EUR Research Information Portal

All together now

Publication status and date:
Published: 27/01/2023

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Citation for the published version (APA):
Vandenberg, F. (2023). *All together now: Live (streamed) music as collective practice*. [Doctoral Thesis, Erasmus University Rotterdam]. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR).

Link to publication on the EUR Research Information Portal

Terms and Conditions of Use
Except as permitted by the applicable copyright law, you may not reproduce or make this material available to any third party without the prior written permission from the copyright holder(s). Copyright law allows the following uses of this material without prior permission:

- you may download, save and print a copy of this material for your personal use only;
- you may share the EUR portal link to this material.

In case the material is published with an open access license (e.g. a Creative Commons (CC) license), other uses may be allowed. Please check the terms and conditions of the specific license.

Take-down policy
If you believe that this material infringes your copyright and/or any other intellectual property rights, you may request its removal by contacting us at the following email address: openaccess.library@eur.nl. Please provide us with all the relevant information, including the reasons why you believe any of your rights have been infringed. In case of a legitimate complaint, we will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website.

Erasmus University Rotterdam
Making Minds Matter



ALL TOGETHER NOW

Live (streamed) *music as collective practice*

FEMKE VANDENBERG

ALL TOGETHER NOW

Live (streamed) *music as collective practice*

This research has been funded by the Erasmus University Rotterdam
under the Initiative "Vital Cities and Citizens".

Publisher:
ERMeCC—Erasmus Research Center
for
Media, Communication and Culture

Printed by:
Ipskamp Printing, Enschede

Graphic design and cover artwork:
Leeza Pritychenko
(www.leeeeza.com)

Copyright © Femke Vandenberg

All rights reserved.
No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrievable system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise,
without the prior permission of the author.

ISBN: 978-90-76665-54-2

“ALL TOGETHER NOW”

Live (streamed) music as collective practice

“MET Z’N ALLEN NU”

Live (streamed) muziek als gezamenlijke praktijk

Thesis

to obtain the degree of Doctor from the
Erasmus University Rotterdam
by command of the
rector magnificus

Prof.dr. A.L. Bredenoord

and in accordance with the decision of the Doctorate Board.
The public defence shall be held on

Friday 27th January 2023 at 13:00 hrs
by

Femke Vandenberg
born in Galway, Ireland.

Erasmus University Rotterdam

DOCTORAL COMMITTEE:

Promotor:	Prof.dr. C.J.M. van Eijck
Other members:	Prof.dr. PPL Berkers Dr. J. Haynes Dr. L.S. Liebst
Copromotor:	Dr. M.J. Berghman

Contents

1. “HELLO” p. 9

1.1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION p. 9
1.2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS p. 12
1.3. NOTES ON EPISTEMOLOGY AND POSITIONALITY p. 13

PART I **p. 17**

2. “COME TOGETHER“ Theoretical framework I p. 19

2.1. INTERACTION RITUALS p. 19
2.2. CULTURAL TASTE AND CONSUMPTION p. 24
2.3. TOWARD A MICROSOCIOLOGY OF MUSIC CONSUMPTION p. 26

3. “WIJ ZIJN NEDERLAND” Defining Collectivity in Dutch Domestic Music Concerts p. 31

3.1. INTRODUCTION p. 31
◇ Levenslied as a Music of the People p. 32
3.2. METHOD p. 33
3.3. RESULTS p. 35
◇ The Pursuit of Effervescence p. 35
◇ The Nation as Totem p. 38
◇ Intercultural Boundaries p. 40
◇ Interclass Boundaries p. 42
◇ Intraclass Boundaries p. 44
3.4. CONCLUSION p. 45

4. “WE CRY TOGETHER” A micro-sociological analysis of folk, pop, and highbrow music consumption p. 51

4.1. INTRODUCTION p. 51
4.2. METHOD p. 52
4.3. RESULTS p. 54
◇ Survey results p. 54
◇ Music: To share or not to share emotion p. 56
◇ Artist: As ritual leader, totem or creative genius p. 60
◇ Boundary work and cultural taste p. 65
4.4. CONCLUSION p. 72

PART II **p. 77**

5. “THE SHOW MUST GO ON (LINE)” Theoretical framework II p. 79

5.1. VIRTUAL INTERACTION p. 79
5.2. MOVING CONCERTS TO THE VIRTUAL SPHERE p. 80

6. "EVACUATE THE DANCEFLOOR" Electronic music livestreams during COVID-19 as a hotline to collective consciousness? p. 85

6.1. INTRODUCTION p. 85
6.2. METHOD p. 86
6.3. RESULTS p. 88
◇ Old rituals as symbols p. 88
◇ New ritual actions p. 89
◇ Virtual concerts as an end in itself? p. 90
6.4. CONCLUSION p. 91

7. "DIGITAL WITNESS" The hyper-ritualisation of interaction on livestreamed concerts p. 95

7.1. INTRODUCTION p. 95
7.2. METHOD p. 96
7.3. RESULTS p. 97
◇ Content of comments p. 97
◇ Organisation of interaction p. 101
7.4. CONCLUSION p. 104

8. "DANCING ON YOUR OWN" Twitch concerts as unsuccessful large-scale interaction rituals p. 109

8.1. INTRODUCTION p. 109
◇ Twitch as a developing live music platform p. 110
8.2. METHOD p. 111
8.3. RESULTS p. 114
◇ Engaging with the chat p. 114
◇ Engaging with "outsiders" p. 118
◇ Engagement with music and material surroundings p. 120
8.4. CONCLUSION p. 124

9. "THE MESSAGE" p. 129

9.1. GENERAL CONCLUSION p. 129
9.2. IS THERE A TASTE FOR COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE? p. 132
9.3. EXTENDING INTERACTION RITUAL THEORY p. 135
9.4. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH p. 136

References p. 138
Appendices p. 149
Summary p. 159
Portfolio p. 175
Acknowledgements p. 181

"HELLO"

1.1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Why do we go to music concerts? Listening to music at home, through speakers or headphones, often provides better quality sound, and viewing a performance on YouTube guarantees an unhindered view of the artist, both without having to leave the comfort of our couch. However, the rise of music streaming, and the consequential ease of music consumption in the domestic environment, has not impeded audience interest in this industry. In fact, live music consumption has steadily grown in popularity since the early 2000s (Frith, 2007; Holt, 2010; Montoro-Pons et al., 2013, Mulder & Hitters, 2021; Propheter, 2015).

While recorded music is often regarded as something that complements an activity (Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Marshall, 2019)—consumed inattentively or through "ubiquitous listening" (Kassabian, 2013)—, a concert will usually provide the primary activity. What distinguishes music concerts further is the inherently social nature of these events. Taking place in public space, they allow for interaction between the participants—between performing artist and audience, but also among the audience members (Kjus & Danielsen, 2014). Concerts are therefore seen to have "social value", (re)establishing relationships, feelings of belonging and group identity (Behr et al., 2020; Mulder & Hitters, 2021). As a form of interaction, live music and its "sibling cultural practice, dance" are linked to "sociality and community" more than any other form of communication (Hesmondhalgh, 2013: 84).

This dissertation argues that the experienced feelings of collectivity and social solidarity can be largely attributed to the fact that concerts function as highly successful interaction rituals (Collins, 2004). A core premise of Durkheimian sociology is that certain interactions, that encompass a basic structure (or a number of *ingredients*), can result in the attainment of high levels of collective emotion—what Durkheim names *collective effervescence* (1995[1912]). The outcome of this intensely felt shared excitement is not only a strengthened individual confidence, but a solidarity with the other participants present (Collins, 2004).

Concerts can accommodate interaction on both a small (interpersonal communication) and a large scale (crowd behaviour). While interpersonal interaction—between new or old acquaintances—is no doubt an important part of any music event, it is the large-scale collec-

tive engagement that makes concerts so attractive. It is rare that we find ourselves standing among so many other physical bodies, the change in *social morphology* (from sparsely to densely populated areas) contributing to an initial excitement among the crowd (Durkheim, 1995[1912]); Liebst, 2019; Mauss, 1979[1906]). Add on top of this a mutual focus of attention—the artist and music—and activities common to the audience—a customary dance, singing along or clapping on cue—and a state of *rhythmic entrainment* can be reached (Collins, 2004; Horsfall, 2013). It is precisely the ease of concerts in establishing this cognitive and emotional synchronisation between audience members, that make them so successful in producing high intensity large-scale interaction rituals.

While microsociological studies addressing music consumption are on the rise, following growing interest in the so-called *cultural turn* in sociology (for example: Benzecry & Collins, 214; DeNora, 2000; Hennion 1993; Liebst, 2019), the percentage is still modest. Sociological studies into music consumption and the related lifestyle patterns of consumers, have primarily been analysed in connection with social structure, where cultural preference is related to socio-economic position (Bourdieu, 1984; Emmison, 2003; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Warde, 1997, to name only a few). Stemming from Bourdieu's seminal work, these studies present culture as a status marker, as a method of *distinction*. Culture has thus been largely seen as a way people demarcate themselves (Bryson, 1996; Katz-Gerro, 2011; Lamont, 1992; Michael, 2015; Van Eijck, 2001).

Without diminishing the importance of this line of research (as this dissertation also partly builds on it), I argue that more attention should be given to the micro interactional processes of the use, motivation and experience of cultural consumption. As stated above, we have seen a growing interest in this form of sociological analysis. Notable is the work of DeNora, who stresses the affordances of music for consumers, highlighting "music's role as a medium par excellence of emotional construction" (2011: 163) and Hennion (2001), who focuses on the experience and effect of music on listeners. However, little empirical research has been done into how these processes work for audiences of live music concerts, as sites of large-scale interaction, and how experience and motivations in these settings relate to social position.

In this dissertation I focus on the experience of live music for various audiences. Combining two long standing sociological traditions—Bourdieusian notions of class taste and Durkheimian ritual theory—its main ambition is to understand *how feelings of collectivity play a role in the concert experience* and *under what circumstances does live music act as a vehicle for social solidarity*. This results in a number of sub-questions. Firstly, as music concerts and their corresponding audiences will

have their own genre conventions and manners of engagement (Becker, 1982; Frith, 1996), depending on the cultural scheme they derive from (Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008), I ask: *how does the experience and motivation for collectivity differ between cultural schemes?* Second, as the morphological composition of the participants is such a central component to a successful interaction ritual (Liebst, 2019), I ask: *what is the role of physicality in the establishment of collectivity during live music?* This second question focuses on the engagement and audience interaction during concerts online (namely livestreams), where co-presence is represented not physically but virtually. For this second question, I make use of the growing online presence of live music that occurred due to physical distancing measures imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, the aim of this research is twofold:

i) Present a microsociological perspective on live music consumption (both offline and online). Through analysing how the collective emotional experience of live music (as a large-scale interaction ritual) is conditioned by certain settings and within different social groups, I bring greater understanding to the unifying potential of music.

ii) Add to the growing debate on the appropriateness of the virtual sphere in accommodating successful interaction rituals (e.g., Boyns & Loprieno, 2013; Collins, 2004, 2020; Dimaggio et al., 2018; Nexø & Strandell, 2020). This allows me to give empirical consideration to online interaction—specifically large-scale interaction—an understudied yet increasingly important area due to the acceleration of online activities, spurred on further by the COVID-19 pandemic.

By exploring how interactional elements, found at large-scale assemblies, relate to social cohesion, boundary work and social inequality, I combine both micro and macro sociological perspectives, adding a much-needed triangulation of approaches.

Empirically, I conduct five studies that build upon one another. In this dissertation they are presented in two sections. *Part One* starts with a theoretical chapter, introducing the relevant literature on face-to-face (F2F) interaction and live music. It proceeds with two related empirical chapters. *Part Two* then goes on to present a theoretical chapter on online interaction and three empirical chapters that address online interaction at livestreamed live music. Before these are presented, the methodological considerations of this dissertations are discussed.

1.2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This dissertation derives from an interpretive epistemology, adopting a flexible and emergent research structure. Chapters 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 are empirical chapters, based on papers published or in the process of being published in scientific journals and reworked to some degree for the purpose of this dissertation[1]. The empirical chapters build off one another in the sense that they address questions that arise and are left unanswered in the previous studies. To do this, however, not only requires constant re-evaluation of theory but also of method. Hence, this dissertation uses a combination of well-established and innovative research methods to understand how feelings of collectivity play a role in concerts as large-scale interaction rituals.

Chapter 3 starts out analysing the specific mechanisms needed for collectivity during live music concerts, specifically focusing on how the audience of the Dutch popular folk genre *levenslied* draw boundaries to foster the desired convivial atmosphere. Interviews are conducted with 20 concert attendees, recruited through a survey held during the concert. Qualitative interviews are used here to bring attention to the motivation, meaning and experience of these events. These interviews were transcribed and then analysed, using thematic analysis on ATLAS.ti[2].

Chapter 4 very much builds on this, asking if the same level of collectivity and emotional attainment is experienced and expected in other genres and across social positions. As cultural taste and the mode of engagement with specific genres differ per social group (Bourdieu, 1984; Jarness, 2015), it explores the extent to which there is a *taste for collective effervescence*. It utilises the same methodology as the first chapter, using surveys held at various concerts (from the three ideal-typical cultural schemes—popular, folk, and classical) to recruit respondents. It compares the first sample of 20 levenslied respondents with another 10 from popular genres and 10 from contemporary classical music genres, making the overall sample 40 (see **appendix 1** for overview of respondents). As the homology between taste and social position has been largely explored through quantitative methods (Bellavance, 2008; Lahire, 2008; Peterson, 1992, 1997; Roose, 2015; Van Eijck & Knulst, 2005; Yanish & Katz-Gerro, 2012), the qualitative approach of this chapter adds an important contribution to the literature. Interviews here are specifically appropriate as I focus on how live music is used by audiences (see for example DeNora, 2000), thus exploring the consumption of music by means of not only what is being consumed, but also how it is being engaged with (Lizardo & Skiles, 2012).

Chapter 6 is the first chapter in Part 2 of the dissertation. It is a product of the first "lockdown", seen as a consequence of the

1 The journal article that each chapter is derived from is indicated in the footnotes at the beginning of each empirical chapter.

2 More detailed information is provided into the methodology of each study within the chapter itself.

COVID-19 pandemic. The immense acceleration of live music to the virtual sphere presented an interesting addition to the study of cultural consumption. This chapter explores the transition of live music online[3], specifically questioning the ability of online participation in fostering social resilience and collective consciousness during times of physical distancing. Through a qualitative thematic content analysis of the comments (n=1501) posted during livestreamed techno concerts on Facebook live, it focuses on the rituals, symbols and rhythm of textual communication of the audience.

Chapter 7 is then based on comparing how communication online differs between audience members from various genres, during livestreamed live music. Very much building on the previous study and using a similar methodology, it applies a discourse analysis of comments, left on livestreamed classical and Dutch folk concerts, to explore how these audiences adapt to the virtual sphere (n=2,075). This chapter thus not only examines the mechanisms used in re-constructing the concert situation online—through textual interaction—but compares the type of interaction used by audiences of traditional highbrow and popular genres of music. In this way it also builds off the study in chapter 4 as we can further understand the position and motivation for collective effervescence, and the importance of bodily co-presence.

Chapter 8 is the final empirical chapter. In it I address a limitation of the previous two chapters to answering the research question. As chapters 6 and 7 focus on analysing comments, they do not allow for the interpretation of the online audience's experience. While providing important considerations into audience interaction online, they cannot measure the level of emotional energy established through these interactions. To understand the intensity of both small- and large-scale interaction rituals online, this chapter uses methodological triangulation, combining video observations of users participating in live music on the streaming platform Twitch (23 hours and 18 minutes), with 10 video elicitation interviews. With this rigorous method, I can go beyond speculative studies that use Collins' (2004) interaction ritual model to explore online communication (e.g., Bartholomew & Mason, 2020; DiMaggio et al., 2018; Jodén & Strandell, 2021; Wang & Li, 2020).

3 It is important to mention here that livestreaming was around long before the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically in other fields such as gaming (for example: Ford et al. 2017; Hilvert-Bruce et al. 2018; Taylor 2018). While music livestreams were increasingly becoming popular, the majority of live music remained in the physical realm.

1.3. NOTES ON EPISTEMOLOGY AND POSITIONALITY

Approaching this research from an interpretivist epistemology, the emphasis is very much on the participants' meaning and understanding of interaction. However, I deviate from the radical ethnomethodological epistemology which frames a large part of studies stemming from symbolic interactionism (see for example Mead, Bulmer, and the Chicago

School). Instead, my thinking is more in line with the Durkheimian tradition and scholars such as Collins and Goffman [4]. Although all three (some more than others) have been considered to use microsociological approaches, there remains an emphasis on social structure that we as researchers can make claims about (Collins, 1994).

However, this does not limit my ambition to approach my data and respondents from a heuristic approach of *verstehen*. For example, as discussed above, the respondents for the first two empirical chapters were recruited at the concerts they were attending. This manner of data collection was not only used to surpass traditional means of snowball sampling, but also as a way to get first-hand insights into the experience that I am studying. Although it is impossible to ever know the experience of another, this was an important starting point for the interviews and aided my interpretation of their explanations.

Staying on this point, it should be noted that I am a regular concert attendee and self-confessed cultural omnivore. While I must say that I do not visit every concert with the same appreciation and excitement, it has presented opportunities for a rich comparison of the atmosphere, conventions, and rituals of various types of events (from hardcore to Dutch pop, classical music and jazz). Similarly, as live music transitioned almost exclusively online from mid-March 2020, so too did my live music consumption. During the two years of on-and-off 'lockdowns'—which in the Netherlands highly affected the music industry [5]—I watched countless livestreams, with also the ambition of gaining an understanding of the workings and experience of these platforms. Of course, I make no attempt to use any of this as data, but it has provided a base on which to relate to my respondents and strengthen my interpretations. I am further aware that my appreciation and consumption of live music can have a downside, as it may provide a blind spot; an oversight of aspects that do not resonate with my personal experience. This I have attempted to counter by regularly comparing my interpretations to my own personal experiences and those of friends and colleagues.

The manner in which I interpret data (and also the methods and theories I choose) is not only influenced by my interest in music, but also other background characteristics. For example, an important feature that has certainly influenced my research is my nationality. While I have Dutch parents, I was born and raised in Ireland, living there until starting the master's in *Arts and Culture Studies* at Erasmus University Rotterdam, in 2015. This means that my outlook on Dutch society, the music scene and its consumers is shaped by my international background. In my opinion, this has both positive and negative consequences. Firstly, as I have less experience and exposure to Dutch culture, I can remain relatively impartial. This is particularly interesting when looking at music consumption and cultural taste, as I

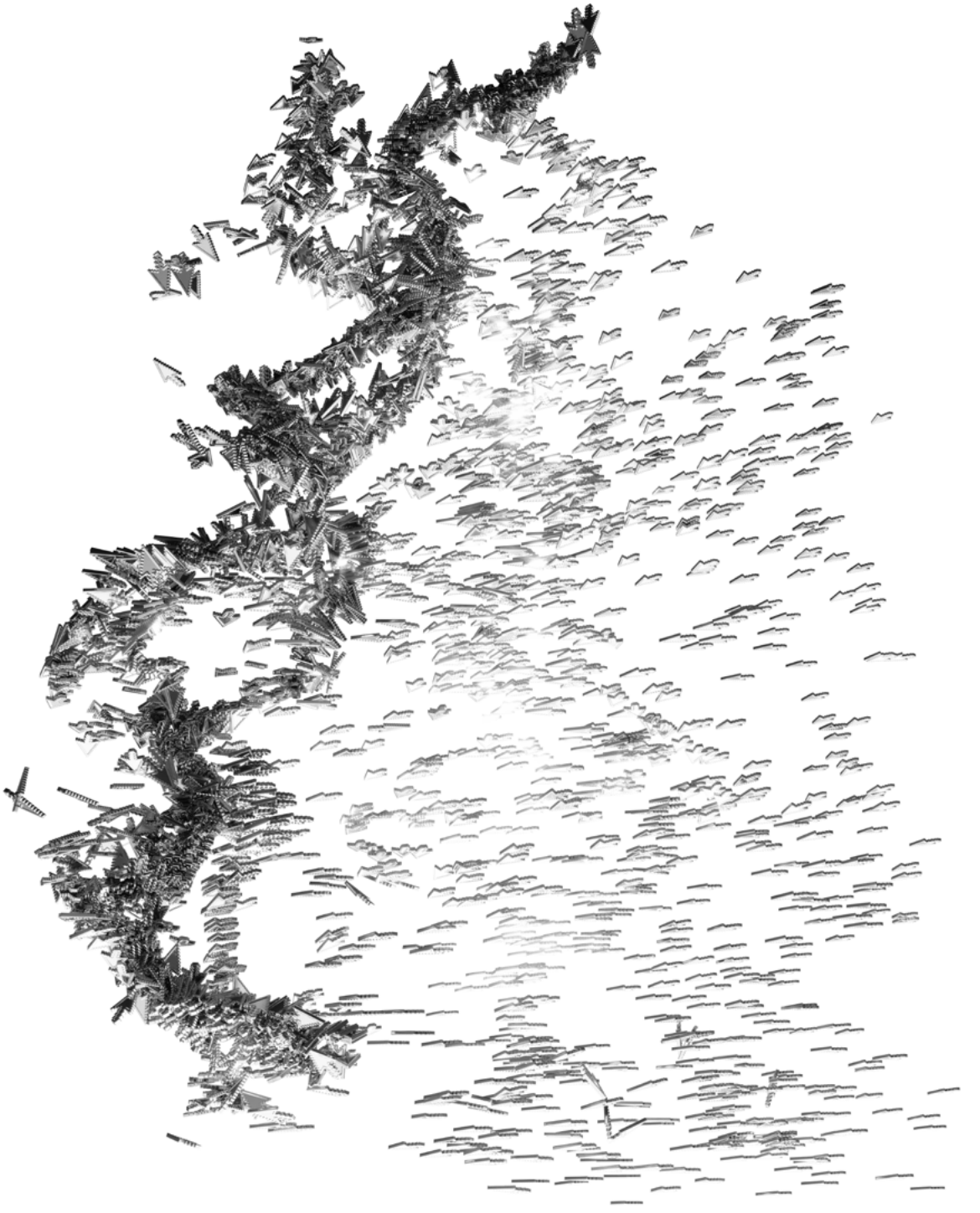
4 Both Collins and Goffman have often been connected to the symbolic interactionist tradition. However, while using microsociological approaches, their theoretical apparatus derives more from a Durkheimian way of thinking, providing micro foundations for understanding macro issues.

5 In the Netherlands, nightlife (bars, clubs and venues) was one of the industries that had the strongest restrictions, remaining closed after other industries (sports, beauty, schools/universities) could once again open.

am less influenced by societal norms such as widely believed cultural hierarchies. However, the downside is that I may miss out on important cultural references and frames.

Finally, while aspects of positionality—nationality, age, gender, education level—have a large effect on how topics are chosen and interpreted, it can also play a role in influencing the research participants. As a researcher it is important to keep in mind that respondents' accounts are not objective facts. Respondents, like all of us, are subject to interactional processes and face-work (Goffman, 1959), meaning that what is presented is performative and affected by the situation and the interviewer. Aware that my background and the space where the interviews are held can impact answers, I adopted a number of tactics. I was particularly aware of the educational difference between the respondents of the Dutch popular and folk music. Conscious of the fact that they may feel intimidated (as previous research has shown—Huang et al., 2010), I adopted a very informal tone. Email and phone exchange was kept light-hearted with hopes of creating trust and comfort. This led to me being invited to the respondents' homes, or local cafes—on occasions even being asked, after the interview, to join to the local bar. This approach allowed me to gain valuable insights into my participants, observing also their local environment and on occasion even first-hand how they interact with music.

Interestingly, an aspect that helped in building a rapport with the respondents (of all education levels) was my nationality. My inexperience with Dutch culture (and music) and non-fluent skill with the language presented a nice icebreaker and allowed the respondents to tell me (as a newbie) about Dutch culture and music. As I was unfamiliar with a lot of the Dutch culture, there was less hesitation to expressing likes and dislikes stemming from personal taste.



PART I



"COME TOGETHER"
Theoretical framework I

2.1. INTERACTION RITUALS

Social interaction has been a topic of sociological inquiry since its formation as a scientific discipline. A notable figure in theorising the role of interaction in social order is Émile Durkheim. While one strand of the Durkheimian tradition has been heavily criticised for its functional approach—idealising and reifying social structure[6]—the other strand has had a huge influence on the way we think about societal rituals, paving the way for microinteractionist approaches (Collins, 1994).

In his theory of rituals, Durkheim stresses the importance of social morphology in forging social membership. Morphology is used to describe certain configurations of people, indicating the importance of specific patterns of interactions (ratio of people per spatial area) in shaping how people behave, feel and think (Liebst, 2016). The relation between social morphology and social solidarity is a principal feature of Durkheim's earlier studies[7]. While in his later work on rituals he no longer directly addresses morphology, the composition of social space remains central to his argumentation. In *Elementary Forms of Religious life* (1995[1912]), for example, he addresses the change in lived intensity, experienced by tribe members, as they move from scarcely populated (profane) to densely populated (sacred) spaces. A similar study was carried out by Durkheim's student and nephew, Marcel Mauss (1979[1906]), who explored the morphological space as a force in structuring social life of the Inuit people. He finds that when human bodies come together, it leads to a heightened emotional state among the participants, corresponding directly with Durkheim's writing.

> "The very act of congregating is an exceptionally powerful stimulant. Once the individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and quickly launches them to an extraordinary height of exaltation."
>
> (Durkheim, 1995[1912]: 217)

This 'exaltation', Durkheim names *collective effervescence*. An intensified shared emotion is thus a consequence of ritual, with these assemblies transporting participants beyond themselves, fostering intersubjectivity and individual emotional energy (Durkheim, 1995[1912]). From this perspective, the larger the gathering the more intense the ritual.

Perhaps the most notable thinker of interaction is the micro-

6 Scholars within in this line of thinking include Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Talcott Parsons.

7 See for example, his doctoral dissertation *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893), *Suicide* (1897), and *Sociology and its Scientific Domain* (1900).

sociologist Erving Goffman. Extending Durkheimian theory of rituals, Goffman broadens the conceptual scope of the sacred and group-based character of ritual to encompass also everyday secular and interpersonal interactions. For Goffman, rituals are the routine aspects of behaviour that people adopt during an encounter (Goffman, 1967). These *interaction rituals* provide the norms befitting the situation. Encounters require a level of ordinance, where participants must signal the correct involvement and understanding of the situation.

> "A fundamental interactional goal is to sustain a collectively shared definition of the situation enabling participants to decode normative expectations and to adjust behaviour accordingly."
>
> (Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2015: 70)

It is through these ritual interactions that a social encounter is defined and maintained. Each interaction ritual requires a different *performance* from the participants, with individuals acting in accordance with the social setting (Goffman, 1959). Participants hold skills in knowing which aspect of themselves to present, depending on the situation in which they find themselves. This impression management is accomplished not only verbally, but also through non-verbal cues (body language, facial expressions, as well as material 'props').

While this *face-work* is certainly important in the process of constructing and preserving participants' identities (Goffman, 1959), interaction has another important outcome—the foundation of emotional energy. In Randall Collins' understanding of ritual, he combines these two now classical approaches, emphasising the personal and collective emotional arousal that emerges from specific social encounters. According to Collins (2004: 143), our interactions are driven by the prospect of reaching this level of emotion, referring to the field of interaction as a "market for emotional energy".

Collins uses the term *interaction rituals* not to describe the structural aspects of behaviour but as a means of measuring the level of success of an interaction (2004, 2020). A successful interaction ritual is one that establishes collective effervescence. For this to materialise during a social encounter, he states that a number of conditions need to be met (deriving largely from Durkheim's initial account) (see **figure 2.1**).

i) **Co-presence:** participants of the interaction must be gathered face-to-face. This can either be a large-scale assembly, in the Durkheim tradition, or a small-scale interaction, such as an interpersonal exchange or conversation.

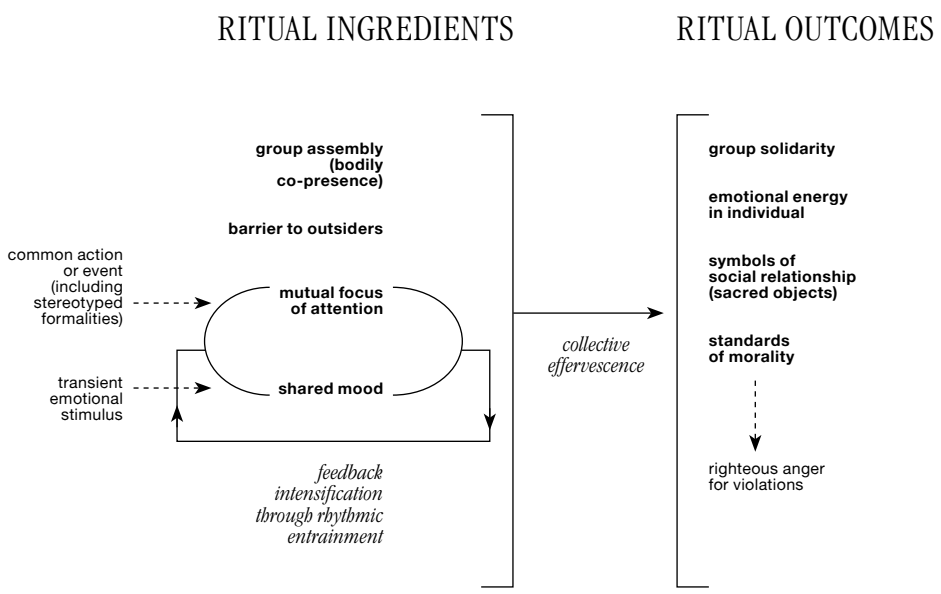
ii) **Barrier to outsiders:** the participants must be clearly delineated. It must be evident who is taking part in the "ritual", marking members from non-members.

iii) **Mutual focus of attention:** while there is certainly already an atmosphere present when people assemble in the same space and are aware of one another (especially if this is a large gathering [Liebst, 2019]), the ritual is intensified once the participants share a focus. What is important is that the participants are not only concentrating on the same "object or activity" but that they are aware of each other's attention (Collins, 2004:48).

iv) **Shared mood:** similarly, the mood and emotional state of the participants should match. The people interacting should "feel the same emotion, whether excitement, joy, fear, sadness, anger, boredom, or any other." (Collins, 2020: 479)

v) **Rhythmic entrainment:** coordinated actions (either physical activities such as clapping, singing and chanting, or the rhythm of verbal turn-taking) should be present to synchronise the participants. Socio-physiologically speaking it is by way of this process that the nervous system of the participants becomes mutually attuned (Heinskou & Liebst. 2016).

Figure 2.1. Interaction ritual model from Collins (2004: 49)



> "Feedback processes take place among these ingredients.
> As people pay more attention to each other, they tend to converge on a shared emotion and intensify it; conversely shared emotion intensifies mutual focus. As these increase, rhythmic entrainment increases."
>
> (Collins, 2020: 479)

It is this build-up of "shared emotions [that] makes or breaks an interaction; if these can be kept going through the feedback processes long enough to pass the threshold to rhythmic entrainment, the ritual will be a success" (481).

If the ritual is successful, Collins states that the result is not only the establishment of collective effervescence (which is the momentary emotional experience), but also a number of more long lasting "outcomes":

i) **Social solidarity:** the establishment/reestablishment of group mentality and membership.

ii) **Emotional energy:** participants are left not only with positive social feelings of group belonging but also a positive individual feeling. Collins (2004: 49) describes it as a "feeling of confidence elation, strength, enthusiasm, and initiative in taking action".

iii) **Symbols of social relationships:** these are the "totems" or "sacred objects", as described by Durkheim—the emblems that come to represent the social interaction and remain as a reminder after the encounter. These collective symbols can come in a tangible form—a flag, a logo, type of dress —, or an intangible form—jargon, inside jokes, a song, a dance.

iv) **Standards of morality:** a protection of these collective symbols and the established relationship. Participants police and defend the conventions, drawing boundaries between non-members and members who violate or disrespect the ritual and its symbols.

Thus, while participants of a successful interaction ritual leave the encounter "carrying the group-aroused emotion for a time in their bodies" (Collins, 2004: xii), unsuccessful interaction rituals, on the other hand, lower individual confidence and leave the participant emotionally drained. Without the establishment of collective effervescence, the ritual "is merely 'formal', an empty going through the formal steps, even a dead ceremonialism" (Collins, 2004: 49).

Collins (2004, 2020) uses this interaction rituals model interchangeably for both *large-scale interaction* (e.g., concerts, political rallies, football games, religious rituals) and *small-scale interaction* (e.g., intimate conversation). He does not provide a clear definition of either, but uses a variety of terms to express the distinction, for example: "mass au-

diences"/"personal networks", "large groups"/"sociable conversation", "macro"/"micro rituals". Attempting to shed light to this distinction further, Ling (2008: 88) states:

> "Small-scale rituals are more limited in scope, but they are far more frequent. […] For every large periodic sporting event, wedding, rite of passage, or religious observation in which we participate, we engage in hundreds if not thousands of everyday mundane greetings, partings, conversations, and interactions."

Hence, the difference rests not only on the number of people interacting, but also on the fact that large-scale interaction happens a lot less regularly, signalling that it is also more likely to be embedded with a "sacred" quality (Durkheim, 1995[1912]).

Variation between these types of interaction is also seen in the manner in which participants reach a state of intersubjectivity. According to Collins, a successful large- or small-scale interaction ritual will have the same outcome and depend on the same variables, however, the method of achieving this differs. For small gatherings the participants synchronise through actively participating in conversation. Rhythmic entrainment is built predominantly through a shared discourse and effective turn-taking (although body language is important to assess the sincerity and emotional state of the speaker). When the group gets too large and it becomes no longer possible to synchronise with each participant individually, the manner under which rhythmic entrainment is established must take another form (Ling, 2008). Hence, for large-scale interaction, rhythmic entrainment is based on visual cues (moving bodies and emotional expressions) and the overall noise of an excited crowd. Collins (2004) writes that it is not only synchronous vocals (such as collective singing) that enhance large-scale interaction, nondescript noises of enthusiasm (the roars of a stadium) have an almost equal affect.

While the idea that all interaction is negotiated within this 'market' is debated (e.g., Rawls, 1989), acknowledging that certain interactions result in an increase of emotional energy is fruitful, specifically when looking at events characterised by high levels of collective effervescence, such as live music events (Collins, 2004; Horsfall, 2013; Liebst, 2019).

In this market, emotional energy is, however, not equally distributed. According to Collins, individuals with higher social status experience greater emotional energy, as "for the upper class, their daily life consists in being in the centre of successful rituals; for the lower, being in rituals that are controlled by someone else […] drain their emotional energy" (Collins, 2014, 302). Interestingly, Collins points to a solution to the poor attainment of emotional energy for low status individuals. Particularly mass entertainment (such as football games, but also live music events) act as spaces where lower classes can escape

from the stratified realm, finding fitting and highly successful interaction rituals (Collins, 2014).

2.2. CULTURAL TASTE AND CONSUMPTION

Taste for culture is inherently a social process. Scholars have long been interested in the homologies between social position and lifestyle patterns (see for example early sociological works: Weber, 1946; Veblen, 1991[1899]). It was Bourdieu's seminal book *Distinction* (1984), however, that firmly put *homology* [8] in a place of mainstream sociological inquiry. In Bourdieu's original account, a distinction is made between three taste patterns—a *popular taste*, a *middlebrow taste* and a *legitimate taste*, each connected to one's social position. For example, the popular taste of the *dominated* class is highly influenced by necessity. Cultural participation is used as a social resource (Holt, 1997; Kuipers, 2015), where the *function* of a cultural product is valued over its *form*. Culture is consumed with the mentality of "we want to enjoy ourselves", aiming to be swept up in a moment, creating direct, immediate emotional gratification (Bourdieu, 1984: 26). Most important for individuals who fall under this taste scheme is a "deep-rooted demand for participation" (25); cultural experiences should encourage a collective engagement from the audience, contributing directly to the festivities.

The *dominant* class, with a distance from necessity, suppress both functional and practical considerations. A drive for an accessible emotional release is swapped for a "disinterestedness", an "aesthetic disposition" or "pure gaze" that values the stylistic features of a cultural product. Legitimate taste, in other words, distances itself from enjoyment that is too simple, shallow, "culturally undemanding" or "immediately accessible" (Bourdieu, 1984). For these consumers the *form* of an artwork is valued over its *function*. This not only leads to an appreciation of a particular class of "legitimate" works, but also to a particular orientation—the ability to aesthetically view "objects that are ordinary or even 'common'" (Bourdieu, 1984:40).

Individuals with a middlebrow taste—or the petite bourgeoisie—are characterised as having "cultural goodwill". Their ambition for consumption is driven on the basis of emulating legitimate taste, although not always succeeding in the "naturalness" of the taste displays that characterises the dominant class (Bourdieu, 1984). A preference for well-established types of culture—too mainstream for the cultural elite—is driven by a desire to be respected, afraid of missing the mark. Subsequently, consumption tends to be based also on a disdain for cultural products associated with social fractions situated below them, fostering strong symbolic boundaries towards the

8 By homology I refer to the "assumption that social class structure is linked to the structure of aesthetic preferences through a one-to-one correspondence, a kind of isomorphic relation". (Coulangeon & Lemel, 2009: 48)

"popular aesthetic" (Lawler, 2005).

While the Bourdieusian description of taste patterns remains valid, it is not the only way to categorise cultural orientations. A now also common distinction between taste patterns is provided in the form of the three cultural schemes of *popular*, *folk* and *highbrow* (Alexander, 2003; Becker, 1982; Frith, 1996; Schulze, 1992: Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). A relationship exists between a preference for culture (from within one of these ideal types) and one's values, motivations, and social attitudes (Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). For example, in their strive for tradition and harmony, individuals with a folk taste emphasise a preference for art that is "authentic and rather than offering transcendence, should fulfil the social function of creating a sense of community or solidarity" (Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008: 222). With a distrust for strangers, people within this folk scheme draw tight boundaries, valuing familiarity, simplicity and security, feelings that they attribute to a bygone era. Similar to Bourdieu's popular taste, these individuals look for relatable experiences that accommodate active participation (Frith, 1996). The pop scheme, on the other hand, is predominantly governed by ideas of fun and self-indulgence (Schulze, 1992). The underlying ideas of community are less present in this taste grouping, with individuality and anti-conventionalist attitudes outweighing notions of collective bonding, and the normative pressures it presumes. Rather than fear and distrust of society, individuals put emphasis on ideas of spontaneity and originality, using culture for escapist purposes. Finally, individuals that fall under the highbrow scheme attend culture with intellectual aspirations, demonstrating contemplation, and distancing themselves from anything uncivilised (similar to Bourdieu's *disinterestedness*).

Both perspectives categorise "legitimate" taste (of members within the *highbrow scheme* or the *dominant class*) as a preference for and engagement in high art. However, this was soon challenged with the *omnivore thesis*. Omnivorousness—a taste for a broad variety of cultural genres—is seen as a valid status marker, as opposing the cultural univores (Van Eijck, 2001; Lizardo & Skiles, 2012; Goldberg, Hannan & Kovács, 2016, Johnston, & Baumann, 2007).

Since Peterson and co. first established this theory, there has been a plethora of research done into the characteristics of the cultural omnivore, with the goal of understanding the adjacent mechanisms of distinction. As consumers (particularly higher educated consumers) become more *omnivorous*, the manner in which culture is consumed becomes more relevant than the genre (Jarness, 2015). Lizardo and Skiles (2012) for example, state that the higher educated cultural omnivores adopt the same aesthetic disposition as Bourdieu's original account of legitimate taste proposed, emphasising the aesthetic and formal aspects of cultural objects to maintain a distinctive position, but they apply this approach to a variety of both popular and high arts.

Distinction is also maintained when higher educated adopt an ironic perspective, as opposed to a more serious form of engagement (Peters, Van Eijck, & Michael, 2018). Playing off one's participation as "ironic", a "guilty pleasure", or as a "camp sensibility", allows consumers to distance themselves from the traditional consumers of these products (McCoy & Scarborough, 2014).

Omnivorousness can also indicate a broad consumption of genres but a restricted choice of cultural products from within those genres. For example, Goldberg, Hannan & Kovács (2016), coin the term "poly-purists" to describe consumers of a wide selection of genres but that do not mix styles or forms within the genres. In this regard omnivores are largely linked to *authenticity* (Grazian, 2005; Halle, 1996; Johnston & Baumann 2007; Peterson, 2005; Van Poecke, 2018; Hahl, Zuckerman & Kim, 2017). An authentic cultural product is defined as one that is not "produced in the expectation of great prestige or material rewards" (Hahl, et al., 2017: 833). Thus, an omnivore with a taste for authentic culture may consume an eclectic mix, but shun things that are too mainstream, too elitist or too vernacular (Van Poecke, 2018).

While evidently a highly debated topic of inquiry, research tends to focus on the role of culture as a status marker. Few research efforts have been done into micro-interactional processes of cultural consumption, and whether these can be related to social position. In the following section I present a number of studies that move in this direction.

2.3. TOWARD A MICROSOCIOLOGY OF MUSIC CONSUMPTION

Music plays an important role in the formation of social life. It can act as a framing device, helping to establish not only personal but also social meaning (Roy & Dowd, 2010). DeNora (2000: 123) writes that "music is […] part of the cultural material through which 'scenes' are constructed, scenes that afford different kinds of agency, different sorts of pleasure and ways of being". The materiality of the music played at a given moment helps to make sense of the occasion, directly affecting one's actions. For example, changing the soundtrack of a dinner party from a smooth trip-hop playlist to '80s sing-along classics, can drastically change guests' behaviour, with the music altering not only their bodily movements (from sitting to standing), but also their attitudes and general mood.

When looking at live music events in particular, the music's materiality is not the only factor that shapes the behaviour of the people present. Although music serves as a point of focus for the gathered

crowd, as social occasions, concerts are the scene of a multitude of interactions where participants put on a performance appropriately attuned to the situation. Becker (1982) furthers this point by emphasising the importance of genre conventions in the construction of meaning. These stereotypical characteristics of a cultural form are used by an audience as a reference to make sense of the cultural product and, subsequently, as guidelines of how to perform. Every music event will thus have its own social and cultural context, with corresponding rules and practices (how to behave, how to dress and which substances to consume) largely depending on the genre of the music (Frith, 1996). Tying seamlessly to Goffmanian thinking, the definition of the (concert) situation is not an individual act of either artist or organiser but is dependent on the cooperation of all individuals involved. Through impression management and the staging of ritualised activities, the participants demonstrate a collective meaning and understanding, leading to the formation of a distinct cultural form (Hughes, 2000). In sum, music concerts are distinct not just for the music's material composition, but for everything that they encompass; the manner of audience engagement, its affordances, and reasons for appreciation. Conventions constitute interaction rituals and, in turn, the enactment of interaction rituals also reproduces conventions. Although this means that genres are redefined constantly and may change more noticeably over time (as can be seen in the evolution of jazz, see for instance Peterson [1972]), interaction rituals also stabilise genres in terms of engagement and expectations, leading to characteristics that are recognisable for participants and external observers alike.

Concerts can accommodate both small-scale and large-scale interaction. While interpersonal interaction—between new or old acquaintances—is no doubt an important part of any music event, it is the large-scale collective engagement that makes concerts so attractive (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). It is in these moments that the audience can experience a group-based collective effervescence (Berkers & Michael, 2017; Collins, 2004; Horsfall, 2013). In mutually participating in common rituals the audience synchronises movements. The artist shouting "put your hands up in the air" into the crowd may seem like a trivial formality, but it is in these moments—where participants coordinate "bodily micro-rhythms and emotions" (Collins, 2004: 47)—that a state of collective effervescence can be reached.

A certain level of satisfaction is gained through being able to anticipate the actions of people around you (Benzecry & Collins, 2012). Numerous studies point to the intersubjectivity fostered not only through synchronising body movements, but also through synchronising voices (Bensimon, 2012; Heider & Warner, 2010; Horsfall, 2016; Tutenges, 2013). Collective singing has been used throughout history to establish feelings of unity and group membership—for example, during protest, marches, rallies or sports competitions. Looking at exactly this, Bensi-

mon (2012) refers to the human voice as a unique musical instrument and as our primary source of communication, giving participants the ability to express and connect on deep-rooted emotions.

Where the music can work to entrain the audience, the artist can act as ritual leader, encouraging and motivating the crowd to enter into a state of collective effervescence (Tutenges, 2013). Furthermore, the morphological composition of concerts, and particularly festivals (as they have even larger audience capacity), make for the prospect of a highly successful interaction ritual. Not only are these densely populated areas, but they also tend to have a fairly homogonous audience (Roy & Dowd, 2010). This homogeneity can be evidently seen through the conventions of the genre; through the appearance of the audiences (what they wear) and their attitudes (how they behave). A state of collective effervescence is more likely to be reached when levels of cultural capital match (Liebst, 2019) and the audience can easily draw boundaries between those who are participating and those who are not (Collins, 2004).

When considering these aspects, it becomes evident that not all concerts will be equally successful as large-scale interaction rituals. An example may be a concert where an artist plays in a large venue, for a fraction of the venue's audience capacity. Similarly, some genres of music accommodate collective participation and engagement more than others—either the music's materiality or the conventions do not accommodate singing or dancing along. However, little research has compared the affordances and experience of live music for different genres and audiences (in regard to demographical characteristics), specifically from a microinteractionalist perspective. Are there genres where motivations are primarily driven by the prospect of collective effervescence, and reversely, genres where motivations lie elsewhere?

An outlier in this line of inquiry is a study by Benzecry and Collins (2014), who adopt a microsociological approach to understand the consumption of opera fanatics. The comparison with other genres of music in this case, is relatively small and non-empirical, however, the authors make an interesting contribution to thinking about live music consumption from an interactionist perspective. Connecting Weber's ideas on working-class religious emotionality to Durkheimian ritual theory, they characterise a popular taste as one that strives for high levels of collective effervescence. "Loud noise, strong and simple marked rhythms, and repetitive musical forms" (Benzecry & Collins, 2014: 320) are said to help to coordinate movements of the audience, along with a pre-established mood that together foster rhythmic entrainment (see also: Bensimon, 2012; Heider & Warner, 2010; Horsfall, 2013; Reddish et al., 2013). In contrast, Benzecry and Collins (2014) state that the upper-class orientation is one of "formality" and "dignity", aiming to distance themselves from the emotionally unrestrained engagement of

popular taste and its audience (320). According to the authors, two types of upper-class preferences can be distinguished. The first are traditional consumers, prioritising distinction (as status marking) over the musical experience and a high level of front-stage performance. The second, the "fanatics", are consumers who attend for the music, positioning themselves against public self-presentation and focusing on an "inwardly, solitary experience of listening with their whole bodies" (315). The latter adopt a form of "anti-Durkheimian" consumption where rhythmic entrainment is not with the other audience members but with oneself—an *internal interaction ritual* (314). Finally, the middle-class music consumption is theoretically connected to the principle that music (stemming particularly from high culture) is "good for you". Similar to Bourdieu's conception of "goodwill", these consumers are not afraid of "hard work" during their cultural experience, emphasising that it should not necessarily be enjoyable (321). Similarly, they draw strong boundaries towards other consumers, adopting a "snobbish" disposition.

While this argumentation seems compelling, Benzecry and Collins (2014) limit their empirical research to one specific type of cultural consumer—the opera fanatic. By implication, the claims on the differing importance of collective effervescence for the middle and lower classes (and the corresponding genres) remains purely theoretical. This thesis thus aims to bring a much-needed empirical microsociological look into the taste and cultural experience of these consumers.

"WIJ ZIJN NEDERLAND" *Defining Collectivity in Dutch Domestic Music Concerts* [9]

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the common belief that music consumption is primarily dominated by an Anglo-American market, the last decades have seen a steady increase in the consumption of locally produced music (Achterberg et al., 2011; Bekhuis et al., 2014; Frith, 2004; Van der Hoeven et al., 2016). Research into the consumers of local music has shown that a taste for the domestic and the national is not equally distributed throughout society but is structured socially, making it dependent on one's position in social space. Studies find, for example, that those who occupy a relatively disadvantaged position in society are most likely to consume local culture while individuals higher on the social ladder are found to consume a more broad and cosmopolitan range of culture (Cheyne & Binder, 2010; Kuipers, 2012; Meuleman & Savage, 2013).

Fitting within this wider European trend of rising 'nationally oriented' music consumption, the Netherlands has seen the popularity of its homegrown musical talents steadily increase since the 1990s (Van der Hoeven et al., 2016). This study will focus on the case of the Dutch music genre *levenslied*, exploring the experience of locally produced live music among its consumers. Levenslied can be seen as a form of *domestic music*—widely popular music sung by national artists in the national language. While levenslied (and domestic music in general) is often considered as a folk music, it deviates from folk in the traditional sense because of its commercial nature. Where folk music is generally considered to derive from a specific community, made by and for its members (Frith, 1981), domestic music is produced by a professional culture industry, and although communities form around it through participation in live music concerts, these communities are not involved in the actual production of the music. Levenslied as a genre can thus be situated somewhere between folk music and popular music; finding a balance between community and mass appeal.

Through interviews with levenslied concert goers, this chapter investigates the underlying attitudes and beliefs relevant for the audience of domestic music in creating and experiencing community. In ad-

9 An almost identical version of this chapter, with the addition of an extended theoretical framework, was published in Cultural Sociology, 15(2):233-251, in 2021. Co-authored with Michaël Berghman and Koen van Eijck.

dition, a survey was conducted during a levenslied concert (n=812) to establish the demographics of these audiences. Previous research has looked into music concerts (Benzecry & Collins; Olaveson, 2004) and festivals (Fabiani, 2005; Liebst, 2019; Niekrenz, 2014) as modern-day secular rituals, highlighting their potential in the reproduction and reification of community. As boundaries are fundamental aspects to the establishment of community and the establishment of collective effervescence (Collins, 2004), this chapter examines the symbolic boundaries used to define this community, uncovering the totemic principles of this audience. The analysis reveals that the preconditions for collectivity are determined by three forms of symbolic boundaries: (1) *intercultural boundaries*, (2) *interclass boundaries* and (3) *intraclass boundaries*. In understanding what the audience celebrates and disdains, we get a broader understanding not only of the section of society attracted to this music, but also of the driving force behind its rise in popularity.

◇ LEVENSLIED AS A MUSIC OF THE PEOPLE

Levenslied is a popular Dutch music genre heavily influenced by traditional folk music. Similar to Germany's Schlager, Serbia's Turbo-folk, or America's country music, it fuses modern music, such as pop, rock or electronic, with elements from the nation's traditional folk music. While levenslied finds its roots in Dutch cabaret from the early 20th century, typically played with live instruments such as the accordion and the barrel organ, today it is primarily performed by solo (male) artists singing over an electronic backing track. The music can vary from overtly sentimental ballads, dealing with themes of life and death or love and heartbreak, to more upbeat songs, focused on creating a party atmosphere. Characteristics that remain constant, however, are the simple lyrics, sung in the Dutch language and accompanied by an accessible backing track.

Concerts can range from private events such as weddings and birthday parties to large-scale events and festivals featuring numerous artists that regularly sell out. Despite—or because of—its vast popularity, levenslied is generally considered a lowbrow genre, standing at odds with 'legitimate' culture, and perceived as inferior to international music (Hitters & Van de Kamp, 2010; Van der Hoeven et al., 2016).

Musical influence is not the only thing that levenslied shares with traditional folk music; a parallel can also be drawn between the national component of both genres. Folk, traditionally being a music passed down from generation to generation and used as an expression of cultural identity, is a celebration of the national and the local (Roy, 2010). And while levenslied is very much a commercial music, with little

emphasis on the craft or the oral tradition of storytelling associated with traditional folk music, the influence of the nation is evident. The symbolic significance of the nation is visible through the advertisement of its events, where posters and banners frequently display the Dutch flag or the monarchical colour orange, along with a variety of Dutch emblems such as clogs, windmills, cheese and tulips. The monarchical colour is also used as the name of the TV channel devoted to this music, *TV Oranje* (translated: TV Orange). Furthermore, the national component is emphasised in the names given to concerts and festivals where levenslied artists perform, for example, *Sterren van Holland* (translated: Stars of Holland) and *Puur Hollands* (translated: Purely Dutch).

The musical characteristics of levenslied as not only loud, simple and repetitive but also emotionally accessible, make it an ideal catalyst for the generation of collective effervescence (Benzecry & Collins, 2014; Tutenges, 2013). But how is the corresponding image of community defined in the minds of the audience and how is this sense of community created? Looking at the symbols and ritual activities both celebrated and disdained by levenslied audiences can help us understand how this group defines itself and experiences levenslied concerts, contributing to what we know about the rise of domestic music and its audiences.

3.2. METHOD

For the present study, I conducted interviews with visitors of levenslied concerts to understand what motivates them to participate in these events. In doing so, I aimed to find how they described their taste in music, their expectations of levenslied concerts, and what they would dislike in a live musical experience (levenslied concert or other). To this purpose, the interviews focused on four topics: (1) experience of the concert attended, (2) cultural taste, (3) affinity with levenslied and other musical genres and (4) affinity with other cultural forms. The interviews took a semi-structured format (Flick et al., 2004), although the questions were kept broad to let the interviewees steer the conversation with the aim of limiting probing on the part of the interviewer.

As taste patterns vary considerably across generations (Bellavance, 2008) and I did not want age to become the single most decisive factor in the data, only respondents within the range of 18 to 35 were selected. Still, apart from age, I wanted to avoid a sample consisting of only particular kinds of fans, which would have restricted the possible diversity of motivations in the data collection. I therefore sidestepped snowball sampling or recruiting inside (online) fan communities, but selected respondents directly at three major levenslied festivals in different cities.

Initially, respondents were recruited at *Sterren van Holland* (which took place in Ahoy, a large Rotterdam venue, on 23 February 2018). I attended this event, accompanied by a group of six student volunteers who carried out a brief survey among the audience. They were positioned at the doors and approached every tenth person coming in with a brief paper questionnaire (n=812), asking for gender, age and education level and invited respondents to participate in an interview at a later date. Those who agreed to an interview and met the age criterion, were invited for an interview in the days following the festival. In this way, 10 respondents were recruited and interviewed, and their data were analysed before continuing the study.

To collect additional data, I attended two more levenslied festivals—the summer edition of *Sterren van Holland* (in Arenapark, Amsterdam, 12 August 2018) and *Puur Hollands* (in Goffertpark, Nijmegen, 27 August 2018). At these events, I indiscriminately approached people and, having established their age, asked them whether they would be willing to participate in an interview at a later date. In this way, an additional 10 respondents were recruited, bringing the total to 20 individual participants.

In total 17 interviews were conducted. Two interviews were held with a couple and one with two friends, the others were conducted individually. The interviews lasted an hour on average. All the interviews were carried out face-to-face in Dutch, in a setting of the respondent's choosing (see **appendix 2** for the interview guide). All participants signed a consent form and pseudo names are used throughout this thesis to ensure anonymity.

On the basis of the survey, I obtained a more reliable indication of the composition of the audience (see **table 3.1**). Females were slightly more represented than males and the average age of the surveyed audience members was 35. In regard to educational attainment, only 2.2% had obtained a university degree. The largest section of the sample had completed intermediate vocational education (46.9%). This indicates a primarily lower class to lower-middle-class audience.

The interviewed group included 7 women and 13 men (see **appendix 1** for a detailed overview of the respondents). The majority of participants had completed a type of applied or vocational secondary education. However, four had been to university, indicating an overrepresentation of higher educated interviewees. Although lower educated audience members were most willing to engage in conversation at the concert, it has been found repeatedly that they are more reluctant to participate in an interview (Huang et al., 2010). In terms of occupation, the majority of the women worked as social workers and the men as labourers (carpenters, builders, caretakers). Four respondents were still students (three of whom were in vocational education), and two worked

in more skilled occupations—one as a consultant and the other as a graphic designer.

Table 3.1. Gender, age, and level of education of surveyed participants attending the levenslied festivals (n=812).

GENDER (n=786)	Male	39,1% (307)
	Female	58,9% (478)
AGE (n=778)	Under 20	10,6% (84)
	21—30	28,3% (224)
	31—40	14,6% (117)
	41—50	23,9% (190)
	51—60	16,4% (130)
	Above 61	4,7% (33)
EDUCATION (n=784)	Primary education	7,8% (61)
	Secondary education	28,8% (226)
	Intermediate vocational education	46,9% (368)
	Higher vocational education	14,3% (112)
	University Bachelors	1,4% (11)
	University Masters	0,8 % (6)

A thematic analysis of the interviews was conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which started with thorough and repeated reading and was succeeded by an extraction of recurring and meaningful themes and patterns. In the following section, the results of the analyses are presented. After delving into the feeling of collective effervescence fostered at these events, I address the symbols that the audience celebrate. I then turn to the symbolic boundaries, identifying three important areas of boundary work invariably adopted by the respondents.

3.3. RESULTS

◇ THE PURSUIT OF EFFERVESCENCE

A common term used by all participants when asked why they attend levenslied concerts was the word '*gezelligheid*'. The Dutch use this term to describe a collection of sentiments that encompass feelings of cosiness, intimacy, fun, sociability, and homeliness. Inhabitants of the Netherlands proudly depict it as a "classically Dutch virtue" (Hendriks, 2009: 252) used to describe social interactions, the atmosphere of an

event or the quality of a person (for more on *gezelligheid*, see Lindemann, 2009). When asked what he likes about these events, Tino (male, 18), a relative newcomer to levenslied, states: "the *gezelligheid*. What I love about Dutch festivals is the atmosphere. Sometimes, out of nowhere you just get handed a beer by a stranger." Tino is attracted to these concerts because of the general mood. He appreciates the community feeling, where strangers become friends for the duration of the concert. When asked the same question, Geertje (female, 28) reiterates this by saying "I just really like the *gezelligheid*, it is a little like-knows-like, that kind of party". Although they come together as individuals, previously unrelated, the perceived similarity of the group unites them, fostering feelings of solidarity.

For Mike (male, 25), a seasoned festival goer, it is the particular audience of levenslied concerts that attracts him to these events. He states: "yeah, it is just, I mostly go to these festivals, not for the music. Yeah, we stand at the back the whole time, this doesn't matter. But the *gezelligheid*, the people, yeah that makes the festival". The music seems secondary to the people present, with the concerts being primarily utilised as an opportunity to socialise. Building on this, Danny (male, 23) accepts that levenslied artists do not have to sing "perfectly", placing more emphasis on the fact that "they can build a good party". The artists' appeal lies less in their vocal ability, but in their capacity to captivate an audience—carrying the attention of the crowd, encouraging interaction and a lively atmosphere. Mike (male, 25) explains why he enjoyed the performance of his favourite act:

> "Because he just gets a certain energy going. Which is just really great. You are just standing there . . . Full throttle he starts the show, and immediately, really in that minute, from the moment that he starts to sing, then the whole audience receives, straight away, that energy from him and that I just think is really cool. You easily go along with that energy; the energy is just there. Everyone just goes as fast as him, with his tempo. And that is just really cool."

Mike's admiration for the artist's ability to disseminate his energy to the audience, passing on his tempo and infecting the crowd with enthusiasm, demonstrates the role of conductor that these artists play. There is an expectation for artists to act as a "charismatic leader" (Carlton-Ford, 1992), a guide who manoeuvres the crowd, generating the desired atmosphere.

It is the job of the artist to spur on collective movement and singing. Like Danny, Janne (female, 20) and Maaike (female, 20), who travelled down from the north of the Netherlands to be at *Sterren van Holland* in Amsterdam, agree that the vocal capacity of the artist comes second to their ability to encourage collective singing.

They state:

Janne: I don't think that the voice even matters that much in Dutch music.

Maaike: No.

Janne: I think that, often, they just have to be able to get the people going.

Maaike: Yeah.

Janne: That's really all it is.

Maaike: The ability to sing along with songs, you know.

Janne: Yeah, with the music. Because the moment that you cannot sing along to a Dutch song and it has no atmosphere, then it's over.

Maaike: Yeah.

Janne: Or if you cannot understand half of it, even if it is in Dutch, then I switch off very quickly and go away very fast. That, hmm, no you really have to get people going with the music. Then it's fun.

Maaike: That is really the most important, I think.

These best friends indicate that an important feature of the genre is audience interaction. To establish the desired atmosphere, it is fundamental that the crowd can participate. There is a danger that if the artist is not understood—the song is too complicated, or the lyrics unclear—the attention of the audience will be lost. It becomes evident then that the audience explicitly values the simplicity of the songs as it generates a sing-along atmosphere.

An exceptional voice is not necessary and may even hinder the reputation of an artist. The barrier between artist and audience should be kept at a minimum and exhibiting advanced singing techniques, such as high notes or complicated key shifts, may keep the audience from singing along. Despite the fact that the artist is standing on a stage and the audience at ground level, artists should exhibit as little distinction from the audience as possible. They should come across as relatable and display recognisable characteristics. Most importantly, levenslied artists should never get "too big for their boots" (Arijan, male, 33), remain humble and refrain from flaunting any newfound wealth or prestige.

For the respondents, the music—like the artist—should also be relatable, with lyrics that reflect personal experience and address recognisable themes. Demonstrating this, Kelsey (female, 27) explains that:

> "Making music is not art. Making music is putting your feelings into something. Every singer has song lyrics with something that often comes from their own life. Because it has to be sincere it must come across to the people; you have to recognise it within yourself... for me the lyrics are important. I have to think 'oh that is a beautiful text' or 'I can see myself in that', uh—it has to give me emotion."

Appreciated less for aesthetic qualities and more as a reflection of life, music should provoke emotion. In a similar way to how Holt (1997) writes about the taste of the low cultural capital consumer, the levenslied audience prefers to engage in culture that evokes immediate sensory pleasure. The relatable songs, filled with the universal feelings of love and sadness, aid in the establishment of solidarity among the crowd.

The vernacular nature of the music and the guidance of the artists, who act as ritual leaders, transform the audience from a collection of individuals into a collectivity, with a mutual awareness. Not only do these concerts then allow for a space that is separate from everyday life, fostering excitement in itself, but they establish feelings of intersubjectivity. The solidarity generated through collective effervescence then appears not as a consequence or side effect, but as something that the participants strive for, and an important reason to participate. While we can say that collective effervescence is a primary reason for attending any concert (or live event in general), it is the accompanying notions of community that specifically drive this audience.

◇ THE NATION AS TOTEM

As feelings of community lie at the core of the experience of levenslied consumers, the question arises: how is this community defined? When asked who attends these concerts, Danny (male, 23) states that the audience do "not necessarily have to be campers, but people who love *gezelligheid*. It will also be uhhh... from the 100% of people who go, 95% will also really be Dutch". Danny here paints the audience as fun and sociable. He separates the crowd from what he calls "campers"—a derogatory term used to describe a group of lower-class Dutch who live in trailer parks. Through this distinction, he acknowledges a common image—and in his thoughts a misconception—of the social position of levenslied fans. This is a segment of society that Danny does not want to be associated with, attempting to distance himself by saying that the crowd's main characteristic is *gezelligheid*. He points to the virtuous nature of *gezelligheid*, taking pride in the perceived sociable and cosy atmosphere among the audience and pinning it against that of the "camper" community.

Furthermore, Danny associates these concerts with a predominantly Dutch crowd—an aspect spontaneously referred to as central by many interviewees. When asked why he likes levenslied concerts, Arijan, states that it is the "*gezelligheid* and, say, all the people together, all the Dutch people together". The social element of the concert is important to Arijan. However, in his opinion, this community cannot be

made up of just anybody; the desired atmosphere only exists because of the predominantly Dutch audience that it attracts. Here the adjective *gezellig* takes on a connotation very much, if not exclusively, associated with an idealised Dutch characteristic.

Gezelligheid was not only used to describe the people and atmosphere at these concerts, but also the music itself. For example, Bart (male, 25) states:

> "It is easy music. You easily sing along with the tracks. It's *gezellig*. It is also quite straightforward about things. Less artistic, just straight to the point. It's just a bit of 'guys let's all just be normal, make it fun!'"

As seen in the foregoing quotations, music should provide an opportunity for sociability, connecting the crowd through collective singing. However, Bart adds to this by saying that music should also be straight to the point, conveying a directness. Only when the music is "straightforward", and "normal' is it 'fun".

The music, or at least the language in which Bart portrays it, is a reflection of the attitudes of the audience, a sensibility which trickles into other aspects of their lives. Janne (female, 20) reflects this when talking about her clothing style:

> "I do have simple clothes actually [laughs]. Pretty boring really. Well... at the concerts everyone has it. Just normal. With no frills, it doesn't have to be all that much. It's just simple, just if you wear a dark green shirt then it's fine."

Similarly, Jan (male, 35) states:

Jan: You can always recognise the people who are going to the concert.

Interviewer: Yeah, how do you see this?

Jan: Yes, they are just normal. Say, people go in farmer's clothing, let's say a farmer taste. Not in a costume or—uh—a suit or something.

Clothes, like music, should "just [be] normal", not flashy, with no frills or embellishments. The interviewees downplay the importance of apparel, clothes are worn to fit in rather than stand out, reflecting the crowd's attitude towards homogeneity.

In striving for the "normal" and the "simple", they reject the eccentric and idiosyncratic. Demonstrating this drive, Maaike (female, 20), compares the visitors of a rap concert with the levenslied audience:

> "Now that is really weird music. Now that rapper music, if I hear that I think of those 15-year-old boys, you know? With those caps, trying to be completely cool, but of course they are totally not... I always have the idea that it is those guys who think they are amazing. With their little bags. Yeah, exactly that kind of type goes to those concerts. This is, of course, a big difference from our music. See, if we go to a concert, 9 out of 10 boys that walk around are broad

and twice as big. They wear clogs and just act normal."

Distinguishing the type of masculinity displayed at levenslied concerts from that at rap concerts, she shows a strong aversion to arrogance. Valuing a more traditional form of masculinity, she feels that men should be strong and avoid feminine objects like "little bags". Men should stick to forms of clothing that are modest and unpretentious—something she feels is represented in the quintessentially Dutch footwear, clogs. While clogs as a traditional shoe are rarely worn today, it becomes evident that the interviewees see normalcy as something connected to Dutchness. Traditional symbols such as clogs and modest clothing make visible an imagined Dutch culture governed by ideals of the normal, simple and ordinary.

National symbols, such as clogs, become a totem for the audience; a tangible image that the group can relate to and identify with. As the emblem of the crowd, these symbols come to represent values of not only long-standing tradition, but also ideals of normalcy, simplicity and sociability. The totem of the audience speaks for a specific image of Dutchness, with the community defining itself from within these boundaries. Through the collective emotion fostered at these concerts, these symbols are charged with a certain narrative or a *national mythology* (Zubrzycki, 2011). While these symbols do not make them nationalistic in a political sense, it redefines and reproduces feelings of national fellowship (Fukuoka, 2017).

◇ INTERCULTURAL BOUNDARIES

Boundaries provide a logistical time and place setting for the manifestation of community (McMillan, 1996). Moreover, fostering solidarity requires active choices of exclusion. Concerts have both physical and symbolic boundaries, which enclose the crowd and come with implicitly governing rules; with norms and practices that all participants must adhere to. The exclusiveness of definitions of community is positively related to the inelasticity of its boundaries (Sutton, 2004).

Tino (male, 18), reflects on what he perceives will happen if the boundaries are breached:

> "At Dutch folk concerts, the atmosphere is great and yes it sounds very racist, but there are no Moroccans or Turks. The moment that those people come in, the atmosphere changes. Then everyone goes more into themselves. Look, now everyone can go a little crazy together and have fun... You do not have to be afraid. It is usually very *gezellig*, just like you've known each other for years. So, when a song comes on about a boat, you have 25 people sitting on the floor, rowing an imaginary boat. You really do not see this at other parties. You would get laughed at, or people would try and rob you of your stuff. Here you do not have that; here you have all the freedom and peace."

With the security of being surrounded by the familiar—people from a similar social background who display similar intentions—the concert has the ability to transport the crowd to new heights of enthusiasm and feelings of solidarity. During the ritual, a freedom of self-expression is generated, allowing the crowd to detach themselves from the constraints of everyday life. However, while the breakdown of individual boundaries is necessary for the generation of collective effervescence, here Tino also highlights the perceived danger of group contamination. In breaching the boundaries to the outside, the sense of security is lost. When newcomers who are seen as deviating from the conventional image, join, the ritual is broken. There is a desire to keep the audience "pure" and Dutch, justifying this distinction by comparing the fun and sociable atmosphere at levenslied concerts with the dangerous and unpredictable atmosphere at other events.

One type of event where respondents expected an unsafe environment was at rap concerts. The majority of the interviewees explicitly mentioned their dislike for rap music. Mike (male, 25) describes why he would never go to a rap concert:

> "Yeah, just the young boys so to speak. The little guys. Those wound-up types. Yes, it is hard to say without coming across as very discriminating. But it is just—yes—yes—more the Moroccan type of people. A certain type of person is going there. A type which does not suit me, because I sometimes get completely irritated by those people. Those people annoy me immensely. So yes, then you would rather avoid them than go there. Yes, it's just a certain type of person who likes that music. Those with the caps that match their bags. There is such a strange pattern over it, I don't know anything about that. The men carry little bags with them and all of that kind of stuff. And pants that hang up to here" [points to his upper thigh].

It is the audience at these concerts that deters Mike from these events, associating the crowd with a "Moroccan type", which agitates him. The disdain for this music genre stems more from a racialised image of a "seemingly homogenous imagined [fan] community" (Nayak, 2005: 142) rather than the music itself. Similar to what Maaike states (in an earlier quotation), his dislike for this audience comes down to exterior displays, such as the clothes they wear and how they wear them. The interviewees' image of this scene is encoded with racialized features very much connected with traditional notions of gender and sexuality. Male rap fans are presented as being of small physical build and are shunned for placing too much attention on their clothing style. These characteristics can be associated with traditional feminine qualities, especially when contrasted to the "farmer taste" preferred by the levenslied fans. Boundaries seem to be drawn around not only a preconceived traditional Dutchness, but a Dutchness very much seen in terms of whiteness.

Boundary work towards the foreign was not only limited to music audiences, with interviewees also showing a dislike for multiculturalism in general. When describing what levenslied, as a Dutch music,

means to her, Janne (female, 20) states:

> "Yes. My own culture is also very important to me. Yes, to stay with your own. Because you notice that a lot of people from other countries are coming here. A lot nowadays. And then you see that they started with *Zwarte Piet*. Their ideologies must be respected, but then ours—that suddenly becomes uh, that should just go away. Then I think, this is going too far. Because that is part of the Netherlands... And then you think it's nice that you let them in, but why does that have to be changed? It is still just the Netherlands."

Here Janne points to the debate in the Netherlands surrounding the Dutch tradition of Sinterklaas (in English Saint Nicholas). Controversies have been mounting about the painted skin colour and accompanying ethnic stereotyping of the Saint's helper, Zwarte Piet (Black Peter; see Hilhorst & Hermes, 2016), leading to changes in the old tradition. One of the reasons Janne feels so strongly about levenslied is because it is a Dutch music—sung in the Dutch language for the Dutch people. Through stating that it is her "own culture", she claims ownership of the nation and its traditions, something she feels is under threat in an increasingly multicultural climate.

When misunderstanding a question about his opinion on the importance of art and culture, Marco (male, 22) mimics Janne's reasoning:

> "Of course, I think Dutch culture is important. It is nice for us all to maintain it. I think it is important that you do not lose it because it is really something of your own people. Your own country. It is nice to maintain it. To show what you are, what country you are from. It really is very *gezellig*."

The interviewees demonstrate an overall ambition to preserve Dutch culture, fearing a dilution of Dutch customs and identity. They aim to maintain a particular image of the Netherlands, manifested in nostalgia and rooted in the past. Levenslied concerts, despite being a relatively new music genre, provide a space for this. Through participating in this ritual, they celebrate an idealised Dutch culture, strengthening their 'national' identity and forming and reaffirming their moral and ideological stances.

◇ INTERCLASS BOUNDARIES

As levenslied is a domestic music, which in many ways celebrates a national identity, it is perhaps not surprising that people who are seen to deviate from this are not accepted. However, in the interviews we find that boundaries are not just drawn along ethnic lines. Through the participants' desire for the "normal", the "simple" and the "homogenous", they disdain not only the unconventional, but also the elite and the highbrow. After expressing her dislike for classical music, Geertje (female, 28) is asked what kind of people she thinks visit such concerts:

> "Yeah, maybe well, yes, the higher, the higher educated people, say the older people, yeah, I will just call them the rich class, or so I think. They go to these concerts, the rich classes... No, high art, there really isn't anything in it for me."

Geertje, while aware that classical music consumers have both higher economic and cultural capital, does not strive for a highbrow lifestyle. In this statement, she actively resists the Bourdieusian notions of symbolic power and cultural goodwill (Bourdieu, 1984). The consumers of levenslied distinguish themselves from this culture, not only explaining how it is "not for them" but also criticising it as "boring" and unengaging. They do not feel shame or embarrassment about their own taste but embrace and celebrate its fun and sociable atmosphere. When asked a similar question, Rachel (female, 19) shared a comparable opinion:

> "Well, I think people like my granny [laughs]. You are not allowed to dance or anything, yeah, I don't think people who go there would like to dance. Or even sing along. So yeah, not for me."

Classical music concerts are associated with people of an older generation. The music is seen as unexciting, with no room for interaction in the form of dancing and singing along, demonstrating once again the value the participants place on audience participation. While these levenslied concerts can be classified as part of the "sacred" (Durkheim, 1995[1912]), separated from the everyday, they are an overt celebration of the mundane. Events traditionally seen as legitimate in society, such as classical music concerts and opera, are disdained with little consideration of the elite cultural position they hold in wider society. When the position of the high arts is considered, it is normally met with downgrading terms such as "pretentious" and "cocky". Luxury or brand clothing, also perceived as superior in wider society, is downplayed as well. Suits, high heels, and flashy garments are disliked by the participants as they are seen as ostentatious. The interviewees place emphasis on the function of clothing, praising garments for being mundane. The audience protect their ideology of simplicity and uniformity by disregarding anything eccentric as dishonest.

The celebration of the mundane is another indication of the importance of community for this group and places them firmly within what Schulze named the "folk scheme" (1992). According to Schulze, there are three principal schemes—folk, highbrow, and pop—where schemes are distinct cultural discourses operating in a way similar to Boltanski and Thevenot's (2006) justification logics. Whereas intellectual aspirations drive the highbrow scheme, and the pop scheme is focused on recreation, in the folk scheme people are motivated by ideas of tradition and harmony. In line with this cultural orientation, the interviewees display a longing for predictability and find comfort in fitting in. While these concerts stand as sacred events, where the heightened energy leads to extraordinary happenings—such as sitting on the floor pretending to row an imaginary boat (see description from Tino given earlier)—these activities are very much aimed at bringing the crowd

closer together and strengthening feelings of collectivity.

◇ INTRACLASS BOUNDARIES

Interestingly, it was not only types of music that would traditionally be considered non- Dutch or highbrow that were disliked by the participants. A music genre that was not only unanimously disliked by the group but would also be spontaneously used as a contrasting musical taste was the Dutch music genre hardcore techno. This massively successful electronic music subculture emerged in the Netherlands as a successor of the 1990s rave scene. When asked why she dislikes this music, Sammi (female, 21) states:

> "It doesn't grab me. It's too fast and I, I don't see any meaning in it. The only thing I see is people who, yes, who are on drugs and can only get through the night because of it. No, that is not for me. Well, it is not that I draw judgements, but it is mainly people who like a pill and well, yes, how should I say that, err, have a bit of aggression and bitterness towards everything. Let me put it that way. So, they don't care what people think... Yes. They will not be people who love Dutch-language music."

Through the "negative othering" (Stahl, 2017) of the hardcore consumers, Sammi formulates an image of who she is, distancing herself from the immoral behaviour that she anticipates during a hardcore event. She bases her dislike for this music on the substance consumption of the crowd at these events. Whereas alcohol (namely beer) is celebrated and utilised by the levenslied audience as a ritual activity, illegal substances that are seen as taboo in society, are shunned by the interviewees, demonstrating their eagerness to fall under the category of "good citizen".

The drug use, in conjunction with the "fast", "loud and intense" (Mark, male, 27) music, made the participants conclude that the atmosphere at a hardcore concert would be sombre and unpredictable. Sophie (female, 23), who admits she has never been to a hardcore event, compares the atmosphere of a levenslied concert to a hardcore concert:

> "The *Sterren van Holland* was especially atmospheric and all fun and cosy. And with hardcore, I think that everyone stays within themselves, and then there is only headbanging, and for all I know, that kind of thing. That is the image that I have... Yes, mostly dark. And for example, at *Sterren van Holland*, there were all those decorative hearts in the air. I think the atmosphere is very different. It was all about warm atmospheric lighting. I think that at a hardcore event there is only darkness and, uh, strobe lights that flicker all the time. Where you never know if you are really safe."

Here Sophie paints a vibrant picture of how she views the events that she attends in comparison to hardcore techno concerts. Where levenslied concerts, according to her, are bright and cosy, she presumes

that hardcore concerts are bleak and made up of an individualistic crowd. The moral component is also evident here, with Sophie correlating the atmosphere to an unsafe environment. In distinguishing her taste from events, she associates with anti-social and unsafe behaviour, she demonstrates that she rather values a strong sense of community, once again subscribing to the importance of solidarity for this group.

While hardcore tends to be associated with a Dutch crowd, it is not a genre that the participants connected or wished to be associated with. The image given of these concerts and its audience does not fit their value system or the constructed national mythology (Zubrzycki, 2011). By distinguishing themselves from what they perceive as unlawful and individualistic behaviour, they display their moral values as a group of sociable, friendly, law-abiding citizens. They erect boundaries not only against members perceived to be above them socio-economically, but also against those on similar or lower strata, demonstrating the rigidly narrow nature of their image of Dutchness.

3.4. CONCLUSION

Throughout the interviews with participants of levenslied concerts, the atmosphere at the events was a central theme—invariably epitomised as the quality of *gezelligheid*. The accounts provided by the interviewees display striking similarities with Durkheim's arguments on group rituals. The respondents present collective effervescence as something they seek out deliberately (rather than it being a side effect), for the particular outcome of solidarity that it generates. Through collective movement and singing, the audience becomes rhythmically entrained, leading to the heightened group energy and subsequent outcome of social bonding. These concerts are thus mobilised rather deliberately as a cultural resource, where the artist is viewed as ritual leader and the artists' vocal capacity seen as secondary to their ability to foster this atmosphere of collective effervescence.

Still, whereas Durkheim viewed collective rituals as sacred, setting them apart from the humdrum of ordinary life, levenslied is in fact experienced as a celebration of the ordinary. And although the totems of the group seem to come in the form of national symbols, it could be argued that these emblems are based on the principle of normalcy. This is manifested in a number of ways—from the norm of dressing down, the explicit preference for simple, catchy songs and relatable lyrics to the requirement of small social distance with the performing artist. The central value underlying these events seems to be social accessibility, complemented by an outspoken disapproval of pretence.

However, this social accessibility is defined rather narrowly as it is conditional on a number of requirements, which are repeatedly encountered throughout the interviews. Hence, a set of strong symbolic boundaries are drawn around the perception of normalcy. First, although none of the respondents claim to subscribe to racist ideology, from their arguments it becomes evident that they presume a sense of cultural homogeneity to be a precondition for the convivial and friendly atmosphere they value so much. This cultural homogeneity is understood in national terms, which becomes apparent when respondents emphasise the Dutchness of both the music and the crowd at levenslied concerts. Moreover, when contrasting the clothing worn at these events to clothing styles commonly associated with minority subcultures, respondents tend to rely on a racialised portrayal—not just of the perceived outgroup, but also of the Dutchness of the ingroup (for instance, by referring to clogs, which are rarely worn in the Netherlands nowadays, let alone in public). This makes clear how much of this national cultural homogeneity is imaginary.

Second, the idea of normalcy is further qualified by marking its difference from highbrow music concerts, which are rejected for being pretentious and boring. From the perspective of the interviewees, the audience at such events seem 'to miss the point' of going to a concert, thereby emphasising the central importance attached to audience participation in the generation of collective effervescence. Although this disdain for pretence suggests that there is a classed dimension underlying the preference for levenslied concerts, we also see a disavowal for other forms of popular music events, as these are considered to be centred on individualistic and antisocial attitudes. The atmosphere at levenslied concerts is repeatedly contrasted to hardcore techno events, which are associated with drug consumption and aggressive behaviour. In that way, an intraclass boundary is constructed on moral grounds, placing a characteristically Dutch taste outside the bracket of what is considered "normal".

The respondents build their identity by placing themselves morally above this section of society, but also by generating a strong hierarchy in terms of the music's materiality. The perceived musical qualities of techno as "loud" "fast" and "intense" were seen to contribute to the anti-social behaviour of the crowd. Similarly, classical music was seen as "boring" and without the capacity to generate any form of participation. The social values of the audience are materialised in the perceived quality of levenslied, as simple and straightforward, indicating the importance of the aesthetic experience of music in the formation of cultural taste. It becomes evident that the quality of the music itself is not only crucial for the concert experience—for the establishment of collective effervescence and the generation of solidarity—but also for the construction of identity (Born, 2011; DeNora, 2000; Hennion, 2001).

The social values of the audience were not only represented in musical characteristics, however. Social meaning was also embedded in material forms such as the stereotypical Dutch symbols of clogs, windmills, tulips, and cheese. These banal images serve as an "iconic nationalism" (Rose-Greenland, 2013: 667), where contact with these icons leads to an emotional experience and the renewal of meaning (Alexander, 2010: 11). Levenslied concerts then manifest themselves as a form of everyday nationalism (Billig, 1995; Hobsbawm, 1991). Although far removed from explicit political discourse and mobilisation, they are a celebration of what is perceived as the essence of a nation and its traditions. While the image upheld may not be an accurate reflection of the national community in any way, levenslied concerts take on the meaning of a site for the re-establishment of a community that is perceived to have been lost. For visitors, they present a frozen moment, a nod back to a time that was supposed to be "simpler and better".

The growing popularity of levenslied concerts (and domestic music more generally) should, therefore, be understood against the backdrop of broader societal changes. Research has shown an increasing polarization within society, fuelled by perceptions of rising immigration, globalization and multiculturalism (Grande et al., 2018; Silva, 2017). While economically well-off and educated segments of society are becoming progressively more internationally oriented, as a result, the less educated feel disaffected by these processes and remain primarily locally oriented (Weenink, 2008, cited in Kuipers, 2012: 27—28). The ensuing decline in cultural exchanges between social strata on the national level has contributed to a decreasing centrality of shared "symbols, stories and rituals" that bind a nation (Kuipers, 2012: 28). Although for people in socially advantaged positions national allegiance has been replaced by membership of an international (or even global) community, those positioned at the other end of the spectrum merely experience "eroding cultural values and traditional ways of life" (Halikiopoulou & Vlandas, 2019: 413).

Emerging research on nationalism has taken this erosion of tradition as one of the driving forces behind new forms of nationalist populism, understood as a cultural backlash of the "common people" (Bugaric & Kuhelj, 2018), or as a working-class revolt against globalization. However, this growing trend can also be seen as a consequence of a "squeezed middle", an intermediate class struggling with a declining socio-economic position (Antonucci et al., 2017). For example, in spite of popular media accounts, research into the demographics of Trump and Brexit voters in 2016 (Bhambra, 2017; Dorling, 2016) has found an overrepresentation of individuals with an intermediate level of education—"ordinary workers coping with the increasing cost of living and inflation" (Antonucci et al., 2017). This position is reflected in the clutch to tradition of the (lower to lower-middle-class) respondents of this research. Therefore, levenslied can be considered the Dutch mani-

festation of a broader trend where national identity is reinscribed in the domain of cultural consumption and leisure. Through glorifying traits like "being normal" and *gezelligheid*, they defend their position in society and reaffirm their self-worth by contrasting who they are to minorities and those considered morally lower or socially higher than themselves.

Connecting this to a traditional Bourdieusian framework we can say that although both the upwardly and downwardly mobile build an identity by distinguishing themselves from sections lower than them, those expecting to climb socially show admiration for upper-class culture (*cultural goodwill*), aspiring to transcend their intermediary position. By contrast, the dispositions of people on a downward trajectory are shaped by the hopes to preserve their position, which manifests itself in a value system emphasising tradition and conservativeness. Levenslied fans, then, seem not only to differentiate themselves from unattractive lower positions, but also from the unattainable upper tiers. Through performances and practices that they frame as 'Dutch', they signify their taste as authentic and differentiate it from the dominant symbols of a social hierarchy that is structured to their disadvantage. By setting up strong cultural boundaries, they attempt to maintain this identity, clinging to their position in society.

In uncovering the governing principles behind the consumption of levenslied, and domestic music more broadly, this chapter has not only added to our understanding of the mechanisms used to foster collectively for this audience but also of a cultural facet of growing European nationalism.

"WE CRY TOGETHER"
A micro-sociological analysis of folk, pop, and highbrow music consumption

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter, the conditions needed for the collectivity of a specific audience were analysed—namely the Dutch music levenslied. This chapter goes on to compare the findings with two other genres. Live music is often seen as a vehicle for group solidarity (Benzecry & Collins, 2014); as a "hotline to collective consciousness" (Horsfall, 2016: 52), but does it work the same for every genre and audience?

When performed live, each genre of music will have its own conventions, requiring different types of engagement and catering for varying degrees and forms of sociability (Frith, 1996). Similarly, music affords a diverse set of emotions, depending on the genre and the individuals' personal experiences with it (Roose, 2008; DeNora, 2000). A long history of research maps cultural orientations onto social dimensions (Bourdieu, 1984; Bryson, 1996; DiMaggio, 1987; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Peterson & Simkus, 1992; Van Eijck, 2001). In these studies, a taste for specific genres (highbrow and/or popular), and the manner in which these genres are engaged with (detached and rational versus emotional and participatory) are connected to specific social positions within society. Adding to this line of research, this chapter asks: is there a taste for collective effervescence? Through this I connect macro-level structures to micro-level processes, aiming to bring a greater understanding of the relationship between cultural consumption and social hierarchies. By combining these perspectives—analysing the experience and use of live music by its participants as well as their social position—I hope to move past studies that perceive culture purely as a status marker, providing a much-needed microsociological perspective on cultural consumption.

Scholars of culture have long considered there to be three overarching cultural schemes—popular, folk and highbrow (Becker, 1982; Frith, 1996; Peterson, 1972, Schulze, 1992; Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). Audiences choose which cultural products to consume and how

to engage with them as part of one of these "ideal types" (Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). Rather than "meta-genres" (Frith, 1996: 26) these are ways of approaching culture. For example, members within the folk scheme tend to approach culture with an emphasis on community, the popular scheme emphasises excitement and spontaneity, and the highbrow scheme aspire intellectual attainment (Schulze, 1992). There are clearly similarities to the Bourdieusian conception of taste patterns—even more so as schemes are loosely connected to social position—the difference, however, rests on the addition of the folk scheme, and in the case of Schulze (1992) an extensive emphasis on how taste relates to preferences, values, and social ambitions in other aspects of their lives (For a more in-depth discussion on these theories see chapter 2.2.).

This chapter addresses the degree to which an ambition for collective effervescence is scheme specific. Additionally, it aims to understand to what extent the orientation towards these schemes is connected to social position. To do this, an additional 20 respondents are recruited, 10 Dutch popular music fans and 10 contemporary classical music fans. These are compared with the 20 interviews from the levenslied audiences, seen in chapter 3. Subsequently, the data is supported with an audience survey, taken at each concert, with the intention of establishing the audience's demographics (n=1416).

10 For a detailed description of levenslied see chapter 3.

11 With this I refer to well established Dutch pop music, song in Dutch and although having some minor international recognition, remaining mostly relevant in the Netherlands.

4.2. METHOD

To understand whether an ambition and taste for collective effervescence is scheme specific, this research compares the audience experience, expectations and preferred modes of participation of three music audiences—levenslied [10], Dutch popular [11] and contemporary classical [12]. These are chosen for two reasons. Firstly, they map onto genres recognised as part of the three cultural schemes. In a study on cultural taste in Flanders, Van Eijck and Lievens (2008: 228) find, for example, that the highbrow scheme includes genres such as "classical works, opera, baroque music, operetta, and *contemporary classical music*". Popular genres consist of "*pop*, rock and dance" and folk genres are found to consist of genres such as "Flemish music, brass band, *(Flemish) folk music*, and chansons". While undertaken in a different country, the genres chosen for this research are very much the Dutch equivalent to these genres.

The second reason for the selection of these three specific genres is to limit differences in taste and consumption styles due to age and nationality (see for example, Van Eijck & Knulst, 2005; Fishman & Lizardo, 2013). Adopting the same approach as chapter 3, to avoid a

12 With this I refer to classical music produced in the 21st century, often seen as experimental or alternative, fusing classical instruments like piano with elements of electronic or popular music.

large age gap, the sample consisted of respondents between the ages of 18 and 35. As the average age of highbrow arts consumers tends to be over this bracket (Roose & Vander Stichele, 2010; Van Eijck & Knulst, 2005), contemporary classical music was chosen for the purpose of finding a younger audience. Similarly, all the artists chosen for this research were Dutch. This condition was used to limit discrepancies in experience and expectation based on the artists' (and attracted audiences') nationality.

The method adopted is the same as in chapter 3, where respondents are recruited at the various concerts through a survey carried out with a team of student volunteers. Incorporation of these surveys had a dual function for the research. Firstly, it was used as a method of approaching concert attendees and inviting them to take part in an interview at a later date, thereby avoiding the need for snowball sampling and, thus, the possible recruitment within only certain active fan communities. Second, these surveys collected the basic demographic characteristics (age, gender, education level and place of residence) of the audience present (see **tables 3.1** [from previous chapter], **4.1** and **4.2**) to understand the overall composition of the audiences.

In addition to the three festivals and 20 interviews held with audience members from levenslied concerts (analysed in chapter 3), two concerts of Dutch pop music (resulting in 10 respondents) [13] and two contemporary classical music concerts (resulting in 10 respondents) [14], were visited. As five interviews were double interviews (interviews held with a couple, or two friends), this resulted in a sample of 40 respondents and 35 semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interviews lasted for 80 minutes on average and took place between February 2018 and November 2019 [15]. All respondents were Dutch, 21 identifying as male and 19 as female (see **appendix 2** for detailed overview). Education level and occupation differed greatly per genre (see **appendix 1** for a more detailed overview). The interviews were conducted face-to-face [16], in a setting of the respondent's choosing. All participants signed a consent form and have been given a pseudonym for anonymity.

During the interviews, the questions focused on a number of elements: i) experience of the concert, ii) expectations and motivations, iii) preferred modes of engagement, and iv) cultural taste. The interviews were analysed using a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) on the computer programme ATLAS.ti. An initial open coding produced 120 codes, related to aspects of the research question. These were grouped based on a process of searching, reviewing and defining themes, which resulted in a number of overarching theoretically relevant themes: cultural taste/boundary work, role of artist, role of music, role of rituals, and self-presentation. After the results of the survey are presented, these will be addressed in the below sections—subdivided by genre—with a focus on the extent to which collective effervescence

13 The Dutch pop concerts consisted of: 1) Trijntje Oosterhuis at the Ziggo Dome, Amsterdam, with special guests, and 2) Tino Martin at the De Kring, Roosendaal.

14 The contemporary classical music concerts consisted of: 1) Matteo Mijderwijk, and 2) Binkbeats, both at the Vondelkerk, Amsterdam.

15 It is important to mention here, that this was before the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the closure of a large section of the live music industry. In the Nederland's, this "lockdown" started in March 2020.

16 Interviews were conducted in Dutch, and I later translated the used quotes to English.

is relevant to the concert experience. The final section addresses the three audiences' cultural taste, by focusing on how they draw boundaries.

4.3. RESULTS

◇ SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the surveys held at the concerts demonstrate that gender was relatively consistent across the different audiences, with females slightly outweighing males at all concerts across all three genres (see **tables 3.1**, **4.1** and **4.2**). When considering age, the youngest audience is seen at the contemporary classical music concert, with an average age of 32. The Dutch popular music concerts present the oldest audience at an average age of 47 and the levenslied audience stands in the middle with an average age of 38. Interestingly, at first glance these findings contradict past research, as visiting classical (or highbrow) music concerts is usually associated with an older cohort than both popular and folk concerts (Roose & Vander Stichele, 2010; Van Eijck & Knulst, 2005). The older popular music audience can be largely attributed to the fact that both concerts featured well established Dutch pop artists who have had long careers in the industry, attracting both new and old fans. Similarly, the discrepancy with the average age of the classical music audience can be attributed to the subgenre, as both contemporary classical music concerts showcased young solo artists with a classical training, but who deviate from the traditional canon by playing original work that often combines classically inspired music with modern elements—such as the addition of synthesizers or keyboards. As stated before, this genre of classical music was specifically chosen with hopes of finding a slightly younger audience.

While the age marks a deviation from past research, the highest attained level of education of the audience presents a much more familiar picture. For example, the most common education level at both the Dutch popular music concerts and the levenslied concerts was *intermediate vocational education* [17], while the contemporary classical music audience is noticeably higher educated, with most audience members having attained a university bachelor's degree (see **figure 4.1**). This corresponds with past research that finds highbrow genres (such as "baroque, classical and contemporary classical") to be largely consumed by higher educated cohorts—specifically when consumed live (Roose & Vander Stichele, 2010: 191). Genres within the fields of popular and folk music tend to have a lower educated audience (Roose & Vander Stichele, 2010; Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). Thus, despite an increase in *cultural omnivorousness*—with the younger, higher educated consuming a broad spectrum of culture (Van Eijck & Knulst, 2005)—

17 In the Netherlands this is the MBO leve (middelbaar beroepsonderwijs; or "middle-level applied education").

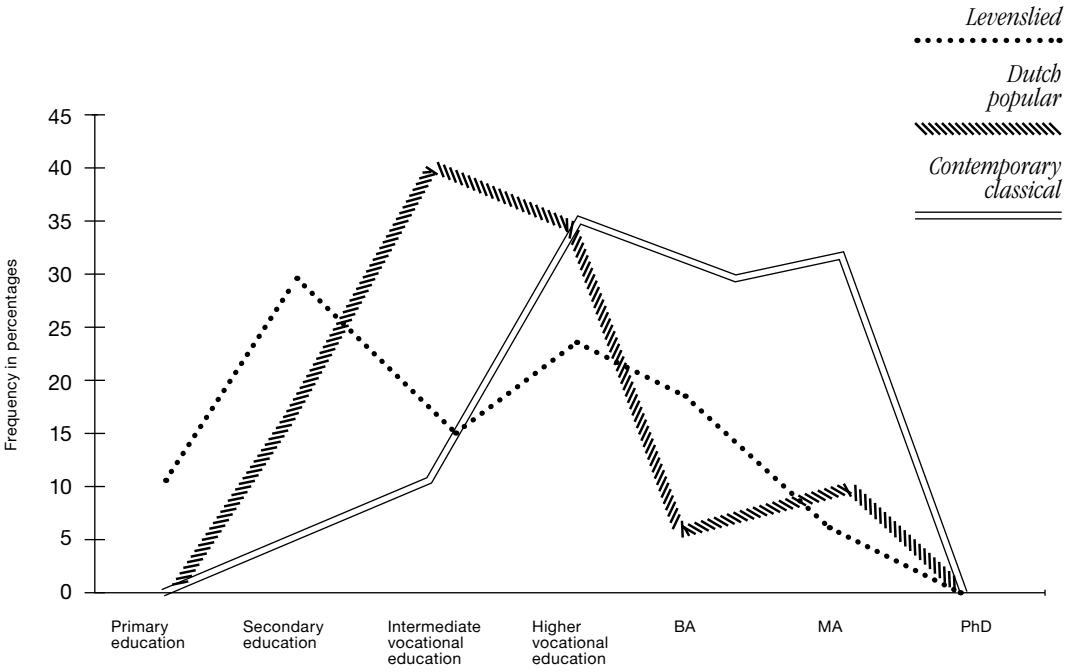
Table 4.1. Gender, age, and level of education of surveyed participants attending the Dutch popular music concerts (n=432).

GENDER (n=421)	Male	33,5% (141)
	Female	66,5% (280)
AGE (n=428)	Under 20	4,4% (19)
	21—30	8,3% (36)
	31—40	10,6% (46)
	41—50	28,7% (124)
	51—60	35,6% (154)
	Above 61	11,3% (49)
EDUCATION (n=426)	Primary education	0,5% (2)
	Secondary education	14,6% (63)
	Intermediate vocational education	38,9% (168)
	Higher vocational education	32,9% (142)
	University Bachelors	3,9% (17)
	University Masters	7,6 % (33)
	PhD	0,2% (1)

Table 4.2. Gender, age, and level of education of surveyed participants attending the Dutch popular music concerts contemporary classical (n=172).

GENDER (n=170)	Male	49,4% (84)
	Female	50,6% (86)
AGE (n=172)	Under 20	1,2% (2)
	21—30	57% (98)
	31—40	27,9% (48)
	41—50	6,4% (11)
	51—60	6,4% (11)
	Above 61	1,2% (2)
EDUCATION (n=172)	Secondary education	4,2% (4)
	Intermediate vocational education	10,5% (18)
	Higher vocational education	31,4% (54)
	University Bachelors	25,6% (44)
	University Masters	30,2% (52)

Figure 4.1. Distribution of education level per scheme



these results show a consistent homologous relation between education level and the consumption of high vs popular culture.

◇ MUSIC: TO SHARE OR NOT TO SHARE EMOTION

Folk: Music as collective emotion

In the first empirical chapter of this dissertation, chapter 3, I find that the bonding potential of live music was something highly sought after by the levenslied audience. The respondents stress the events' ability to accommodate a "sociable" atmosphere, unanimously emphasising "gezelligheid" as the most important feature. For example, when asked about what he likes most about these events, Marco explains "the gezelligheid, the social atmosphere with friends, just singing along and drinking beer". Mimicking this, Geertje states "gezelligheid, I just like the gezelligheid that the music brings". The straightforward "lyrics" (Arjian) and "rhythm" (Tino) allow for the audience to easily join in with the music making. The desired atmosphere is fostered through a participatory culture, endorsed by means of accessible music requiring little effort to master. This works to focus the attention of the participants, transforming an audience from individuals standing in close proximity, to an *interaction ritual* (Bensimon, 2012). The prospect of collective

action, such as singing along, which is common to this audience, synchronise the participants (Horsfall, 2016), leading to the establishment of rhythmic entrainment and subsequent heightened group emotion.

Interestingly, while the music certainly plays an important part in the establishment of collective effervescence and the desired convivial atmosphere, there is a lot of emphasis on the happenings around the music. A number of respondents even admit to attend "not for the music […] but for the people and the gezelligheid" (Mark), indicating that these events are truly about the social experience.

This is an interesting finding and affirms Liebst's (2019) understanding of the success of *unfocused* interaction in generating collective effervescence. During these concerts—similar to the festivals researched by Liebst—the morphological composition of the densely populated area with likeminded participants, establishes a heightened energy, to the extent that a clear focus or activity (such as an artist or singing or dancing along) is not needed.

The success of these interaction rituals is reiterated in the respondents' praise of the *solidarity* and the release of emotional energy felt during these events, along with the clear Durkheimian totemism seen in the depiction of traditional Dutch motifs—tulips, clogs, the colour orange, or the Dutch flag—symbolising the group (that is very much defined in national terms as shown in chapter 3).

Highbrow: Music as individual entrainment

Unsurprisingly, the visitors of the contemporary classical music concert attend these events with very different expectations. The word gezellig was rarely mentioned and the social aspect hardly acknowledged. When asked about her experience of the concert, Alice explains: "I was just really looking forward to an evening of listening, just sitting still and letting the music come over me". The music stands central to the experience. However, the music here is not used to foster collective engagement (as it is with the levenslied audience), but as a stimulant in itself, something to experience individually.

The music is to be reflected on, with respondents providing detailed accounts of the musical composition and emphasising the strict attention needed for concentrating on the complex music:

> "This music is not about recognition, but really it is about a type of emotional interpretation. This emotion, you cannot really express or actively realise. The music is moody, you have to think about it, and there is room given to allow you to think about it, instead of having it already chewed for you."
>
> (Kasper)

The audience shows great symbolic mastery—an ease with abstract and difficult pieces (Atkinson, 2011). Music does not have to be recognisable, but should allow for contemplation and interpretation, echoing previous understandings of highbrow taste (Bourdieu, 1984; Schulze, 1992).

However, deviating from a traditional Bourdieusian reading, the music is not only to be enjoyed for its stylistic features—as pure form—but should work as a resource for moments of reflexivity, a reflexivity towards personal emotion:

> "It's interesting, one way or another, I just didn't get the emotion. I was actually a little disappointed. If I think about it, it's music that I really enjoy, and the location was beautiful, but one way or another I just didn't really feel it […]. I don't know, acoustically it was good, the set up was good, but it just didn't come across."

The respondents explain their motivations as a form of "emotional work" (DeNora, 2011), where the musical experience is actively sought after as a resource to tap into emotion. To a certain extent, this is not surprising, as the construction of emotion is a principal musical affordance (DeNora, 2003). However, the arousal of emotion through music has primarily been connected to genres that fall within the popular and folk scheme (Benzecry & Collins (2014; Bourdieu, 1984; Schulze, 1992), and as something associated with the lower strata.

Similar to the "fanatics" described by Benzecry and Collins (2014), this audience would seem to have an "anti-Durkheimian" approach to these events, favouring individual engagement and emotion over collective interaction. This is seen also in the little discursive attention given to collective activities such as applause at the end of a track or set. However, while a lot of discursive emphasis is placed on the individual experience, there is a clear awareness of their position within a collective audience:

> "Everyone was there really for the music,
> and everyone was really blown away."
>
> (Kasper)

> "Everyone was really focused, and no one was talking to each other,
> everyone was really there for the music, and it was great."
>
> (Daan)

In using words like "everyone", they place themselves as part of the group, the collective enjoyment of the music being an important part of the experience. Similarly, Sophie states:

> "It was very relaxed. I think it might have been due to the type of person that comes to this type of event, a little laid back, just nice and relaxed, just wanting to listen to music. That's how I saw the atmosphere. People had a lot of respect for the artist, it was extremely quiet, just really very quiet in the room."

While the social aspect is not directly discussed, it is evident that they

are aware of the audience and the fact that they are a member of this group. The audience seems to make up an important aspect, not for the collective engagement but for the collective silence. There is pleasure in collectively acting out the genre conventions, in this case the act of being silent and individually engaged in the music.

Pop: Music as part of the show

For the audience of the popular Dutch music concerts, motivations are based on a similar drive to that of the levenslied audience, with collective interaction playing an important role. When asked what she likes about these types of events, Lucy states "everyone is just having fun, dancing and singing along. Really, I just think that's amazing". Similarly, Isabel explains "I have to say, I do not really know her new music. So, everything from the 90s, when she was just getting mainstream, that I loved, then I can really sing along". As was observed for the levenslied audience, it is important that the music is recognisable, with the intent of actively participating. For this audience, an event of this type is successful if the artist plays familiar hits, and a good song is one that has been extensively circulated so as to "get stuck in your head" (Fleur).

As with the levenslied audience, the familiarity of the tracks had another important feature. Sarah describes:

> "There was a moment where I just sat and cried […] It was one of the songs that I really associate with the past. And that was just very very beautiful and nice. And it made me extremely emotional."

Songs are attached to certain moments, charged with the associated emotions. As DeNora (2003: 62) explains, "music has the capacity to reorient awareness, to direct consciousness back to past times and experiences". The music takes the listener, in this case Sarah, briefly out of the concert setting, transporting her to another time. Emotion is fostered here through an individual interpretation and connection with the piece of music, actively shaped by past musical experiences (DeNora, 2000; Lamont & Loveday, 2020). So, while the levenslied audience positions the construction of collective emotion centrally, this makes up only part of the emotional aspirations of the pop audience. Nostalgia plays an important role in the musical experience, fostering not only an individual emotional attainment, but an individual experience—taking the individual out of the collective ritual.

During the interviews, an in-depth discussion of the music and its materiality was rarely provided, with appreciation given to other aspects of the event. For example, when asked what she thought of the live musicians during the performance, Irene states "yes they were su-

per important, the live instruments are what make it into a show", while she mentions the instruments it is not in regard to the musical quality, but how they facilitate the production of a spectacle. Furthermore, it was only in this group that the outer appearance of the artist was mentioned, with respondents commenting on the artists' costume changes. Lucy observes that the artist "went from a beautiful blue dress, and then a black suit. Yes, that makes it exciting. Like 'what's going to come next'". The clothes and live instruments are all part of the show, keeping it captivating. This was reflected further in Elise's description of her favourite moment of the event:

> "Yes, the atmosphere that is there and the fact that it was an anniversary concert, that makes it already super special. But yeah, the production, with the lights and how she entered the concert in that red dress. I thought it was all very well done."

Similar to the pop scheme described by Schulze (1992), the audience value the entertainment of a spectacle over the music. A concert is successful if it comes with excitement and an element of surprise. Interestingly, however, the surprise should not come from the music (appreciated most when recognisable) but in everything around it—the costumes, lighting, setting, concept, etc.

Collins (2004: 59) writes that sporting events are contrived to foster dramatic situations where collective emotion is established through the support of a favourite team and a competitive scoring system. Popular music concerts seem to work much the same way. Although not obviously competitive, they use novel tools—such as lighting, visuals, and costume changes—to bring tension and excitement to the event. Moments of collective emotion are then established not only through choreographed action, but through the impact of collectively experiencing a happening. For this audience the emotional response can be both group-based—fostered concurrently through rhythmic entrainment—or individual—established through previous exposure. Thus, while the levenslied audience primarily aspires to collective engagement, urging for strong levels of collective effervescence, and the contemporary classical audience adopt an individual engagement and emotional experience, the Dutch pop audience seems to stand somewhere in the middle, pursuing both.

◇ ARTIST: AS RITUAL LEADER, TOTEM OR CREATIVE GENIUS

Folk: Artist as ritual leader

As seen in chapter three, the audience of the levenslied concerts consider the role of the artist as contributing to the participatory atmosphere they desire. After being asked what makes a good artist

within this genre, Geertje explains:

> "That they can make an atmosphere, that they can make gezelligheid, that's very important. That they get people singing along and go along with the music. They should be able to make people dance, create a party, but apart from that, not much more, as I think anyone can just sing what they sing."

Geertje's views are illustrative of a sentiment found among many respondents. For this audience, the artist does not have to be an amazing singer, and anyone is in principle capable of singing these songs. The fact that the music and singing style is so accessible, shows again the importance of low participation barriers. More important than a good voice, the levenslied artist should interact with the audience, fostering excitement and encouraging the crowd to join in. Mike shares this sentiment—also presented in chapter 3—when explaining why he likes one of the artists:

> "Because he just gets a certain energy going. Which is just really great. You are just standing there... Full throttle he starts the show, and immediately, really in that minute, from the moment that he starts to sing, then the whole audience receives, straight away, that energy from him and that I just think is really cool."

It is the role of the artist to foster the desired atmosphere through singing accessible songs, but more importantly they should be able to disseminate a certain energy. The artist thus works like a conductor, or "charismatic leader" (Carlton-Ford, 1992) of the ritual, trusted with the important function of fostering and sustaining collective effervescence for a highly successful interaction ritual.

The description of artist as charismatic leader works well for artists within the levenslied genre. As seen already in the results of chapter 3, the artist is more of a guide in the process of fostering collective effervescence, rather than an idol or icon (as many artists can be seen—think of a Justin Bieber or Beyoncé). Similar to traditional folk music, the hierarchy between artist and audience should be kept as low as possible. This is not only important for stimulating collective participation, but also to keep the artist relatable for the audience. Many artists from this specific genre come from humble backgrounds, something highly valued by the audience, who disdain any ostentatious or egocentric behaviour.

Pop: Artist as totem

Similarly, the Dutch popular music audience looked for an artist that could keep their attention. Commenting on her favourite moment of the concert, Isabel states:

> "Yes, I think it was the moment that she entered, and that she still fitted in that

> red dress. Yes, I think that that was the most beautiful moment.
> I thought that she did try also to give some good interaction with the audience, but it never really took off. She wasn't like "now everyone start clapping", or that everyone should put their phones in the air with the light on and wave them from left to right. That didn't happen, so then I think that the most beautiful moment was that she entered in that red dress."

The artist has the responsibility of entraining the audience, which again acknowledges the importance of collective engagement for this audience. Interestingly, however, the artist can entrain the audience through direct interaction (communicating with the audience), or through indirect interaction (the show they put on). The emphasis here is on the specific "red dress", worn previously by the artist at a prestigious event 25 years earlier, and thus retaining a sentimental quality. This dress was mentioned by a number of the respondents (also seen in the previous section, above), demonstrating the importance of the performance aspect to the concert for this audience.

The artist played another crucial role for the audience's concert expectations, with many respondents expressing the sheer importance of seeing the artist live—in real life. For example, Joe states "it was the first time that I saw him. So, I thought, yes now I can also say I have seen him live". For Joe, attending the live concert was in a sense part of preparatory backstage behaviour, as groundwork for a front stage performance, or in other words as a status marker that can be used in future interactions (Goffman, 1959). Similarly, Tony states:

> "I found the experience very impressive. Seeing Marco Borsato was of course amazing. That is such an idol of mine, and that is no exaggeration. He is such an icon, everyone knows him, and there is no way that you can't find that cool."

It is evident that the status of the performer is very important. This point is strengthened in Lucy's response to why she disliked a guest artist at one of the Dutch pop concerts, "I didn't know her, so that's why I didn't like her performance". An unknown artist gives little chance of encouraging participation (also having unknown music), but more important, they do not have the legitimised position. When referring to the same guest artist, Fleur expresses a similar opinion:

> "These people they are nobody yet. They are singers on YouTube and have participated in a competition. Yeah, who are you then? Nobody. Yeah, that may sound strong, but you just don't get anything from them. They can sing. That's it!"

The quality of the music seems to come secondary to the artists popularity and status.

The artist thus plays an important role in the event, not only for their capacity to put on a show, but in their stature. Artists, for this audience, work similar to the sports stars described by Collins (2004), acting like the sacred object, celebrated and venerated, creating a collective excitement and emotion through their idolized position. A clear hierarchy between audience and artist is seen here, with the audience

placing the artist on a high up pedestal. While the levenslied audience members (see above) praise the relatable quality of the artist, with the focus remaining on the convivial atmosphere and the artists' ability to foster collective engagement, the pop audience place the artists in a position of superiority. In this sense these large-interaction rituals are more classically Durkheimian, as the concert experience is seen as something sacred, the artist being the totem, and the collective emotions of the audience projecting directly onto them.

Highbrow: Artist as creative genius

Where the popular and levenslied audiences required high engagement from the artist, the attendees of the contemporary classical concerts did not seem to expect such a commitment. Lieke explains that the artist "was very engrossed in his instrument and his music; a little inwardly focused. He did not have much interaction with the audience […] I really like that he was so in his element". The artist's interaction with the audience was not only seen as unnecessary for this group, but it was occasionally found to be a hinderance to the experience. During the interview, Kasper gives an example of a moment when the artist tried to involve the audience by making them clap on the beat:

> "Yeah, perhaps it is because we were sitting, but people find clapping hard. Unless of course... you are being dragged along in a tight pop show […] I have it often with clapping... it is expected of you to participate and often this works great, but no... this was not the setting for it. No. You just want to look and enjoy yourself, reaching almost a sort of trance, and not feel obliged to clap. It can feel like a laugh track of a tv series."

It seems contemporary classical music concerts are not the setting for audience interaction. This was a common feeling among the respondents of this group, calling it a "cheap trick" (Daan), emphasising again the desire for individual engagement. The audience expects emotion and participation to be self-motivated; something not "forced" upon them by the outside.

Deviating particularly from the Dutch popular music audience, the respondents of this group praise the artist for their devotion to the music. The artist is valued because of technical abilities. Showmanship is either disregarded or even disdained. When defining what he likes about a particular contemporary classical artist, Steven states:

> "He just closes his eyes while he plays. He was really not occupied with us; he was only focused on his instrument. And a sound comes out where I think "how is he doing that" and I can really get on board with that... I find performance less important."

The respondents appreciate the artists' immersion in their music. Ac-

cordingly, they deem the performative and interactive aspect irrelevant. Similarly, responding to why he likes this artist, Sam explains:

> "His concentration is in the music, and I think that is really beautiful. […] You see that this is a man, a person, only occupied with the music. He puts it on the internet, but he doesn't do it for the fame. He just wants to share his art, he wants to share his sound and music with people. […] he is careful when he speaks to the audience because he doesn't have the feeling that 'they are here for me' but he thinks, I am making music and they are going to evaluate that."

While the audience value the artists' ability and are very complimentary about their talents, they are not "idolized" to the same extent as the artists from the Dutch popular music concerts.
What does seem to be important is 'authenticity'. The production of music should be based on a desire to create—or *Art for Art's Sake* (Bourdieu, 1984).

> "I think that the most important thing is that you feel the artist is passionate... that you don't get the feeling that they are thinking 'yeah I am just going to sit here and earn some money, and then I will go home'. Because it is all about feeling that authentic emotion and the venerability".
>
> (Marijke)

Musical talent and creativity should not be tainted by any commercial or financial motivations. Artists are valued by the audience for staying true to their art, with the authenticity relating subsequently to a more rewarding emotional experience.

For the audience of contemporary classical music concerts, the artist is not entrusted with the role of ritual leader (as with levenslied) or that of totem (as with Dutch popular music). The artist is seen as a facilitator of an individual emotional experience. This, however, depends on the precondition that the artist is authentic, which (for this group) [18] means being motivated by an honest drive to create rather than seeking prestige or material returns (Hahl, et al., 2017). Direct artist-audience interaction is not given central importance as the individual experience is preferred over a collective one. What is more, this group seems to have little drive for collective rituals in general. While with the audiences of levenslied and Dutch popular music there is an expectation of ritualised interactions (such as collective singing, clapping or dancing), this type of collective engagement was rejected by the contemporary classical audience for being inappropriate.

In sum, we find that the three audiences, to a certain extent, match the anticipated cultural orientations. The levenslied audience are seen to prioritise participation (Bourdieu, 1984), with the aim of fostering a community atmosphere (Schulze, 1992), and high levels of collective effervescence. This lends empirical weight also to Benzecry and Collins' (2014) theorisation of lowbrow music consumption. Similarly, the Dutch popular music audience seem to also emphasise the establishment of collective effervescence, however, the manner in which

18 See Van Poecke (2018) on the socially constructed nature of "authenticity".

this is produced differs. While the levenslied audience celebrates the collective (the community), the pop audience celebrates the artist, with the emotional attainment stemming from and projected onto the artist.

Perhaps the most surprising are the findings on the contemporary classical music audience. Interestingly, the audience members have a strong ambition for an emotional experience, openly expressing the desire to be moved by the music. This deviates from the emotionally distant form of consumption most commonly associated with the highbrow audience (Atkinson, 2011; Bourdieu, 1984; Kant, 1790; Lizardo & Skiles, 2012). Furthermore, while individual and reflexive engagement is most definitely seen, the experience is not as individualistic as has previously been described (Bourdieu, 1984; Schulze, 1992). While largely anticipated collective participation during the events is shunned (presenting an anti-Durkheimian sentiment, as found by Benzecry & Collins, 2014), a shared focus and mood is seen in the mutual enactment of genre conventions, most notably the collective silence. Although unlikely to result in rhythmic entrainment and the subsequent generation of collective effervescence, sharing this experience can bring a level of excitement in itself.

◇ BOUNDARY WORK AND CULTURAL TASTE

While the previous two sections establish the desired intensity of ritual interaction during the three genres of concert (levenslied, Dutch popular and contemporary classical), it does not tell us how this fits within the audience members' broader cultural preferences. In other words, is there such a thing as *a taste for collective effervescence*? Thus, in this section, I look into the respondents' cultural tastes. As "tastes are perhaps first and foremost distastes" (Bourdieu, 1984: 56), I focus on how the respondents draw "cultural boundaries" (Lamont, 1992). In analysing what they dislike, I follow a long line of research into boundary work and cultural consumption (to name a few: Bryson, 1996; Katz-Gerro, 2011; Michael, 2015; Van Eijck, 2001).

Folk: A taste for collective effervescence

Interestingly, the levenslied audience's emphasis on collectivity is seen even more pronounced when I let them reflect on the types of engagement that they dislike. For example, as seen in chapter 3, highbrow genres such as jazz, classical music and opera were very unpopular among these respondents. Explaining why she dislikes concerts like these, Rachel states: "you are not allowed to dance or anything, yeah, I

don't think people who go there would like to dance. Or even sing along. So yeah, not for me". This sentiment was shared by other respondents. Although never having been to a classical music concert, they perceive these events to be subdued, not accommodating the overall ambition of active participation.

The disdain for highbrow genres stems from an audience-wide celebration of the "profane" (Willis, 1978), with anything too eccentric, snobbish or elitist being rejected by the respondents. For example, Geertje explains, in a quote also presented in chapter 3, why she dislikes "high art", through describing who she thinks would be attracted to these types of events:

> "The higher educated people, say the older people, yeah, I will just call them the rich class, or so I think. They go to these concerts, the rich classes... No, high art, there really isn't anything in it for me."

Clear symbolic boundaries are drawn against an audience not only perceived as older, but also of a higher socioeconomic position. The high stature of the music genre and its audience is criticised for not displaying the informality and accessibility that is preferred by levenslied audiences. Situated firmly within Schulze's (1992) "folk scheme", they prioritise simplicity, where low-entrance levels are formalised to stimulate an egalitarian community atmosphere.

Boundaries were not only drawn towards events that do not accommodate the preferred form of engagement, but also towards certain "unwelcome" people entering the concert space. Describing, the change in atmosphere when "Moroccans or Turks" enter the concert Tino states:

> "The moment that those people come in, the atmosphere changes. Then everyone goes more into themselves. Look, now everyone can go a little crazy together and have fun... You do not have to be afraid. It is usually very *gezellig*, just like you've known each other for years." [19]

The desired convivial atmosphere is heavily guarded by the audience, with boundaries forming around individuals who are perceived to diminish this. Boundaries thus fall around people who do not fit the usual demographics, with the audience placing a strong emphasis on traditional Dutch characteristics.

The levenslied audiences strive for collective engagement evidently matches Bourdieu's (1984) original account of lower class "popular taste", characterised by a preference for an emotional and participatory experience. Levenslied concerts, correspondingly, serve a clear *function* of conviviality and social bonding by establishing a highly successful interaction ritual. The *form* of the music should merely promote the *function*, and for this reason the materiality of the music is praised for being simple, recognisable and accessible—all

19 A similar quote to this was also presented in chapter 3.

stylistic features that encourage participatory engagement (see previous two sections). The strong dislike for highbrow genres and audiences, demonstrates an anti-elitist attitude, reflecting a growing trend among the lower educated (see for example: Daenekindt, Van der Waal, & De Koster, 2018). The drive for high levels of collective engagement and emotion can thus be seen as resistance to the perceived taste and mode of consumption of the elite. As Hesmondhalgh (2013: 109) writes, collective engagement such as dance is an "immensely appealing aesthetic experience [for] communities that are excluded from many more reflexive cultural forms". This type of engagement thus presents them with an opportunity to express their culture, in relation to the dominant culture (see also: Hebdige, 1979; Horowitz, 1983; Lamont & Lareau, 1988; Willis, 1978). Boundaries are not only drawn towards those positioned higher, however. A strong emphasis on community, means that barriers are drawn towards individuals who are perceived to break these bonds (for more see chapter 3). The drive for collective effervescence is thus highly based on the creation of "others"—in this case individuals who do not fit a traditional Dutch image as defined by the levenslied fans.

Pop: Good will vs good show

Similar to the attendees of levenslied events, the respondents recruited at the Dutch popular music concerts share a distaste for attending concerts from traditional highbrow genres:

> "I would never go to see an orchestra on their own. I would only go if they were playing in combination with a singer. See, it just doesn't speak to me so much alone. The performance of a singer I just find really cool. An orchestra just give less atmosphere for me, I prefer to go to an orchestra that makes a show of it."
>
> (Lucy)

> "I have never been to an orchestra. I just have a feeling that an orchestra would be way too boring. And I just don't feel drawn to that. But if it's in connection with a singer, then I would think it is very cool. Then they can play along with the music. But I wouldn't go specifically to see an orchestra."
>
> (Sarah)

Although the popular music concert attended by Sarah and Lucy, when recruited for this interview, was accompanied with a full orchestra, the presence of these musicians came very much secondary to the pop artist who was performing. If not in support of a popular music singer, an orchestra is seen by the respondents as having little impact, as it lacks the "show" quality of a singer.

Tony, who is a musician by profession, explains that he "can play a piece from Bach. Yeah, no joke *Invention No.3*". When asked if he

would ever visit a concert of classical music, he answers “no, not really. But I can appreciate it”. This was a common feeling among the respondents. They exemplify a “cultural goodwill” through acknowledging the legitimacy of these genres (Bourdieu, 1984), but refrain from consuming them themselves, in favour of what they perceive to be more stimulating and spectacular (see also the previous two sections). While these characteristics can be likened to Schulze’s (1992) “pop scheme” in that there are similar motivations for fun and excitement, the aspiration for novelty and anti-conventionalism seems to be less important—at least in terms of the musical content. A certain level of standardisation is required, as the music must remain relatable. Experimentation and exploration thus seem to contradict this orientation. The respondents recruited at the Dutch popular concerts invariably liked the “Top 40”. This very much falls in line with Bourdieusian notion of middle brow taste, as the respondent favour music that has been legitimised by the industry.

Clear boundaries are also drawn between them and their social neighbours. After indicating her dislike for levenslied, Fleur continues:

> “I really do not like Dutch folk music. I do not get the hype of André Hazes[20]. The whole room always just goes like [waves her hands in the air from side to side]. I just think “what’s happening here”. But yes, there would be many people who would not agree with me.”

Interestingly, levenslied is disliked precisely for the collective rituals that are deemed so characteristic of it. Aspects of audience participation such as waving arms to the beat or “jumping from left to right” (Isabel) are highly criticised. A contradiction is seen here, as collective interaction at popular music concerts seems to be acceptable (see sections above), but not during levenslied concerts. Comparing this music to English pop music, Lucy states:

> “I don’t mind a Dutch song every now and again but having to do the polonaise and dance shoulder to shoulder all night long. No no, not a chance. I just don’t like Dutch music. Dutch is just not a nice language. I just find English way more interesting. You can dance better to it and not only that hoompapa and the polonaise. And Dutch music is usually a little bit dumber.”

It seems like there is an appropriate and inappropriate mode of participation, with the music’s materiality accommodating either the correct or incorrect form of audience engagement. Thus, while the Dutch popular audience appreciate moments of rhythmic entrainment (through singing, dancing and swinging phone lights along to the music), a clear distinction is upheld between these forms of interaction and those seen at levenslied concerts. The quote from Lucy holds a second aspect of notable interest, as she emphasises her preference for the English language. This was something also reiterated by other respondents who valued popular music sung in both English and Dutch. The English language is used as a means of differentiation, as it provides an undebatable criterion to set Dutch popular music (often in English) apart from levenslied music (exclusively in Dutch).

20 She refers here to André Hazes, one of the central figures within the levenslied genre.

Although orientations towards collective engagement and emotion are similar to the levenslied audience, the boundaries that pop music attendees draw are very different. Interestingly, they do not seem to guard the perimeters of participation as heavily. Unwanted viewers are rarely mentioned, and "othering" seems to be predominantly based on taste for music genres in itself, rather than on aspects of the identity of the people displaying this taste (as was the case for levenslied audience members).

Highbrow: Piggybacking on collective effervescence

Finally, when comparing the previous two groups to the contemporary classical music audience, we see very different modes of distinction. While both former genres favour familiar music—for fostering relatability and audience participation—the respondents recruited at the contemporary classical music concerts actually disfavoured music sounding too familiar:

> "*Despacito* is a song that I find really bad. I really can't listen to that. I think it's because it is played too much. If you hear that song one time then I can already sing along with it, even though I don't even like the song. It just gets stuck in your head. Those songs that are made just to get stuck in your head, I really don't like them. It's too easy."
>
> (Steven)

In contrast to the previous two audiences, the respondents of this group dislike music that is too accessible, displaying aversion to catchy songs that easily allow singing along. Presenting a clear connection to Schulze's (1992) highbrow scheme, popular music such as this does not provide the levels of contemplation and complexity that this audience looks for.

However, this disdain for pop music was further related to the perceived commercial aspect to these songs, as they are seen to be made with a clear intention of acquiring broad success. Kasper, an audio technician at a popular venue in Amsterdam, explains this further:

> "I don't like the shows that just revolve around commerce. I have it with a lot of hip hop […] they are more concerned with selling merchandise than the music they were playing. Yeah, I can't really handle that so well."

For this audience, the artist's motivations should be in the music itself and not in the financial reward. This in turn impacts their consumption patterns as well. When asked what concerts she would never attend, Marijke states:

> "Pop music, the Top 40 […] I feel that it is just very commercial, and it misses a bit of [the] authenticity that I look for. I think about shows that are very big and spectacular, and then I think "yeah, that will not touch me".

The Top 40 was unanimously disliked by all the respondents recruited at the contemporary classical concert and used spontaneously as a negative point of comparison for their own taste. The very reasons why popular music is liked by its attendees, are now used as an argument against them—the spectacle, its mainstream quality and the overly familiar music.

The notion of authenticity, which was found to be a central legitimising rhetorical tool for contemporary classical consumers, is again proposed as a primary criterion to guide taste—so much so that any live concert could be seen as "good" as long as it was deemed authentic. Lieke, a regular festival attendee, described her experience at a Foo Fighters' performance:

> "A concert that has really stuck with me is the Foo Fighters, and it's because Dave Grohl, because he had such good interaction with the audience and could really get everyone on board. The energy that he got going in the audience was definitely a plus. But on the other side, I also find it fascinating if an artist is totally inwardly focused and gives little interaction. I suppose as long as it's authentic."

If the artist is perceived as authentic, then the level of engagement with the audience in itself does not matter. The respondents seem to adapt their expectations to the context and the genre—favouring little interaction at contemporary classical music concerts, but during festivals appreciating high levels of audience engagement. Interestingly, a similar process is seen regarding the musical content, with authenticity trumping the "quality" of the music.

> "If I see that the artist is passionate about what they do. That I can almost feel it when I listen, or that it hits me emotionally really hard. Then the music does not even have to be something that I like. I was at Lowlands, at a band that I would never listen to, but because of everything around me, you could just feel it, everyone found it amazing."

Recognisability is not important for these respondents. They are capable of appreciating live performances of music they do not know or even do not like. As long as the artist is seen to be making music for the 'right' reasons, the respondents see value in it. This resonates with past research on higher educated omnivorous consumers who value first and foremost authenticity (Grazian, 2005; Hahl, et al., 2017; Halle, 1996; Johnston & Baumann, 2007; Peterson, 2005; Van Poecke, 2018).

In line with this omnivorous orientation, respondents from this group are capable of appreciating a wide selection of genres, especially when it comes to live performances. Interestingly, levenslied music was regularly mentioned in this regard. Alice, for example states: "I am not really a mega fan of a Gerard Joling [21], or artists within that genre, even though I think it's great, I love standing in a bar drinking beer singing along, I just don't put it on at home". In contrast to the Dutch pop audience, these respondents seem to find value in the levenslied concerts, specifically for the conviviality that the concerts stimulate.

21 Gerard Joling is a very well-known singer and television presenter who would fall loosely under the genre of levenslied, singing sentimental ballads in Dutch.

Lieke echoes this point, when describing an experience at a levenslied concert:

> "Sometimes I feel very uneasy at "hip" concerts, and that is something I did not get at this concert. It doesn't matter how you look, how old you are, what you wear. Everyone was so welcoming, and dancing a lot, not standing idle, but really dancing. So, it was actually a really great feeling, really fun. I only just don't really like the music."

Concerts are appreciated for the open and social atmosphere and the people present. These concerts are visited for something that these respondents cannot get at "hip" types of music events—events that they would more readily be associated with. However, in this case, they shift their focus towards the experience, rather than the music (even if this was deemed so central to the contemporary classical concerts where they were recruited).

It is one thing to state that you appreciate these types of concerts for the purpose of face work—constructing an egalitarian and open image—and another thing to actually commit to this cultural form (for example, by paying money for tickets and really attending). Interestingly, when conducting this research at the levenslied concerts, I spoke to a number of higher educated visitors, two of which have taken part in this research. When asked what it is he likes about these shows, Ben, a regular at these concerts, states:

> "The atmosphere is just great. It has something special, you can just sing along, it's uncomplicated. It is just nice and happy. You can just switch off your brain. And I mean that in the best way. And of course, it is fascinating to look at the people. Still a little bit of tourism. But mostly, it's just fun, something a little different."

Similarly, Bas (consultant, MA), another higher educated respondent found at a levenslied concert, states:

> "If Andre Hazes sings, then the whole audience is dragged along. Then you create a kind of collective atmosphere, and that's something that is hard to reach normally in the Netherlands, because the Dutch are usually quite reserved and closed. […] I think that along with football, Dutch folk music is one of the only ways to get Dutch people shoulder to shoulder next to each other."

It is evident that these consumers understand that they do not belong, the reason for which can only be sought in their social position. However, the concerts seem to be appreciated not only for the "different" experience and the "tourism", but also because it gives them something that they cannot get at other concerts—a particular atmosphere. They visit these concerts for exactly the reason that make these events such successful interaction rituals, piggybacking on the collective effervescence that is established there.

These results thus clearly mimic past literature on the cultural omnivore, where the higher educated respondents tend to consume a wider variety of culture while the lower educated present more uni-

vorous tendencies (DiMaggio, 1987; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Peterson & Simkus, 1992; Van Eijck, 2001). This is seen in the strong boundary work of the Dutch popular and levenslied audiences (see also Bryson, 1996), but it might also go some way to explain the distribution of education levels found at each concert, where both the popular and levenslied concerts are found to attract a greater variety of education levels, while for contemporary classical, lower education levels are far less represented (see **figure 1**). Still, in line with findings from past studies on the cultural omnivore, even if a larger range of different genres is consumed by the higher educated, this does not entail an 'anything goes' attitude (Van Poecke, 2018). Boundaries are drawn, in this case, around *authenticity*, leading to a disapproval of anything too commercial or mainstream (Hahl, et al., 2017; Van Poecke, 2018).

These cultural omnivores differentiate their consumption primarily in the mode of engagement. Previous studies have argued that the higher educated omnivore applies an aesthetic disposition to the consumption of any cultural product, suppressing functional considerations and focusing on the formal and stylistic features of both highbrow and popular cultural products (Lizardo & Skiles, 2012; Atkinson, 2011). This is taken to result in "illegitimate" or "lowbrow" genres being consumed with a disinterested, serious (Peters et al., 2018), or ironic attitude (McCoy & Scarborough, 2014). What we find in this study, however, is a group of omnivores who suppress their aesthetic disposition during certain cultural encounters. In fact, it is the very emotional and unrestrained participation of genres such as Dutch levenslied that the higher educated respondents of this research praise. While they are aware of their "tourism", indicating a sense of being out of place, they use these events as a cultural resource for the experience of taking part in such a successful interaction ritual, similar to how the lower educated consumers use it.

4.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to understand whether a motivation for collective effervescence is connected to specific cultural schemes, combining perspectives from stratification sociology and micro-interactionism. Linking these frameworks has resulted in a number of important contributions to understanding cultural consumption and the experience of live music.

First, the analysis shows that emotion is not tied to one specific concert or scheme. This means that we can reject the notion that emotional engagement is something primarily characteristic of popular genres (Adorno, 1976; Bourdieu, 1985). The difference between schemes, however, lies in the type of emotion expressed—whether in-

wardly focused, or group-based. However, while emotion is context specific—showing the constructed nature of feelings (Hochschild, 1979)—it appears not necessarily to be connected to social class. For example, both lower and middle educated audiences value active engagement and the arousal of overt collective emotion. However, the mechanisms on which this is established differ, based on the aspect of the concert each audience finds sacred—for levenslied it is the community, for popular Dutch music it is the artist. Motivations for community clearly differed between these genres. While the popular music audience places discursive emphasis on the individual emotional experience, this topic remained untouched by the respondents of the levenslied concerts. Interestingly, while the higher educated may have previously been thought to distance themselves from individual and collective emotions (Atkinson, 2011; Bourdieu, 1985; Schulze, 1992), the audience emphasises the presence of both. In fact, individual emotion was presented as a central motivation to the concert experience, given more weight than was the case among either of the other two audiences. And while collective engagement was shunned, the experience of watching as part of an audience was duly noted. Although ritual interactions are much more subtle within this audience—collective silence taking the place of collective screams—these conventions work much the same way in generating feelings of collectivity among the audience. Any emotional attainment, however, is expressed inwardly, countering the extreme outwardly expression favoured by the other two audiences.

Second, combining macro and micro processes has presented some surprising new insights into the cultural consumption of the higher educated, primarily through extending our understanding of omnivorousness. Compared to others, the higher educated respondents consume a broader selection of genres, in line with previous observations in the literature. And, although they are noticeably inwardly focused at contemporary classical music concerts, they do not carry this form of engagement across all genres. Where in previous research, the higher educated omnivore has been seen to keep one form of engagement across all genres—an aesthetic disposition (Atkinson, 2011)—these omnivores switch modes, prioritising an inward focus of emotion in one genre and undisguised outward emotion in another. Omnivorousness can thus be seen as not only a repertoire of genres, but also as the ability to shift modes of participating, resting on the capacity to understand what a diverse set of genres require from and afford for their audience. Rather than focusing on the methods of distinction—through ironic, sarcastic, or guilty remarks (Peters et al., 2018; McCoy & Scarborough, 2014) —, we notice a thorough appreciation of what these unassuming forms of consumption bring. Confident in their social position, they arguably can openly express a liking for “illegitimate” culture, without a fear of losing face. Although, traditional forms of distinction are still clearly seen in relation to popular forms of music (for example,

the Top 40), where audience groups are situated closer on the social ladder. Furthermore, this flexibility in being able and willing to consume a broad range of culture presents a method of distinction in itself, as the appropriation of a wide selection of genres is not reciprocated across education levels.

Third, this research highlights nuances in cultural boundaries. It seems that the folk audience are the ones to draw the strongest boundaries during events, with the aim of fostering the greatest attainment of collective effervescence—disliking genres that do not accommodate collective effervescence or unwelcome guests that may stand in the way of its production [22]. Interestingly, however, we see that these boundaries can be broken, and individuals associated with disliked social groups (namely higher educated in this case) can enter these concert spaces without hindering the establishment of the desired collective effervescence. It would appear that the boundaries stressed by Collins (2004) do not necessarily have to be demographic features. The success lies, however, in the willingness of these newcomers to partake in the conventional proceedings. Theoretically this presents interesting new insights into the social morphological properties needed for collective effervescence (see also Liebst, 2019). While Collins (2004) has indicated that we are drawn to interactions with people who share similar levels of emotional energy and cultural capital, the later seems not to be necessary. The higher educated respondent's willingness for (and success in) interaction with a highly divergent group, signals that sharing similar compositional features are not necessary. At least not for large-scale interaction rituals. Thus, while live music events have been seen to mainly foster bonding among pre-established acquaintances (Wilks, 2011), successful large-scale interaction rituals (collective activity resulting in rhythmic entrainment) enable people of varying social backgrounds to connect, thereby rendering social barriers irrelevant for the duration of the ritual. On a societal level, this gives empirical weight to the *bridging* potential of live music. [23]

22 See also chapter 3.

23 For a detailed account of bonding and bridging see Putnam (2000).



PART II



"THE SHOW MUST GO ON(LINE)"
Theoretical framework II

5.1. VIRTUAL INTERACTION

Having established that physical co-presence plays an important role for music concerts, the question arises whether the virtual sphere can accommodate similar outcomes. What happens to interaction (both-small scale and large-scale) when the socio-morphological make-up of an audience is virtually present, without any face-to-face (F2F) means of interaction.

Scholars have been interested in online interaction since the advent of the internet. Specifically, fields such as ethnomethodology—in particular *conversation analysis*—have seen considerable attention given to the analysis of written communication (Meredith, 2019; Paulus et al., 2016). Like in the previous chapters, I adopt a more Durkheimian approach towards interaction, following Collins (2004) in analysing the emotional components of interaction. While Collins does little empirical research into online communication, he certainly has strong opinions of the possible success of interaction rituals online. Collins (2004, 2014; 2020) heavily questioned the virtual world's ability to convey nuanced emotional communication. He states that due to the lack of bodily co-presence "interaction mediated by telephone, internet, or other distant media, are weak in producing emotional amplification and micro-rhythmic entrainment, and thus generate less solidarity and emotional energy" (Collins, 2014: 309). So, while interaction rituals are to some extent possible online, he suggests that the intensity of "outcomes"—of solidarity and emotional energy—are diluted in comparison to what is possible in F2F encounters.

Online, in many cases bodily co-presence is swapped for a profile picture and a username, meaning that interaction is no longer between two actors, but between an actor and an abstracted representation of another actor (Hogan, 2010). This not only complicates face-work, but also diminishes non-verbal cues and emotional sentiment in these interactions. Moreover, the opportunities to establish rhythmic entrainment are also more limited in social interaction online. While interaction in the virtual realm can often be done in "real-time", consistency in turn-taking is not always maintained. Online encounters generally "lack the flow of interaction" and subsequently also the rhythmic

build-up and mutual engrossment (Collins, 2004: 63).

That said, participants of virtual worlds are inventive and have developed ways of maintaining coherent and meaningful online communication (e.g., Meredith, 2019; Paulus, Warren, & Lester, 2016, on online conversation analysis). Over the past decade, scholars interested in online interaction have also challenged Collins' strict description of the ingredients needed for successful interaction rituals. Nexø and Strandell (2020), for example emphasise the development of emojis in online dating, stating that "pattern matching is used as a digital feedback tool", where messaging the same image can demonstrate compatibility, mutual attention and shared mood. Similarly, Boyns and Loprieno (2013) develop a theoretical account that proposes the principle of parasocial interaction to be a substitute for physical co-presence. Defined by Horton and Wohl (1956), parasocial interaction refers to the relationship that is developed towards media personas, where repeated exposure gives the illusion of intimacy and friendship. For Boyns and Loprieno, repeated exposure to individuals online can foster a "parasocial presence", giving the impression of "non-mediated" interaction and resulting in higher levels of emotional engagement.

Although these insights are useful in understanding online interaction practices, it is important to note that they do not engage empirically with the level of attained emotional energy. That is to say, they do not consider the extent to which these virtual interactions are successful for participants (e.g., Jodén & Strandell, 2021; Wang & Li, 2020). An effort towards this comes from DiMaggio et al. (2018), who quantitatively analyse the likelihood of receiving a response on an online forum. Although the aim is not to measure the level of success, they hypothesise that interaction online will have the most intense outcomes when it is: i) "in real time", ii) "among people with a history of face-to-face interaction, or, at least, biographical knowledge of one another", iii) "about topics in which participants are intensely interested", iv) "accompanied by visual information as well as text", v) "supported by complementary offline communications", and vi) "bounded, with a beginning and an end". Although not empirically tested, these provide interesting aspects to explore in the following three chapters.

5.2. MOVING CONCERTS TO THE VIRTUAL SPHERE

The past few decades have seen music consumption become progressively more digitally mediated, with streaming platforms such as Spotify, SoundCloud, Deezer and YouTube rapidly becoming the most popular ways of listening to recorded music (Airoldi et al., 2016; Hesmondhalgh, 2021). However, when it comes to live music, digital plat-

forms remained largely supplementary to the place-based concert scene (Bennett & Peterson, 2004; Schaap & Berkers, 2014). This, of course, largely changed with the COVID-19 measures that spanned across Europe from mid-March 2020 onwards. Concerts of all shapes and sizes—like all other large gatherings of people—were put on hold for the foreseeable future. As a consequence, the transition of live music to the virtual sphere saw an immense acceleration, with livestreams proving a popular means for artists to continue performing for their fans.

The 'liveness' of livestreamed concerts is defined in terms of time, rather than space. Although not experiencing the music in the physical presence of others (or the artist), the fact that one is attending a live performance—in real-time—lends to an "added sense of presence, heightened immediacy and involvement" (Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019: 590), making the experience closer to the 'real thing' than pre-recorded videos. The fact that over ten times more comments are posted at livestream concerts than under regular videos indicates that people find it important to communicate their "presence" during these online events (Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019). The 'liveness' is crucial to the experience of these interactions as "the closer the flow of [messages] is to real conversational exchange, the more possibility of a sense of collective entrainment" (Collins, 2004: 62). This makes livestreams superior to traditional recorded videos in providing ritual experiences.

An issue presents itself when considering that interaction on social media causes "context collapse", as social situations that are commonly separated merge into the same virtual space (Marwick & boyd, 2011). In livestreamed concerts, the context collapse is largely due to an invisible audience. Mediated through a computer, laptop or phone screen, the interaction is no longer among participants, but between the individual participant and an abstracted representation of a person or group (Hogan, 2010). This directly affects impression management as individuals only have a name and small profile picture to work with (Persson, 2012; Ellison et al., 2006). However, the anonymity online can also lead to new social dynamics with the weakening of social and symbolic boundaries (such as ticket price, but also gender, age, race and ethnicity). As traditional boundaries diminish, new audiences may be attracted, possibly challenging the usual conventions (Mueser & Vlachos, 2018; Schaap & Berkers, 2014).

Obtaining a clear definition of the situation is challenged further when considering the *collapse of situational context* (Haimson & Tang, 2017). When moved online, the concert's characteristics are concealed. The unique sensory features of an event (such as the sound quality, the visual effects of lighting, the feel of the bass or even the smell of stale beer) are reduced to the generic two-dimensional virtual space of the social networking service. The location, which would usually help in

defining the situation for participants, loses its distinctiveness. In turn, this is likely to contribute to what Boyd (2008) named social convergence, where the public and private sphere collapse into one. While F2F concerts are set in clearly defined public spaces such as a festival ground or a concert hall, livestream participation tends to take place from a private space (a couch, a bed, a kitchen table, etc.). This leads to the collision of two realities, usually kept distinct. In Durkheimian terminology, profane (home) life blurs with that of the sacred (concert) experience, calling for engagement with multiple situations and multiple audiences at once.

The transition online complicates not only the establishment of context, but also impacts the form that interaction takes. Online interaction must be accomplished almost exclusively through verbal (textual) communication. And while there is no doubt that the lack of non-verbal cues affects interpersonal conversations, an overall understanding can be reached through textual exchange (Meredith, 2019). However, the collective interaction (predominantly non-verbal—dancing, clapping, singing and shouting together), characteristic of large-scale interaction rituals is also forced to be communicated through text. Even though livestream comments happen in 'real-time' (Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019)—and are thus exchanged faster than Collins (2004) assumed in his initial writing on email correspondence—communicating ritual actions synchronously seems challenging when having to type out responses. In other words, apart from a change in the spatial dimension, livestreams also affect audience interaction along the temporal dimension.

These following three empirical chapters aim to contribute to the understanding of growing forms of mediated music consumption, and the role of social morphology for the concert experience. Thus, adding to the debate on the appropriateness of the virtual sphere in accommodating successful interaction rituals (e.g., Boyns & Loprieno, 2013; Collins, 2004, 2020; Dimaggio et al., 2018; Nexø & Strandell, 2020).

"EVACUATE THE DANCEFLOOR"
Electronic music livestreams during COVID-19 as a hotline to collective consciousness? [24]

6.1. INTRODUCTION

As European governments intensified their efforts in the fight against COVID-19 in March 2020, outlooks on social life changed drastically. Societal 'lockdowns' aimed at restricting human interaction to 'flatten the curve' of infections, had a pervasive impact in many social and economic domains. Consequences for the performing arts—including live music—were particularly severe, as concerts, tours, festivals, and parties were rapidly cancelled. This is not only problematic financially for the sector but also societally, as (live) music can play a crucial role in, amongst other things, generating social solidarity and fostering social resilience. Music is often mobilised to provide the "routines, assumptions and occasions that constitute 'social life'' (DeNora, 2000: xi) and, as such, give meaning to people and their social surroundings (Roy & Dowd, 2010). In other words, apart from its immediate individual effects (emotional release), music has a social function (generating intersubjectivity). As seen in the previous chapters, live music in particular has the ability to foster strong collective sentiment, symbols of group belonging and individual resilience (Collins, 2004). Hence, during times of personal or collective crisis—such as a global pandemic—it is not unusual for people to turn to music, due to its connective purposes (Bodner & Gilboa, 2009).

In the initial stages of the European societal lockdowns, musicians rapidly moved to the virtual sphere, with livestreams in particular proving to be a vital resort for artists and audiences. Although the practice of livestreaming was around long before the pandemic (cf. Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018), live music tended to be experienced in the 'traditional' sense—as part of the physical realm (Holt, 2010). But when venues closed, there was little choice but to shift focus to the free and accessible livestreaming services of Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. As the live experience changed, this begs the question: to what extent can livestreamed concerts conduce feelings of social solidarity and resilience?

A version of this chapter was published in *European Societies*, 23(51): 141-152, in 2021. Co-authored with Michaël Berghman and Julian Schaap.

24

In this chapter, I offer an explorative analysis of the emerging collective practices surrounding livestreamed electronic music events in the Netherlands. No other music genre has been more likened to the ritual experience than electronic music—specifically the genres that fall under the category of rave (see for example: Partridge, 2006; St John, 2004; Sylvan, 2013; Takahashi & Olaveson, 2003; Gore, 1997). Originating from the UK in the late 80s—but finding a prominent position throughout the European music scene in the early 90s—raves are dance events that feature electronically produced dance music (such as techno, house, trance and drum & bass) (Anderson & Kavanaugh 2007). Ravers and theorists alike have pointed to the importance of the shared feeling of connectedness during these events, as the ritualistic aspects of bodies involved in close and synchronised dancing generates "profound feelings of communality" (Olaveson, 2004: 85).

By investigating the transition of this type of event online, the aim is not to study how livestreams are experienced in general, but to focus specifically on their potential to contribute to the development of a collective consciousness, and related feelings of social solidarity. In doing this, I expand our understanding of not only one of the prominent ways the heavily affected cultural sector coped during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also of the role of online communities during a time of crisis.

6.2. METHOD

To get a better understanding of online communities during the COVID-19 lockdown, I performed a qualitative content analysis of the comment section accompanying livestreamed raves on Facebook Live. Developed in 2016, Facebook Live is the livestreaming function of the online social networking service Facebook (Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019). Any registered Facebook user can stream and broadcast live footage from their personal profile. The user's followers can watch the stream, with the option of leaving comments in real-time in the chat function on the side. After the stream is complete, the video and its comments can be saved on the user's profile, where people can view it asynchronously afterwards. Facebook Live was chosen for this research as it is an established livestreaming platform that is used by a large and varied public (Sheffield, 2018).

The use of social media platforms as a source of data for qualitative research has been growing (Ditchfield & Meredith, 2018), with the data gathered there seen as a "novel tool to observe behaviour in a naturalistic setting" (Wilson et al., 2012, p. 203). Collins (2004, 2020) states that observation is the most appropriate manner for examining the dynamics of social interaction. Adopting this method of data col-

lection avoids obtaining scripted answers from interviews, allowing the research to unobtrusively capture an uncontrived representation of an (online) situation (Collins, 2004, 2020; Silverman, 2011).

In gathering the data for this chapter, the following sampling procedure was applied. First, I looked for Dutch music venues that began posting livestreamed concerts on Facebook after the initial lockdown commenced (in the Netherlands, 12 March marked the day that all events over 100 people were cancelled). I chose to look at pages of venues because these are public pages that play various artists and have a large public following. The broadcasted videos had to display live electronic sets of over 30 minutes, and stream regularly (at least weekly). Finally, the search was restricted to profiles that received over 100 synchronous comments per video, so as to have a sufficient number of comments for the analysis.

Fitting within these criteria, the Facebook profile of a well-established Dutch electronic concert venue was selected. Since the early 90s, it has accommodated large scale events and enjoys both national and international repute. Its Facebook page has a large following and turnaround of content. For the privacy of the viewers, the names of these profiles are kept anonymous. Consent was not requested as these Facebook profiles are not restricted by privacy settings and participants are aware of the public nature (Boyd, 2008; Ditchfield & Meredith, 2018; Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019).

The first five livestreams posted after the COVID-19 measures initiated, were analysed. The analysis thus focuses on virtual events when the lockdown restrictions were at their heaviest. Thematic content analysis (Ditchfield & Meredith, 2018) was used to analyse the comments of these livestreams (n=1501; see table 6.1). In the results section below, I have translated the Dutch comments left by viewers.

An iterative process is used to categorise comments into broader themes (such as informative contents related to the music—track, artist or DJ—small talk, mentioning of activities and alluding to past and imagined experiences). I also focused on the length and content of sequences of comments and conversations to identify recurring patterns.

Table 6.1. Outline of analysed techno livestreams, comments, uploaded date, duration, and views (n = 1501).

TECHNO			
COMMENTS	**UPLOADED DATE**	**DURATION**	**VIEWS**
156	12 March	2:10:09	10,000
173	23 March	58:16	7,000
197	30 March	1:52:25	10,000
480	2 April	1:58:25	9,000
459	6 April	44:48	34,000
Mean: 238			**25,800**
Total: 1190			**129,000**

6.3. RESULTS

◇ OLD RITUALS AS SYMBOLS

An essential element for a successful ritual is a mutual focus of attention (Collins, 2004). In being collectively attuned to the same thing, a crowd can reach a state of rhythmic entrainment, aiding the emotional and cognitive synchronisation and, potentially collective effervescence. Numerous comments left on the analysed livestream comment sections reflect a shared written discourse. Ample comments, for example, focus on activities and phrases typically found in a place-based concert: “see you at the left of the stage”, “do you have a cigarette?”, “where is the toilet?”. Despite the fact that participants are watching the livestream from their homes, they persistently keep up conventional dialogue heard during a place-based concert. The arguably ironic undertone of these comments, however, displays that they are not naive to this fact.

Apart from phrases common to any concert, some communication is also unique to these particular types of raves. For example, the comment sections are scattered with remarks about “hakken”, the customary dancing style at these events. Even more prominent, however, is the discourse about drugs-usage. A recurring theme is looking for or wanting to share drugs (“does someone have a popper for me?”, “where is the bag at?”, or “someone for a line?”). The celebration of these social activities is clear, with a sizeable number of comments dedicated to just a drug’s name. This is not surprising as drugs are considered to be central to electronic music, and rave culture in particular. Gore (1997: 52) writes that drugs are at the core of any rave, providing the energy needed to dance all night and inducing the feelings of “well-being, sociability and gregariousness” of the audience. The ritual

of drug use in unison with the music is used by participants to reach a shared mood, leading to collective effervescence (Olaveson, 2004). If one is watching a livestreamed techno concert, it seems vital that drug use is also involved—if only discursively.

In sum, raves are formed around ritual activities, such as meeting people "at the left of the stage", asking for a cigarette and sharing drugs. The symbolic importance of these routine and recognisable actions is particularly noticeable in the comments. However, the irony with which these activities are introduced, suggests that they are no longer rituals actually unfolding, but they have turned into mere symbols of an already established collective consciousness. These symbols rely on a preconstructed collective memory to mark participants' membership, but they do not generate new feelings of collectivity.

◇ NEW RITUAL ACTIONS

However, an exclusive focus on verbal mimicry of ritual interactions does insufficient justice to the particularity of online events. To express the emotional charge of written discourses, digital interaction has broadened to include symbols and images, predominantly in the form of emojis (Novak et al., 2015). Even on superficial inspection, the frequent use of emojis stands out. Although comments are rife with emojis of various faces, clusters of specific object-based emojis are observed at particular junctures in the livestreams. Especially during the 'drop'—a climactic change in the bassline of electronic music—verbal communication makes way for the 'fire', 'collision' and 'bomb' symbol.

Viewer one: Nice man 🔥 🔥 🔥

Viewer two: Greeting from Germany 😜

Viewer three: He is going nicely! 🔥 🔥 🔥

Viewer four: <3 🔥 🔥 🔥 🔥 🔥 I miss you

Viewer five: 🔥

Deriving from the common slang phrases 'lit' and 'hot', these emojis represent the viewers' appreciation of the track. The recurring use of a limited range of emojis to express enjoyment indicates the establishment of a common symbolism, specific to online events. Use of this symbolism marks participation and displays an understanding of the group's discourse. Moreover, the fact that viewers tend to join in by replicating an emoji in a series of replies, signals close observation of what others are doing and a collective awareness of one another.

Emojis used in this manner constitute a new shared ritual that is specific to online collective gatherings around (popular) music. The symbols perform a social role to "maintain and enhance social relationships" (Riordan, 2017: 555). These conversations, however, tend to be quite brief (clusters of emojis rarely exceed four or five comments). A partial reason for this may be that comments are presented sequentially, so the moment passes before larger numbers of people can join in. Moreover, these comments often come with a pessimistic remark, such as "I miss you" (see quote above). Even if these new rituals achieve a collective awareness between viewers, they appear to have limited strength in generating a powerful collective emotion as they are too brief and halted by viewers who, despite enjoying the music, also lament the 'real' thing—thereby stressing the inadequacy of these rituals.

◇ VIRTUAL CONCERTS AS AN END IN ITSELF?

Recent research has argued for the capability of social networking sites to provide a "third space", a virtual platform which not only connects people but can also generate the collective consciousness obtained from a successful ritual (Bartholomew & Manson, 2020). Comments like "lonely raver", "raving from isolation" and "nice, just spacing out from home" indicate that the livestreams are to a certain extent successful in transporting the party to viewers' homes. However, they also emphasise that the solitary nature is a conspicuous characteristic of the experience.

Furthermore, although the viewers clearly enjoy the music, many comments suggest that they consider these streams more in terms of a recording than a live experience. For example, "nice [name of viewer six], let's play this during work tomorrow". Instead of enjoying it in the here and now—virtually together—the viewer ignores the live component and treats it as a recording that can be played at any time. In fact, this message suggests that it is nearly more important to listen to the recording together, in person. There are a multitude of comments that similarly reflect the need to listen to this type of music physically together:

> "This is super hot, but I can't dance... not alone in a room".
>
> "It is just painful to watch this from the couch, when all I want to do is be there with you guys dancing 😢😢😢".

These can almost be read as outcries of frustration. The viewers recognise that they would normally dance to this music, but not having the rest of the audience around them (physically, because they are very

much aware of the presence of others) stops them from being fully immersed in the experience.

In grief of not being physically surrounded by fellow participants, livestream concerts are being compared to physical events and clearly disfavoured for not providing a similar collective experience. The viewers pay tribute to what they consider the 'original' ritual by mimicking particular aspects of it. However, they seem fully aware that an important aspect is missing to transform the individuals watching a concert into a unified entity attuned to one another. The virtual concert then seems to leave the viewers only missing the real thing more.

6.4. CONCLUSION

Music events, whether live or livestreamed, present a break from the mundane; they represent a special occasion and an opportunity to connect with others. One of the most important features of livestreams, then, is the fact that they happen simultaneously for all viewers. In knowing that others are watching at the same time, individuals can feel part of something bigger. And thus, viewers are reminded of belonging to a community for the duration of the event. This may aid in dealing with the consequences of societal lockdown measures, as it preserves feelings of solidarity in a group that is already established.

The analysis suggests that, to a certain extent, livestreams made after the initial COVID-19 outbreak can produce new ritual activities, where collective focus can turn into collective emotions. However, more prominent are the hints to established, pre-COVID-19 ritual activities, deriving from past physical experiences and verbally translated to the online environment. Viewers lament these lost ritual actions, specifically acknowledging the bereavement of the physical crowd itself. Although many more aspects differentiate the livestream experience from physical concerts (such as the sound, temperature and lighting), which no doubt impact how people feel, viewers' insistence on the social dimension stands out. Without the physical proximity to other bodies, collective energy seems out of reach, regularly leading to utterances of frustration. This demonstrates the need for the small bodily cues and sounds of a crowd (Collins, 2004). Without them, the experience has little potential to foster a "hotline" to a collective consciousness (Horsfall, 2016: 52) and turns into a "dead ceremonialism" of sorts. While interactions in comment sections enable a shared experience without the ability to see or hear other participants in the ritual, it provides confirmation of established group membership rather than a strong collective consciousness—necessary to achieve strong feelings of social solidarity and resilience. Simply put, because the social experience of

a rave is fundamentally about physical engagement, when this is removed, its essence is lost. A livestream can then be understood as a ritual-turned-symbol, a surrogate for social interaction, but not a substitute.

Clearly, the focus was on raves in particular, which are characterised by heavy audience engagement in the form of dancing. It may seem that the amount of audience activity is a decisive factor in how successfully events make the transition to livestreaming. This might mean that the online sphere could be more suited to other genres of music. Furthermore, these findings hint at the importance of physicality for the feelings of collectivity. But could this be different for events that do not have a physical counterpart, such as streaming platforms such as Twitch? In the following two chapters, an answer is provided to these two questions.

"DIGITAL WITNESS"
The hyper-ritualisation of interaction on livestreamed concerts [25]

7.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I addressed the transition of live electronic music online. To understand how this works for different genres of music, this chapter compares the previous results to two additional music genres—levenslied [26] and classical music. As chapter 4 demonstrates, there is a significant difference in the ambitions of these two audiences. Here I am thus interested in understanding how their engagement and interaction with live music adapts to the online sphere.

The current analysis uses the same methodology as the previous chapter, conducting a qualitative discourse analysis (n=2,075) to examine the content and organisation of synchronous comments of livestreamed concerts, on Facebook live. Through comparing the interaction between music audiences with differing behaviour and interactional expectations, this chapter aims to understand how participants navigate context collapse and adapt their behaviour to the online setting.

In analysing the audience interaction on these livestreamed concerts, I find an explicitation of conventions, something I consider to be an effort to manage context collapse. Ritual actions common to the face-to-face (F2F) concert become *hyper-ritualised* (Goffman, 1979). Similar to mass media messaging, participants of large-scale interaction rituals compensate for the plurality of reading by concentrating on the most stereotypical behaviour. This not only presents a form of interaction distinct from small-scale online interaction rituals, but also demonstrates the central position of genre conventions in structuring the concert experience.

25 An almost identical version of this chapter, but with a longer theoretical section, is under review. Co-authored with Michaël Berghman. It was also awarded with *the Graduate School Award for PhD Excellence 2020*. Erasmus School of Social Science and Humanities, Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

26 See chapter 3 for a description of levenslied.

7.2. METHOD

To study how virtual audiences interact and adapt to the online concert setting, I compare livestreams from two genres—classical music and levenslied. These were chosen as they have very different cultural orientations—stemming from traditionally highbrow and lowbrow genres. Furthermore, when comparing it to chapter 6, we again have a comparison of music genres that stem from the three cultural schemes, classical from highbrow, levenslied from folk, and electronic music from pop. In this way, it also relates to the genres analysed in chapters 3 and 4 in this dissertation.

The same sampling procedure was used as that of chapter 6 but with a focus on music venues, concert halls and radio stations that specialised in these two music genres. Given the focus on written communication, I chose to concentrate on Dutch based venues only. In this way I could somewhat limit the international composition of the audience, thereby avoiding language barriers in communication. Moreover, as interaction rituals are to some extent region-specific, it restricted the possibility that audience members would have largely different expectations. Still, I would argue that the validity of the claims is not restricted to the Netherlands as such, as the types of events under consideration will have a counterpart in many countries.

Fitting within the sampling criteria, two Facebook profiles were selected, i) an established classical music concert hall, and ii) a radio station specialising in levenslied. Similar to chapter 6, to achieve a comparable sample of comments per genre, only the first five videos posted after the initial lockdown are used. This meant that the final sample contained 2,075 comments (classical music n=885, levenslied n=1190) (see **table 7.1** and **7.2**).

Inspired by Goffman's later work on the use of language in social interaction, discourse analysis is used to see how the participants use language to construct and frame their virtual concert experience (Tannen, 2009). I adopted an inductive approach, starting out with a thorough reading of the synchronous comments to become familiarised with the data. The comments are seen as social practices and thus I analyse both their content (what participants talk about) and organisation (how participants communicate) (Gill, 2000). An initial phase of coding was carried out, based on both the variability and consistency between the discourses used by the (classical and levenslied) audiences. This method allowed me to develop themes and patterns within the data resulting in 24 code groupings. These groupings were then revised reflecting on the content and organisation of the comments. This left three overarching themes that fall under content: i) ritual activities, ii) shared symbols, iii) expressed satisfaction/unsatisfaction of event,

and three overarching themes that fall under organisation: i) interaction, ii) rhythmic entrainment, and iii) social/individual engagement. These themes are discussed in the results below.

Table 7.1. Outline of analysed levenslied livestreams: comments, uploaded date, duration, and views (n=1190).

LEVENSLIED			
COMMENTS	**UPLOADED DATE**	**DURATION**	**VIEWS**
200	12 March	2:10:09	10,000
173	23 March	58:16	7,000
197	30 March	1:52:25	10,000
480	2 April	1:58:25	9,000
459	6 April	44:48	34,000
Mean: 238			**25,800**
Total: 1190			**129,000**

Table 7.2. Outline of analysed classical music livestreams: comments, uploaded date, duration, and views (n=885).

CLASSICAL			
COMMENTS	**UPLOADED DATE**	**DURATION**	**VIEWS**
250	3 April	1:30:02	2,300
161	4 April	56:30	3,100
134	5 April	1:29:08	1,100
137	6 April	1:03:19	5,200
203	7 April	1:10:14	7,200
Mean: 177			**3,780**
Total: 885			**18,900**

7.3. RESULTS

◇ CONTENT OF COMMENTS

Expressions of ritual succes

When looking at the content of the comments left on the livestreams, one might expect that the predominant topic of conversation would be the musical performance itself. Interestingly, however, the performance and music's materiality are only discussed explicitly in the chat feeds of

the classical music livestreams. For this audience, the aesthetic qualities of the concert are a central focus of the chat feed, seen for example in comments such as:

> "Fabulous play and dance, lovely music, great registration; thanks to each and every one of you all"
>
> "I find the key changes so natural and smooth. Beautiful. I am enjoying [this] immensely"
>
> "Beautifully layered. Beautiful balance between the fascinating music and the wonderful evening light through the windows"

These comments not only discursively demonstrate an enthusiasm for the livestreamed event, but also a broad command of language, expressing appreciation through refined and well considered vocabulary. Even when the comments are short—"layered beautifully", "brilliant composition!", "very colourful" and "beautiful physicality"—it is apparent that viewers are notably articulate in verbalising their appreciation. By contrast, the viewers of the levenslied livestreams rarely discuss the musical properties or what happens within the specific performance. Although a large number of comments do show clear enjoyment of the livestreamed concert (expressed through the written imitation of excited sounds, such as "OHJAAAA", "whoeoeoeoeoeoee", and "tudududu"), little recognition is given to technical skill. This is further seen in comments:

> "Fun in these sombre corona times"
>
> "Better than watching the news"
>
> "Music is always good for young and old. Together we are strong"
>
> "This is doing good for us all in these times"

Rather than focusing on aspects of the performance, the levenslied livestreams are often discussed more as an event in itself; a break, distraction or release. Additionally, these chat feeds stand out in the extent to which conscious consideration is given to COVID-19, with numerous comments addressing the importance of these events in the given circumstances. At a time when the pandemic was in its initial phase, and a hot topic in public discussion, it is perhaps even more striking that this was not explicitly acknowledged in the classical music chat feeds. The positive tone of the comments left on the levenslied livestreams, however, cannot conceal the emphasis on lament for F2F concerts:

> "I miss concerts, hope we can go again very soon"

"Go away corona, then we can have music parties again"

"This provides so much comfort in troubled times. Hope we can do this in real life soon."

"I look forward to the real thing, sick of doing nothing"

These viewers acknowledge that while watching together provides "comfort", it does not live up to the real thing. The recurring nostalgic sentiments expressed by the viewers of the levenslied livestream reveal that these livestreamed concerts take a secondary position; a temporary substitute falling short of a true replacement. Interestingly, this lament for F2F concerts is largely absent among the comments of the classical music audience. It is unclear whether this is because they are satisfied with the virtual experience or that it is not in their conventions to express dissatisfaction.

Rituals and symbols

In the chat feeds, both audiences pay tribute to activities associated with the corresponding place-based concerts. For example, considerable portions of the comment sections of the levenslied livestreams verbally re-enact behaviour commonly seen at the F2F concerts.

"Cheers everyone"

"Everyone jump!"

"SOON, the whole room will go from left to right"

"I'm singing along already. Can you hear me?"

"I'll grab your shoulders" [27]

In maintaining these conventions (albeit textually), the viewers mark them as central aspects of the F2F event. Using them correctly in the chat feed displays membership and an understanding of the usual event proceedings. However, it is hard to deny the ironic undertone to these comments, as actually enacting these actions is simply impossible through online interaction, and thus, emphasising them also seems to mock the improperness of the mediated setting. While the viewers of classical music livestreams also routinely invoke recognisable rituals, the sense of irony is less obvious. Reference to the F2F concert is seen to be primarily reserved for the end of the piece, in streams of comments such as:

27 Holding other audience members' shoulders is part of the polonaise, a type of conga line commonly performed at levenslied concerts.

Classical music viewer 1: Braavo 🙌 ♥. Thank you so much

Classical music viewer 2: BRAVO A TOUS 😎😎

Classical music viewer 3: 💐⚓🌸🌸💐💐💐

Classical music viewer 4: 🙌 🙌 🙌

The placing of the Clapping Hands and Bouquet emojis, along with the vocabulary used at the end of a set, present very conventional expressions of enthusiasm for live classical music performances, displaying an obvious nod to the customary proceedings. Particularly popular is the phrase "bravo". This is a word used by classical audiences (traditionally opera fans), who loudly shout at the end of the concert to show satisfaction with the performance. Used in this online setting it mimics this custom and displays an understanding of the tradition of the music genre (when performed live) by the individual participant that uses it. The use of French may similarly be considered to be inspired by the association between this language and culture that is assumed to be refined and classical. [28]

The use of emojis to represent common rituals (as seen above) is adopted by both audiences, adding a visual element to the text-based communication. However, a clear distinction is seen in the emojis used. For example, while applause is a common action in all music events, emojis of clapping hands were much more common in the classical music chat feed. Instead, the emojis used by the levenslied viewers consisted largely of dancing people, a variety of hearts, music symbols and pitchers of beer ("🕺" "💃" "♥" "🎶" "🍻" "🍺" "🍺").

The addition of symbols of beer is an interesting example of the difference in customary behaviour between these two audiences and in a way not surprising, as the ingestion of substances is an important aspect of many social events. Alcohol, food, or drugs are ritualised substances, the consumption of which is part of "coparticipation" (Collins, 2004, p. 62). This applies very manifestly to many live popular music events. Substances are central to social interactions (such as going to the bar, toasting, or taking drugs together). Furthermore, consuming them lowers inhibitions, aiding in the establishment of a collective mood (Niekrenz, 2014).

The considerable use of the Clinking Beer Mugs emoji alongside utterances of "cheers" or "who wants a bottle" in the levenslied chat feed stresses the importance of the consumption of alcohol as a collective activity for these events. Interestingly, while the mention of alcohol is less present in the chat feed of the classical music stream, the occasional Wine emoji is seen. This represents not only differing rit-

28 It cannot be ruled out that the people using French in the chat are native speakers (although somewhat unlikely, given the limited fame of the concert venue outside of the Netherlands), but then still it would be striking that they use this language in a chat where predominantly Dutch is used.

uals, but also the audiences' varying ambitions, as wine tends to have more of a refined association. The understatement of the social use of alcohol is further seen in the fact that it is manifested purely in pictorial form, with no accompanying written text. There is then also no mention of the wine being consumed in a social context. Although some concert attendees of classical music are arguably accustomed to drinking a glass of wine in the lobby at intermission, in the absence of explicit mentions of clinking glasses or toasting, the Wine emoji is not necessarily used to symbolise sociability but might just as well suggest that one enjoys a glass of wine while listening to the music.

In sum, both audiences refer back to recognisable, almost stereotypical, ritualised activities and symbols associated with live events. Stripped of context, the perimeters and behavioural norms, usually evident in a F2F concert setting, are conspicuously spelt out (through text or emoji). The level of explicitness displayed by each of the audiences can be understood as the participants' attempt at redefining the situation.

Still, it is worth noting that while the classical music viewers refer to previously established rituals (such as the throwing of bouquets and clapping on queue), they omit comments relating to direct social interaction seen at F2F concerts (such as finding your seat with your partner or drinking a glass of wine during intermission). This too can be linked back to conventional behaviour—where audience members remain seated and silent during a concert, with the main focal point being the music. We see here a clear indication towards the differing ambitions of these two audiences, with classical music audiences displaying a more individualised form of engagement, and the levenslied audience referring heavily to the social component of the concert experience.

◇ ORGANISATION OF INTERACTION

In the classical music chat feeds, interaction between participants is minimal. The majority of comments aim to directly praise or provide a statement about the performed music (as illustrated in the previous sections). Direct interaction between participants is primarily reserved for inquiries about the music performed:

Classical music viewer 5: Beautiful! What are they playing?

Classical music viewer 6: Trout!

Classical music viewer 7: Schubert's Trout Quintet

Classical music viewer 8: Hi there! What is this piece? Beautiful

Classical music viewer 9: Piece written for Dudok by Joey Roukens

The classical music fans do not only direct their questions to other viewers, but also occasionally to the performing artists. One viewer writes “questions for Anna: Did your grandmother like Rachmaninoff as you do? And do you prefer him or Scriabin?”. Similarly, the audience was seen regularly directly commenting the artist, “play Chopin, please...” or responding to something that the artist was saying, “thanks for the explanation, it makes the ‘out of tune’ parts understandable. ♪🌳”. Unsurprisingly, these questions and reactions to the artist hardly receive any reply, but also inquiries about the music directed to fellow audience members rarely result in a dialogue of more than three comments. These enthusiastic, but essentially informational exchanges are indicative of the extent of conversation on the chat feeds, where interaction among this audience remains very limited. This feeds the impression that the audience focuses on the music, rendering frequent exchange during the concert unnecessary, or perhaps not appropriate.

Among the levenslied audience, conversation is very different. Comments very rarely display questions or prolonged dialogue between two viewers but address the audience as a whole. For example:

Levenslied viewer 1: Yes yes yes, everyone take their shirt off

Levenslied viewer 2: Party team back together!!!

Levenslied viewer 1: Hahaha

Levenslied viewer 3: Hoppa

Levenslied viewer 4: Take your shirt off and wave it

Levenslied viewer 5: Party

Levenslied viewer 1: We should come together some time, for a beer

Levenslied viewer 2: This is a good plan

Levenslied viewer 1: Which bus should I take?

This sequence of comments was part of the third livestream. What is interesting is that a group of regular viewers started to emerge, seen in the above quote by the comment, “party team back together!!!”. The viewer here acknowledges that a section of the virtual audience has attended an earlier livestream on this Facebook profile. Later in the sequence of comments, another viewer reiterates the emerging relationship by asking to meet in person. The recurrent participation of viewers leads us to believe that aspect of these virtual interaction rituals must be successful. However, the regular mention of ambitions to meet face-

to-face suggest that interacting via the livestream is not the end goal and does not fully replace physical interaction.

Furthermore, interaction between participants of the levenslied livestreams is ongoing throughout the entire concert, with a continuous stream of boomeranging comments (which, as mentioned, gives little consideration to the content of the livestream). This is a small but exemplary fragment, taken from one of the chat feeds:

Levenslied viewer 6:	Do keep 1.5
Levenslied viewer 7:	Fun right?
Levenslied viewer 6:	[Name of viewer 7]
Levenslied viewer 8:	1.5 meters distance at all times
Levenslied viewer 9:	I just wanted to dance the polonaise with you [name of viewer 8]
Levenslied viewer 6:	Lol
Levenslied viewer 9:	From the left tudududud
Levenslied viewer 10:	To the right

While these comments are short and seem somewhat random, they are clearly conversational reactions to one another. By directly commenting another viewer's name, reciprocating previously used themes, and even completing another's sentence, they indicate a far more engaged manner of interaction than occurs among classical music viewers. The style of commenting also comes across as more impulsive, contrasting the articulate manner of communicating seen from the classical music audience. Instead of functional exchanges of information, these conversations are aimed at keeping the interaction going.

This spontaneous and fast-flowing stream of reciprocating comments shows a *mutual focus of attention* between the online audience members who are participating in the chat feed. However, while it is difficult to comment on the effectiveness of this synchronisation in forging a state of rhythmic entrainment due to the nature of the data, these enthusiastic sequences are interspersed with expressions of lament for F2F concerts:

Levenslied viewer 11:	🕺
Levenslied viewer 12:	Fun dancing together
Levenslied viewer 13:	Back when we still could 😔

This reveals that this text-based exchange is not entirely satisfactory to the expected cultural experience. Adding to this interpretation are the numerous instances where the build-up of excitement results in viewers suggesting meeting in person, indicating that face-to-face interaction ultimately remains the objective.

Levenslied viewer 14: That's it!

Levenslied viewer 15: Just warming up…

Levenslied viewer 16: Corona party anywhere?

The difference in how interaction is organised by these two audiences makes their diverging ambitions evident. For the classical music audience, the performance in the livestream seems to remain the centre of the experience, seen also in the lack of interaction during the performance. This clearly mimics the proceedings of the place-based counterpart, reflecting also Bourdieu's (1984) qualification of highbrow cultural engagement. By contrast, in the chat of the levenslied livestream, little consideration is given to the beginning or end of a song, suggesting that interaction is organised less around the music. For this group the social aspect seems to be central to the experience, using the livestream as a reason to come together. The spontaneous and excited form of interaction mimics the engagement of a place-based popular music audience (Benzecry & Collins, 2014; Bourdieu, 1984), where embodied collective rituals (such as dancing and singing together) play a large part in constructing heightened collective energy.

7.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the manner in which music audiences adapt their behaviour when interacting during live music performances online. Comparing comments left on livestreamed concerts, representing contrasting cultural orientations (classical music and levenslied) during the initial months of the COVID-19 imposed lockdown, the analysis reveals distinct patterns of interaction used by each audience. Despite the rapid move online and the inherent complications to interaction on both the spatial and temporal dimension, these audiences maintain clear differences in the content and organisation of interaction. For example, there is a noticeable distinction in the level of sociality pursued. The collective engagement that is assumed to guide the consumption of popular and folk culture (Benzecry & Collins, 2014; Bourdieu, 1984) is clearly recognisable in the participants' interactions and their expressions of solidarity (also recognised by Schulze, 1992) around topics

such as the ongoing pandemic. By contrast, the classical music audience displays a more individualistic approach to consumption, with the focus remaining on the performance, displaying characteristics of an "aesthetic disposition" (Bourdieu, 1984).

This leads to the conclusion that livestream audiences approach these virtual concerts with the same intentions as they would approach their place-based counterparts, attempting to textually construct an engagement similar to that at a F2F concert. However, this results in differing levels of success (as expressed textually). For the popular music fans, the comments of grief for the "real thing" exemplify that an important aspect of the concert experience is missing when participating online. While livestreamed concerts provide an element of solidarity during times of social isolation, they are not deemed sufficient in replacing the F2F concert experience. Interestingly, a similar lament for place-based concerts is not recorded among the classical music audience. In a sense, the transition online appears more successful. Viewers primarily praise the musical quality, with little acknowledgment of the importance of co-presence. Whether this indicates that it is just not in this audience's conventions to express disappointment or that the online concert does not violate the essential conventions of live classical music, it is clear that for this audiences the collective experience is less central (Benzecry & Collins, 2014).

While differences in discourse and form of commenting are evident between the two audiences, one similarity persists; the direct reference to actions related to F2F concerts. The extensive number of comments discursively marking common social activities seen at concerts (collective drinking, dancing, and singing), along with emojis that mimic the core ritualised practices (pitchers of beer, dancing figures, glasses of wine, bouquets, roses and clapping hands), construct a recognisable situation for participants. Interestingly, this is something that was also clearly seen in chapter 6—specifically in the referencing to drugs. In an attempt to combat context collapse, these actions essentially become "hyper-ritualised". Here I draw from Goffman who used this term to describe the gendered behaviour seen in mass media (1979). To prevent plurality of reading, advertisers take the existing conventions of social interaction and present an exaggerated and simplified version—the rituals without any of the "dull footage" (p.84). Goffman (1979, p. 84) states:

> "If anything, advertisers conventionalise our conventions, stylise what is already a stylisation, make frivolous use of what is already something considerably cut off from contextual controls. Their hype is hyper ritualisation".

Interestingly, although a very different type of communication, the interaction on livestream chat columns presents a similar pattern. In dealing with the plurality of meaning—caused by an invisible audience (Hogan,

2010), social convergence (boyd, 2008), and a collapse of situational context (Haimson & Tang, 2017)—the participants revert to commenting the central features of the F2F event. However, where mass media is to a large extent a form of one-way interaction, presenting a clear message to a target audience, here interaction is a reciprocal exchange, used to establish a clear definition of the situation.

These findings lead to some tentative conclusions about online interaction. While the loss of context online promotes a plurality of meanings in all interaction, this seems more problematic for the establishment of large-scale interaction rituals. The reason arguably is that mentioning a ritual is quite different from being collectively engaged in one. At F2F events, ritual activities (whether types of customary dance, dress, or the conventional expressions of appreciation) work to foster rhythmic entrainment—through engaging in these actions, the audience become attuned to one another. Online, however, without the physical copresence, these ritual activities become totemised. The customary activities themselves become symbols and much of the interaction is geared at acknowledging them. In that sense, rather than collective interaction (needed for a successful large-scale interaction ritual), a significant section of the online activity can then be considered a form of *totem-defining interaction*; concerned with establishing a common ground and marking membership. Here we find a fundamental difference compared to small-scale interaction rituals that take place online. Active turn-taking (Meredith, 2019) and mutual recognition are to a large extent still possible through direct messaging, leading to satisfactory levels of emotional energy. This accounts for previous findings on the success of interaction rituals online in an interpersonal scenario (as seen in: DiMaggio et al., 2018; Nexø & Strandell, 2020). However, for a build-up of collective effervescence in the Durkheimian sense, the preconditions are simply not met. Although experiencing the music together is possibly likely to have a similar effect on individual members of the audience, they lack the means to express the shared feeling as a group. In an audience, participants of the interaction do not take turns one by one. Expressions of excitement need to be collective or they lose their intensity. Arguably, when reactions are translated to a textual format, the absence of confirmation of visceral effects is part of the problem, but even when displaying them more directly (as would be the case by, for example, including the option for audience members to share webcam footage), individual turn taking stands in the way of true synchronisation.

Furthermore, while there is little evidence of audience members policing incorrect behaviour or unwanted viewers, the very fact that long-standing conventions are so centrally placed suggests strong symbolic boundaries, in contrast to previous ideas on the democratic nature of the internet (Mueser & Vlachos, 2018; Schaap & Berkers, 2014). I speculate that for uninitiated newcomers, boundaries to par-

ticipate in the social aspect of the event (the chat feed) reflect those at a F2F concert, as viewers must have an adequate understanding of the conventions to display appropriate sociable behaviour. This results in a chat feed likely used primarily—and possibly even governed—by seasoned audience members who take the lead in defining the nature of the situation.

As the data for this research was collected during the initial months of lockdown, some of the findings of this chapter may be accountable to the user's unfamiliarity with online participation. To look into this further, the following chapter looks at live music consumption on the gaming platform Twitch, a year into the pandemic (thus a year later than these findings). The audience is, thus, not only more used to interacting online, but also Twitch is known for its dedicated users and tight communities (Ford et al., 2017; Hilvert-Bruce et al., Taylor, 2018). In a similar vein, to combat the methodological limitations of analysing only written accounts of interaction, the next chapter also incorporates interviews with participants to better understand how they experience virtual interaction rituals and their ability to generate successful large-scale interaction rituals.

"DANCING ON YOUR OWN"
Twitch concerts as unsuccessful large-scale interaction rituals[29]

8.1. INTRODUCTION

While the previous two chapters contribute valuable information to the consumption of live music online, a large question remains about the level of intensity of interaction rituals in the virtual sphere. Collins (2004, 2020) has been adamant that interaction will have the most intense outcomes (of emotional energy, social solidarity, collective symbols and a shared morality) when face-to-face (F2F). In recent years this has been debated, with a number of scholars adapting his model of interaction rituals to online gameplay (Burroughs, 2014; Simpson et al., 2018), dating (Nexø & Strandell, 2020), social media (Bartholomew & Mason, 2020; Boyns & Loprieno, 2013), and forums (Dimaggio et al., 2018). However, I would argue that these studies (and the two chapters of this dissertation prior to this [6&7]), while using Collins' theory, do not empirically grasp the level of intensity of the online interaction, due in part to methodological limitations. Thus, a clear understanding of the possible level of intensity of obtained emotional energy is missing. Therefore, this chapter aims to address these limitations, providing an empirical and theoretical contribution to our understanding of the ability of the virtual sphere in providing successful small- and large-scale interaction rituals.

To do this, I use the platform Twitch, a leading livestreaming service known originally for video games (Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018), which has recently seen substantial growth in the dissemination of live music[30]. What sets Twitch apart from other streaming services is its sheer scale, with the synchronised chat feature receiving more comments than any other platform (Ford et al., 2017). Taylor (2018) subsequently named Twitch streams "media events", as they allow for virtual crowd behaviour. The focus on social activity makes Twitch an ideal platform for analysing the experience of livestreamed concerts and the effect the transition to the virtual sphere has on the success of large- and small-scale interaction rituals.

This chapter uses methodological triangulation, combining i) observations of users' self-recorded video footage, while participat-

29 An almost identical version of this chapter, with the addition of an extended theoretical framework, was published in *Symbolic interaction*, in 2022.

30 During the first year of "lockdown" (February 2020 and February 2021), Twitch saw music related content increase by 359% (Music –Twitch Statistics and Charts, N.d.)

ing in live music on Twitch, with ii) interviews with these users, who—through *video elicitation*—discuss their online and offline interaction during these streams. Ten respondents were recruited and asked to record three of these sessions (via both their webcam and screen). This innovative method allows for the simultaneous observation of respondents' engagement with the livestreamed concert and their surroundings, while also mapping their emotional response. The subsequent interviews provide deeper understanding of the meaning of their interactions.

◇ TWITCH AS A DEVELOPING LIVE MUSIC PLATFORM

Twitch, a livestreaming platform combining audio-visual media with a synchronous chat feed, is the largest of its kind (Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018). The majority of the content on Twitch is live, broadcasted by *streamers* who (on most occasions) use a webcam to film themselves and what they are doing. *Viewers*, interested in the content of the streamer, can tune into these channels, watch the streamed events and follow their favourites (meaning that they get notifications when the streamer goes live). These viewers can communicate through a real-time chat feed, not only among each other but also with the streamer, allowing a two-way interaction of sorts.

What sets Twitch apart from other streaming services is the high level of viewer engagement (Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018). The prominence of the real-time chat feed has become one of its most distinctive features (Taylor, 2018). The synchronicity of interaction along with the highly regular broadcasting routine of streamers [31] is said to allow for the establishment of a virtual community (Hamilton et al., 2014). While motivations to participate can vary depending on the type of stream and the mood of the viewer, the social aspect of the platform tends to remain a central feature (Hamilton et al., 2014; Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018; Jodén & Strandell, 2021).

Interaction found on the chat is predominantly based on text and symbols (in the form of emotes [32] and memes) (Taylor, 2018) and can take on different forms depending on the type of stream and the size of the audience (Wang & Li, 2020). As the speed of the chat changes with the number of people commenting, the popularity of the stream affects the type of messages being left. On small streams, for example, there is more time for viewers to interact with one another, building a virtual community through regular participation (Hamilton et al., 2014). On the other hand, larger streams tend to be accompanied with a fast-moving chat feed, meaning that a comment may only be seen on a viewer's screen for a split second. In these streams, comments tend to be shorter and more repetitive in nature—with participants re-

31 It is very common to have streamers broadcasting live content two or three days a week.

32 Similar to emojis, emotes are visual representations of objects, symbols or emotional expressions used specifically on Twitch.

using stock phrases, personalised emotes (either made by themselves or the streamer), and *copypastas*[33] (Ford et al., 2017). The lack of direct discussion may lead to the perception of these comments being meaningless and random (Hamilton et al., 2014), however, they accommodate a "different kind of coherence that prioritises crowd-based reaction and interaction over interpersonal conversation" (Ford et al., 2017: 859). Dubbed by Ford et al. (2017) as "crowdspeak", these streams of fast-flowing comments are said to compare to the type of interaction seen in a sports stadium, where the crowd engages in group-based activities (singing, chanting or Mexican waves). Studies like that of Ford et al. (2017), Taylor (2018), Jodén and Strandell (2021), and Hamilton et al. (2014) emphasise the collective experience that this form of interaction affords, comparing the attained intersubjectivity to that seen at F2F events.

While Twitch has been predominantly known for gaming content—with streamers broadcasting themselves playing video games—other content (such as *just chatting, fitness,* and *cooking*) has grown in popularity, accelerated further by physical distancing measures during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interactive and accessible qualities of Twitch provided a platform for virtual social interaction while physical interaction was limited. One of the areas that has gained increasing attention during this period is live music. On Twitch, live music streams can take many forms and come in all genres (everything from techno to classical). These streams consist of the artist—either a solo musician, a DJ, or a full band—broadcasting their performance for a number of hours. Most artists (like streamers of other content) tend to broadcast from a living space (bedroom or dining room), but this is not a given. Similar to the gaming streams, viewers comment on the chat while the artist plays, with the artist engaging with the viewers' comments in between tracks. Through regular streaming artists can build up a fan base, and while certainly not all streamers are as popular, some of the bigger accounts receive +10,000 views per stream (The Highest Peak Viewership Music Twitch Streamers, 2022).

33 Copypastas is a form of online communication where the user copies a section of the chat, only to paste it back into the chat again. This is generally seen as a sarcastic response, often turning into a type of spam with the intention of getting a reaction.

8.2. METHOD

While Collins' (2004) interaction rituals model has become an increasingly popular inspiration for research on online interaction, empirical studies have predominantly used an analysis of text-based exchange on social media sites (e.g., DiMaggio et al., 2018; Jodén & Strandell, 2021; Wang & Li, 2020) or interviews with users (e.g., Bartholomew & Mason, 2020). These methods, however, have drawbacks when analysing the intensity of emotional energy of these interactions. On the one hand, analysing online scenes directly limits the possibilities of

understanding the meaning participants attach to interactions, while, on the other hand, interviews can limit discussions to general themes, relying on remembered experiences, rather than the accompanying emotion (Baym, 2015). To combat these drawbacks, this chapter uses methodological triangulation, collecting both recorded data—capturing participants' engagement and emotional response—and *video elicitation interviews*, allowing participants to reflect on their interactions and experienced emotions.

The respondents of this research consist of ten Twitch users, recruited through a call put out on Twitter and subsequent snowball sampling. This group consisted of two women and eight men, aged between 21 and 35. Five were Dutch, the others were Irish, English, Italian, Japanese, and Argentinian. Respondents were asked to record three music livestreams on Twitch (see **appendix 3** for detailed overview). Using Zoom as a recording device, the videos consisted of a screen recording with a smaller webcam view in the top right-hand corner, allowing the researcher to see a substantial portion of the respondents' online and offline interaction simultaneously. [33]

The livestreams were chosen by the respondents, the only condition being that they were live music and reflected something that the respondent would usually watch. The respondents were asked to record their videos with a minimum length of 45 minutes each (see **appendix 4** for an example of the guide provided to the participants), within a timeframe of one month, so as to remain fresh in their memory.

The data set for the video analysis consisted of 28 recordings (23 hours and 18 minutes). The use of video as a methodological tool has been gaining interest in the social sciences (Heath et al., 2010; Brümmer, 2019; Mosselman et al., 2018) as it provides a "relatively objective perspective on real-life behaviour" (Keesman, 2021: 8). Videos allow researchers to view activities that can later be watched with great detail and scrutiny, revealing "conduct and interaction that are unavailable to more traditional social science methods" (Heath et al., 2010: 2). This is particularly useful when measuring levels of emotional energy, where video information can help capture the subtle dynamics of interaction rituals (Collins, 2004: 134). Furthermore, video enables us to move beyond an analysis of transcripts of interactions (Paulus et al., 2016), facilitating the observation of users' local ecologies, the behind-the-scenes footage of their engagement and how it impacts their action and emotion.

While there have been concerns that research participants' performance may be affected by the presence of a camera, research has found that the impact is mostly restricted to the initial moments of recording, and does not hinder the quality of the data as a whole (Heath et al., 2010; Henry & Fetters, 2012; Murthy, 2008). However, it is import-

34 While this method provided a lot of useful information, the webcam view was relatively small and thus facial expressions of respondents, when standing far away from the camera, were not as clear. Furthermore, when the respondents were watching from very close (as at a desk or table), the information of what was happening directly besides, under or above the screen was lost—unless they brought the object into view.

ant to be aware and reflect on the impact of these recordings on participant behaviour. With this in mind, the experience and comfort with self-recording was addressed in the interview and taken into account in the analyses.

These recordings had an important second function, as they were used as a method of elicitation during the interviews, stimulating the respondents to recall certain interactions they had online (Heath et al. 2010; Henry & Fetters, 2012; Keesman, 2021). Watching the recordings back with the respondents and discussing the points of interaction formed the basis of the interview. Using this method allows the researcher to focus the respondent's attention on specific (and relevant) moments and feelings, rather than discussing the experience as a whole (Keesman, 2021).

These interviews were carried out on Zoom in the week after the participant sent the three recordings and lasted on average 1.5 hours. During the interview, the recording was paused at various sections and the participant was asked to describe and explain their action and/or emotion. Frequently used questions then included, "what is happening here", "can you explain this action to me", "why did you leave this comment here/now", "can you explain the emotion you felt here". Respondents also paused the video on their own accord with the aim of showing certain aspects they felt important.

The interviews were analysed using a thematic analysis, where after a thorough and repeated reading of all interview transcripts, preliminary codes were given to the data using Atlas.ti. This open coding resulted in 39 codes. The second analytical process consisted of finding relevant themes, drawing connections and merging codes. Through an iterative process, codes were formed into themes. The result of this was six overarching themes, loosely influenced by Collins' (2004) interaction ritual model: i) solidarity/belonging, ii) emotional energy, iii) distraction, iv) sacred vs profane, v) shared symbols, and vi) rhythmic entrainment.

The videos were analysed using a three-stage analysis (Heath et al., 2010). First, a preliminary review was conducted where the data was catalogued. Here both online and offline interactions were coded using Microsoft Excel. During this process, each interaction was marked with a time stamp, along with registering the length of interaction, the type of interaction, the visible emotional response and a brief description. In the second stage, the analysis became more focused, drawing larger patterns between the types of interactions. This led to the final analytic stage of the analysis, where focus was given to the specific sections that emerged as relevant from the second stage. As a result of this, five overarching themes were identified: i) engagement with the artist, ii) engagement with the audience, iii) engagement with

the material surroundings, iv) engagement with "outsiders" (meaning interaction with someone outside of Twitch, either physically or on another social media site), and v) engagement with music. The moments belonging to these themes were subsequently addressed in the interviews. The findings (below) are presented based on these themes.

To maintain respondents' anonymity, pseudonyms are used. Furthermore, for the privacy of the viewers in the chat (not interviewed for this research) usernames are left out of this manuscript. Moreover, all data is stored on the universities secure cloud, and only accessible by the author.

8.3. RESULTS

◇ ENGAGING WITH THE CHAT

The social aspect of Twitch has been widely documented, identifying interaction in the synchronous chat feature as a central component to the experience (e.g., Hamilton et al., 2014; Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018; Jodén & Strandell, 2021). This feeling was shared by the respondents of this research, who regarded Twitch as more interactive than other livestreaming platforms (Facebook or YouTube). Throughout the analysed screen recordings, clear engagement is noted in the chat. For example, in replying to another viewer's comment that reads "hydrating with a carbonated lemonade water", during one of her recordings, Camila (24, Argentinian) responds "[name of viewer] OMG LITERALLY SAMEEEE, I'm having the liminata!!!". A seemingly random comment like this gives other audience members a glimpse into their behind the screen environments. As there are no profiles attached to viewers, and no visual representation, the only information known about other audience members (apart from their username, which is often cryptic) is what is disclosed in the chat. These small bits of information are thus crucial to make connections, as described by Camila during the interview:

> "Like there was this girl. She's a Virgo as well, and I am a Virgo. We were talking about birthdays. And, like, 'oh my God I'm a Virgo too.' And from that it is like 'hey bestie' every time I log in. And like 'hey bestie hey Virgo queen.' Like, yeah, just like, find similar traits or similar things in common with each other and just go from there."

Camila explains that she pays close attention to what other people write and responds to aspects that she relates to. Through this, a seemingly generic trait (such as a star-sign or type of lemonade) can result in that person becoming your "bestie". Virgo here becomes the symbol of this specific chain of interactions, the icon that these two viewers use to mark their relationship (Collins, 2004).

Important to mention, however, is the brevity and speed of these interactions. In between the two comments (shown above) there is a gap of about three minutes and a large number of non-related comments from other viewers. Looking at the recorded webcam footage also reveals that while Camila seems enthusiastic when writing the message, after she has written it, she moves away from her screen to sit on her bed, suggesting that she does not expect to receive an immediate reply. This demonstrates that, although the comments can be made in almost real-time, they are rarely used this way, meaning rhythmic entrainment is very unlikely. This is further exemplified in the fact that conversations are relatively short, with most encounters lasting between two and six exchanges.

Despite this lack of rhythmic build-up, during the interviews the respondents emphasise the community nature of the platform, also in line with previous research (Hamilton et al., 2014). The convivial atmosphere is seen in a number of comments exchanged with the artist during one of Sarah's (19, Dutch) recordings:

Sarah: Extremely good vibes

Sarah: I really need this space, I've been feeling emotionally drained from what is going on in my country

Artist: *ohh yeah Sarah, we are here for you.* [another viewer's name] *Thanks for the hearts. Sarah these hearts are for you*

Sarah: I love you guysssssss

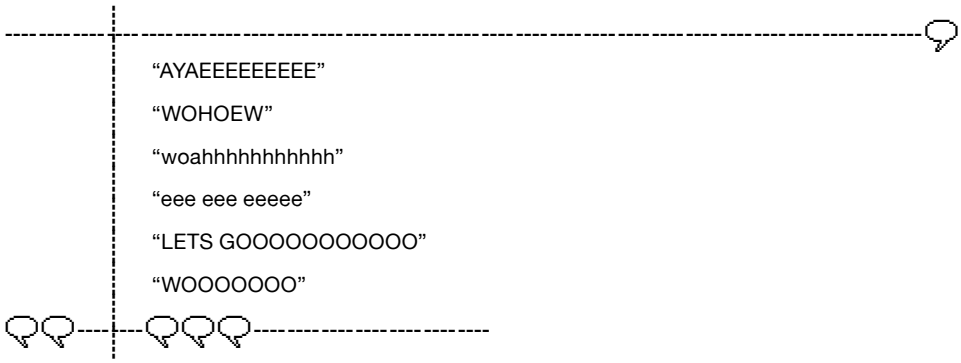
Artist: *I love that we get to be here for each other*

Sarah: Literally the best

When asked about this interaction during her interview Sarah expresses that she felt "connected and heard and just, like, just being a part of a community, and it was super nice".

This was furthermore reflected in the recordings showing an almost bashful Sarah, who puts her hands to her mouth and lets out a squeak of enthusiasm when the artist says her name. This emotional response, however, does not last long, as immediately after writing the last message she goes back to what she was doing on her phone. Despite this artist's attentiveness being somewhat unique—as replies tend to consist more of greetings and the occasional track ID—the emotional response of Sarah was seen in other respondents as well. On the five recorded accounts, receiving a verbal response from the artist resulted in a bodily reaction from the viewer—an uncontrolled grin or laugh, and physical movement towards or away from their screens. Although interaction is brief, and the emotional reaction short-lived, this clearly shows the value of this type of interaction for viewers.

Not all comments left on the chat aim for a response. Writing as a means of encouraging the artist and expressing enthusiasm for the music was regularly seen in comments imitating excited sounds:



According to the respondents, they do not expect a reply to these comments, but use them to show their appreciation for the track. During the interview, Andrew (20, Irish) explains this further:

> "The chat was just, like, hand emotes in the air, and just kind of vibing emotes, where it showed that they're kind of enjoying the music, basically. That maybe it wasn't even a conversation, but it was more even, like, to show that they're there and they love what's going on […] Very, like, I would say that, like, digital yelling that you are enjoying it, you know."

Online, the audience's screams of enthusiasm are swapped for a form of text based "digital yelling", displaying a nod to the genre conventions and group-based interaction seen at concerts. This use of the chat feed corresponds to previous findings on gaming streams, where larger audience sizes lead to a chat feed based on a collective (textual) voice—or *crowdspeak* (Ford et al., 2017)—rather than reciprocal individual interaction. Interestingly, different from gaming streams, for live music the size of the audience seemingly did not impact the use of this form of crowdspeak, with chat sections in both small and large streams displaying this form of behaviour. The differences between interaction on these varying types of content is telling, suggesting that audiences of live music incorporate behavioural conventions from the physical sphere.

Furthermore, crowdspeak was not only seen with comments of approval, but also in the collective use of common emotes or phrases. The recordings show many instances of the chat section filling with long sequences of the same (or very similar) comments, usually spurred on by something the artist says or the music. Thomas (33, Dutch) discusses his experience of joining in one of these streams, leaving a comment with the letter "F" during a long sequence of the same comments:

> "It is fun. Even if it is as lame as putting the letter "F" in the chat, you are still active. And if a lot of people do it, and you get a waterfall of "Fs", it looks cool. And then you feel like you actually took part in something. […] Yes, I'm not sure, maybe it creates that feeling of belonging. That you are all doing something together. […] Yes, a little, how do you say that? Active. And that you fit in."

Through regular participation, shared symbols (such as the letter "F") materialise. In using it correctly, the viewer can foster a sense of belonging and positive feelings are established through correctly anticipating other viewers' actions. These symbols are infused with an emotion, gaining a place in the collective memory of the participants (Collins, 2014).

The appreciation of this type of interaction is clear from the positive feelings expressed by the respondents during the interviews. Yet, when looking at the analysed recordings, this emotional response was less visible. When leaving a comment as part of crowdspeak, the facial expression of the respondents remained to a large extent neutral, with little change in bodily position. When asked about this, Sarah relates it to the anonymity of the platform, stating it is because "[I] don't really see the people". Similarly, in comparing the experience of interacting as part of an online audience to that of an offline one, Pablo (25, Italy) says:

> "So, when you're, for example, in a live concert you laugh with the people. You embrace each other randomly, with also people you don't know, because you can give a face to them. Like, you can, you can see them, you can feel them, you can feel the presence. In this case it's more like, okay, you have, like, people that want to show their support, but it's a different way. I don't know. It's more, like, distant."

The anonymity on Twitch seems to present a barrier to experiencing collective interaction of high intensity. And while leaving a shared symbol (emote or phrase) can foster feelings of group membership, being 'in on the joke' is a very different emotional experience than the uncontrollable emotional and cognitive entrainment in large-scale interaction at physical concerts.

The insufficiency of these types of interactions is reiterated in the limited emotional release seen in the facial and bodily expressions of the respondents who engage in these streams. This is arguably due to a lack of rhythmic entrainment, as not only is there no reciprocal exchange (participants leaving only one message within the sequence), but the usernames and textual comments do not compensate the presence of a physical audience. The issue lies not so much in the anonymised identity of the viewers, but rather in the concealed emotions, as the comments represent only impressions given and not those *given off* (Goffman, 1959). While this undoubtedly also affects small-scale interaction, facial and bodily expressions of emotion, in this case, are not the sole driver of rhythmic entrainment, as they also rely on discourse (whether verbal or textual). Synchronicity between large collectives, on the other hand, rely purely on the sights and sounds of shared emotion.

Receiving a message from another individual viewer on the chat clearly resulted in more of an emotional response, but this was still very mild in comparison to the reaction seen upon receiving a ver-

bal reply from the artist. Despite the short and infrequent communication, the respondents came to see many of the artists as a "sort of friend" (Paul, 20, Dutch). This relationship appears to be primarily forged through the informal nature of the platform, where artists perform from private spaces, share personal information about their lives and interesting insights into the music industry. Interaction with the artist can thus be likened to the parasocial relationships described by Boyns and Loprieno (2013). Although communication is mainly one-sided (with the viewers having far more knowledge of the artist), a perceived relationship is established through frequent exposure. This connection then comes to be seen as stronger than many of the connections with other audience members. Subsequently, the obtained emotional energy of these interactions is greater, with the outcome of interaction enhanced further by the privileged feeling of having one's name pulled out of a group of thousands.

◇ ENGAGING WITH "OUTSIDERS"

The analyses of the recordings revealed that during livestreams, interaction was not limited to communication on Twitch. Many of the respondents continued to engage with people on other social media platforms and in the physical realm. When asked about this, Rick (21, Dutch) explains that in those other channels respondents can speak more openly. Here, the viewers can reflect on what is happening in the livestream while disclosing more "personal information". Andrew furthers this point by emphasising that relationships are generally made "through the platform, not necessarily maybe in the platform itself". While you can meet people on Twitch, it is helpful to foster this relationship through communication on other social media (such as Discord, WhatsApp, or the chat function of Zoom). Camila states:

> "I feel more open with her because I was able to join her discord channel. And I've been able to talk more with people on there […] about, like, just things that happen in your life. It's a smaller community, so it's easier for you to present yourself and follow up with other people and other people can interact with you. […] They know a little bit more about me."

The smaller number of participants on these platforms results in more room for people to have extended conversations and gather in-depth knowledge of one another. Such a deepened relationship—which is represented in established shared symbols (such as emotes or phrases)—can in turn be taken back to the Twitch chat, leading to the exchange of more socially loaded messages.

Furthermore, interaction on Twitch acquired supplementary weight if the respondents had had previous F2F contact. During one of her recordings, Sarah had a brief textual exchange with someone

in the Twitch chat. This exchange reads:

Other viewer: Hi.. I'm new!

Sarah: [name of other viewer] hiiiii

Sarah: !hug @[name of other viewer]"

When Sarah sees this message from the other viewer, she immediately moves closer to the screen. After writing the first comment she smiles uncontrollably, laughs, and claps twice in the air. After she has left the two consecutive comments, she goes back to texting on here phone. During the interview she explains that this interaction was with a good friend who just joined Twitch, on Sarah's insistence. When asked about the enthusiasm she explains:

> "With my friends on Twitch, I feel very alone, like physically alone. […] But this is awesome [having someone from the physical world in the chat]. It really made me happy because now I'm not just commenting to strangers, that I know have the best of intentions and […] they have a beautiful energy, but I'm here chatting with my best friend, and we can react to the same song or I can tell her more crucial things of what I'm feeling with that song."

Interaction with a friend is considered more meaningful than the interaction with her "Twitch friends". The difference in these types of online interactions was reiterated by Thomas who justifies his preference for a specific livestream:

> "I have to say, in regard to the chat, I found this one a lot more fun. Being with my friends in real life is more fun, but it does give something extra that they were in the chat. You can talk about things a little easier, or say things that they already know about. You don't have to explain yourself; they know exactly what you mean."

Due to the pre-established relationship, the comments—which are often short—are imbued with more meaning. The topics of comments are based on past experiences, rather than the generic topics usual to the Twitch chat. These messages are endowed with a respect for mutually defined symbols of the physical relationship, preserving already established feelings of solidarity and confirming group membership. Mutual attention and emotion are then based on these past feelings, creating a synchronicity among the friends.

While sharing these experiences with established friends heightens the intensity of the interaction ritual—resulting in what seems to be a greater emotional energy and feelings of social solidarity with that individual—these remain small-scale interactions and thus provide a very different experience than the collective engagement seen at concerts. The occasions most likened to physical concerts by respondents are the livestreams that are watched in the physical presence of other people. Sarah, who was the only respondent to send a recording of

her watching with company, discussed this experience as being closer to a concert. Thomas, who regularly watches livestreams with friends, explains:

> "We sit around together, drink some beer and put it on the big TV with speakers. So, we get a bit more of an experience, more than what you would get on your own on your laptop. It makes a massive difference. You try to make a bit of a festival experience, as much as you can. If I watch it alone, I do not get that at all."

When friends join, the livestream is presented more as an event, with an active effort made towards creating a sensory experience (with larger speakers and screen). Furthermore, similar to watching the stream while connected with friends through other social networks, the participants share the event more closely. However, in this case they also share the same space, resulting in a greater arousal of "energy" (Mark, 31, English).

In conclusion, having had previous physical encounters raises the intensity of the interaction ritual, reflecting DiMaggio et al.'s (2018) hypothesis that a history of face-to-face interaction leads to a more intense interaction. However, this remains on the level of interpersonal, small-scale interaction. The fact that the livestreams are experienced as more authentic when physically watching together, demonstrates the importance of physical co-presence for large-scale interaction rituals. Even if it is just an attempt, and the outcome is not as intense, the physical presence of others, and the alteration of the physical space (using a bigger screen and speakers) creates a heightened energy that is not felt from sitting alone in front of a screen.

◇ ENGAGING WITH MUSIC AND MATERIAL SURROUNDINGS

This section moves away from interaction with other people (both off- and online) and presents the findings related to non-human engagement, namely with the music and the material surroundings. Interaction with music is defined here as action taken in relation to the music (Collins, 2013; Leman et al., 2017). The recordings depicted respondents interacting with the music through movement (head bopping, swaying or dancing to the beat) and vocals (singing or humming along). The most common mode of interaction, however, was seen in the form of a simple shift in focus—where respondents moved their attention to the stream and actively listened. Thus, although the respondents participated in live music streams from differing genres (as diverse as drum and bass or acoustic country music) the engagement with the music remained surprisingly similar.

Camila, who is seen listening to electronic dance music (EDM)

on all three recordings, stood out as the only respondent to actually leave her seated position in response to the music. When asked about a particularly excited moment in her recordings (where she lets out a loud enthusiastic squeak, starts to dance eagerly and hums along) she replies:

> "What got me excited was, like, yeah, the way that she changed the song […]. I was like 'Okay, let me get up. Let me hide the chat and let me dance for a little bit.' And then, when the song changes, again I just wait to see if it's more of a sitting down kind of song or if it's something that will rise me up again."

At this moment it was the change in song that got her attention—as the song moves into something she recognises, she gets excited. Similar to findings in previous research (Peretz et al., 1998), hearing a known song leads to a positive emotional release. She explains that her attention and enthusiasm for the music is fluctuating (something also very much reflected in the analysed recording), but when in the "moment" she "drops everything" and will "focus solely on the song", minimising also the chat feature on Twitch. Interestingly, in order to engage with the music, she closes access to the main social part of the livestream, the chat. Thus, while Camila enthusiastically reacts to the music, this presents a very different form of interaction than that seen at a physical EDM concert, where the collective (social) engagement with the music stands central to the experience (Olaveson, 2004). We see here that participating online presents a clear deviation from the traditional genre conventions.

The effect of the online sphere on genre conventions was further reiterated by Han (29, Japanese).

> "For me the sound quality is the most important thing, but there are other elements that compromise the experience. For example, the kind of seriousness cannot be made in an online platform. You know, the atmosphere before the concert and the one just after a song ends. This kind of, you know, this kind of atmosphere. You know that energy, you cannot explain it in words. But that kind of thing is very important for classical music. Because at a classical concert you cannot make noise. But when you attend a virtual concert, you can listen to the music more relaxed. This affects the experience, gives it a different quality."

Han, a regular classical music attendee, first puts the difference in the offline and online concert experience down to the obvious discrepancy in the material quality of the sound (livestreams not being acoustic). However, it is the shift in space—from concert venue to living room—that changes the atmosphere that he is accustomed to at classical music concerts. At home, there is no one to guard the conventions of the genre. Without the external pressure from a physical audience to conform to the customary proceedings (in this case being quiet during the show), the experience of the live music is also different—the new "relaxed" setting diminishes the importance of the conventional ritual activities, and thus also the particular atmosphere of the live music setting (Frith, 1996; Hughes, 2000).

In his engagement with the music, Han's behaviour is far more restrained in comparison to that of Camila (seen above). This is not only seen in his interaction with the music (which consisted of an occasional intensification of gaze, usually when something in the music catches his attention) but also in his interaction with the chat. When asked about this he states:

> "I don't find any connection with these artists [in this case solo pianists who play 'popular' classical music], but I use it [the streams] for a warm atmosphere in my room".

He acknowledges that he watches these streams because he likes the atmosphere it brings to his space, the social (chatty) nature of the Twitch artists acting somewhat like a radio in the background. However, he prefers to take a position of a lurker (Haimson & Tang, 2017), as he feels uncomfortable engaging with the social aspect (the chat), explaining that he has little connection to the artist or rest of the audience.

This is something reiterated by Adam (22, Dutch), who does not comment in the chat section either. He states:

> "For me also, like with concerts where the audience would swing and from left to right in unison, yeah, I don't really feel connected to that, or I don't want to be associated with it, that's what I'm trying to say actually. I am more a sucker for a really good music experience."

Here Adam is particularly talking about the long streams of similar comments or emotes that regularly fill the chat section. He tries to distance himself from this kind of crowdspeak, by drawing a parallel to his dislike for collective engagement in physical concerts. This implies that the chat section is perceived by Adam as the virtual concert ground, where audience behaviour online mimics the audience behaviour at physical concerts, although textually reconstructed. However, it also implies a direct translation of his cultural orientation. Collective engagement is not only more customary to certain genres of live music (think for example of the difference in behaviour of folk and opera audiences) but it also corresponds directly to the specific taste patterns of their consumers (Bourdieu, 1984; Frith, 1996). While some audiences long for high levels of collective effervescence, others distance themselves from uncontrolled emotional outbursts, opting for a more individualised and reflexive experience (Benzecry & Collins, 2014).

It is important to mention here that cultural dispositions are very different from genre conventions and although connected, it seems that one translates to the virtual sphere better than the other. This is clearly seen in a comment from Pablo:

> "For me, the one thing that makes the difference is that the experience [of the concert] is not in your same house. It's something you go out for. You enjoy it because you go there. You go to the venue, you have people around, you have things going on around you. Because, let's say in my personal case, I'm alone at home watching it."

For Pablo, who is more insistent on expecting collective engagement from his cultural experience, the online sphere cannot provide one of the central elements of a live music event: the presence of other people. For him the concert experience relies not only on the music, but on having others (physically) around and being present in a (physical) space. Reflecting on the consequence of this, Sarah states that after livestreams "I don't feel that excitement. […] Like, after a concert I would be more excited, and it would last longer". She attributes the anticlimactical experience of livestreams to the fact that she is viewing alone from her "kitchen table", a space where she does not feel motivated to physically express herself. The unmemorable quality of the online events is also reiterated by other participants. According to Collins (2004), successful interaction rituals are moments of high emotional energy, moments that will remain present in our memories. By contrast, the stated insignificance of livestream events situates the experience as a mediocre or perhaps even failed interaction ritual—at least in terms of the large-scale interaction.

For the respondents, the livestreams are presented not as an extraordinary event, but as something to fill time. This could be seen also in the recordings, where concentration towards the stream and the music often fluctuated in intensity. When not fully focused, respondents engaged with objects from their physical surroundings. For example, Adam, Han, Mark, Camila, and Andrew were seen working or studying during the stream, engaging with another computer screen, copies or books. Another common occurrence was the consumption of food or alcohol — Paul ate on a number of occasions, also leaving his seat to get new snacks, and Rick and Thomas drank beer. Sarah spent about 30 minutes cooking during one recording and on another occasion cleaned her room (an activity also recorded for Rick, Thomas and Pablo).

When asked about these moments, the notion that livestreams are a "secondary activity" repeatedly came up. Sarah states that she usually gives "10%" of her attention to the livestream. Andrew alternates between two monitors (one with the livestream and one with work), while Mark, Han and Adam use it as "background music" to fill silence. When asked if he would ever watch a livestream as his main activity, Thomas says:

> "With Twitch, you are just watching from your own familiar environment and then you quickly want to have it as a side thing, where you are also doing something else".

He later explained that in participating from a residential space, the level of distraction is high, as there are always emails to be answered or clothes to be folded.

During the interview, Camila was asked about her continued

engagement with her phone and tablet computer. She responds, "I feel a little guilty if I'm just sitting here, I don't know, on a Wednesday afternoon. […] 'I haven't done anything with my life', that's sometimes how I feel. I don't want to waste my day". To justify the time spent in front of her screen, she combines watching livestreams with other activities. She goes on to explain why she thinks this is:

> "It has to do with how many times you can watch those streams, because when we're talking about, like, a concert or a gig, they're done maybe a couple of times a month […] I'll do anything I need to do to get my plans out of the way, so I can have Friday or Saturday off, so I can go to the venue and watch the DJ or band. On Twitch, if I missed one or two, I won't have a problem. I can watch it later."

The experience and use of livestreams can thus be somewhat likened to that of recorded music, where limitless Spotify playlists or 24-hour radio coverage provides a complementary backing track to everyday life. In line with the respondents' "ubiquitous listening" style, recorded music is on most occasions (especially when listened to alone) consumed in an inattentive manner and is not the main focus of attention (Marshall, 2019). Thus, while livestreams share characteristics of physical concerts—they are live and provide a space for social interaction, making them more engaging than recorded music—there is a fundamental difference in the experience. This difference lies predominantly in the type of interaction that the platform affords. Any emotional energy seems to be established through small scale encounters (either with the artist or with other viewers that are known from F2F settings). The large-scale group interaction rituals that make concerts so appealing seem to be largely missing, meaning that the establishment of Durkheimian collective effervescence is also out of reach.

8.4. CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to explore the audience experience of livestreamed Twitch concerts, asking to what extent small- and large-scale interaction rituals are successful during these virtual events. The analysis reveals that although respondents can obtain the positive outcomes of successful interaction rituals, these are less intense and are not produced through the same mechanisms as those seen at physical concerts. This is largely because successful interaction on these streams takes the form of small-scale interaction. Large-scale interactions (characteristic of physical events) are not just weaker but arguably also not possible online.

The inadequacy of Twitch—and likely the virtual sphere in general—to provide a space for successful large-scale interaction rituals is seen in a number of factors. First, while an attempt is made to maintain certain genre conventions customary to the physical concert, such as crowdspeak (Ford et al., 2017)—where the audience uses onomato-

poeic words to express the noises of an excited audience—the virtual space does not allow for the regulation of ritual proceedings. Elements central to a concert experience, for example the hush of collective anticipations that persists across an audience at a classical music concert, or the dancing bodies acting in unison at EDM concerts, do not translate to the virtual sphere. This is largely due to *context collapse*, as users interact with a largely invisible audience, on a two-dimensional virtual space instead of having the full embodied experience (Marwick & boyd, 2011). The consequence of this is that there is a challenge to maintain a distinct social context that feeds particular expectations of behaviour. Conventional activities and rituals that involve the entire audience are difficult to accomplish through online communication, leading participants to focus on individual interactions and activities.

Second, in a similar vein, participating in these (virtual) concerts from home leads to a *social convergence* (boyd, 2008) where "profane" home life blurs with that of the typically "sacred" concert experience—to borrow Durkheimian terminology. This form of participation very much deviates from the respondents' expectations, making these events incomparable to the real thing. As the respondents claim, this is partly due to the fact that they are participating from their desk/couch/bed/kitchen table, which convey little excitement. However, apart from the material setting, I would argue that the experience of participating (physically) alone has a large effect as well. The morphological composition—the ratio of people per space—is an important dimension of large-scale interaction rituals (Liebst, 2019), with collective excitement building from the very act of assembling (Collins, 2004; Durkheim, 1995[1912]). This is most evident when respondents classify the livestreams watched in the physical presence of other people as closest to the "real thing".

Finally, although the chat regularly displayed interaction in the form of collective commenting—seen in a flow of messages of similar images or phrases—the result of this was not one of emotional energy but of a reaffirmation of group membership. The reason for this is the inadequacy of these sequences in generating rhythmic entrainment among the participants. These trains of comments not only present little opportunity for turn-taking, but they also do not allow for the disclosure of emotion. The respondents critiqued the concealed nature of the audience, not for absence of identity (*expressions given*) but absence of perceivable sincerity (*expressions given off*—Goffman, 1959). With only the evidence of a shared focus (the train of comments) and not a shared sentiment, the cognitive and emotional synchronisation of the audience does not occur. The lack of emotional engagement when participating in one of these trains may serve as further empirical support.

This is not to say that there is no generation of emotional energy when participating in these streams. Uncontrolled outbursts (such

as excited laughter and body movements) are seen during small-scale interaction, in particular when communicating with familiar people (based either on F2F encounters or a parasocial relationship with the artist). This corroborates DiMaggio et al.'s (2018) hypothesis that interactions vary in intensity depending on the level of commitment between the individuals—the more knowledge of the other, the stronger the ritual. In interpersonal communication, there is more room for the reciprocal exchange of messages, with prolonged interaction, subsequently meaning a greater chance to convey emotion and thus also an exchange of mood and an overall context. Small-scale interactions are thus far more likely to (and are also seen to) establish emotional energy (resulting in participants also obtaining a new confidence) and a charge/recharge of collective symbols marking solidarity, and a strong reason to participate again.

The difference in derived emotional energy between large-and small-scale interaction online leads to the conclusion that these types of interactions may not be as interchangeable as Collins (2004) perceives. It is evident that rhythmic entrainment cannot manifest online (either with small- or large-scale interaction). Turn-taking does not happen fast or fluidly enough and there are too many distractions (on and off-screen) to become fully entrained in the interaction. However, we see a clear emotional energy being fostered in the interpersonal encounters. Shared focus and mood, aided with clear markers of membership seem to provide enough grounds to foster an intense social encounter. For large-scale interaction, these ingredients do not provide the same effect, with the loss of rhythmic entrainment having a greater impact. This is arguably because without rhythmic entrainment, large-scale interaction is not technically an interaction. Without the collective cognitive and emotional synchronisations of participants at an event, the people present remain as individuals standing in the same geographical area.

What do we then learn about the *interaction ritual model* from analysing virtual concerts? First, virtual interaction rituals are more successful at an interpersonal level. Second, this research demonstrates that the interaction ritual model works differently for small- and large-scale interaction rituals. While the ritual outcomes may be the same, the ingredients vary to some degree. For example, the need for bodily co-presence is much higher for large-scale interactions. Furthermore, it would seem that rhythmic entrainment is less necessary for successful small-scale interaction rituals, with the realisation of emotional energy also deriving through interactions that do not have any rhythmic build-up.

“THE MESSAGE”

9.1. GENERAL CONCLUSION

As I write this conclusion, it is spring 2022. With the defrosting of winter came the loosening of social distancing regulations, COVID-19 now seems a distant reality (what will happen in the future is yet to be seen). It is hard not to situate this dissertation within this time, as half of the research was conducted during this turbulent period. However, while COVID-19 no doubt had a lot of negative impact (in all walks of life), it also presented an extremely interesting time to be looking at music, specifically live music.

Just days after the World Health Organization’s declaration of a pandemic (11th of March 2022), Italian citizens took to their balconies in song. These musical flashmobs quickly spread around the world with music clearly working as a symbol of solidarity. Despite the closing of venues, clubs, and festivals, live music soon found new ways of reaching audiences. Illegal raves saw a return (or perhaps they never left but were suddenly more visible again amidst the silence of other physical musical events), with the media presenting them as unlawful but “understandable behaviour”, a change in tone from the previous moral panic surrounding these events (Ashford & O’Brien, 2022).

Of course, the biggest development was seen in the rapid growth of live music online. Although a large portion of music consumption was already taking a mediated form, this was predominantly recorded music, with live music remaining largely a cultural product of the physical realm. During the pandemic we saw gaming platforms successfully house festivals (such as ‘Block by Block West’ in Minecraft) and concerts (such as that of Travis Scott in Fortnite). Even more significant, however, was the rise in livestreamed music, with an influx of streams coming in all shapes and sizes—from Billie Eilish’s huge “immersive virtual event” to Instagram livestreams of artists such as John Legend, James Blake and Shawn Mendes streaming from their living rooms.

While the social and technological developments that came with these modes of production and consumption will no doubt remain relevant, interestingly the hype of online consumption very quickly died down. As restrictions relaxed, so too did the consumption of livestreams, leaving us wondering why these online concerts were not more successful. This presents a perfect inlay into the central questions of

this dissertation, as although live music can certainly result in positive individual and group-based emotions (Benzecry & Collins, 2014; Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Horsfall, 2016), it is definitely not always successful. Under what circumstances does live music then act as a vehicle for social solidarity?

The five empirical chapters of this dissertation have given us important insights into the live music experience and the mechanisms and role of collectivity. As large-scale interaction rituals, these group-based encounters can vary in intensity, meaning that the bonding potential of a successful interaction ritual also differs.

First, the importance of having a *mutual focus of attention*, as specified by Collins (2004) is evident. The more focused the audience is, the more intense the resulting collective experience is. In music concerts, this focus seems to be largely guided by the artist and the music, whether it be the specific songs that the audience can sing along to or the showmanship of the artists themselves. This seems to be quite genre specific; what may work to grab the attention of one audience, may not work for another. The importance of keeping the audience's (full) attention was further demonstrated when looking at online participation, specifically seen in chapter 8 of this dissertation. Participating from a setting in which the rest of the audience and artist are not physically present—such as one's home environment—presents an element of distraction, where attention is split between the livestreamed performance and other things in the consumer's immediate environment.

Similarly, the audience should share an emotional state, again aligning with Collins' (2004) interaction ritual model. Focus on the same activity must be matched with a shared mood. In music concerts this is something that is easily established as excitement already hangs in the air, with many concert goers anticipating being in the presence of their idol and the feelings of collective effervescence that could commence. This excitement is enhanced when the music starts. Music already works as an emotional conductor (DeNora, 2011), something only intensified when experienced as part of a group. What is crucial for the establishment of solidarity, however, is that the audience becomes aware of one another and the shared mood. This is in essence what leads to the heightened feelings of collectivity, as it is this feedback process, or rhythmic entrainment (Collins, 2004) that synchronises the audience. I found that for large-scale interaction rituals, such as concerts, it is crucial that this process occurs. I argue that without this rhythmic entrainment between participants, a gathering of people cannot turn into an interaction *ritual*, as it is the specific awareness of shared emotion that makes the gathering an *interaction*. This is, for example, the difference between people at a political rally versus people shopping on a busy shop street. The former feel part of a happening, while the latter continue to go along with their own business.

While these findings very much corroborate a Durkheimian thinking about the central position of focused interaction, I find that a shared mood outweighs a shared focus. This is seen specifically in the first empirical chapter (chapter 3), where audience members emphasize the importance of the atmosphere and elements not connected to the music—such as drinking beer at the bar. We can imagine that this is then very similar to festivals in general, where an atmosphere persists around the entire festival ground, for example in places such as the campsite where there is not one specific group focus. This builds on the findings of Liebst's (2019), where collective effervesce is found to be based on the morphological composition of being in a densely populated area. While I agree that the density of bodies is important, giving someone the "sense of being 'where the action is'" (Collins, 2004:82), I argue that there must be an awareness of shared mood between participants. Thus, although festival goers walking the terrain are not in a "well-defined action" (Collins, 2004:82), they are part of a well-defined mood.

The importance of this shared mood is further seen when we look at the intensity of large-scale interaction rituals online. For example, in chapter 8 I find that the anonymity of the virtual audience has a large impact on the establishment of rhythmic entrainment. While the inadequate speed of message exchanging (or turn-taking) no doubt affects entrainment, messages can also only convey *impressions given* and not those *given off*, meaning that honest emotions (seen in uncontrolled excited body language and noises) remain inaccessible. While messages may present an emotional tone (excitement, joy, sadness), the genuine feeling of the writer is difficult to affirm, making the attunement of emotions problematic and the interaction ritual less intense. This is specifically challenging for large-scale interaction where interaction is primarily based on the sights and sounds of an excited audience and not verbal discourse. Furthermore, this very much shows the importance of physical co-presence for the success of large-scale interaction rituals and the establishment of collectivity among the audience.

Finally, we see that feelings of collectivity rest largely on the production and policing of genre conventions (Frith, 1996). This is unsurprising as the strong boundary work revolving around cultural consumption has been documented extensively (Bryson, 1996; Katz-Gerro, 2011; Lamont, 1992; Michael, 2015; Van Eijck, 2001). I find in chapters 3 and 4 that for the establishment of solidarity there needs to be a defined in- and outgroup, or, in Collins's terms, a clear "barrier to the outsiders" (Collins, 2004:48, see also Figure 1). While this seems more evident with some audiences (namely the levenslied audience who discuss extensively the change in atmosphere when someone 'new' enters), the policing of genre conventions is seen across all audiences. Interestingly, these conventions are directly carried to the virtual

sphere. In fact, when artists who predominantly perform in the physical realm go online, the conventions of that music genre become "hyper ritualised" (see **chapter 7**). This leads to the implication that although the internet is presented as an open and egalitarian space—with less financial and physical barriers to overcome (Mueser & Vlachos, 2018; Schaap & Berkers, 2014)—boundaries persist, and taking part in the social aspect of the livestream (the chat column) means that one should also be familiar and comfortable with the ritual activities that make up the physical counterpart.

However, these textually expressed rituals serve the experience only partially. While they can stimulate feelings of group membership, the impact of collectively participating in them does not translate during the livestream. Thus, while virtual audiences may emphasise specific aspects of the concert's conventions (clapping hands, bouquet of roses or pill emojis), the rhythmic entrainment that usually follows through physically engaging in these ritual activities does not occur. This not only shows the inadequacy of the online arena in accommodating large-scale interaction rituals, but also the importance of genre conventions for the live music experience.

9.2. IS THERE A TASTE FOR COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE?

Moving to the first sub-question of this dissertation, in the introduction I ask *does the experience and motivation for collectivity differ between cultural schemes?* In other words, is there a music genre where collective effervescence plays a more prominent role in the experience and is this then connected to the social position of the respondents? Unsurprisingly, I find that modes of consumption differ greatly per scheme. Aligning closely with past research on cultural consumption (Bourdieu, 1984; Schulze, 1992), I find that motivations for collective engagement (singing, dancing and clapping along) are far more present in folk and popular genres than highbrow genres such as classical music. For folk and popular music concerts, both F2F and online, the social aspect is highly prioritised by the audience. In contrast, the classical music audiences demonstrate a far more individual mode of consumption. However, while the discourse used by the latter audience—during the interviews and on the livestream chat column—emphasises individual emotion and musical engagement, it does not imply a total lack of collectivity. The act of sitting together in joint silence fosters a collective experience. The importance of this mutual engagement was seen in chapter 8, where participating in the classical music livestream was met with disappointment, due to the lack of conventions such as mutual silence [35]. This again indicates the importance of the collective experience for this audience, although the manner of expression is com-

paratively subtle making the achievement of rhythmic entrainment (and subsequent collective effervescence) far more unlikely.

Despite the lack of overt collective engagement and emotion at highbrow music concerts, the consumers of this music did not restrict themselves to this mode of consumption (see **chapter 4**). The group of higher educated respondents display strong omnivorous tendencies, not only attending music concerts from various genres, but adapting their modes of engagement accordingly. For these consumers, modes of engagement—either collective with overt shows of emotion or individualistic and restrained—are appropriated depending on the setting. Interestingly, the lower educated respondents of this research did not present this flexibility, distancing themselves from highbrow modes of consumption and displaying recognisable univorous tendencies (DiMaggio, 1987; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Peterson & Simkus, 1992; Van Eijck, 2001).

What can we then learn about cultural consumption from this dissertation? We see that omnivorousness is not only about a repertoire of genres, but also (and perhaps primarily) an ability to switch between modes of consumption. While the omnivore theory is by no means new (Peterson & Simkus, 1992; Peterson, 2005), this is distinct from what has previously been written on the highbrow engagement in lowbrow genres, as it is not overtly characterised by an aesthetic (Atkinson, 2011), ironic, camp, guilty or sarcastic disposition (Peters et al., 2018; McCoy & Scarborough, 2014), but mimics the consumption style of the lower educated audience members. While this may signal a more inclusive, flexible, and open cultural elite, and the diminishing of cultural boundaries, a clear distinction remains. The disparity is seen in the very ability of the higher educated to be inclusive, flexible, and open, as these are important characteristics needed to navigate the changing social landscape of modern society (Van Eijck, 2000), and the opportunity for social mobility (Emmison, 2003). At the same time, highbrow events maintain their limited accessibility, governed by strict traditional conventions that require a specific aesthetic disposition. Here we can again clearly see the uneven distribution of these traits, meaning that the prospect of mobility remains a restricted asset.

However, while highbrow remains socially exclusive, this also implies that at other concerts a more socially diverse audience is achieved—and, importantly, this diversity does not interfere with the possible establishment of collective effervescence (see **chapter 4**). Put differently, the heterogeneity of participants does not seem to hinder the success or intensity of the interaction as previously has been thought (Collins, 2004). Thus, while social characteristics—age, gender, ethnicity, education level—manifestly play a role in the likelihood of one attending a concert (Schaap & Berkers, 2019, 2020; Van Eijck, 2001), once there, these social distinctions can be overcome. And although

35 The difference between physically engaging in a ritual activity and commenting about one is seen again here. Although conventions can be enacted and policed on the chat column, there is little positive affect.

we cannot ignore the *symbolic boundaries* that surround live music events (evidently seen also in this dissertation), there is a *bridging* potential there (Putnam, 2000). On the condition that the participants are knowledgeable of and willing to partake in the ritual activities, solidarity between divergent people can be established through the interaction process [36].

Notwithstanding the well-established fact that music—and by extension taste—often acts as a symbol of group membership, these symbols need to be charged socially. When people identify with such symbols, they identify with a representation of an abstract group. Feelings of solidarity are then only extended to those who are considered to be part of that group. However, when people participate in a large-scale interaction ritual, the experience of collective effervescence charges symbols that come to represent the group that is physically there, joining in the mood, regardless of previous identifications (these characteristics become largely irrelevant if they do not stand in the way of participation). Solidarity is then no longer restricted to social bounds. Here lies the power of Durkheimian theorising indeed, as it provides a perspective that is quite different, but fully compatible with stratification perspectives.

This finding has important societal implications. With increasing cultural and ethnic diversity (White, 2017) and polarisation between social groups (Grande et al., 2018; Silva, 2017), methods of fostering social cohesion are welcome. While music as a tool for social bonding is by new means novel (Bensimon, 2012; Horsfall, 2013; Lena, 2012; Vougioukalou et al., 2019), it has also been critiqued, as music concerts rarely attract demographically diverse audiences and hence the bonding remains within and not between social groups (Schaap & Berkers, 2019; Wilks, 2011). This research provides empirical evidence to claim that music (specifically live music) can work in connecting social groups [37], as long as we can find ways to overcome the initial boundaries that separate them. We can broaden the scope also beyond music, as these positive effects can be seen to work through all forms of large-scale interaction rituals. Of course, I cannot claim that this is entirely new, as the premise of Durkheim's original writing emphasised the importance of gatherings ("rites") for social cohesion. This research demonstrates, however, that it can work across social groups and not only within them.

36 The difficulty of this should not be underestimated and characteristics of being willing and able to adjust to the genre conventions of another audience is unlikely to be equally dispersed through the social landscape.

37 The positive bridging potential of live music concerts presented here should not be taken as a definitive characteristic—as the discordance seen in particularly the levenslied audience cannot be ignored—I merely aim to emphasis the possibilities that large-scale interaction rituals can afford.

9.3. EXTENDING INTERACTION RITUAL THEORY

From the three studies of audience interaction during livestreamed concerts (chapter 6, 7 & 8) it becomes evident that large-scale interaction rituals are not possible online. As seen above, the main hindrance to the establishment of a Durkheimian collective effervescence is the inability of online communication to establish rhythmic entrainment among participants, despite what has been previously thought (Nexø & Strandell, 2020). As rhythmic entrainment is not only a key feature for the success of large-scale interaction rituals, but a necessary ingredient for the formation of large-scale interaction in general, the virtual sphere (as it is today) cannot accommodate this type of communication. For the concert experience it means that this too will be different, as the solidarity synonymous with live music (Frith, 2007; Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Mulder& Hitters, 2021) cannot be reached in the same regard.

However, this is not to say that the online sphere cannot accommodate meaningful interaction. In chapter 8, we saw that small-scale interaction—between two respondents or with the artist—is far more successful. Intense emotional outbursts are seen when the participants interact with, specifically, people they know (either from the physical realm or through a parasocial relationship with the artist) (see also: DiMaggio et al., 2018). This implies that although rhythmic entrainment is not possible online, these conversations can have significant intensity and accommodate an influx of emotional energy. The difference is that small-scale interaction online has a capacity for direct and prolonged turn-taking, which means that there is more of a chance of conveying and thus sharing an emotional state. Furthermore, the capability of a reciprocal exchange of messages means that there is more of a likelihood for a charge/recharge of collective symbols marking solidarity. We may be tempted to see this as rhythmic entrainment; however, I would argue (as does Collins, 2004) that the pace of online messages cannot match the flow of F2F conversation, meaning the build-up of rhythm needed for collective effervescence is out of reach.

The difference in the online sphere's ability in producing successful interaction rituals leads me to conclude that small- and large-scale interactions are not as interchangeable as Collins perceives them to be. While the outcome of successful F2F interaction rituals—social solidarity, emotional energy, and new standards of morality—may be the same, the necessary ingredients vary. This is an important distinction and one that deserves more attention, as little effort has been made previously to distinguish the difference between these types of interaction.

As we move our lives progressively online (accelerated by the pandemic and growing travel restrictions combating global warming),

these findings become increasingly relevant. Interaction online is found in various forms, through social media platforms—chat columns and messaging services—but also through virtual or extended realities. This is no longer limited to Gen Z gamers. While it started with *massively multiplayer online role-playing games* (MMORPG), we are turning to the metaverse, where many everyday activities previously conducted exclusively in the physical world—office meetings, art exhibitions, parties, concerts —, can now be done in the virtual world.

I would argue, however, that although these platforms allow for an increase in embodiment, a similar issue for interaction persists—the establishment of rhythmic entrainment. Thus, while small-scale interaction on these platforms may result in a certain degree of emotional energy, the establishment of large-scale interaction will remain a happening of the physical realm. The implications for interaction and social cohesion are too soon to tell.

9.4. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

While this dissertation certainly makes important contributions to thinking about the experience of live music, the place of collectivity, and large-scale interaction in general, it also brings to the fore a new set of questions and interesting future avenues to explore. I started the conclusion with examples of the changes in live music consumption, seen as a consequence of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. While this has certainly presented some interesting additions, as the online component of the research would have been limited otherwise, it also means that other aspects had to suffer—namely the analysis of physical interaction. For example, an area that needs further investigation is the difference between small-and large-scale interaction and how these work in generating positive individual and social emotions for F2F encounters. Further research is thus needed to compare and contrast the mechanisms of various types of F2F interaction. Researchers interested in interaction rituals should approach this with methodological rigor, as collective effervescence and emotional energy are hard to measure, evidenced in the limited studies that attempt this (Liebst, 2019). An approach worth exploring would be through methodological triangulation—similar to that seen in chapter 8 of this dissertation—where video observations of large- and small-scale interaction are combined with video elicited interviews with the people interacting. As Collins (2004) notes, interaction rituals are best studied through observation, with the addition of interviews adding a much-needed perspective of the experience of these encounters, from the perspective of the participants.

Another aspect worth noting is the limited sample of physical concerts and concert goers that this dissertation presents. Ideally, the

sample of F2F concerts would have been larger, adding more genres from within the three cultural schemes to strengthen the analysis [38]. An avenue of future research would certainly be to look into a wider selection of genres, asking how the collective aspects, aspirations, and possibility for bridging differ. Furthermore, a larger sample of F2F concerts could have led to the development of a more nuanced qualitative analysis of the consumption of national music, focusing not only on folk genres (as I do now in chapter 3) but also nationally produced music from popular and highbrow genres. During the last few decades, we have seen a steady increase in the popularity of "home-grown-talents" from a wide selection of genres, however, little is known about this growing trend and the motivation of its consumers. Further comparative research should be conducted on the incentive, experience, and engagement of these audiences.

Furthermore, the data collected is extremely context specific, and while this is the case for all data, the period in which many of these studies were conducted is relatively unique. While this was taken into account as much as possible, it is important to reflect on how this timeframe effected behaviour and preferences. For example, what is the experience of livestreams and online interaction when restrictions limiting physical interactions are no longer in place? New technologies are rapidly developing, and we are becoming increasingly comfortable with the tools of online communication. What will this mean for boundary work, the re/establishment of conventions, and accessibility? The emphasis on digitalisation (and its effect on how we live our lives) is not only accelerating but it is here to stay, this dissertation is a small but significant steppingstone in understanding the impact of this shift on social interaction and social solidarity.

38 I had organized to attend and collect data at four concerts in March 2020, which were subsequently canceled due to the COVID-19 restrictions. These were going to be two concerts from the Metropole Orchestra and two concerts of the Dutch pop singer Eefje de Visser.

References

Achterberg, P., Heilbron, J., Houtman, D., et al. (2011). A cultural globalization of popular music? American, Dutch, French, and German popular music charts (1965 to 2006). *American Behavioral Scientist*, 55(5): 89—608.

Adorno, T. W. (1976). *Introduction to the sociology of music*. New York: Seabury Press.

Alexander, V. (2003). *Sociology of the arts. Exploring fine and popular forms*. Malden: Backwell Publishing.

Alexander, J. (2010). Iconic consciousness: The material reeling of meaning. *Thesis Eleven*, 103(1): 10—25.

Airoldi, M., Beraldo, D., & Gandini, A. (2016). Follow the algorithm: An exploratory investigation of music on YouTube. *Poetics*, 57: 1 13.

Anderson, T. L., & Kavanaugh, P. R. (2007). A 'rave' review: Conceptual interests and analytical shifts in research on rave culture. *Sociology Compass*, 1(2): 499—519.

Antonucci, L., Horvath, L., Kutiyski, Y., et al. (2017). The malaise of the squeezed middle: Challenging the narrative of the 'left behind' Brexiter. *Competition & Change*, 21(3): 211—229.

Atkinson, W. (2011). The context and genesis of musical taste: Omnivorousness debunked, Bourdieu buttressed. *Poetics*. 39: 169—186.

Bartholomew, D. E., & Mason, M. J. (2020). Facebook rituals: Identifying rituals of social networking sites using structural ritualization theory. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 19(2): 142—150.

Baym, N. K. (2015). *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Becker, H. S. (1982). *Art worlds*. London: University of California Press.

Behr, A., Brennan, M., Cloonan, M., Frith, S., & Webster, E. (2016). Live Concert Performance: An Ecological Approach. *Rock Music Studies*, 3(1), 5—23.

Bekhuis, H., Lubbers, M., & Ultee, W. (2014). A macro-sociological study into the changes in the popularity of domestic, European, and American pop music in Western countries. *European Sociological Review*, 30(2): 180—193.

Bellavance, G. (2008). Where's high? Who's low? What's new? Classification and stratification inside cultural "Repertoires". *Poetics*, 36: 189—216.

Bensimon, M. (2012). The sociological role of collective singing during intense moments of protest. *Sociology*, 46(2): 241—57.

Bennett, A. (2004). Consolidating the Music Scenes Perspective. *Poetics*, 32: 223—234.

Bennett, A. (2008). Towards a cultural sociology of popular music. *Journal of Sociology*, 44(4): 419—432.

Bennett, A., & Peterson, R. (2004). *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal and Virtual*. Vanderbilt University Press.

Benzecry, C., & Collins, R. (2014). The high of cultural experience: Toward a microsociology of cultural consumption. *Sociological Theory*, 32(4): 307—326.

Berkers, P., & Michael, J. (2017). Just what is it that makes today's music festivals so appealing? In P. Koudstaal (Ed.), *Music brings us together: Music & Art festivals* (pp. 98—115). Den Haag: Uitgeverij Komma.

Bhambra, G. (2017). Brexit, Trump, and 'methodological whiteness': On the misrecognition of Race and class. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68: S214-S232.

Billig, M. (1995). *Banal Nationalism*. London: SAGE.

Bodner, E., & Gilboa, A. (2009). On the power of music to affect intergroup relations. *Musicae Scientiae*, 13(1): 85—115.

Boltanski, L., & Thévenot, L. (2006). *On Justification: Economies of Worth*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Born, G. (2011). Music and the materialization of identities. *Journal of Material Culture*, 16(4): 376—388.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. London: Routledge.

boyd, danah. (2007). Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, Identity, and Digital Media* (pp. 119—142). Cambridge: MIT Press.

boyd, danah. (2008). Facebook's Privacy Trainwreck. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 14(1): 13—20.

Boyns, D., & Loprieno, D. (2013). Feeling Through Presence: Toward a Theory of Interaction Rituals and Parasociality in Online Social Worlds. In T. Benski, & E. Fisher (Eds.), *Internet and Emotions* (pp. 47—61). New York: Routledge.

Brandtzaeg, P. B., & Lüders, M. (2018). Time collapse in social media: extending the context collapse. *Social Media+Society*, 4(1): 1—10.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): 77—101.

Brümmer, K. (2019). Coordination in sports teams—ethnographic insights into practices of video analysis in football. *European Journal for Sport and Society*, 16(1): 27—43.

Bryson, B. (1996).
"Anything but heavy metal". Symbolic exclusion and musical dislikes. *American Sociological Review*, 61(5): 884—899.

Bugaric, B., & Kuhelj, A. (2018). Varieties of populism in Europe: Is the rule of law in danger? *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 10(1): 21—33.

Burroughs, B. (2014). Facebook and FarmVille: A digital ritual analysis of social gaming. *Games and Culture*, 9(3): 151—166.

Carlton-Ford, S. (1992). Charisma, ritual collective effervescence, and self-esteem. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 33(3): 365—387.

Cheyne, A., & Binder, A. (2010). Cosmopolitan preferences: The constitutive role of place in American elite taste for hip-hop music 1991—2005. *Poetics*, 38(3): 336—364.

Cohen, A. P. (1985). *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London: Routledge.

Collins, K. (2013). *Playing with sound: A theory of interacting with sound and music in video games*. Cambridge: MIT press.

Collins, R. (1994). *Four Sociological Traditions*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Collins, R. (2004). *Interaction Ritual Chains*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Collins, R. (2014). Interaction ritual chains and collective effervescence. In C. Von Scheve, & M. Salmela (Eds.), *Collective Emotions* (pp. 299—311). Oxford University Press.

Collins, R. (2020). Social distancing as a critical test of the micro-sociology of solidarity. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 8(3): 477—497.

Coulangeon, P., & Lemel, Y. (2009). The Homology Thesis: Distinction Revisited. In K. Robson., & C. Sanders (Eds), *Quantifying Theory: Pierre Bourdieu* (pp. 47—60). Dordrecht: Springer.

Davis, J. L., & Jurgenson, N. (2014). Context collapse: Theorizing context collusions and collisions. *Information Communication and Society*, 17(4): 476—485.

Daenekindt, S., Van der Waal, J., & De Koster, W. (2018). Social mobility and political distrust: cults of gratitude and resentment? *Acta Politica*, 53: 269—282.

DeNora, T. (2000). *Music in Everyday Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DeNora, T. (2003). *After Adorno: rethinking music sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DeNora, T. (1999). Music as a technology of the self. *Poetics*. 27(1): 31—56.

Dimaggio, P. (1987). Classification in art. *American Sociological Review*, 52: 440—455.

Dimaggio, P., Bernier, C., Heckscher, C., & Mimno, D. (2018). Interaction ritual threads does IRC theory apply online? In E. B. Weininger., A. Lareau., & O. Lizardo (Eds.), *Ritual, Emotion, Violence: Studies on the Micro-Sociology of Randall Collins* (pp.81—124), New York: Routledge.

Ditchfield, H., & Meredith, J. (2018). Collecting qualitative data from Facebook: Approaches and methods. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection* (pp. 496—510). London: SAGE Publications.

Dorling, D. (2016). Brexit: The decision of a divided country. *BMJ*, 354: i3697.

Duguay, S. (2016). "He has a way gayer Facebook than I do": Investigating sexual identity disclosure and context collapse on a social networking site. *New Media & Society*, 18(6): 891—907.

Durkheim, É. (1995[1912]). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, New York: Free Press.

Durkheim, É. (1994). Note on Social Morphology. In M. Traugott (Ed.), Émile Durkheim: *On Institutional Analysis*, (pp. 88 90). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ellison, N., Heino, R., & Gibbs, J. (2006). Managing Impressions Online: Self-Presentation Processes in the Online Dating Environment. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(2): 415—441.

Emmison, M. (2003). Social Class and Cultural Mobility: Reconfiguring the Cultural Omnivore Thesis. *Journal of Sociology*. 39(3):211—230.

Fabiani, J. (2005). Should the sociological analysis of art festivals be neo-Durkheimian? *Durkheimian Studies/ Études Durkheimiennes*, 11: 49—66.

Fine, G. (2003). Crafting Authenticity: The Validation of Identity in Self-Taught Art. *Theory and Society*, 32(2):153—80.

Fishman, R., & Lizardo, O. (2013). How Macro-Historical Change Shapes Cultural Taste: Legacies of Democratization in Spain and Portugal. *American Sociological Review*, 78 (2): 213—239.

Flick, U., Von Kardoff, E., & Steinke, I. (2004). *Companion to Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE.

Frith, S. (1981). 'The magic that can set you free': The ideology of folk and the myth of the rock community. In R. Middleton., & D. Horn (Ed), *Popular Music 1. Folk or Popular? Distinctions, Influences, Continuities* (pp. 159—168). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Frith, S. (1996). *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Frith, S. (2004). Does British music still matter? *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(1): 43—58.

Frith, S. (2007). Live music matters. *Scottish Music Review*, 1(1).

Ford, C., Gardner, D., Horgan, L. E., Liu, C., Tsaasan, A. M., Nardi, B., & Rickman, J. (2017). Chat speed op: Practices of coherence in massive Twitch chat. *Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems—Proceedings*, Part F1276: 858—869.

Fukuoka, K. (2017). Between banality and effervescence? A study of Japanese youth nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism*, 23(2): 346—366.

Gibbs, M., Meese, J., Arnold, M., Nansen, B. & Carter, M. (2015) '#funeral and Instagram: Death, social media, and platform vernacular'. *Information, Communication and Society*, 18(3): 255—68.

Gil-Lopez, T., Shen, C., Benefield, G. A., Palomares, N. A., Kosinski, M., & Stillwell, D. (2018). One size fits all: Context collapse, self-presentation strategies and language styles on Facebook. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 23(3): 127—145.

Gill, R. (2000). Discourse analysis. In M. Bauer & G. Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative Researching with Text, Image and Sound. A Practical Handbook* (pp. 172—190). London: Sage.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life.* New York: Doubleday.

Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction Ritual*. New York: Doubleday.

Goffman, E. (1979). *Gender Advertisements*. New York: Harper & Row.

Goldberg, A., Michael, T., Hannan, B., & Kovácsc, B. (2016). What Does It Mean to Span Cultural Boundaries? Variety and Atypicality in Cultural Consumption. *American Sociological Review*, 81(2): 215— 241.

Gore, G. (1997). The beat goes on: Trance dance and tribalism in rave culture. In H. Thomas (Ed.), *Dance in the City* (pp. 50—67). London: Macmillan Press.

Grande, E., Schwarzbözl, T., & Fatke, M. (2018). Politicizing immigration in Western Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26(10): 1444—1463.

Grazian, D. (2005). *Blue Chicago: The Search for Authenticity in Urban Blues Clubs.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hahl, O., Zuckerman, E. W., & Kim, M. (2017). Why Elites Love Authentic Lowbrow Culture: Overcoming High-Status Denigration with Outsider Art. *American Sociological Review*, 82(4), 828—856.

Haimson, O. L., & Tang, J. C. (2017). What makes live events engaging on Facebook Live, Periscope, and Snapchat. *Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems—Proceedings*, 48—60.

Halikiopoulou, D., & Vlandas, T. (2019). What is new and what is nationalist about Europe's new nationalism? Explaining the rise of the far right in Europe. *Nations and Nationalism*, 25(2): 409—434.

Halle, D. (1996). *Inside Culture: Art and Class in the American Home.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hamilton, W. A., Garretson, O., & Kerne, A. (2014). Streaming on Twitch: Fostering participatory communities of play within live mixed media. *Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems—Proceedings*, 1315—1324.

Heath, C., Hindmarsh, J., & Luff, P. (2010). *Video in Qualitative Research: Analysing Social Interaction in Everyday Life.* London: SAGE.

Heider, A., & Warner, R. S. (2010). Bodies in Sync: Interaction Ritual Theory Applied to Sacred Harp Singing. *Sociology of Religion*, 71(1): 76—97.

Heinskou, M. B., & Liebst, L. S. (2016). On the elementary neural forms of micro-interactional rituals: Integrating autonomic nervous system functioning into interaction ritual theory. *Sociological Forum*, 31(2): 354—76.

Hendriks, F., (2009). Democratic reform between the extreme makeover and the reinvention of tradition. *Democratization*, 16(2): 243—268.

Hennion, A. (2001). Music lovers: Taste as performance. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 18(5): 1—22.

Henry, S. G., & Fetters, M. D. (2012). Video elicitation interviews: A qualitative research method for investigating physician-patient interactions. *Annals of Family Medicine*, 10(2): 118—125.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2013). *Why music matters*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2021). Is music streaming bad for musicians? Problems of evidence and argument. *New Media & Society*, 23(12): 3593—3615.

Hilhorst, S., & Hermes, J. (2016). 'We have given up so much': Passion and denial in the Dutch Zwarte Piet (Black Pete) controversy. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 19(3): 218—233.

Hitters, E., & Van de Kamp, M. (2010). Tune in, fade out: Music companies and the classification of domestic music products in the Netherlands. *Poetics*, 38(5): 461—480.

Hilvert-Bruce, Z., Neill, J. T., Sjöblom, M., & Hamari, J. (2018). Social motivations of live-streaming viewer engagement on Twitch. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 84: 58—67.

Hobsbawm, E. (1991). *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hochschild, A. (1979). Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure. *American Journal of Sociology*, 85(3): 551—575.

Hodkinson, P., &; Deicke, W. (2009). *Youth Cultures: Scenes, Subcultures and Tribes*. London: Routledge.

Hogan, B. (2010). The Presentation of Self in the Age of SocialMedia: Distinguishing Performances and Exhibitions Online. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, 30(6): 377—386.

Holt, D. (1997). Distinction in America? Recovering Bourdieu's theory of tastes from its critics. *Poetics*, 25(2—3): 93—120.

Holt, F. (2010). The economy of live music in the digital age. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13(2): 243—261.

Horsfall, S. T. (2013). Music as Ritual: A Hotline to the Collective Conscious. In S. T. Horsfall., J. M. Meij., & M. Probstfield (Eds.), *Music Sociology: Examining the Role of Music in Social Life* (pp. 51—59). New York: Routledge.

Horton, D., & Wohl, R. (1956). Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction. *Psychiatry*, 19(3): 215—229.

Huang, J., Van den Brink, H., & Groot, W. (2010). College education and social trust: An evidencebased study on the causal mechanisms. *Social Indicators Research*, 104(2): 287—310.

Hughes, M. (2000). Country music as impression management: A meditation on fabricating authenticity. *Poetics*, 28(2-3): 185—205.

Jacobsen, M. H., & Kristiansen, S. (2015). *The social thought of Erving Goffman*. London: SAGE.

Jarness, V. (2015). Modes of consumption: From "what" to "how" in cultural stratification research. *Poetics*. 53: 65—79.

Jodén, H., & Strandell, J. (2021). Building viewer engagement through interaction rituals on Twitch.tv. *Information Communication and Society*, [Advance online publication].

Johnston, J., & Baumann, S. (2007). Democracy versus Distinction: A study of omnivorousness in gourmet food writing. *American Journal of Sociology*. 113(1): 165—204.

Johnston, J., Baumann, S., & Oleschuk, M. (2019). Omnivorousness, distinction, or both? In F. F. Wherry., & I. Woodward (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of consumption* (pp. 361—380). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kant, I. (1790 [2000]). *Critique of the Power of Judgment (Kritik der Urteilskraft)*, page reference to the 2000 translation by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kassabian, A. (2001). Ubiquitous Listening and Networked Subjectivity. *Echo: A Music-Centered Journal*, 3(2).

Katz-Gerro, T. (2011). Highbrow cultural consumption and class distinction in Italy, Israel, West Germany, Sweden and the United States. *Social Forces*, 81(1): 207—299.

Keesman, L. D. (2021). Action accounts of police-civilian interactions: Using video elicitation to explore police officers' how-to knowledge. *Poetics*, 91: 101561.

Kerney, M. (2018). Totally alive: The Wisconsin uprising and the source of collective effervescence. *Theory and Society*, 47(2): 233—254.

Kjus, Y., & Danielsen, A. (2014). Live Islands in the seas of recordings: The music experience of visitors at the øya festival. *Popular Music and Society*, 37(5): 660—679.

Knottnerus, J. D. (2016). *Ritual as a Missing Link: Sociology, Structural Ritualization Theory, and Research*, London: Routledge.

Kuipers, G. (2012). The rise and decline of national culture and the shaping of national similarity. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 16(1): 17—35.

Kuipers, G. (2015). *Good humor, bad taste: A sociology of the joke*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co.KG.

Lahire, B. (2008). The individual and the mixing of genres: Cultural dissonance and self-distinction. *Poetics*, 36: 166—188.

Lamont, M. (1992). *Money, Morals, and Manners: The culture of the French and American upper-middle class*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lamont, A., Loveday, C. (2020). A New Framework for Understanding Memories and Preference for Music. *Music & Science*, 3: 1—14.

Lawler, S. (2005). Distrusted subjects: The masking of middle-class identities. *Sociological Review*, 53(3): 429—446

Leman, M., Buhmaan, J., & Van Dyck, E. (2017). The empowering effects of being locked into the beat of the music. In C. Wollner (Eds.), *Body, Sound and Space in Music and Beyond: Multimodal Explorations*. (pp. 13—28). New York: Routledge.

Lena, J. C. (2012). *Banding Together: How Communities Create Genres in Popular Music*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Liebst, L. S. (2016). Reassembling Durkheimian sociology of space. In S. Griffiths., & A. von Lünen (Eds.), *Spatial cultures: towards a new social morphology of cities past and present* (pp. 214—224). Design and the Built Environment.

Liebst, L. S. (2019). Exploring the sources of collective effervescence: A multilevel study. *Sociological Science*, 6: 27—42.

Lindemann, H. (2009). Autonomy, beneficence, and gezelligheid: Lessons in moral theory from the Dutch. *Hastings Center Report*, 39(5): 39—45.

Ling, R. (2008). *New Tech, New Ties: How mobile Communication is Reshaping Social Cohesion*. London: MIT Press.

Lizardo, O., & Skiles, S. (2012). Reconceptualizing and Theorizing "omnivorousness" genetic and relational mechanism. *Sociological Theory*, 30(4): 263—282.

Marwick, A. E., & boyd, d. (2011). I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Twitter users, context collapse, and the imagined audience. *New Media & Society*, 13(1): 114—133.

Marshall, L. (2019). Do People Value Recorded Music? *Cultural Sociology*, 13(2): 141—158.

Mauss, M. (1979[1906]). *Seasonal Variations of the Eskimo: A Study in Social Morphology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

McCoy, C., & Scarborough, R. (2014). Watching “bad” television: Ironic consumption, camp, And guilty pleasure. *Poetics*. 47: 41—59.

McMillan, D. (1996). Sense of community. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 24(4): 315—325.

Meredith, J. (2019). Conversation Analysis and Online Interaction. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 52(3): 241—256.

Meuleman, R., & Savage, M. (2013). A field analysis of cosmopolitan taste: Lessons from the Netherlands. *Cultural Sociology*, 7(2): 230—256.

Michael, J. (2015). It’s really not hip to be a hipster: Negotiating trends and authenticity in the cultural field. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 15(2): 163—182.

Montoro-Pons, J. D., Cuadrado-García, M., & Casasús-Estellés, T. (2013). Analysing the popular music audience: Determinants of participation and frequency of attendance. *International Journal of Music Business Research*, 2(1): 35—62.

Mosselman, F., Weenink, D., & Lindegaard, M. R. (2018). Weapons, Body Postures, and the Quest for Dominance in Robberies: A Qualitative Analysis of Video Footage. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 55(1): 3—26.

Mueser, D., & Vlachos, P. (2018). Almost like being there? A conceptualisation of livestreaming theatre. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 9(2): 183—203.

Mulder, M., & Hitters, E. (2021). Visiting pop concerts and festivals: measuring the value of an integrated live music motivation scale. *Cultural Trends*, 30(4): 355—375.

Murthy, D. (2008). Digital Ethnography: An Examination of the Use of New Technologies for Social. *Sociology*, 42(5): 837—855.

Nayak, A. (2005). White lives. In: K. Murji., & J. Solomas (Ed.), *Racialization: Studies in Theory and Practice* (pp. 141—162), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nexø, L, A., & Strandell, J. (2020). Testing, Filtering, and Insinuating: Matching and Attunement of Emoji Use Patterns as Non-Verbal Flirting in Online Dating. *Poetics*, 83:101477.

Niekrenz, Y. (2014). The elementary forms of carnival: Collective effervescence in Germany’s Rhineland. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 39(4): 643—665.

Novak, P. K., Smailović, J., Sluban, B., & Mozetič, I. (2015). Sentiment of emojis. *PLoS One*, 10: 12.

Nowak. R., &; Bennett, A. (2022). *Music Sociology Value, Technology, and Identity*. London: Routledge.

Olaveson, T. (2004). ‘Connectedness’ and the rave experience: rave as new religious movement? In G. St John (Ed.), *Rave Culture and Religion* (pp. 83—104), London: Routledge.

Partridge, C. (2006). The spiritual and the revolutionary: Alternative spirituality, British free festivals, and the emergence of rave culture. *Culture and Religion*, 7(1): 41—60.

Paulus, T., Warren, A., & Lester, J. N. (2016). Applying conversation analysis methods to online talk: A literature review. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 12: 1—10.

Peters, J., Van Eijck, K., & Michael, J. (2018). Secretly Serious? Maintaining and Crossing Cultural Boundaries in the Karaoke Bar Through Ironic Consumption. *Cultural Sociology*, 12(1): 58—74.

Peterson, R. (1972). A process model of the folk, pop and fine arts phases of jazz. In C Nanry (Ed.), *American music: From Storyville to Woodstock* (pp. 135-151). New Jersey: Transaction Books.

Peterson, R. (1992). Understanding audience segments: From elite and mass to omnivore and univore. *Poetics*, 21: 243—258.

Peterson, R., & Kern, R. (1996). Changing highbrow taste: From snob to omnivore. *American Sociological Review*, 61(5): 900—907.

Peterson, R. (2005). In search of authenticity. *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(5): 1083—1098.

Peretz, I., Gaudreau, D., & Bonnel, A.-M. (1998). Exposure effects on music preference and recognition. *Memory & Cognition*, 26(5): 884—902.

Propheter, G. (2015). Frequency and attendance at popular music concerts in the USA: Does facility age matter? *Cultural Trends*, 24(4): 310—319.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rawls, A. W. (1989). Interaction Order or Interaction Ritual: Comment on Collins. *Symbolic Interaction*, 12(1): 103—109.

Reddish, P., Fischer, R., & Bulbulia, J. (2013). Let's dance together: synchrony, shared intentionality and cooperation. *PLoS One*, 8(8): e71182.

Riordan, M. A. (2017). Emojis as Tools for Emotion Work: Communicating Affect in Text Messages. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 36(5): 549—567.

Roose, H. (2008). Many-voiced or unisono? An inquiry into motives for attendance and aesthetic dispositions of the audience attending classical concerts. *Acta Sociologica*, 51(3): 237—253.

Roose, H., & Vander Stichele, A. (2010). Living Room vs. Concert Hall: Patterns of Music Consumption in Flanders. *Social Forces*, 89(1): 185—207.

Roose, H. (2015). Signs of emerging cultural capital? Analysing symbolic struggles using class specific analysis. *Sociology*. 49(3): 556—573.

Rose-Greenland, F. (2013). The Parthenon marbles as icons of nationalism in nineteenth-century Britain. *Nations and Nationalism*, 19(4): 654—673.

Roy, W. (2010). *Reds, Whites, and Blues: Social Movements, Folk Music, and Race in the United States*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Roy, W., & Dowd, T. J. (2010). What is sociological about music? *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36: 183—203.

Schaap, J., & Berkers, P. (2014). Grunting Alone? Online Gender Inequality in Extreme Metal Music. *I@J*, 4(1): 101—116.

Schaap, J., & Berkers, P. (2020). "Maybe it's... skin colour?" How race-ethnicity and gender function in consumers' formation of classification styles of cultural content. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 23(6): 599—615.

Schaap, J., & Berkers, P. (2020). "You're Not Supposed to Be into Rock Music": Authenticity Manoeuvring in a White Configuration. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 6(3): 416—430.

Sheffield, R. T. (2018). Facebook live as a record making technology. *Archivaria*, 85: 96—121.

Schulze, G. (1992). *Die Erlebsnisgesellschaft: Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart*. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.

Silva, B. (2017). Populist radical right parties and mass polarization in the Netherlands. *European Political Science Review*, 10(2): 219—244.

Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting Qualitative Data: A Guide to the Principles of Qualitative Research (5th ed.)*. London: SAGE.

Simpson, J. M., Knottnerus, J. D., & Stern, M. J. (2018). Virtual Rituals: Community, Emotion, and Ritual in Massive Multiplayer Online Role-playing Games—A Quantitative Test and Extension of Structural Ritualization Theory. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 4: 1—13.

Skjuve, M. & Brandtzaeg, P. B. (2019). 'Facebook live: A mixed-methods approach to explore individual live streaming practices and motivations on Facebook', *Interacting with Computers*, 31(6): 589—602.

Stahl, G. (2017). The practice of 'othering' in reaffirming white working-class boys' conceptions of normative identities. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 20(3): 283—300.

St John, G. (2004). *Rave Culture and Religion*, London: Routledge.

Sutton, C, R. (2004). Celebrating ourselves: The family reunion rituals of African-Caribbean transnational families. *Global Networks*, 4(3): 243—257.

Sylvan, R. (2013). *Trance Formation: The Spiritual and Religious Dimensions of Global Rave Culture*, New York: Routledge.

Tannen, D. (2009). Framing and Face: The Relevance of The Presentation of Self to Linguistic Discourse Analysis. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 72(4): 300—305.

Takahashi, M., & Olaveson, T. (2003). Music, dance and raving bodies: Raving as spirituality in the central Canadian rave scene. *Journal of Ritual Studies*, 17(2):72—96.

Taylor, T. L. (2018). *Watch Me Play: Twitch and the Rise of Game Live Streaming*, Princeton University Press.

Triggs, A. H., Møller, K., & Neumayer, C. (2019). Context collapse and anonymity among queer Reddit users. *New Media & Society*, 23(1): 5—21.

Tutenges, S. (2013). Stirring up effervescence: An ethnographic study of youth at a nightlife resort. *Leisure Studies*, 32(3): 233—248.

The Highest Peak Viewership Music Twitch Streamers. (2022, March 10). *Twitchmetrics*. Retrieved March 12, 2022, from https://www.twitchmetrics.net/channels/peak?game=Music

Music—Twitch Statistics and Charts. (N.d.). TwitchTracker. Retrieved January 6, 2022, from https://twitchtracker.com/games/26936

Vandebroeck, D. (2016). *Distinctions in the Flesh: Social Class and the Embodiment of Inequality*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Van der Hoeven, A., Janssen, S., & Driessen, S. (2016). Articulations of identity and distinction: The meanings of language in Dutch popular music. *Popular Music and Society*, 39(1): 43—58.

Van Eijck, K. (2000). Richard A. Peterson and the culture of consumption. *Poetics*, 28: 207—224.

Van Eijck, K. (2001). Social Differentiation in Musical Taste Patterns. *Social Forces*, 79(3): 1163—1185.

Van Eijck, K., & Knulst, W. (2005). No more need for snobbism: Highbrow cultural participation in a taste democracy. *European Sociological Review*, 21(5): 513—528.

Van Eijck, K., & Lievens, J. (2008). Cultural omnivorousness as a combination of highbrow, pop, and folk elements: The relation between taste patterns and attitudes concerning social integration. *Poetics*, 36(2—3), 217—242.

Van Poecke, N. (2018). Pure Taste in Popular Music: The social construction of indie-folk as a performance of "poly-purism". *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*. 6: 499—531.

Veblen, T. (1991[1899]). *The theory of the leisure class. An economic study of institutions*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Vougioukalou, S., Dow, R., Bradshaw, L., & Pallant, T. (2019). Wellbeing and integration through community music: the role of improvisation in a music group of refugees, asylum seekers and local community members. *Contemp. Music Rev*, 38: 533—548.

Wang, M., & Li, D. (2020). What motivates audience comments on live streaming platforms? *PLoS One*, 15(4): 1—12.

Warde, A. (1997). *Consumption, Food and Taste: Culinary Antinomies and Commodity Culture*. London: SAGE.

Weber, M. (1946). Class, Status, Party. In H. H. Girth., & C. W. Mills (Eds.), From *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (pp. 180-195). New York: Oxford University.

Weenink, D. (2008). Cosmopolitanism as form of capital: Parents preparing their children for a globalizing world. *Sociology*, 42(6): 1089—1106.

White, B. W. (2017). *Intercultural Cities: Policy and Practice for a New Era*. New York; London: Springer.

Wilks, L. (2011). Bridging and bonding: Social capital at music festivals. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 3(3): 281—297.

Wilson, R. E., Gosling, S. D., & Graham, L. T. (2012). A Review of Facebook Research in the Social Sciences. *Perspectives on Psychological Science: A Journal of the Association for Psychological Science*, 7(3): 203—220.

Yanish, M., & Katz-Gerro, T. (2012). Disentangling "cultural capital": The consequence of cultural and economic resources for taste and participation. *European Sociological Review*, 28(2): 169—185.

Zubrzycki, G. (2011). History and the national sensorium: Making sense of Polish mythology. *Qualitative Sociology*, 34(1): 21—57.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Overview of (anonymised) interview respondents for chapters 3 & 4, including their occupation, educational status, and age. One asterisk (*) next to the respondent's name indicates a double interview. Two asterisks (**) next to the education status indicates a student is in the process of completing the degree and is still enrolled at university.

NAME	OCCUPATION	EDUCATIONAL STATUS	AGE
LEVENSLIED			
Jan	Chef	Intermediate vocational education	35
Arijan	Caretaker	Intermediate vocational education	33
Mark	Gardener	Primary education	27
Geertje*	Social worker	Intermediate vocational education	28
Danny*	Carpenter	Intermediate vocational education	23
Tino	Builder	Secondary education	18
Kelsey	Social worker	Intermediate vocational education	27
Sammi	Social worker	Intermediate vocational education	21
Sophie	Student	Intermediate vocational education**	23
Wout	Student	Secondary education**	18
Rick	Bartender	Higher vocational education	25
Janne*	Student	Higher vocational education**	20
Maaike*	Student	Higher vocational education**	20
Bart	Technician	Bachelors	25
Marco*	Builder	Secondary education	22
Rachel*	Social worker	Higher vocational education	19
Ben	Graphic designer	Masters	28
Bas	Consultant	Masters	28
Joe	Project leader	Bachelors	29
Mike	Technician	Intermediate vocational education	25
DUTCH POPULAR MUSIC			
Isabel	Project leader	Higher vocational education	30
Irene *	Bank teller	Higher vocational education	25
Elise*	Student	Bachelors**	18
Marlies	Student	Bachelors**	21
Jordy*	Project leader	Intermediate vocational education	21

Tony*	Musician	Intermediate vocational education	24
Fleur	Musician	Higher vocational education	34
Sarah	HR	Higher vocational education	33
Lucy	Student	Bachelors**	19
Peter	Teacher	Bachelors	25
CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL			
Daan	Civil servant	Masters	29
Elmer	Civil servant	Masters	30
Kasper	Audio Technician	Masters	27
Marijke	Consultant	Higher vocational education	26
Sam	Chef	Higher vocational education	29
Alice	Art director	Bachelors	24
George	Musician	Bachelors	30
Steven	Welfare officer	Higher vocational education	30
Amy	Designer	Bachelors	25
Lieke	Medical technician	Masters	28

Appendix 2

Interview guide for chapter 3 & 4. Original set of questions were in Dutch, they have been translated here by the author. Everything in italics are probes.

Introduction:

1. Thank the respondent for their participation
2. Explanation of the interview process

About the concert/festival

1. How did you like the event?
2. What was the reason for attending?
3. Can you tell me about how you got ready for the event?
4. Can you tell me a little bit about the concert and what you did there?
   - ◇ *Where were you standing/sitting?*
   - ◇ *What were you mostly doing?*
   - ◇ *Who did you go with?*
   - ◇ *What was the atmosphere like?*
   - ◇ *What did you think of the artists performance/interaction with the audience?*
5. Can you tell me a little about the audience that was there?
   - ◇ *Was it the usual crowd, do you think?*
6. What do you think the most impressive moment of the show was?
7. Was there also a moment that you remember enjoying less?—was there anything about the experience that you did not like/appreciate?
8. How often do you normally go to these types of events?
9. [Some additional or more specific questions connected to each concert were also asked during this phase of the interview]

Defining the genre

1. How would you describe the type of music playing?
2. What genre do you think it belongs to?
3. What do you think makes this music different to other genres?
4. Can you name other similar artists?—or artists within this genre?
5. Do you have a favourite artist within this genre?
6. What are the most important features of the music should have?
   - ◇ *The voice, lyrics, rhythm/beat, harmony etc…*
7. What are the most important features an event should have?
   - ◇ *Singing/dancing, light show, costume changes, food/drink etc…*
8. What are the most important features an artist should have?

- ◇ *Style, stage presence, authenticity, relatability, star quality, musicality etc…*

Taste and taste formation

1. When did you start listening to this music?
2. How did you discover it?
3. What attracted you to it?
4. Do you listen to similar music to your parents?
   - ◇ What do they listen to?
5. Do you listen to similar music to your friends?
   - ◇ What do they listen to?
6. What other types of music do you like?
7. Do you also visit other types of music events?
   - ◇ How often?
   - ◇ How do these types of events differ?—do you attend for different reasons?
   - ◇ Is there any type of music event that you would like to attend in the future?
8. What times of music do you dislike?
   - ◇ *And why?*
9. Is there a type of music event that would never attend?
   - ◇ *And why?*
10. How would you describe your music taste?
11. How do you think others see your music taste?
12. In your opinion what is the difference between "good" and bad "music"?
    - ◇ *What makes a good artist?*
    - ◇ *What makes a good song?*
    - ◇ *What makes a good music event?*

Music in everyday life

1. How do you most often listen to music?
   - ◇ *Radio, Spotify, YouTube, live, at the bar etc…*
2. When do you listen to music?
3. How often?
4. Do you also listen to it in the company with other people?
   - ◇ In what way?
   - ◇ *In the background, as the primary activity?*
5. Do you share music with your friends and family?
   - ◇ Which genres of music?
6. Do you buy any music?
   - ◇ Which genre of music?
   - ◇ Do you buy any other music related memorabilia? *Band shirts etc…*
7. How do you think music impacts your daily life and who you are as a person?

- *Your clothing style, behaviour, friends, people you do not get on with, identity, the way you think about the world*

Personal information

1. Age
2. Occupation
3. Education status
4. Education of your parents
5. City of residence

Appendix 3

Overview of interviewed respondents for chapters 8, including their occupation, nationality, educational status, and age. Two asterisks (**) next to the education status indicates a student is still studying. Missing information is due to respondent not mentioning it or missing information on the interview transcript.

NAME	OCCUPATION	NATIONALITY	EDUCATIONAL STATUS	AGE
CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL				
Camila	Supply chain	Argentinian	Bachelors	24
Sarah	Student	Dutch	Bachelors**	19
Andrew	Student	Irish	Bachelors**	20
Thomas	Stage manager	Dutch		33
Pablo	Accountant	Italian	Masters	25
Paul	Student	Dutch	Higher vocational education**	20
Rick	Student	Dutch	Higher vocational education**	21
Mark		English	Bachelors	31
Han	Student	Japanese	PhD**	29
Adam	Student	Dutch	Bachelors**	22

Appendix 4

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Proceedings of research:

Thank you so much for agreeing to take part in this research. This document provides you with all the information about the processing's of the research.

1. The research is based on your experience of live music on Twitch. Therefore, **it is necessary that you have a Twitch account, and are versed in how Twitch works**.
2. You are asked to view **three 45min + "concerts"** (by "concerts" I mean live music, so anything from a festival to a singer songwriter, it can have three viewers or 100,000 and anything in between). It is up to you to choose what you would like to watch and when, as long as you have watched **all three in a month**.
    - Note: I would suggest to spend some time in choosing what you will watch. There is ongoing music on Twitch, but maybe find something you are interested in. Maybe a friend makes videos, or maybe you know of an artist who will give a concert.
    - **When watching try act like you normally would. There is no wrong or right way to act, just act natural.**
3. You are then asked to **record your experience.**
    - To take part in this research it is important that you can **record your screen while simultaneously recording through your camera on your laptop/computer**.
    - You may use any means of doing this (For example, OBS Studio or something similar)
    - For a tip, Zoom works well for this and it is **free**. Find tips for how to record your screen while simultaneously recording from your camera below.
4. After you have watched three "concerts" and have all three saved. **Send the three videos to me at Vandenberg@eshcc.eur.nl. If the files are too large you can use WeTransfer. https://wetransfer.com/**
5. After I have looked at the videos, I will contact you for a **interview** about your viewing experience.

How to use zoom to record your screen while recording from your camera:

1. Make an account https://zoom.us/signup (its free!)
2. Go to "**MY ACCOUNT**"
3. Then go to "**HOST A MEETING**", and click with video on. (You do not need to invite anyone), you can just use it to record.
4. Join with computer audio
5. You will now be on a Zoom call, with yourself ;)
6. Press **Record** on the bottom of your screen to the right. (It looks like a circle with a circle in it). Now you are recording from your camera.

Erasmus
University
Rotterdam

7. To record your screen, go to **Share Screen**. (This you will find at the bottom of your screen in a green rectangle with an arrow in it). Now you are recording both yourself from your camera and your screen.
8. You will have **40 minutes** to use this for free.
9. Go to Twitch and enjoy the show.
10. When the 40 minutes is up, **end the call**. You will be then given the option to save the recording. Save in a safe place.

If you have any questions at any time about the proceedings, about zoom, recording or anything else please do not hesitate to contact me (Femke Vandenberg).
My email is: vandenberg@eshcc.eur.nl

Erasmus University Rotterdam



SUMMARY

English Summary

What is the potential of live music to bond people? Music has been credited with both connecting and dividing people (Bennett, 2008)—contributing to both the construction of social cohesion (Bennett, & Peterson, 2004; Hodkinson & Deicke, 2009) and symbolic boundaries (Bryson, 1996; Schaap & Berkers, 2020). While these paradoxical characteristics of music consumption are a long-established topic of sociological research, few empirical investigations have been dedicated to understanding how this works during live music events. This dissertation explores this, asking *under what circumstances does live music act as a vehicle for social solidarity.*

The ability of music to connect people—grounding individuals to a place (Cheyne & Binder, 2010; Van der Hoeven et al., 2016), forging communities and establishing scenes (Bennett, & Peterson, 2004; Hodkinson & Deicke, 2009)—has been largely attributed to a shared musical preference (often related to the participants' social position [Bourdieu, 1984]). However, the act of participating in music collectively can itself be an extremely effective tool for social bonding (Heider & Warner, 2010; Horsfall, 2013). The artist shouting "all together now", may seem like a trivial formality, but it is these moments, where the audience engages in a shared activity, that a state of heightened mutual energy—or as Durkheim (1995 [1912]) named it *collective effervescence*—is reached. This shared feeling is said to have important individual as well as social consequences, including (but not limited to) a newfound individual confidence and solidarity among the participants (Collins, 2004). At the same time, for participants to be successful in reaching these positive *outcomes* a number of *ingredients* are required, such as boundary drawing, physical co-presence, and the matching of similar social compositional features (Collins, 2004). In this dissertation live music consumption is explored from an interactionalist perspective, approaching the concerts as a *large-scale interaction ritual* that can provide more-or-less successful interactions.

This results in a number of sub-questions:

1. HOW DOES THE EXPERIENCE AND MOTIVATION FOR COLLECTIVITY DIFFER BETWEEN CULTURAL AUDIENCES?

Music concerts will differ in terms of genre conventions (the practice of the artist and audience, common to the particular genre), and the audience's social composition (Frith, 1996). This question is, thus, posed

to investigate if some audiences place a greater emphasis on the establishment of collective effervescence during live music, and how this relates to traditional notions of homology (the relationship between cultural taste and social position as theorised by Bourdieu). Combining micro-and macro-sociological perspectives this research adds a much-needed empirical account in understanding how and when music can give rise to intense collective experiences, departing from studies that look at culture from a purely structuralist perspective (Nowak & Bennett, 2022).

The second sub-question is then:

2. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MORPHOLOGY IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COLLECTIVITY DURING LIVE MUSIC?

Morphology here is defined as the ratio of people per space (Liebst, 2019; Mauss, 1979[1906]). The importance of the make-up and size of interacting participants has long been noted, emphasised already in Durkheim's early sociological writings. In this second sub-question, the importance of morphology is questioned through analysing a space where co-presence is not physical but virtual—namely online social media platforms. This question is very much geared at utilising the growing online presence of live music that occurred due to physical distancing measures imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. More specifically then, it asks if collective effervescence can be established when participants are interacting via an online platform. In posing this question this research adds to the growing debate of the appropriateness of the virtual sphere in accommodating successful (small-and large-scale) interaction rituals (e.g., Boyns & Loprieno, 2013; Collins, 2004, 2020; Dimaggio et al. 2018; Nexø & Strandell, 2020) and contributes empirical consideration to digitalized cultural consumption, which (due partly to the COVID-pandemic) has gained increasing significance, while remaining understudied.

After the introduction in **chapter 1**—which presents some positional considerations, along with the data and methods used—the dissertation is split into two parts. Part one predominantly addresses the first sub-question of this dissertation while part two moves on to the second sub-question.

Part one, starts with **chapter 2**, providing a theoretical foundation to the dissertation, primarily focusing on key theories to understand face-to-face (F2F) interaction and cultural consumption. **Chapter 3** is than the first empirical chapter of the dissertation. It looks at the mechanisms needed for collective effervescence by focusing on the consumers of the Dutch popular folk genre *levenslied*. A two-step research design is adopted, where 20 interviews with concert attendees,

are supported with a survey (n=812) used to recruit the respondents and register the demographics of the audience. The analysis reveals a number of important features that help in fostering social solidarity among the audience; for example, the vernacular nature of the music, the guidance of the artist, and national symbols (such as clogs, flags and the colour orange) that work as the "totem" of the audience. Solidarity appears not as a consequence or side effect, but as something that the participants strive for, and an important reason to participate. However, the preconditions for collectivity are determined by three forms of symbolic boundaries: i) intercultural boundaries, ii) interclass boundaries and iii) intraclass boundaries. Through the negative othering of ethnic monitories, those considered socially higher, and those considered morally lower than themselves, the audiences of these concerts glorify a very narrow image of Dutchness, obtaining a sense of community through the celebration of an idealized national image rooted in nostalgia (Zubrzycki, 2011). Additionally, this chapter thus brings understanding to the increasing popularity of levenslied (and domestic music more generally), relating it to broader societal changes and connected to a class clinging to tradition and their declining social position (Antonucci et al., 2017).

Chapter 4 builds directly on chapter 3 by comparing the findings with two other music genres. It focuses on assessing to what degree collectivity and emotional attainment is experienced and expected by varying music audiences. It uses the same two-step research design as the first study but adds music concerts from *Dutch popular music* (10 interviews and 432 survey respondents) and *contemporary classical music* (10 interviews and 172 survey respondents). In doing so it aims to compare the difference in ambition for collective effervescence found in the three ideal-typical cultural schemes—*popular*, *folk*, and *highbrow* (Becker, 1982; Frith, 1996; Peterson, 1972, Schulze, 1992; Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008), and understand to what extent the orientation towards this is connected to social position. Combining macro and micro processes presents some surprising new insights into cultural consumption. First, emotion, previously seen as a characteristic of lower-class consumption (Atkinson, 2011; Bourdieu, 1985; Schulze, 1992), is found to be a motivation for all three audiences, although the mechanisms on which this is established differ per scheme. Second, where previously the higher educated omnivore has been seen to keep one form of engagement across all genres (Atkinson, 2011), maintaining distinction through adopting an *ironic*, *sarcastic*, or *guilty* attitude (Peters et al., 2018; McCoy & Scarborough, 2014), I find that omnivores are very likely to switch modes of engagement and appreciation per genre. Reflecting confidence in their social position, they can openly express a liking for "illegitimate" culture without losing face. Finally, this chapter highlights nuances in cultural boundaries. In contrast to what has previously been emphasised (Collins, 2004; Liebst, 2019) boundaries around compositional features are not necessary for successful inter-

action rituals, thus providing important empirical weight to the *bridging* potential of live music (Wilks, 2011).

Moving onto part two of this dissertation chapters 6, 7 and 8 explore the transition of live music to the digital realm, analysing interaction rituals—the changes and level of success—during livestreamed concerts. After **chapter 5**, which provides the second theoretical section and a foundation for part two, **chapter 6** is the first empirical chapter to explore virtual concerts. It assesses the ability of online participation to foster social resilience and *collective consciousness* (Horsfall, 2016) during times of physical distancing. Through a qualitative thematic content analysis of the comments posted during livestreamed techno concerts on Facebook live (n = 1,501), it focuses on the rituals, symbols, and rhythm of textual communication of the virtual audience. The analyses finds that both old and new ritual actions are used to form online communities. While these ritual activities mark participation and remind members of a previous collective feeling, the omission of visceral elements of a physical audience hampers the establishment of a renewed sense of social solidarity.

Chapter 7 builds off chapter 6 by comparing the difference between various genres and their audiences. It uses a similar methodology to the previous chapter, applying a discourse analysis of comments (n=2,075), left on livestreamed classical and Dutch folk concerts, to explore how these audiences adapt to the virtual sphere. This study not only examines the mechanisms used in re-constructing the concert situation online—through textual interaction—but compares the type of interaction used by audiences of traditional highbrow and popular genres of music. As such, this chapter also feeds back into the chapters dedicated to F2F interaction by focusing on similar genres and audiences. The analysis reveals that both audiences use a form of *hyper-ritualised* interaction (Goffman, 1979). In an attempt to combat the plurality of meanings online, they explicitly refer back to the central conventions of the F2F concert. This emphasises not only the significance of genre conventions, but also presents a form of virtual interaction distinct form interpersonal (small-scale) interaction.

The final empirical chapter, **chapter 8**, looks specifically at the success of small-and large-scale interaction rituals online. It uses a rigorous method, triangulating observations of users participating in live music on the streaming platform Twitch (23 hours and 18 minutes), with 10 video elicitation interviews. This study, thus, provides a means of going beyond the previous speculative studies (Bartholomew & Mason, 2020; DiMaggio et al., 2018; Jodén & Strandell, 2021; Wang & Li, 2020) that have used Collins' (2004) interaction ritual model to explore online communication, providing important empirical insights into online interaction, relevant to fields beyond music sociology. It finds that the online sphere is more suited to small-scale interaction. Large-scale

interaction rituals are unsuccessful, suffering from a i) *context collapse*, where conventional activities and rituals that involve the entire audience are difficult to accomplish through online communication, leading participants to focus on individual interactions and activities, ii) *social convergence*, where "profane" home life blurs with that of the typically "sacred" concert, both in terms of material setting and morphological composition, diminishing the experience, and iii) *no rhythmic entrainment*, where the collective interaction (seen in trains of comments) not only present little opportunity for turn-taking, but also do not allow for the disclosure of emotion, meaning that the synchronisation of the audience, synonymous to F2F large-scale interaction rituals, cannot occur.

The conclusion is presented in **chapter 9**, where I provided answers to the research questions, a theoretical synthesis of the finding, its limitations, and suggestions for future research. I start by mapping out the conditions needed for a successful large-scale interaction ritual (or, *when does live music act as a vehicle for social solidarity*), supported by the empirical findings of the previous chapters. As specified by Collins (2004), both *mutual focus of attention* and *shared mood* are important ingredients. However, for large-scale interaction rituals, I argue that the latter has more weight to the interaction than the former. In other words, the focus of a crowd does not always have to be the same as long as there is an awareness of a shared emotional state. This has a large impact on virtual interaction, where messages can only convey "impressions given" and not those "given off" (Goffman, 1959), meaning that honest emotions (seen in uncontrolled excited body language and noises) remain inaccessible. The consequence of this is that attunement of emotions become problematic and the interaction ritual less intense. *Physical co-presence* is therefore an essential ingredient for the success of large-scale interaction rituals. Finally, we see that feelings of collectivity rest largely on the production and policing of genre conventions (Frith, 1996), reflecting the significance Collins (2004) places on *barrier to the outsiders*. The strength and importance of these conventions is seen in their direct translation to the virtual sphere, where activities common to the crowd become *hyper-ritualised*. However, while these rituals can stimulate feelings of group membership, they cannot provide the outcome of rhythmic entrainment custom to F2F interaction, as they lack the flow of turn-taking.

I, thus, specifically argue that large-scale interaction rituals are not possible in the digital realm. However, this is not to say that the online sphere cannot accommodate meaningful interaction. Confirming the speculations of DiMaggio et al. (2018), interaction is more successful when it is with people known previously (either from the physical realm or through a parasocial relationship). The discrepancy is due to small-scale interaction online having a capacity for direct and prolonged turn-taking with a greater likelihood for a charge/recharge

of collective symbols marking solidarity. An important contribution of this dissertation is thus that small- and large-scale interactions are not as interchangeable as Collins (and others) have previously perceived them.

Finally, when asking, *is there a taste for collective effervescence*, I conclude that the motivation lies more in the type of event (and genre) than the attendees. We see this most prominently in the highbrow music audience who shift modes of emotional engagement (individual or collective) depending on the event they are visiting. This not only provides an interesting new perspective on omnivore theory, but these cultural omnivores also provide positive examples of bridging, related to cultural consumption. This dissertation then provides important empirical evidence to claim that live music (and large interaction rituals in general) can work in connecting social groups, as long as we can find ways to overcome the initial boundaries that separate them.

Nederlandse Samenvatting

Kan live muziek mensen samenbrengen? Aan muziek wordt het vermogen tot verbinden toegeschreven, maar ook het vermogen om mensen te verdelen (Bennett, 2008)—waardoor muziek kan bijdragen aan zowel sociale cohesie (Bennett, & Peterson, 2004; Hodkinson & Deicke, 2009) als aan het maken van onderscheid door het trekken van symbolische grenzen (Bryson, 1996; Schaap & Berkers, 2020). Hoewel deze paradoxale kenmerken van muziek reeds lang onderwerp van sociologisch onderzoek zijn, is er weinig empirisch onderzoek dat zich richt op het begrijpen van deze potentiële effecten tijdens live muziekevenementen. Deze dissertatie legt de focus wel op dit onderwerp, met als hoofdvraag: onder welke condities kan live muziek functioneren als een vehikel voor sociale saamhorigheid?

Het vermogen van kunst om mensen te verbinden—door ze aan een specifieke plaats te binden (Cheyne & Binder, 2010; Van der Hoeven et al., 2016), gemeenschappen te smeden of muziekscenes te creëren (Bennett, & Peterson, 2004; Hodkinson & Deicke, 2009)—wordt veelal toegeschreven aan gedeelde muzikale voorkeuren (vaak samenhangend met de sociale positie van de betrokkenen [Bourdieu, 1984]). Het deelnemen aan collectieve muzikale activiteiten kan echter ook op zichzelf een uiterst effectief sociaal bindmiddel zijn (Heider & Warner, 2010; Horsfall, 2013). Als een artiest "Met z'n allen nu!" roept, mag dat triviaal lijken, maar het zijn juist zulke momenten, waar het publiek deelneemt aan een gezamenlijke activiteit, waarin een staat van verhoogde gedeelde energie—of zoals Durkheim (1995 [1912]) het noemt: *collective effervescence*—wordt bereikt. Dit gedeelde gevoel heeft naar verluidt belangrijke individuele en sociale implicaties, waaronder een versterkt gevoel van individueel zelfvertrouwen en solidariteit onder de deelnemers (Collins, 2004). Tegelijkertijd is een aantal ingrediënten vereist om met die deelnemers tot deze positieve resultaten te komen, zoals het trekken van grenzen, gezamenlijke aanwezigheid, en overeenstemming in de sociale achtergrond van de groepsleden (Collins, 2004). In deze dissertatie wordt de consumptie van live muziek onderzocht vanuit een interactionistisch perspectief, waarbij concerten worden beschouwd als grootschalige rituelen die kunnen leiden tot meer of minder succesvolle interacties.

Dit leidt tot de volgende subvragen:

1. HOE VERSCHILLEN DE ERVARINGEN EN MOTIEVEN MET BETREKKING TOT COLLECTIVITEIT TUSSEN VERSCHILLENDE CULTURELE PUBLIEKSGROEPEN?

Muziekconcerten verschillen in de gehanteerde genreconventies (de praktijken van de artiesten en het publiek die typerend zijn voor een specifiek genre) en in de sociale samenstelling van het publiek (Frith, 1996). Deze vraag wordt derhalve gesteld om te onderzoeken of sommige pubieken meer belang hechten aan het creëren van *collective effervescence* tijdens live concerten en hoe dit samenhangt met traditionele noties van homologie (de relatie tussen culturele voorkeuren en sociale posities zoals getheoretiseerd door Bourdieu). Door het combineren van micro- en macro-sociologische perspectieven draagt dit onderzoek bij aan een hoognodig, empirisch gefundeerd begrip van hoe en onder welke condities muziek kan leiden tot intense collectieve ervaringen, met als startpunt studies die cultuur bestuderen vanuit een louter structuralistisch perspectief (Nowak & Bennett, 2022).

De tweede subvraag luidt vervolgens:

2. WAT IS DE ROL VAN MORFOLOGIE BIJ HET REALISEREN VAN COLLECTIVITEIT TIJDENS LIVE CONCERTEN?

Morfologie wordt hier gedefinieerd als de verhouding tussen het aantal mensen en de beschikbare ruimte (Liebst, 2019; Mauss, 1979[1906]). Het belang van de samenstelling en omvang van groepen deelnemers wordt reeds lang onderkend; Durkheim benadrukte het al in zijn vroege sociologische werk. Met deze tweede sub-vraag wordt het belang van morfologie onderzocht via een analyse van een ruimte waarin gezamenlijke aanwezigheid niet fysiek maar virtueel is, namelijk online sociale-media platformen. Deze vraag richt zich dus op het benutten van de groeiende online beschikbaarheid van live muziek zoals we dat zagen opkomen vanwege de noodzaak tot fysiek afstand houden van elkaar vanwege de COVID-19 pandemie. Meer in het bijzonder is de vraag of *collective effervescence* kan worden gerealiseerd wanneer deelnemers interacteren via een online platform. Door deze vraag aan de orde te stellen, draagt dit onderzoek bij aan het steeds relevantere debat over de geschiktheid van de virtuele wereld voor het faciliteren van succesvolle (klein- en grootschalige) interactie-rituelen (e.g., Boyns & Loprieno, 2013; Collins, 2004, 2020; Dimaggio et al. 2018; Nexø & Strandell, 2020). Tevens biedt dit empirisch inzicht in de aard van gedigitaliseerde culturele consumptie die, vanwege de COVID-pandemie, steeds belangrijker is geworden, maar nog maar beperkt bestudeerd is.

Na de introductie in **hoofdstuk 1**, waarin enkele positionele overwegingen alsmede de data en methoden gepresenteerd worden, valt deze dissertatie in twee delen uiteen. Deel 1 houdt zich hoofdzakelijk bezig met de eerste sub-vraag die aan deze dissertatie ten grondslag ligt, terwijl deel twee zich richt op de tweede sub-vraag.

Deel 1 begint met **hoofdstuk 2**, waarin de theoretische basis voor het onderzoek uiteengezet wordt, met nadruk op de meest relevante theorieën over *face-to-face* (F2F) interactie en culturele consumptie. **Hoofdstuk 3** is vervolgens het eerste empirische hoofdstuk, waarin verslag wordt gedaan van de mechanismes die kunnen leiden tot *collective effervescence* via onderzoek onder bezoekers van Nederlandstalige *levensliedconcerten*. Hierbij is gebruik gemaakt van een tweetraps onderzoeksontwerp, waar twintig interviews met concertbezoeker zijn aangevuld met gegevens uit een survey (n=812) dat is gebruikt om deze twintig bezoekers te selecteren en om de socio-demografische achtergronden van de bezoekers in kaart te brengen. De analyse legt een aantal belangrijke kenmerken bloot die bijdragen aan de ervaren solidariteit onder het publiek, zoal het volkse karakter van de muziek, de enthousiasmerende rol van de artiest en nationale symbolen (zoals klompen, vlaggen en de kleur oranje) die als het ware als een 'totem' fungeren voor het publiek. Solidariteit blijkt niet een gevolg of neveneffect van deze kenmerken te zijn, maar iets waar deelnemers bewust naar streven. Het is zelfs een belangrijke reden voor hun participatie. De voorwaarden voor het optreden van een dergelijke gemeenschapszin zijn echter juist drie soorten symbolische begrenzingen: i) interculturele grenzen, ii) grenzen *tussen* sociale klassen, en iii) grenzen *binnen* sociale klassen. Door leden van etnische minderheden, leden van hogere klassen en leden van de eigen klasse die men als moreel minderwaardig bestempelt, negatief te labelen, verheerlijken de bezoekers van deze concerten een tamelijk beperkte definitie van Nederlanderschap, wat tot een gevoel van saamhorigheid leidt via het vieren van een geïdealiseerd nationaal imago dat stevig is geworteld in nostalgie (Zubrzycki, 2011). Daarnaast biedt dit hoofdstuk inzicht in de toegenomen populariteit van het levenslied (en muziek van eigen bodem in het algemeen) door deze ontwikkeling te koppelen aan bredere sociale trends en aan een klasse die zich vastklampt aan tradities en haar bedreigde sociale positie (Antonucci et al., 2017).

Hoofdstuk 4 bouwt direct voort op hoofdstuk 3 via een vergelijking van de bevindingen met twee andere muziekgenres. Het brengt in kaart in welke mate collectiviteit en emoties worden verwacht en daadwerkelijk ervaren door de verschillende publieksgroepen. Dit hoofdstuk kent hetzelfde tweetraps onderzoeksontwerp als de eerste studie, maar voegt daaraan concerten toe van *Nederlandse popmuziek* (10 interviews en 432 survey respondenten) en *hedendaagse klassieke muziek* (10 interviews en 172 survey respondenten). Zo krijgen we zicht op de verschillen in de mate waarin publieken naar *collective effervescence* streven binnen drie ideaal-typische culturele schema's—*populair*, *volks*, en *highbrow* (Becker, 1982; Frith, 1996; Peterson, 1972, Schulze, 1992; Van Eijck & Lievens, 2008), en zien we in hoeverre deze drie oriëntaties gelinkt kunnen worden aan sociale achtergronden. Het combineren van kennis van micro- en macroprocessen levert een aantal verrassende inzichten in culturele consumptie op. Ten eerste zien we dat emotie,

voorheen beschouwd als iets wat vooral de consumptie van de lagere klassen typeerde (Atkinson, 2011; Bourdieu, 1985; Schulze, 1992), een belangrijk participatiemotief is voor alle drie de publieksgroepen, hoewel de mechanismes via dewelke emoties worden gerealiseerd verschillen per schema. Ten tweede zien we dat de hoger opgeleide culturele omnivoren, waarvan werd aangenomen dat die zich op dezelfde manier zouden verhouden tot een breed scala aan genres, (Atkinson, 2011), sociale distinctie bewerkstelligen door juist verschillende houdingen aan te nemen, zoals ironie, sarcasme, of quasi-schuldbewustheid (*guilty pleasure*) (Peters et al., 2018; McCoy & Scarborough, 2014). Zij blijken probleemloos te kunnen wisselen tussen manieren van participeren en de bijbehorende criteria voor waardering wanneer ze overschakelen naar een ander genre. Vanuit de zelfverzekerde houding die hun sociale positie met zich meebrengt, zijn zij in staat om openlijk uiting te geven aan hun voorkeur voor 'illegitieme' cultuur zonder daarbij gezichtsverlies te lijden. Tot slot biedt dit hoofdstuk een genuanceerd beeld van culturele grenzen. Anders dan voorheen werd benadrukt (Collins, 2004; Liebst, 2019), zijn zulke grenzen op basis van gedeelde kenmerken niet noodzakelijk voor succesvolle interactie-rituelen, hetgeen een empirische ondersteuning biedt aan de potentie van live muziek om verschillen tussen sociale groepen te overbruggen (Wilks, 2011).

In het tweede deel van de dissertatie verkennen **hoofdstukken 6**, **7** en **8** de overgang van live muziek naar de digitale sfeer door een analyse van interactierituelen—hoe ze veranderen en hoe succesvol ze zijn—gedurende livestream concerten. Nadat **hoofdstuk 5**, als tweede theoretische sectie, de basis legt voor het tweede deel, biedt **hoofdstuk 6** de eerste empirische verkenning van virtuele concerten. In dit hoofdstuk wordt het vermogen van online deelname geëvalueerd om sociale veerkrachtigheid en *collectief bewustzijn* in de hand te werken (Horsfall, 2016) in tijden van 'physical distancing'. In een kwalitatieve inhoudsanalyse van 'comments' die gepost werden tijdens livestream technoconcerten op Facebook live (n=1.501), ligt de nadruk op de rituelen, de symbolen en het ritme van tekstuele communicatie van het virtuele publiek. De analyses maken duidelijk dat zowel oude als nieuwe rituele handelingen worden gehanteerd om online gemeenschappen te vormen. Hoewel deze rituele handelingen dienen om de deelname van publieksleden te beklemtonen en het hen herinnert aan een voorgaand collectief gevoel, staat het gebrek aan viscerale aspecten, eigen aan fysieke publieksdeelname, het vestigen van een hernieuwd gevoel van solidariteit in de weg.

Hoofdstuk 7 bouwt voort op hoofdstuk 6 door verschillen te bestuderen tussen verscheidene genres en hun publiek. Vergelijkbaar met de methode uit het vorige hoofdstuk wordt er wederom een inhoudsanalyse uitgevoerd op de 'comments' (n=2.075) die gebruikers achterlaten bij livestream concerten van klassieke muziek en levenslied,

om te bestuderen hoe het publiek van deze genres zich aanpast aan de virtuele omgeving. In deze studie gaat het niet alleen over de mechanismes die worden gebruikt om de concertsituatie online te reconstrueren—aan de hand van tekstuele communicatie—maar wordt er ook gekeken naar het soort interactie dat gebruikt wordt door het publiek van een traditioneel 'highbrow' genre in vergelijking met een publiek van een populair genre. Op die manier koppelt dit hoofdstuk ook terug naar de hoofdstukken over F2F interactie aan de hand van een analyse van gelijkaardige genres en publieken. De analyse maakt duidelijk dat het publiek van beide genres gebruikmaakt van een vorm van *hyper-rituele* interactie (Goffman, 1979). In een poging om de veelvuldigheid aan betekenissen online tegen te gaan, bedienen ze zich nadrukkelijk van de centrale conventies van F2F concerten. Dit benadrukt het belang van genreconventies, maar impliceert ook een manier van virtuele interactie die verschilt van interpersoonlijke interactie (op kleine schaal).

Het laatste empirische hoofdstuk, **hoofdstuk 8**, neemt in het bijzonder het succes in beschouwing van online interactierituelen op kleine en grote schaal. Het maakt gebruik van een omvattend methode. Gebruikers van het platform Twitch worden geobserveerd terwijl ze live muziek op het platform bijwonen (23 uur en 18 minuten). Deze observaties worden gecombineerd met 10 video-elicitatie-interviews, bij wijze van triangulatie. Op deze manier gaat dit onderzoek verder dan voorgaande speculatieve studies (Bartholomew & Mason, 2020; DiMaggio et al., 2018; Jodén & Strandell, 2021; Wang & Li, 2020) die Collins' (2004) interactieritueelmodel hebben toegepast om online communicatie te verkennen en biedt het belangrijke empirische inzichten in online interactie met een relevantie voorbij het domein van muzieksociologie. De studie vindt dat de online omgeving zich beter leent tot interactie op kleinere schaal. Interactierituelen op grote schaal zijn niet succesvol om een aantal redenen. Ze lijden onder i) *context collapse*. Conventionele activiteiten en rituelen die het hele publiek omvatten zijn moeilijk te verwezenlijken met behulp van online communicatie, zodat deelnemers zich gaan toeleggen op individuele interacties en activiteiten. ii) *Sociale convergentie* maakt de ervaring minder diepgaand, omdat het "profane" leven van thuis zich vermengt met het karakteristieke "sacrale" concert, zowel waar het gaat over de materiële omstandigheden als met betrekking tot de morfologische compositie. Bovendien is er ook iii) *geen ritmische meevoering*. De collectieve interactie (die zichtbaar wordt in opeenvolgende 'comments') biedt niet alleen weinig gelegenheid tot uitwisseling in de communicatie ('turn-taking'), ze laat het ook niet toe om emoties te uiten, waardoor er geen synchronisatie kan plaatsvinden binnen het publiek, terwijl die juist zo kenmerkend is voor F2F interactierituelen op grote schaal.

In **hoofdstuk 9** komt de conclusie aan bod. De onderzoeksvraag wordt beantwoord, er wordt een theoretische synthese geboden, evenals beperkingen en suggesties voor vervolgonderzoek. Ik begin met

een weergave van de voorwaarden voor een succesvol interactieritueel op grote schaal (of, *wanneer kan livemuziek dienen als vehikel voor saamhorigheid*), gesteund door de empirische bevindingen uit de voorgaande hoofdstukken. Zoals ook gesteld door Collins (2004), zijn een *gemeenschappelijk aandachtspunt* en *gedeeld gevoel* hierbij belangrijke ingrediënten. Echter, voor interactierituelen op grote schaal is mijn stelling dat het tweede ingrediënt harder doorweegt in de interactie dan het eerste. Met andere woorden, het publiek hoeft niet noodzakelijk gedurig een aandachtspunt te delen, zolang er maar sprake is van een gedeelde emotionele toestand. Dit heeft een grote impact op virtuele interactie, waar boodschappen alleen door "impressions given" worden overgemaakt en niet door "impressions given off" (Goffman, 1959), wat wil zeggen dat ze geen toegang verschaffen tot oprechte emoties (zoals die blijken uit ongecontroleerde opgewonden lichaamstaal en rumoer). De consequentie hiervan is dat het wederzijds afstemmen van emoties moeizamer verloopt en het interactieritueel minder intens wordt. *Fysieke gezamenlijke aanwezigheid* is daarom een essentieel ingrediënt voor het succes van interactierituelen op grote schaal. Ten slotte zien we ook dat gevoelens van collectiviteit in grote maten steunen op de productie en bewaking van genreconventies (Frith, 1996), wat overeenkomt met het belang dat Collins (2004) hecht aan *grenzen tegenover buitenstaanders*. De sterkte en het belang van deze conventies blijkt uit hun vrij letterlijke vertaling naar de virtuele omgeving, waar activiteiten die kenmerkend zijn voor het publiek *hyper-rituelen* worden. Echter, hoewel deze rituelen gevoelens van groepslidmaatschap in de hand kunnen werken, zorgen ze niet voor een ritmische meevoering zoals in F2F interactie, omdat ze niet het ritme van een wisselwerking aannemen.

Daarom stel ik dat interactierituelen op grote schaal niet mogelijk zijn in een digitale omgeving. Dit wil echter niet noodzakelijk zeggen dat de online omgeving geen betekenisvolle interactie toelaat. In bevestiging van de speculatieve beweringen van DiMaggio et al. (2018) is interactie succesvoller als ze plaatsvindt met mensen die men voorafgaandelijk al kende (ofwel op basis van fysiek contact, ofwel door een parasociale relatie). Het verschil zit in de mogelijkheid tot rechtstreekse en langdurige uitwisselingen bij online interactie op kleine schaal, wat de vestiging/herbevestiging aannemelijker maakt van collectieve symbolen die saamhorigheid markeren. Een belangrijke bijdrage van deze dissertatie ligt in de vaststelling dat interacties op grote en kleine schaal niet zo inwisselbaar zijn als Collins (en anderen) eerder veronderstelden.

Tot slot, als de vraag is of er zoiets is als *een smaak voor collectieve effervescence*, concludeer ik dat het meer afhangt van het soort evenement (en het genre) dan van wie ze bijwoont. Dit zien we het sterkst onder leden van het highbrow muziekpubliek, die de wijze waarop ze emotioneel engagement (individueel en collectief) aangaan, aanpassen naargelang het evenement dat ze bijwonen. Dit biedt niet alleen

een interessant nieuw perspectief op de theorie over de culturele omnivoor, maar deze omnivoren laten ook positieve voorbeelden zien van hoe culturele consumptie kan dienen als brug. Dit proefschrift voert belangrijk empirisch materiaal aan om te stellen dat live muziek (en grootschalige interactierituelen in het algemeen) kunnen zorgen voor verbinding tussen sociale groepen, zolang we maar manieren vinden om de initiële grenzen te overwinnen die hen scheiden.

PORTFOLIO

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THIS PROJECT

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

- Vandenberg, F. & Berghman, M.J. (under review). The show must go on(line): large-scale interaction rituals at livestreamed concerts? *Poetics*.
- Vandenberg, F. (2022). Put your "hand emotes in the air": Twitch concerts as unsuccessful large-scale interaction rituals. *Symbolic interaction*. [Advance online publication].
- Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M.J. & Eijck, C.J.M. van (2021). 'Wear Clogs and just Act Normal': Defining Collectivity in Dutch Domestic Music Concerts. *Cultural Sociology*. 15(2): 233-251.
- Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M.J. & Schaap, J.C.F. (2020). The 'lonely raver': music livestreams during COVID-19 as a hotline to collective consciousness? *European Society*. 23(51): 141-152.
- Schaap, J.C.F., Vandenberg, F. & Berghman, M.J. (2020). Balkonconcerten, lockdownsessies en quarantunes: muziek als sociale geleider tijdens de COVID-19-pandemie. *Tijdschrift Sociologie*. 1, 101-114

BOOK CHAPTERS

- Swartjes, B. & Vandenberg, F. (2022). Festival atmospheres: social, spatial, and material explorations of physically distanced festivals. In I Woodward, et al. (Eds.), *Remaking Culture and Music Spaces. Affects, Infrastructures, Futures.*

BOOK REVIEWS

- Vandenberg, F, (2018). Het Sociale Lichaam Blootgelegd [Book review of Distinction in the Flesh]. *Tijdschrift Sociologie*, 14(2/3): 243-247.

POPULAR WRITING

- Berkers, P.P.L., Schaap, J.C.F., Vandenberg, F., Everts, R.A., Swartjes, B., Goossens, D.M., Berghman, M.J., & Kimenai, F.F.P. (2021). Muziek als medicijn tegen maatschappelijke kwalen? *Sociologie Magazine*, 29(1): 6-9.

COURSES FOLLOWED DURING PHD PROJECT

2017

- Practical Programming Experiments (ESSB; MA Clinical Psychology)
- Advanced Quantitative Methods (ESHCC; Research MA Sociology of Culture, Media and the Arts; 5 ECTS)

2018

- Responsible data management (RDM) (EGSH; 1 ECTS)
- KISMIF Summer school (Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto, Portugal)

2019

- ATLAS.ti (EGSH; 1 ECTS)
- Academic Integrity & Responsible Research (EGSH; 1 ECTS)
- Self-presentation (EGSH, 2.5 ECTS)
- Analytic storytelling (EGSH, 2.5 ECTS)

COURSES TAUGHT DURING PHD PROJECT

2018—2020

- Introduction to Cultural Policy (BA1; 2 tutorial groups each)

2018—2021

- Sociology of Arts and Culture (BA1; 2 tutorial groups each)

2018 & 2022

- Supervision of cultural internships (BA2; 4 students and 8 students)

2020

- Contemporary Approaches in Cultural Sociology (BA2; 3 tutorial groups)

2021

- Applied Methods of Arts and Culture research (MA; course coordinator)

2022

- Supervision Master thesis (MA; 5 students)
- Qualitative interview techniques, (Erasmus Graduate School of Social Sciences and the Humanities [EGSH]; course coordinator)
- Sociology Culture and Modernity (BA3; course coordinator)
- Sociology of Media and the Arts (RMA; course coordinator)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

2019—PRESENT

- Treasurer: International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) Benelux

2019—2020

- Chair: EGSH PhD Council, Erasmus University Rotterdam

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Vandenberg, F. & Berghman, M.J. (2022). A taste for collective effervescence? A micro-sociological approach towards different live music experiences. Keep it Simple, Make it Fast! DIY Cultures, Spaces and Places, University of Porto, Portugal. 13—16 July.

- Vandenberg, F. (2022). Put your “hand emotes in the air”: Twitch concerts as unsuccessful large-scale interaction rituals. Keep it Simple, Make it Fast! DIY Cultures, Spaces and Places, University of Porto, Portugal. 13—16 July.

- Vandenberg, F. (2022). Put your “hand emotes in the air”: Twitch concerts as unsuccessful large-scale interaction rituals. Dag van de Sociologie. University of Groningen. 16 June.

- Vandenberg, F. (2021). Twitch Concerts: Mapping the success of livestreamed music, as a virtual large-scale interaction ritual. 12th International Music Business Research Days. Erasmus University Rotterdam. 3—5 November.

- Vandenberg, F. (2021). Plenary panel session: Music and communities. 12th International Music Business Research Days. Erasmus University Rotterdam. 5 November.

- Vandenberg, F. (2021). Livestreams and the collective potential of digitalized concerts. Keynote. INVENTCULTURE conference. Erasmus University Rotterdam. 23 September.

- Vandenberg, F. & Berghman, M.J. (2021). The show must go on(line): virtually building context in livestreamed music concerts. Session presider. 116th ASA virtual meeting, virtual conference. 6—10 August.

- Vandenberg, F. & Berghman, M.J. (2021). The show must go on(line): virtually building context in livestreamed music concerts. 70th British Sociological Association, virtual conference. 13—15 April.

- Vandenberg, F. & Berghman, M.J. (2021). Constructing the Virtual Music Concert: How High, Pop and Folk Audiences Build Context Online. Dag van de Sociologie, virtual conference. 10 June.

- Vandenberg, F. & Berghman, M.J. (2021). Reconstructing music concerts online: How highbrow, pop and folk audiences virtually build context. 8th mid-term conference, ESA Sociology of Culture research network, virtual conference. 10—12 March.

- Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M.J. (2020) Virtual displays of cultural taste. Cultural Sociology Lowlands. virtual conference. 6 November.

- Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M.J. & Eijck, C.J.M. van (2020). "Walk on clogs and just act normal": defining collectivity in Dutch domestic music. 115th ASA virtual meeting, virtual conference. 8 August.

- Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M.J. & Eijck, C.J.M. van (2020). Consuming the nation through domestically produced music. Rotterdam, EURovision 2020 conference. (Conference canceled). 6 May.

- Vandenberg, F. (2019). A Taste for Collective Effervescence: A study into the taste patterns of the national music consumer. Cultural Sociology Lowlands, BOZAR Center for Contemporary Arts, Brussels, Belgium. 13 September.

- Vandenberg, F. (2019). A Taste for Collective Effervescence: A study into the taste patterns of the national music consumer. European Sociological Association: Europe and Beyond: Boundaries, Barriers and Belonging, Manchester, University of Manchester. 20—23 August.

- Vandenberg, F. (2018). ‘Just be normal’: Using a cognitive approach to analysing the boundary work of levenslied consumers. 10th Midterm European Sociological Association Conference: Creative Locations, Arts Culture and the City, Aula Magna, University of Malta Valletta, Malta. 4—7 September.

- Vandenberg, F. (2018). “Sing, fight, cry, pray, laugh, work and admire”: Taste Patterns of the 'Illegitimate' Cultural Consumer. Keep it Simple, Make it Fast! DIY Cultures, Spaces and Places, University of Porto, Portugal. 03—07 July.
- Vandenberg, F. (2018). Taste Patterns of the 'Illegitimate' Cultural Consumer. Cultural Sociology Lowlands. Erasmus University Rotterdam. 15 June.
- Vandenberg, F & Schaap, J. (2017). ‘Any Irish MC’s out there?’ Negotiating class, nationality, masculinity and whiteness in the virtual Irish rap scene. IASPM Student Conference on Music and Culture, University of Amsterdam. 2 June.

INVITED LECTURES AND TALKS

- A crash course: Media Art X Music, lecture and discussion, V2—Lab for the Unstable Media (2022)
- De collectieve waarde van de ‘live’ ervaring, lecture and discussion, Filosofietje, Maas theatre (2022)
- Evening of Levenslied, lecture and panel discussion, Eindhoven University of Technology (2022)
- Livestreams and the collective potential of digitalized concerts, lecture, Manchester Metropolitan University (2022)
- The future of the night, panel discussion, De Dependence, MONO, Rotterdam (2021)
- Wat is de waarde van de nacht?, lecture, Talkshow: Studio Erasmus, Arminius, Rotterdam (2021)
- The future of music, Clubhouse panel discussion, Erasmus University (2021)
- How live are livestreams?, lecture, Eindhoven University of Technology (2021)
- The collective potential of live music, guest lecture, Communication & Multimedia Design. Avans Hogeschool, Den Bosch (2021)
- Wat is de waarde van de nacht?, panel discussion. Organizer Operator Radio and N8W8 R'dam (2021)
- Research Master Seminar, guest lecture, Research Master Sociology of Media and the Art, ESHCC, Erasmus University Rotterdam (2021)
- Digitaal Dansen, lecture & panel discussion, Radboud University Nijmegen (2020)
- Virtual consumption: An audience perspective, Lecture, The Corona Chronicles, Erasmus University Rotterdam (2020)
- Festivals and Corona, lecture, Livestreamed 5th Music Talks. Organizer ESHCC & FestiVersities (2020)
- Music as a bonding agent, guest lecture, ‘Greatest Hits and Critics' Picks’, Music Minor, ESHCC, Erasmus University Rotterdam (2020)
- Taste patterns and cultural consumption, guest lecture, Willem De Kooning Academy (2018)

ACKNOW-
LEDGEMENTS

Today, exactly 5 years ago, I sat at my desk for the first time as a PhD candidate—an art school graduate, with plenty of experience in painting, and only two years of academia. As my mum likes to remind me (and on occasion others), I "didn't pick up a book until the pre-master". So, I have to thank the university not only for the title of Dr. but also for my literacy (of course this is not entirely true, I did read the Hunger Games on holiday when I was 19).

To get a dyslexic artist to not only start but also finish a PhD in Sociology, is an ambition task and in no way a one woman show. To borrow some wise words from Howard Becker, "works of art are not the product of individual makers, 'artists' who possess a rare and special gift. They are, rather, joint products of all the people who cooperate via an art world's characteristic conventions to bring works like that into existence" (Becker 1985: 35). Now, by no means am I classifying this dissertation as a piece of art (although the design by Leeza Pritychenko, who I must sincerely thank for her excellent work, most certainly is), but the joint effort of this project draws similar comparisons.

This dissertation would not have been possible was it not for a number of people; to call them "support personnel" would in no way give justice to the impact on this project they had. First, to my supervisor Michaël Berghman. I cannot count the number of hours that we have spent talking, chatting, and brainstorming about sociological theory and non-sociological happenings, sometimes (too) late into the night (although I would/will leave the 4am emailing to you). Your input into this dissertation has been invaluable, and I could not have wished for a better supervisor. Here's to many more (better than "grand") chats. Koen van Eijck, my promotor, thank you for your enthusiasm and constant positivity. You make every task (even a mammoth one like a PhD) seem totally manageable. I sincerely appreciated the freedom I was given to make the project my own, and the support you showed gave me the confidence I needed to continue doing what I was doing.

I am extremely grateful for the academic community that I landed in. The stimulating, creative, and convivial atmosphere at the Arts and Culture Studies Department has allowed me to thrive as an academic and grow as a person. After seven years at the department, I am sure that there is no better place to be. Thank you, Frans Brouwer, Dorus Hoebink, Annette van Ham, Naomi Oosterman, Mariangela Lavanga, Amanda Brandellero, Camila Malig Jedlicki, Lenia Carvalho Marques, Ellen Loots, and Liesbeth De Strooper, you have shaped me as a researcher and lecturer in more ways than space can allow me to note here. A special thank you to the RPMS team. Britt Swartjes, Pauwke Berkers, Thomas Calkins, Christopher Thompson, Timo Koren, Niels van Poecke, Frank Kimenai, Martijn Mulder, Wessel Coppes, and Didier Goossens cheers for the great discussions, for broadening my understanding of popular music (studies) and reading earlier ver-

sions of many chapters of this dissertation. In particular, I thank Julian Schaap for being a prominent part of every step of my academic journey (tutor of the first pre-master course, MA thesis supervisor, pusher for a PhD, and co-author of my ever-remaining most cited article) and a great friend. I look forward to many more academic collaborations, arty chats and conference tats.

Of course, this project would have been nothing without the respondents. I am very grateful and humbled by your willingness to take time to meet and openly discuss your music engagement. Thank you for allowing me (physically and digitally) into your homes and for sharing your personal tastes and experiences.

The final word goes to my family and friends. A warm thank you to the charades gang (which have now been mentioned in 4 dissertation acknowledgments and are certainly not done here), Carol, Pieter, Alex, Marcus, Lina, Valeria, Giulio, Alessia, Debora, and Tim for making Rotterdam feel like home. Here's to many more game nights and cider @deciderbar. Alice and Rick, my paranymphs, both of you have been indispensable to how the PhD unfolded. Rick, it has been great having someone in the same boat for this journey, hope you are not too salty that I got to the finish line first ;). Alice, thank you for always being there, rain or shine. A huge amount of appreciation goes to my family who have shaped my life in the most profound way. I am grateful for my parents (and stepparents) for surrounding me with music and art from a very early age—some of my earliest memories are of going along to Jantien's music classes, helping to teach art and craft at schools with Mark, learning Flamenco with Fatima and organizing "festivals" with Johnny. To my siblings, Saoirse, Alba, Daire, Rowan, Jules, and Lia, your curiosity for life inspires me every day. Robin, my best friend, and partner in crime, thank you for the unconditional support, for proofreading everything I do and putting up with my double life,

Femke Vandenberg
1st of October 2022

Live music can create a sonic bond between its participants, synchronising the audience and their actions like a murmuration of starlings. Under the right conditions, music can attune the movements of a crowd, transforming the individual experience of participants into that of a large-scale interaction ritual. This dissertation explores the conditions needed for this transformation to occur, asking under what circumstances can live music bond people? It presents five empirical studies, comparing various genres and their audiences, and questions the importance of aspects such as physical co-presence and social position. Through this it establishes a comprehensive image of both physical and digital live music consumption and the specific ingredients needed to establish collectivity.

ISBN: 978-90-76665-54-2

