these musicians are encapsulating vernacular knowledge about the city's flows, about the general mood of the city in the morning versus the afternoon, about where people with some spare change are going

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[86] V. Kofi (Victor Kofi) Agawu, *African Rhythm : A Northern Ewe Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

to work and going home to. Not only these facts, but also their reverses are common knowledge to the subway musicians: "We don't go too far on the blue line; it goes to places like Rissne and Rinkeby, where the people are too poor to give money. And it takes too long to get back and forth to the city center." The practice of playing in the subway speaks to the rhythms of public transport, to the profiles of the people riding them, and to the general day-by-day economic life of the city.

"Everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time, and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm," writes Lefebvre, in his writings later in his career, where he proposes rhythmanalysis as a final aspect of the study of space.[87] In his books, Lefebvre essentially formalizes the type of analysis Agawu undertakes in order to analyze space's social production also as a function of time. Lefebvre distinguishes between different rhythmical phenomena in society, explaining how their interlockings, or failures to do so, in themselves lend to analysis. In the case of these musicians trying to emulate the flows of commuters for their own benefit, the idea of rhythmanalysis features in two senses: on one level, a polyrhythmia is upheld between the rhythms of the commute and the rhythms of the street musicians in the subways and stations, in which the rhythms of one group and the other briefly join paths, before beating to their own drums again. But what is also clear is how these musicians are engaged in rhythmanalysis of their own: their study of the rhythms of the city, and how they relate to patterns of generosity or appreciation, function as a tool for these musicians to perform to their liking. Returning to the idea of performance strategies in the first section, it becomes clear that rhythmanalysis is one tool within the construction of these strategies. While not going as far as Agawu in linking musicians' musical rhythms to their lived ones, it's evident that these street musicians require a feel for rhythm both in the musical sense as in the spatial-rhythmanalytical domain.

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[87] Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis : Space, Time, and Everyday Life, 15*.

Street music: a nested rhythm within many city rhythms

21:30 Friday night, Stureplan, Stockholm. A Romani drummer and accordionist pair have set themselves up under Svampen (the Mushroom), a rain shelter which serves its purpose well in this evening drizzle. The musicians are oriented towards the roads that intersect on the square, with small groups of pedestrians waiting for their green lights. It's these pedestrians, waiting for a minute or so, who form the transient audience of the pair as they play La Lambada, or improvise over two or three chords and propulsive rhythm. "Weekend nights, good nights to be out. People are maybe a little drunk, they give a little money. They go dancing, they have some food left, maybe they give it to us. But only now. Later, when they go back home, is too late. We have to leave so we can get to sleep." The musicians start playing again; a man in suit, waiting for the green pedestrian light with a woman on his arm, turns around and snaps a picture.

23:34, Globen, Stockholm. "Lots of discos around. Lots of people. But not always the best to play here. Too late, too cold, people don't always care." I'm in the biting cold with saxophonist Francescu and his two friends, the metro accordionists, though their instruments are tucked into cases or strapped up now. "But for bottle collecting, really good. People come here on the way to discos and they'll be drinking. But then they go inside - no alcohol they can take inside. They throw the bottle in the trash, or they hide it in bushes if there's still some left. So sometimes, we go here at night to find bottles. Sometimes we find full bottles - even better for us!" They laugh.

01:03, Medborgarplatsen, Stockholm. The guitarist:"That's why I come out here. It's something about the people late at night, they appreciate this music more. When they're coming home…. Sometimes someone gives me a beer when they see me here. I can't take it because I don't want trouble with the metro station staff. But it's a nice gesture."

21:05, Slussen, Stockholm, Friday night. When I meet Samir, drumming and singing at Slussen on a Friday night, we try to set up a next meeting time. I ask him when he will be drumming again - earlier in the conversation he had told me he spends many days exclusively collecting bottles for deposits. "Not tomorrow," he responds. "Next Thursday. When the people go out to the discotheques? That's when I come here again. Good time. Lots of people coming through the station." We exchange phone numbers, and he says he will call me next time he's playing music. Thursday arrives, and even though I haven't heard from him I head over to Slussen to see if he's there. Outside there's no-one to be found. I call the phone number, and a computerized voice informs me the number is no longer in use.

22:48 p.m., the Rue Neuve, Brussels. All the shops are closed, and it being a weeknight, this almost entirely commercial area has little to offer for pedestrians. The area of the Gare du Nord is bustling with nighttime activity: prostitutes hustle for clients in the streets around the station, and in the Maximilianpark a group of volunteers in white jackets try to coordinate the citizen initiative to house transit migrants for the night. None of this commotion is obvious here in the shopping street, where Mustafa is the only man around. He doesn't have a sign, or even a hat in front of him; all he has with him is his clarinet, which he currently plays a waltz on. When I ask him what moves him to play with such a lack of an audience, he replies: "It's a beautiful winter night, and there's no-one now. Even better! I play just for me, and to make my night more beautiful. If someone else hears it? I hope it makes their night better too. If not, then pity for them. But if I can, I'll play."

Half an hour later. The organizers at the Maximilianpark announce on Facebook that everyone has found a place for the night. Around the station, cars still make slow laps while women in heels and skirts keep an eye out smoking. Returning to the Rue Neuve, I find Mustafa gone.

"Polyrhythmia analyzes itself," writes Lefebvre; these episodes illustrating how city nightlife becomes a rhythm for musicians to lock into demonstrate how disparate

rhythms feed off of each other and become related.[88] More than in the case of the commuters, rhythmanalysis forces an examination of how the rhythms of life are manifesting, and what the rhythmanalysis carried out by the musicians is even revealing of the city. While commuters correlate to the economic conditions of the city, the street music as an analysis of nightlife illuminates a less quantifiable aspect of the city: its liveliness, or how its inhabitants live their lives beyond their economic obligations. These ethnographic slices also illuminate the power of rhythmanalysis to contextualize the lives of the musicians beyond their playing music. From an rhythmanalytical perspective, a Romani collecting bottles around nightclubs is operating on a similar rhythmical impulse as he would be if he were playing music on the subway then; the latter is simply more audible, while the former is often carried out in a low profile. The place of music in the rhythmanalytical project therefore becomes one of making these rhythms literally audible; the ear can start catching on to systems in the city which may or may not always be heard, but which leave residue in the soundscape. Street musicians play an important role in this rhythmanalysis because they provide a blueprint for how to pay attention to other rhythms in the city who may not always be as audible – those of sex workers, or of refugees.

Rhythmanalyzing street musicians and their interactions with the city

17:30, Drottninggatan, Stockholm, in December. For Christmas season, the Åhlens City department store has fashioned one of their display windows as a stylized winter landscape, with a small stage and sound installation in the middle. During shopping hours, customers – mostly children - inside the store can line up to sing karaoke Christmas carols in the display window, while outside a small crowd of people watches and listens. The electronic-pop instrumental arrangements and the Autotune applied to the amateur singers' voices spring to the ear as people pass by. When the shopping street is at its busiest, the synthetic voice jumps out of the ordinary

[88] Lefebvre, 36.

streetscape, and the group of people around the display window breaks the organic flow of passersby.

But now, this late in the afternoon, there is not too much hubbub at the window. Some shops in the street have already started closing out and though Åhlens City is still open, it too is over its peak hours. Only a small number of shoppers are still walking through the street, and where previously in the day the display window could count on a small throng of people watching its proceedings from outside, now it does not pull any passerby in. Inside, on the karaoke stage, two girls are still shyly holding the microphone, every once in a while blurting out a few sung-spoken words, then giggling at the sound of their electronically manipulated voices.

Nikolai and Maria have been playing accordion and drum for the past two hours, and for them, too, the day is coming to an end. The accordion goes into its carrier bag, and a shopping bag holds the lighter and smaller drum. They gather their belongings – the instruments, a bag cart, some plastic bags including some donations – and place them against the wall right next to the display window. Nikolai then goes down to the supermarket next to the metro station while Maria guards their things. Next to her, a homeless man of Swedish origin who has spent the day begging in silence at the metro entrance looks at her suspiciously, grunts once and then slowly walks off. Maria first sits next to her bags, then gets up and wanders to the display window. She looks on in silence at the two girls singing behind the glass, as they giggle through a half-remembered version of George Michael's "Last Christmas". The music ends, the girls head back into the main shop area; an Åhlens employee in the display window grabs a microphone and makes a closing announcement for the day, and the crowd outside disperses. The speakers begin playing instrumental muzak songs as Maria walks to the nearby hot dog cart and gets in line. The vendor gives her a hot dog – she doesn't pay – and she ambles back to her bags, waiting for Nikolai to return.

While Maria stands in line at the hot dog stand, Erik, the singer at the H&M nearby, crosses the street and stands in front of the display window. By now, the storefront is somewhat dimmed; the place has been shut down for the evening. Erik, unperturbed, starts singing along to the backing track. As always, his voice does not carry far; his

expressive physical gestures convey the gist of his emotional performance, but do not serve to amplify his voice. At the beginning of the song, he still approximately faces the storefront, but as his performance continues he turns, directing his performance in random directions. Towards the end of the song he sings with arms outstretched, eyes closed: "I did it my… way!" Erik stays briefly in his final pose, before snapping out of the moment, and continuing on unperturbed to the metro station.

Nikolai returns shortly afterwards, with some food from the Hemköp supermarket downstairs. Maria collects the bags and the two set off to find a warm place to sit down and find some acquaintances: the Max restaurant. As they leave, they walk past the storefront, still playing instrumentals, glancing briefly at it in passing. Nikolai laughs at the sight, but they keep walking and leave the storefront behind them – for today.

Another favorable aspect of Lefebvre's approach to analyzing space is its ability to imagine interpretations of situations such as this one without reverting to entrenched narratives of pre-existing power structures. Schafer's agenda in *Tuning of the World* rested primarily on the condemnation of the low-fidelity soundscape that rapid industrialization and capitalism as a whole had engendered, in favor of the high-fidelity "natural" soundscape. Transposed into the city centers where these scenes take place, this pastoralism rings inauthentic and inapplicable. Even on a metaphorical level, it seems disingenuous to pit capitalism against these street musicians, when it is evident that these phenomena are still somehow related. What the tool of rhythmanalysis helps do is find a way to simultaneously acknowledge the abstract spaces (the power structures) that have created this concrete space, and ascribe agency to the individuals involved, allowing them to comment on each other on a somewhat equal footing. In this analysis, the Åhlens stand need not be a foreign capitalist entity that the street musicians are subverting. In his work on programmed music in shopping malls, Sterne asserts that "if all music is ethnic music (McAllester 1979:183), then the ethnicity of

programmed music is capitalism."[89] The view that capitalism is just yet another cultural influence in this exchange gives credence to the idea that the street musicians' reactions to the karaoke are not dominated by the capitalist narrative, but rhythmical counterpoints to it. The brief emotional interactions with the songs from the rhythmical channel of the storefront does not put off from the larger cultural-political projects that these individuals represent; they are just hints of how these musicians can tap in and out of the rhythms of the city, and navigate the already existing power structures.

23:30, Gare du Nord, Brussels, Saturday night. The Gare du Nord area is not a main location of Brussels nightlife. Glass facades of government and business offices surround the station for a number of blocks, and when night falls they coolly reflect the white street lights. Yet all in and around the station, there is activity. At the platforms, there are the few train passengers waiting for the last train home. In the entrance hall, on one side are the echoes of the sneakers, and the tinny sound of a phone speaker playing hip hop while friends loudly argue, or sneak in a few dance moves. Underneath a staircase, two homeless Romani listen to a radio show on their phones. In front of the hall, a prostitute smokes a cigarette, listening to her iPod, the sound of the hi-hats leaking from her headphones. Two men, who had been waiting in the Maximilianpark, walk through the station, in search of a vending machine for a quick snack, and to scope out a possible place to sleep in case none of the volunteers housing refugees manage to take them in tonight. It's a calm night, but in every corner of this at first sight desolate station, there are audible signs of life.

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[89] Jonathan Sterne, "Sounds like the Mall of America: Programmed Music and the Architectonics of Commercial Space" 41, no. 1 (1997): 22–50, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0014-1836%28199724%2941%3A1%3C22%3ASLTMOA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-U.

The power of rhythmanalysis is how it can be a tool to access the stories that would fall by the wayside when analyzing urban life through lenses of power structures. In looking for the components of polyrhythmia, or instances of arhythmia, the ear gets drawn to the events and people who have fallen by the wayside, or who do not immediately spring to mind when considering the city; and it encourages the analyst to understand the reasons for this rhythm to exist at all. Honing in on the day-to-day, even hour-by-hour, opens a door into the lived experiences of sex workers, refugees, marginalized members of society within the city.[90] To those interested in understanding the city from the bottom up, street music, taken in the broadest sense of the word (sound put forward by individuals in public space), is worthy of attention for three reasons. For one, its audibility makes it an easy target to follow throughout the urban landscape, and trace its rhythmical progress. Secondly, due to the innate accessibility of sound and music as a method to express oneself and actually be found in public space (far more than the visual), sound and music are likely to feature in the expression of marginalized groups in some form or another; so tracing it will increase the chances of leading to groups that might be overlooked based on merely visual media representations in the city. Finally, the red thread through this thesis has been musicians' ability to construct strategies to perform their music in public. As such, they have built up more experience in the field of rhythmanalysis; examining how they built their craft is an examination into how to conduct this kind of analysis. Following their example will lead to a more profound understanding of cities, how others live in them and what makes them tick.

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[90] "Sit-in-Actie Aan Noordstation.;Onmenselijke En Onterende Behandeling van Migranten Door Politie Moet Stoppen | VRT NWS," accessed May 16, 2018, https://www.vrt.be/vrtnws/nl/2018/05/11/vluchtelingenwerk-vlaanderen---transmigranten-zijn-niet-verdwene/.

5. Conclusion

In this thesis, the ethnographic research of street musicians in two European capitals prompted a reconsideration of how to approach the study of soundscapes and sound cultures in urban space in general. Though a useful set of analytical concepts have sprung forth from R. Murray Schafer's conception of soundscape studies, these concepts cast negative judgments on the urban soundscape and do not suffice to explain the urban environment's acoustic particularities.[91] In the body of this thesis, an analysis of street musicians and their practices develops a theoretical model which eventually merges with the embodied model that guides musicians in their navigations of the city. Street music therefore aurally enacts a method of interpreting the soundscape of the city from the bottom up.

In the first section, aural architecture – a concept with its roots in Schafer's soundscape studies – is appropriated as a way to characterize street musicians' actions as personally motivated and immediately aurally impactful. Moving away from treating sounds as sound objects in an overall soundscape and toward an approach emphasizing personal agency and creativity opens the door to understanding sound culture as a whole as a moving, continuously constructed process. Where Schafer sets forward an agenda for the acoustic designer based on training, skill and discernment, the aural architect we describe is one whose craft has been honed through experience (as evidenced through the differences between a new young singer and more weathered street performers), and who shape the soundscape through personal actions rather than curatorial moves. These altered positions with regards to agency, the soundscape and the sound object emphasize how the soundscape is a process of individual strategies enacted by those within it, rather than an entity which can be changed by an external designer. This reframing allows for a more general consideration of what kinds of agency exist within the soundscape, and how the

[91] Lacey, *Sonic Rupture : A Practice-Led Approach to Urban Soundscape Design, 29-32.*

soundscape, listened to as a social production, forms the territory for cultural and social negotiations.

The second section of the thesis discusses how street musicians' activities engage with debates beyond the personal, and spatially enact socio-cultural negotiations. In genres which place a lot of historical or social relevance on public performance, such as hip-hop or folk singers, the conversations around street performance as a site of negotiation between tradition, innovation and authenticity in a musical genre naturally arise. Yet the ethnographic material reveals how urban space requires musicians in other genres to also critically engage with their genre and its existence within certain spaces. Opera arias, sung on the street, for instance, awaken conversations about classical music's accessibility towards different class backgrounds. Opening up the theoretical viewpoint from specific ethnomusicological cases to an approach favoring the sociocultural practices that surround listening, sound, and meaning, allows us to draw parallels between how genre-defined musicians negotiate with their culture and how sound and music are leveraged in general in public space. Building off the work of ethnomusicologists and sound studies scholars on the social construction of sound cultures, the ethnographies featuring protest music, or "unwanted" individuals using sound to assert their right to the city, bolster the notion that sound culture in urban space is itself inherently spatial, and the processes of its production trace those of the social production of space as a whole. It is because of this intimate link between the production of space and the production of the soundscape that sound carries such power in asserting opinions, or negotiating stakes of identity and self-expression, within urban space.

Having established how individual strategies shape the soundscape, and how these strategies simultaneously negotiate and accrue meaning onto sound through space, the final section examines how these aural-spatial strategies shape, and are shaped by, the city. Though city governments have adopted different policies related to noise abatement and street music regulations, in practice these are not performed to the letter, but are also subject to ongoing sociocultural negotiations, aural strategies and even subversions. These trends were most obvious in Brussels, where the rigorous

legal framework did not account for day-to-day organizing practices of musicians on-site. This discrepancy between theoretical and concrete space illustrates the shortcomings of a top-down, Schafer-inspired approach to soundscape design, which has no real tools to address the ongoing actualization and interpretation of sound culture. Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis, meanwhile, a component of his greater theories of the social production of space, serves as an interesting theoretical tool where the analysis of street music converges with the strategies of street musicians. As a rhythmanalytical exercise, following street musicians through their activities and strategies of the city reveals volumes of how urban space is constructed and how the city as a whole operates. In doing so, it also becomes clear that these strategies in themselves are exercises in rhythmanalysis, playing off of rhythms of time and space in the city as a whole, for instance, by tracking commuting flows, or by following the city's nightlife hotspots, or by congregating in the same stations as transit migrants do. Approaching street music with a rhythmanalytical lens therefore gives us both the opportunity to understand their realities to a greater extent, while opening the door to how we can learn to experience urban sound culture from the bottom up. Having musicians navigate the chaotic, emergent aspects of the overall city soundscape, as determined by regulations, the interpretation of those regulations, and a myriad of rogue actors, proves that it is possible to engage with these kinds of soundscapes in productive, engaging ways; one need not be in control of the whole soundscape to make it a sonorous one.

Of course, Schafer's argument rests on larger trends in industrialization, and the role of machines in propagating sound pollution, which are issues that have gone largely untouched in this thesis. In highlighting the role of sound as a vehicle for individuals to construct their own narratives within the city, I have disregarded the non-human sounds, and paid only passing reference to work that has studied how capitalism has affected sound culture. In order to incorporate the role of the bottoms-up soundscape generations, our theories around aural architecture and rhythmanalysis would have to marry Schafer's concerns with ours.

Another open question is the role of digital technology in regard to these vernacular techniques of aural architecture and rhythmanalysis. Many of the ethnographic encounters have featured technology in some form: musicians using amplifiers, audiences Snapchatting performances that caught their eye, Romani temporary migrants texting to transmit information to their network of friends, musicians promoting their website or documenting their performances on Instagram… Michael Bull has written about the role of the iPod and how it enables listeners to tune out of the soundscape of the world at large, creating their own permanent non-space.[92]The major shifts in listening culture that digital music players and mobile internet have heralded do not emerge organically as features of the vernacular listening culture and rhythmanalysis that street musicians promulgate. Perhaps an expanded set of ethnographic methods, featuring netnography along with offline fieldwork, would expose these technologies as overlooked yet essential aspects to the grassroots experience of urban space. Perhaps, however, the analyses which ascribe the iPod as a great source of change in listening culture rest upon a series of assumptions around listeners' social and economic capital, ignoring the listening cultures that exist on the fringes of wealth.[93]

After all, the major driving force uniting this thesis is the notion that the sound cultures of public space are not exclusively driven by the typical drivers of power or economy. Arguably, sound and aurality are dimensions of public space in which typical narratives of disenfranchisement and marginalization play out not along the lines of economic power, but along spatialized realities, where it is possible for individuals and institutions of diverse backgrounds and forces to engage in the same playing field.[94] It is possible to view public space not as an egalitarian space, as one that is shaped by

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[92] Michael Bull, "No Dead Air! The IPod and the Culture of Mobile Listening," *Leisure Studies* 24, no. 4 (2005): 343–55, https://doi.org/10.1080/0261436052000330447.

[93] See Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality : Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*.

[94] Marc. Augé and Tom. Conley, *In the Metro* (University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

market forces and power structures, and at the same time to analyze the activities of the powerless as worthy in their own sake, without attributing these activities as functions of the larger power system. The ideas of aural architecture, of using rhythmanalysis both as a way to investigate the lives of the unstudied street musician, but also of viewing rhythmanalysis as a tool that street musicians, the homeless, and the disenfranchised utilize to their survival, altogether form an image of the agency that these vulnerable groups have in their own situations.

In choosing to center the techniques in which individuals shape the soundscape, this thesis claims that to ignore the quotidian and bottom-up perspectives of sound and of urban space, is to ignore a vast wealth of knowledge on sound culture in cities at best, and a blatant disregard of entire communities and their concerns at worst. Sound is a democratic medium, and even the most disenfranchised can invoke it to express truths about their lives. To shut these sound cultures out from the discussion is to dehumanize entire groups in society; to learn from them is to listen to the city in increasingly richer ways.

21:02, Saturday night, La Bourse, Brussels. A guitarist packs up his instrument, and gets ready to go home. "What gets me? The silence. You come to a place, you see all these beautiful old buildings, the tourists, the cafes,... you do your gig, and then two minutes later it's like you were never there."

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