The spatial aspects of musical taste: Conceptualising consumers' *place-dependent* identity investments

Abstract

Consumer research has largely left implicit the interrelationships of space and place with taste. This multi-sited ethnographic study explores how consumers enact, perform, and further develop their musical tastes via their aesthetic experiences in popular (indie) and classical music places. Our findings suggest that consumers create place-dependent identity investments, which unfold via a tripartite experiential process of manifesting habitus, undertaking habitation, and expressing idiolocality. Our study contributes to diverse streams of consumer research such as consumer behaviour, consumer culture theory, and experiential marketing, and opens up avenues for future research focused on the intersections of place with taste.

Keywords

Taste, place, experiential consumption, music consumption, consumer culture

Introduction

Prior consumer culture research has fruitfully employed Bourdieu's theory of taste to explore how various modes of socio-cultural distinction are created, maintained and reproduced in the marketplace (Allen, 2002; Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013; Holt, 1997; Üstüner and Thompson, 2012). Other research streams have developed more contextualised understandings of Bourdieu's work to account for the dynamic and changing nature of consumption phenomena (Arsel and Bean, 2013; Arsel and Thompson, 2011; McQuarrie et al., 2013; Thornton, 1996). However, most studies do not fully capture the lived aspects of taste and, most importantly, stay relatively quiet about their interplay with the overall structures in which they are embedded (Askegaard and Trolle-Linett, 2011). In fact, an important aspect of this lack of clarity is the nature of the interrelationships between specific places and consumption fields. To redress this theoretical gap, we bring together Bourdieuian work on taste along with phenomenological theories of space and place; we propose a spatial conception of musical taste, whereby individuals' tastes unfold through aesthetic experiences within various consumption places. Data are drawn from a multi-sited ethnography of the Primavera Sound festival (Spain) and the Bridgewater Hall (UK), considered to be significant trajectories in the fields of popular (indie) and classical music consumption respectively. Our key contribution is the development of the concept of *place-dependent identity investments.* This concept highlights the analytic relations between consumption

places and field-dependent tastes via consumers' aesthetic experiences. We illustrate how consumers' place-dependent identity investments unfold via a tripartite experiential process involving *manifesting habitus*, *undertaking habitation*, and *expressing idiolocality*. Our synthesising interpretation is schematically captured through the development of a theoretical framework of spatial taste formation. The rest of the paper is organised as follows: first the theoretical foundations of the study are expanded; methodological procedures are discussed; the findings are then presented; and finally, implications for consumer culture research are drawn.

Consuming taste *in* space *and* place

Field, habitus and identity investments

Taste has been extensively conceptualised through the lens of Bourdieu's work. Bourdieu (1984) sees taste as a matter of class and cultural distinction that corresponds with legitimate or good taste (Allen, 2002; Holt, 1997) and as a means to provide aesthetic discrimination through the denial of status, a 'distaste' (McQuarrie et al., 2013; Wilk, 1997). Within Bourdieu's (1986) earlier works, taste is achieved through the employment of different forms of generalised capital (economic, cultural, social capital) mainly acquired via primary socialisation processes, which are then stored within an internal system of dispositions called habitus (Holt, 1998). Habitus enables individuals to make sense of and appreciate the social world and further act upon it

(Bourdieu, 1989). Bourdieu's (1984) earlier conceptualisations mainly deal with consumers' primary socialisation and their pre-existing positions in society. Further, consumer culture research has illustrated how social class and consumers' generalised capital investments are associated with status-oriented consumption behaviour in the marketplace (Allen, 2002; Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013; Üstüner and Thompson, 2012). Such studies mostly focused on the structural aspects of taste and the associated status games, rather than with how taste is continuously performed and further developed in the course of consumers' lives (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013; Holt, 1998).

Later Bourdieuian efforts were directed more towards the abandonment of generalised capital conceptions, replacing these with field-dependent versions; that is with capital conceptions related to specific social fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). This understanding suggests that through *identity investments* in various social fields, consumers accumulate field-specific capital that informs their habitus and further shapes their consumption behaviour and taste (Arsel and Thompson, 2011). Previous research has illustrated how consumers create field-dependent identity investments in the context of consumption communities. For example, consumer researchers have explored the communal consumption practices of experiential and extraordinary activities (Arnould and Price, 1993; Tumbat and Belk, 2011), of lifestyle subcultures (Arsel and Thompson, 2011; Goulding et al., 2002), and lately of taste regimes (Arsel

and Bean, 2013). These studies demonstrate how consumers enact their habitus and create field-dependent capital through their identity investments in various consumption fields. They acknowledge the bounded nature of consumption fields, within broader sociocultural structures, and the interpenetration of meanings, modes of practice and power relations (Arsel and Thompson, 2011; Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013; Holt, 1997). As such, these lines of research have initiated a conceptual movement from the study of the macro-social dimensions of taste to the study of taste as a situated activity (Hennion, 2001) encompassing more experiential dimensions. However, previous research fails to fully capture the lived aspects of taste and does not account for their interplay with the overall structures within which they are embedded. In other words, prior studies do not explain *where* and *how* consumers further develop, shape, and perform their tastes. The interrelationships between specific places, aesthetic experiences, and consumption fields remain somewhat unclear. In this paper, we posit a spatial conception of musical taste which emerges through individuals' aesthetic experiences in various consumption places. Next, we provide a brief outline of prior consumer culture research in aesthetic experiences and detail the phenomenological theories of space and place that inform our study.

Aesthetic experiences and spatial taste formation

Marketing studies have overlooked the development of nuanced understandings of aesthetic experiences (Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008). We follow a broad

understanding of the aesthetic experience that encompasses experiential, symbolic, affective and sensory dimensions (Charters, 2006). We therefore posit a phenomenological approach to aesthetics, which considers them as being 'part of everyday life of consumers who negotiate aesthetic meanings through everyday life experiences and consumption practices' (Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008: 47). Consumer culture researchers have mostly approached aesthetic and aesthetically oriented experiences through the lens of the experiential economy. This approach encompasses understandings of how consumption places can lead to the creation of extraordinary and/or liminal states that possess a set of aesthetic qualities, such as emotional intensity, pleasure, and imagination (Arnould and Price, 1993; Goulding et al., 2002; Tumbat and Belk, 2011), and the processes by which consumers create attachments to commercial or non-commercial consumption spaces (Chatzidakis et al., 2012; Debenedetti et al., 2014; Maclaran and Brown, 2005; Visconti et al., 2010). Most consumer culture oriented works explore how consumers develop emotional and/or symbolic connections with their social and physical surroundings (Debenedetti et al., 2014), and the aesthetic consumption practices and appreciation that result from this immersion in artistic experiences (Carú and Cova, 2005; Joy and Sherry, 2003; Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008). Such studies have illustrated that identity is shaped and developed through consumers' continuous engagement and immersion with embodied aesthetic experiences (Joy and Sherry, 2003; Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008)

as well as discourse and experience (Thompson and Hirschman, 1995). Joy and Sherry (2003) delineate the processes of embodiment in consumers' aesthetic appreciation of artworks within museums and suggest these embodied experiences shape consumers' identities and their ways of thinking about art. Further, Venkatesh and Meamber (2008) argue that ongoing aesthetic experiences might lead to taste formation while also nurturing consumers' identities. Nevertheless, the actual relations between the spatiality of aesthetic experiences and consumers' tastes remain underexplored.

Place has been mostly used as a static construct rather than a substantial source of meanings within the marketing and consumer research field (Sherry, 2000). In contrast, phenomenological approaches conceptualise place as a way of looking and knowing the world, as the experiential marker of our existence (Casey, 1998, 2001a; Malpas, 1999; Tuan, 1977). Place can be understood as an arena of action that is simultaneously physical and historical, social and cultural (Casey, 1997, 2001a) with the world understood through our experiences in different places (Malpas, 1999). In fact, the phenomenological approach to place implies that 'we are the sort of thinking, remembering, experiencing creatures we are only in virtue of our active engagement in place […] our identities are, one can say, intricately and essentially place-bound' (Malpas, 1999: 177). Such an approach inherently presupposes a conceptual movement from the abstractness of space towards the concreteness of lived place (Casey, 1997)

and serves to highlight the ontological significance of place that emerges along with our human existence *in* place (Casey, 2001a).

For Casey (2001a), self and identity are interrelated with place through the concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). Habitus acts as the mediatrix of place and self and is the foundation for human action in any possible place. Casey (2001a: 686) highlights the embodied potential of the habitus concept noting that 'a given habitus is always enacted in a particular place and incorporates the features inherent in previous such places, all of which are linked by a habitudinal bond'. Casey (2001a) also introduces the concepts of habitation and idiolocality. These concepts provide support for his trialectic account of the experiential process of sharing out place and capturing the meanings through which individuals live, realise, and reflect their embodied experiences *in* place. The concept of habitation refers to the continuous re-enactment of habitus within a diversity of places and represents the primary way through which individuals realise their active commitment to place. The concept of idiolocality deals with the unique meanings of place, which are first internalised and are then established as embodied experiences and memories (Casey, 2000, 2001a). Using Bourdieuian field analysis logic, we posit that Casey's conceptualisation alludes to exploration of the analytic relations between various consumption places (and consumers' aesthetic experiences therein) and their relevant fields of consumption. We therefore argue that his conceptualisation constitutes a valuable heuristic to explore the interrelationships

between place and taste. This understanding provides the focus for our study and helps us to frame our findings.

Music consumption and the music marketplace

Music is selected as the context for inquiry. Music has been successfully employed in prior research on taste (Bourdieu, 1984; Hennion, 2001) and is associated with a diversity of musical spaces such as festivals, concerts, clubs and third-places. These spaces are considered as arenas of action where musical tastes are individually and collectively shared and performed (Hennion, 2001). Various streams of research have explored the interrelationships between music consumption and space and place (e.g. Connell and Gibson, 2003; Kruse, 2010). In order to develop understandings of how music is shaped by place, most studies highlight the need to explore the ways in which 'musical space meshes with the specificities of place, in its particular physical, sociocultural, historical, and political contexts' (DeChaine, 2002: 92). Fonarow (1996, 2006) illustrates how live music spaces orchestrate the aesthetics and practices of British indie music culture, and further delineate the ways in which individuals negotiate their membership of the indie music field through their continuous participation in, and engagement with, music spaces.

In this paper, we understand the field of classical music consumption to consist of music styles and genres like chamber, opera, and symphony. Whilst there are

exceptions, it is viewed as part of elite culture and stands in diametrical opposition to popular music (Hibbett, 2005). We define the field of indie music consumption as a popular music field that consists of a range of alternative-oriented music genres (Hesmondhalgh, 1999) and embraces paradoxical aesthetics since 'it counters and implicitly criticizes hegemonic mass culture, desiring to be an authentic alternative to it, but also serves as a taste culture perpetuating the privilege of a social elite of upscale consumers' (Newman, 2009: 17).

Marketing and consumer research on the nature and context of music consumption fields is relatively scarce (Arsel and Thompson, 2011; Carú and Cova, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2009). Research becomes more challenging given that each consumption field possesses its own logic, rules, and modes of practice. We focus our study on two distinct fields and two specific marketplace contexts - the Bridgewater Hall and the Primavera Sound festival. We position both as representative consumption places where classical and indie music are performed. We argue that these places are significant trajectories within their respective fields, where consumers' habitus and tastes are actualised (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The Bridgewater Hall in Manchester is a place where, usually, classical music is performed and experienced. It accommodates a national and international range of artists, critics, and fans. It is home to three orchestras, namely the Hallé, the BBC Philharmonic, and the Manchester Camerata. These orchestras operate as local taste communities (Southerton, 2001) in the

field of classical music, nurturing institutionalised cultural capital to the Bridgewater Hall, and orchestrating the aesthetics of music practices there (Arsel and Bean, 2013). The Primavera Sound festival is an annual music festival that takes place in Barcelona and offers the chance to see new and established independent bands performing on eight different stages. The festival marketplace can be considered as part of a wider network of indie culture, one which loosely revolves around a web of different places such as clubs, music and fashion stores, third places, media, and social networking sites (Arsel and Thompson, 2011).

Methodology

Our multi-sited ethnographic study followed a purposeful sampling logic. We identified two information-rich cases and our approach was influenced by Bourdieu's field analysis logic (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). In contrast to standard multi-sited ethnographic approaches, we aimed to investigate not only individuals' embodied experiences within these two places, but also the social conditions of these experiences (Bourdieu, 2003); achieved through positioning our consumers' place-specific aesthetic experiences within a broader structural framework (Askegaard and Trolle-Linnet, 2011).

We first conducted participant observation at the Primavera Sound festival over a two-year period (i.e. three festival occurrences). We then conducted extended

participant observation in the Bridgewater Hall, where the lead author attended more than twenty classical music concerts during a one-year period. Ethnographic data collection involved the gathering of written fieldnotes, visual ethnographic data (photographs and/or videos), and artefact material (leaflets, programmes, music magazines) across sites. The lead author also participated in several informal discussions and also completed opportunistic unstructured on-site interviews with 43 participants (Joy and Sherry, 2003), which ranged in length from 5 to 45 minutes.

At a later stage, we conducted unstructured off-site interviews (McCracken, 1988) in order to further position our ethnographic ensemble within the fields of indie and classical music, and to structure our experiential themes (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 2003). The sample included some informants from the ethnographic stage (e.g. those who had demonstrated particular engagement within the field) and also additional informants recruited using snowballing techniques. These off-site interviews helped us develop more detailed understandings of participants' life histories and their overall relationship with the fields of indie and classical music; and provided an opportunity for informants to enact their lived meanings of aesthetic experiences within the festival and concert hall marketplaces (Thompson and Haytko, 1997). In total, 25 offsite interviews were conducted. These ranged in length from 30 minutes to 1½ hours. All the interviews were carried out in English, except for three on-site interviews at the Primavera Sound festival which were conducted in Greek (the lead author's native

language) and were subsequently translated into English. Given the international character of the Primavera Sound festival, on-site interviews were conducted with a wide range of nationalities including but not limited to US, British, Latin American, Italian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, and so on. Off-site interviews for the Primavera Sound festival and all Bridgewater Hall interviews were conducted with British participants. The age range of informants was 21-36 and 30-70 years old for the festival and concert hall cases respectively. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and anonymised. Data collection stopped once theoretical saturation was reached - in terms of emergent themes and the research questions.

Data analysis commenced with intra-field analyses, where each place was investigated at the micro-level of actions and interactions. It progressed to tracing relations in-between places and, subsequently, music fields. We coded, categorised and abstracted in a constant comparative manner, moving back and forth between emergent findings and extant literature (Spiggle, 1994). We paid particular attention to the experiential meanings of each place and then moved on to identify connections across places and fields, following a multi-level analysis as we moved from specific consumer experiences to abstract levels of meaning (Thompson and Hirschman, 1995). Our interpretation was ultimately grounded using Casey's (2001a) typology which served as an eventful frame to further abstract our experiential themes (Spiggle, 1998). Finally, in order to safeguard the integrity of our interpretation, we relied on extended participant

observation, constant comparison across both places and various sources of data collection (Joy and Sherry, 2003).

Developing place-dependent identity investments

Key emergent themes deal with the nature of consumers' aesthetic experiences within these musical places. In particular, we demonstrate how consumers develop what we term *place-dependent identity investments* allowing them to associate their embodied aesthetic experiences at the Primavera Sound festival and the Bridgewater Hall with the respective music fields. Our findings illustrate how such investments unfold through a tripartite experiential process of manifesting habitus, undertaking habitation, and expressing idiolocality (Casey, 2001a). The emergent themes are informed by consumers' identity investments in the festival and concert hall marketplaces. These identity investments are then nurtured through individuals' place-dependent investments within the Primavera Sound festival and the Bridgewater Hall. This process of place-dependent identity is portrayed in a theoretical framework of spatial taste formation (Figure 1). The framework focuses on the similarities across fields and places, yet any interpretation should appreciate the structural heterologies between different music fields (in this case classical and indie). In the following sections, we detail the process through which consumers create place-dependent identity investments.

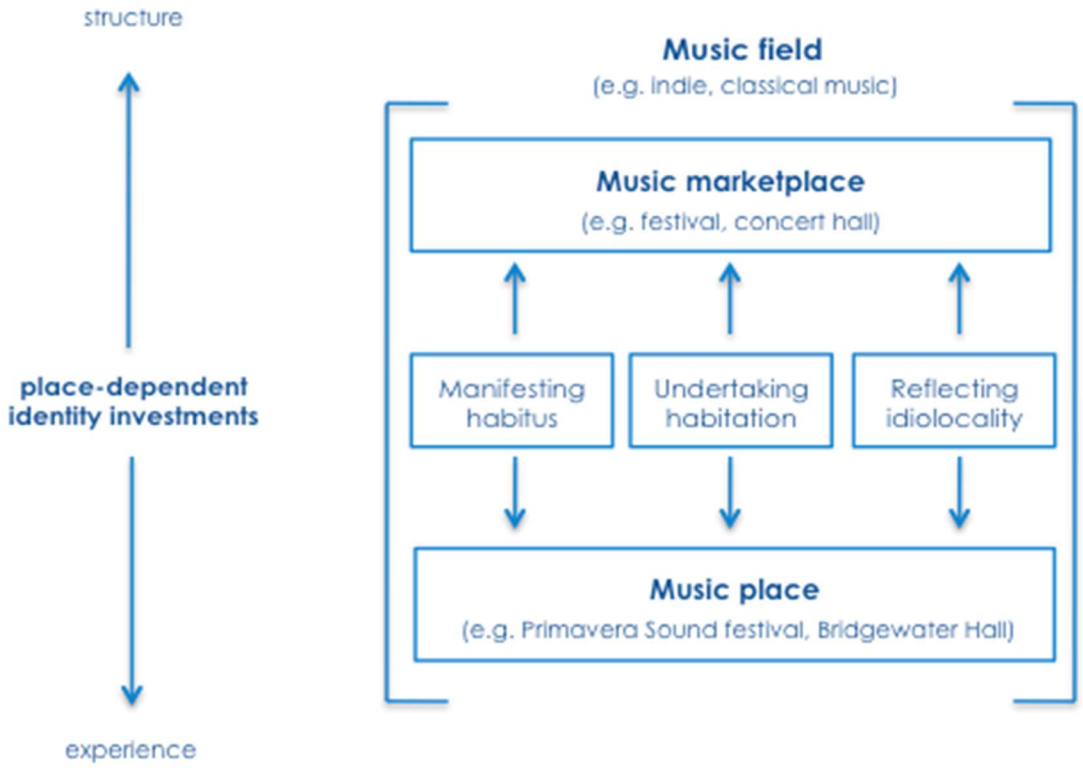

Figure 1. Theoretical framework of spatial taste formation

Manifesting habitus

Primavera Sound festival and Bridgewater Hall attendees are able to ground their aesthetic experiences within the festival and concert hall marketplaces by manifesting the habitus which they have developed through their field-dependent identity investments (Allen, 2002). This process reflects the positioning and comparison of each place (e.g. Primavera or Bridgewater Hall) with, and within, a range of musical spaces reflecting each field (such as other festival and concert hall spaces).

Starting with Primavera, Dennis explains how the festival relates to attendees' indie music tastes:

"Primavera comes out from a concept which is kind of almost like a backlash. [it]… is distinct from Reading and Leeds and T in the Park, and all these kind of things […] it's kind of an urban festival so it's an alternative to that; reclaim the festival for people who want to distinguish themselves from mainstream festivals, they can go to one and still feel like they're part of a utopian club of people who are cool". (Dennis, 30s)

Indie music has been long associated with specific geographical and physical places (Kruse, 2010). Many informants used their association with Primavera to create disassociations with other non-indie musical spaces (Arsel and Thompson, 2011). But Dennis positions other indie festivals as *part* of the popular (mainstream) festival marketplace, reflective of the paradoxical aesthetics of the indie music field (Newman, 2009). By making this distinction, he assigns a spatial significance to the Primavera Sound festival within indie music culture, and justifies his place-dependent identity investments (Arsel and Thompson, 2011). This justification is balanced and mediated via consumers' embodied aesthetic experiences in the Primavera Sound festival. Alan elaborates further:

"Here it's all about music. You know you go to other festivals and there can be poetry or comedy or just things happening, like you know, customary [things] you can go and see, and not just watch a band and all of that. But here you come for the music and

everything is about the music and obviously there's some new bands that you haven't seen before, and, you know, you become a fan of a new band that you haven't heard before". (Alan, 20s)

The explicit focus of the festival on indie music provided most of our attendees with the opportunity to perform their indie music tastes, and also to shape and expand them. While aligning his musical tastes within the indie music field, Alan also refers to the idiosyncratic character of the Primavera Sound festival. The blending of renowned and established independent artists with fresh and promising independent bands from Spain and abroad was frequently cited by our informants as one of the unique attributes of the festival. Alan highlights the phenomenological gains that he acquired via his festival experience which resulted in him becoming a fan of new bands. Such gains are ultimately grounded in the nature of the place and emerge through a series of situated consumption practices (Fonarow, 2006; Kruse, 2010), which we discuss in more detail in the next section.

One of the defining factors in live classical music is the quality of the sound during the musical performance (Hennion, 2001). Our Bridgewater Hall informants frequently cited the hall's aural architecture as a vital aspect of a satisfactory classical music experience; demonstrating their field-specific cultural capital within the classical music field. Nelly enacts previous aesthetic experiences within the concert hall marketplace to confirm her aesthetic inclination towards the Bridgewater Hall:

"I can still remember to this day a Brahms Third Symphony at the Free Trade Hall where I didn't know the symphony well enough…I sometimes find Brahms a bit difficult and the acoustics were so awful, we sat at the back and not on the overhead…it was a mess! I'm sure the orchestra was playing very well but the sound was a mess and I remember thinking I actually just want to leave. And, that never happens in the Bridgewater Hall. The sound is amazing!" (Nelly, 50s)

In recalling this past concert at the Bridgewater Hall's predecessor, Nelly positions her classical music experiences with regards to the sound quality. The Bridgewater Hall has been described as one of the quietest musical spaces in the world; it was built on a set of rubber springs, which minimise the diffusion of external sounds to the concert hall (BBC News, 2009). Our ethnography revealed that this aural architecture becomes a significant part of our informants' embodied aesthetic experiences and certifies their identity investments in the hall. Another informant, Arthur, delves deeper into the importance of his acoustic experience there:

"You either decide a musical space needs amplification or it doesn't and you apply that judgement to all music. But, of course, individual groups [orchestras] may need little adjustments. Like, in the Steve Reich [concert], I was a bit worried when I heard that there was going to be amplification at that concert. But they did it well […] I think they did it very well at the Steve Reich; amplification at the Bridgewater Hall that night…yeah, it was good!" (Arthur, 60s)

Arthur frequently cited amplification as a defining factor of his music experiences. For Arthur each musical space requires careful treatment in order to create authentic music experiences that are consistent with the aesthetics of the classical music field. His understanding of the opportunities and challenges involved allows him to assign cultural legitimacy to his aesthetic experiences (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013). He accumulates symbolic capital, which refers to specific forms of economic, social and/or cultural capital that provide legitimate platforms to claim status in a given consumption field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Our informants gain symbolic resources and claim status in the classical music field via their place-dependent identity investments in the Bridgewater Hall.

Undertaking habitation

Our informants undertake habitation to appreciate their aesthetic experiences within the Primavera Sound festival and the Bridgewater Hall. The re-enactment of their habitus, within these places, impacts the value of their on-going aesthetic experiences; which are inherently co-created (Üstüner and Thompson, 2012). This re-enactment involves diverse modes of appreciation which represent contextualised cultural capital practices and are ultimately grounded *in* place. It is exactly this constant re-enactment of habitus, in various consumption places, that Casey (2001a) defines as habitation.

In the Bridgewater Hall, such modes of appreciation are initially communicated in response to the various resident orchestras that perform there and thus serve to nurture the aesthetics of the classical music field at the hall (Arsel and Bean, 2013; Southerton, 2001). Such practices boost a sense of community within the concert place, which encompasses the audience, the performers, and/or the service providers. These practices can be theorised as quasi-ritualistic behaviours within the communal classical music experience (O'Sullivan, 2009; Thornton, 1996). Margaret explains how interruptions to this communal feeling can negatively impact her aesthetic experience:

"We always sit in the gallery, we like to see the orchestra and the sound is superb there, but there was a gentleman who used to sit in the upper side with us who clapped at the second that the music was finished. And it's so…it's so ruthless to the conductor who's created this atmosphere of beauty or even sometimes, you know, [off] chaos if it's a big, loud piece of music." (Margaret, 70s)

Margaret demonstrates familiarity with the Bridgewater Hall setting by holding clear aesthetic preferences for where she likes to sit and why, supporting prior understandings of the significance of classical music attendees' seating choices (Carú and Cova, 2005). Our ethnography revealed that the spatial arrangement of attendees is not only shaped by their field-specific cultural capital but also by their degree of familiarity with, and commitment to, the Bridgewater Hall. This is further supported by Margaret's discussion of the importance of the norms of appreciation in the field, which

encompasses empathy for both audience and performers and unfolds through the embodiment of her aesthetic experiences in the concert hall (Joy and Sherry, 2003). Lea, primarily a festival informant, recently attended a concert at the Bridgewater Hall and elaborates upon a similar type of aesthetic appreciation:

"One of my friends was sat next to a woman who was on her mobile all the way through the gig, and he [another attendee] made a big fuss about it, wanted to go and complain to the manager. We were talking about that after; that kind of incident ruined the atmosphere for her because she felt quite awkward and felt like the guy behind her was quite rude but actually the woman was ruining it for others who couldn't really concentrate". (Lea, 20s)

Lea remarked on the striking differences between her aesthetic experiences within the indie music field and the Bridgewater Hall. By utilising the word 'gig' to describe her classical music experiences at the concert hall, Lea denotes her low cultural capital in the classical music field. Lea provides an example of contrasting norms of aesthetic appreciation across diverse music spaces: specific places are aligned with the aesthetics of the music field to which they belong. On closer reading, her quote reveals that aesthetic appreciation is inextricably related to, and further shaped by, attendees' habitational practices that are enacted at the Bridgewater Hall (Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008). In the course of the ethnographic process, our fieldnotes cited various

examples of such habitational practices, which included knowing when to clap, keeping silent and avoiding coughing during classical music performances.

Our ethnographic data from the Primavera Sound festival communicate a markedly different mode of aesthetic appreciation. In the festival marketplace, habitation reflects immersion in the music performances and signs of positive association (Fonarow, 2006). Aesthetic appreciation accompanies this immersion, but also relies on the co-created experience of the audience, performers, and festival organisers in place.

"Last time I saw them [Low – indie rock band] at the Academy in the basement, and I don't know if you know them but they are a very quiet band, and when I saw them there, you could hear people talking to each other, and ordering drinks at the bar, and I was enjoying the music, but you have this 'club buzz' in the back, so it wasn't perfect, but at Primavera it was unusual because every single person in the room was completely and utterly absorbed in the music, and not a single word was spoken […] The only other thing I remember was people coming into the room, but they were almost enraptured because of the atmosphere and the way the room was set up I suppose". (Michael, 30s)

Michael depicts his aesthetic experience at Primavera as 'unusual'. His festival experience is converted into an extraordinary consumption experience, one which incorporates both communal and individualistic characteristics (Goulding et al., 2002, Tumbat and Belk, 2011). These behaviours acquire a strong antistructural and

transcendental status for the duration of the band's performance, revealing the immersive character of his aesthetic appreciation (DeChaine, 2002). Michael's reasons behind the creation of extraordinary festival experiences are inherently place-specific – he specifies 'the atmosphere', and 'the way the room was setup'. The 'room' to which Michael refers is the 'Auditorium', the only indoor venue in the Primavera Sound festival and one which hosts purely acoustic music performances. The Auditorium is positioned as somewhat exclusive. Given its low capacity, open access is limited to professional and VIP individuals, with other attendees admitted only on a 'first come first served' basis. Prior research has detailed the existence of spatial zones of participation within indie music gigs, which are associated with attendees' degrees of field-specific cultural capital (Fonarow, 1996; 2006). Similarly, attending music performances in the Auditorium elevates attendees' place-dependent identity investments in the festival and nurtures them with symbolic currency, which can be 'cashed out' in the indie music field.

In the extract below, Nick also reveals different aspects of aesthetic appreciation in which attendees become more conscious about their festival experiences (Joy and Sherry, 2003):

"The main thing is the level of energy that the crowd has, and the level of energy that the crowd has is very much based on how well the artist performs on stage, some of that stands to [is down to] the artist, and some of that stands to [is down to] other practice,

like the sound […] I think it's one of the few festivals where I hear people discussing the quality of the sound as a major factor and how much they enjoyed it. In other festivals, it's much more personal or a smaller group experience, and here I think it's a much wider experience, because a very small number of people is drunk or high, therefore they can share their own experience in music with others". (Nick, 30s)

Nick's Primavera festival experience is understood in connection with the structure of the indie music field through the role of the audience and the festival organisers. Nick feels at one with other audience members who comment on the quality of the sound. Alternative norms are introduced via this more sophisticated audience, who possess higher degrees of cultural capital in the indie music field. These norms provide a means to instantly position their Primavera music experiences within the wider network of the festival marketplace, and ultimately transfer them to the indie music field.

Expressing idiolocality

Place has long been considered as critical to the understanding of the relationship between situated music practices and identity construction (Kruse, 2010). In the festival and concert hall marketplaces, idiolocality indicates how musical taste might be shaped and potentially transformed through the physical, socio-cultural, and/or historical meanings of these places (Casey, 2001a). Our informants express idiolocality mainly through their place attachment to the Primavera Sound festival and the

Bridgewater Hall. Place attachment refers to strong emotional bonds with specific places (Debenedetti et al., 2014) and prior research suggests that individuals delve deeper into consumption fields via their emotional connections with the cultural ambience of various social spaces (Arsel and Thompson, 2011).

In the Primavera Sound festival, such emotional connections unfold through a set of physical, socio-cultural and historical meanings of the place; they become embodied via the contours of the festival experience (Joy and Sherry, 2003).

"I felt that it was really strange not to have grass to sit on, and I kind of quite liked this dystopian, concrete site, it had a kind of weird futuristic feeling to it that I quite enjoyed […] I'd say it's definitely unique. Now, this summer Lea [his girlfriend] and I went to a ridiculous amount of festivals, went to six festivals, it's crazy. I mean the other settings…the concrete aesthetics changed how I feel about it, it was a unique thing…being in a foreign country was a unique thing. I guess maybe the routine of the day with going to bed that late… I guess you go to bed that late at Glastonbury but then all the bands stop at 11 or 12, [but at Primavera] they don't stop until 6 am, that's a very Spanish thing which I thought was a nice touch, it's nice being able to watch bands at 4 am, it's cool." (Tony, 20s)

Tony recalls a set of distinctive aspects of his aesthetic experience. By directly contrasting Primavera with the Glastonbury Festival in the UK, Tony emphasises the existence of a different set of socio-cultural norms, which mark his festival experience.

The spatial aesthetics of the Primavera Sound festival sharply contrast with the formal aesthetics of the festival marketplace (e.g. sitting on grass, bands playing until later, the existence of concrete). The festival setting lies in a vast urban location, which was initially built as part of Barcelona's urban regeneration. The manipulation of the setting and its transformation into a festival space has led to the creation of a novel ambience (Maclaran and Brown, 2005). The concrete contributes to the spatial aesthetics of the festival, creating a 'dystopian' aura (Chatzidakis et al., 2012), which seems to be aligned with the aesthetics of the indie music field (Figure 2). Participants' freedom to wander around the site consuming live music contributes to the transformation of the festival space into a lived place, and leads to the 'lingering of place in body' (Casey, 2001a: 178), as illustrated above in Tony's case. In this regard, the Primavera Sound festival supplies our informants with particularly embodied forms of field-specific capital in the indie music field.

Figure 2. The spatial aesthetics of the Primavera Sound festival

In the context of the Bridgewater Hall, such forms of field-specific capital are similarly acquired through the embodiment of the place. Our written fieldnotes highlight some of the corporeal dimensions of the experiential process of embodiment with the concert hall:

"Many people are strolling around a lot. It's like they're trying to get to be familiar with the place […] most of them are sitting at the lounge/restaurant area and some of them

are walking around either checking the future concerts at the programmes' stand, taking their tickets or strolling around at the souvenir shop." (Fieldnotes, 5/07/2014)

The Bridgewater Hall consists of a multi-level architecture which facilitates access to different spaces such as the auditorium, restaurant and bars, the ticket office, the souvenir shop and so on. The movement of attendees into the concert hall space enables them to create a sense of place which often transcends the boundaries of the music performance and extends to their degree of familiarity with the concert hall through their physical placement within these different spaces (Fonarow, 1996). Our informants ultimately ground their aesthetic experiences in the various physical, socio-cultural and historical meanings of the concert hall. For some, the Bridgewater Hall offers a nostalgic connection with the history of the Free Trade Hall, which, in most cases, was the place where they were introduced to the classical music field. The Bridgewater Hall is positioned as continuing the classical music tradition of Manchester. Their current emotional attachment (Debenedetti et al., 2014) with the Bridgewater Hall is shaped by the historical continuity that it provides with its predecessor. For others, this historical continuity acts as a sign of comparison, one which leverages their acoustic experience within the hall.

"I love the sound of the place, I love the building, I love the way I can tell my kids the story about the Manchester bomb when they walk in…you know that story that they

couldn't hear the explosion in the hall from the Manchester bomb? Kids like that every time!" (Peter, 40s)

Peter cites the key aspects of his aesthetic experience within the Bridgewater Hall; 'the sound', 'the building', 'the story'. He focuses on recognition and appreciation of the aural architecture of the hall, reflecting its physicality and servicescape which enhance consumers' aesthetic classical music experiences (Carú and Cova, 2005). Although Peter refers to the 1996 Irish Republican Army bomb to emphasise the aural architecture of the hall, his narrative also reveals the historical and socio-cultural aspects of the hall which are strongly associated with its geographical location (DeChaine, 2002). The Bridgewater Hall represents physical continuity with other places in this part of Manchester which can be understood through the concept of landscape encompassing the range of places which are socio-culturally and historically related to each other (Casey, 1997, 2001a).

Discussion and conclusions

This paper is concerned with consuming taste *in* space and place. We aimed to investigate how consumers spatially enact, perform, and further form their musical tastes. We focused on the interrelationships of taste with place as they emerge through consumers' aesthetic experiences at the festival and concert hall marketplaces, in particular the Primavera Sound festival and Bridgewater Hall, and within the fields of

indie and classical music. Our emergent findings suggest that consumers create *place-identity investments* within these places via a tripartite experiential process of manifesting habitus, undertaking habitation, and expressing idiolocality. The development of such investments indicates that taste is performed and further developed through one's remembered embodied aesthetic experiences with different places (Casey, 2000); and that these experiences become associated with specific consumption fields. Our paper represents one of the few empirical studies that directly links taste, and as a result, self and identity, with place. To the best of our knowledge, it is also the only study that empirically explores the trialectic process of sharing out place as theorised by Edward Casey (2001a). The concept of place-dependent identity investments might provide a useful tool to explore the myriad ways through which consumers enact and shape their identities in the contemporary marketplace. One of the major contributions of our study is that it implies an epistemological movement towards investigating the interrelationships between consumers' aesthetic experiences in various consumption places and the overall structures within which they are embedded (Askegaard and Trolle-Linnet, 2011).

Our study also contributes to taste-oriented literature within the consumer culture research field (Arsel and Thompson, 2011; Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013; Üstüner and Thompson, 2012). First, we extend prior studies that deal with the structural aspects of taste (Allen, 2002; Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013; Holt,

1997; Üstüner and Thompson, 2012) by further highlighting the significance of the situated dimensions of taste (Arsel and Bean, 2013). More specifically, we illustrate how our informants accumulate various forms of capital within these places, which are subsequently utilised to claim status in the indie and classical music fields. Second, we provide initial empirical evidence of how consumers' place-dependent identity investments are transferred into the indie and classical music fields. In contrast with the discursive regulatory aesthetics of taste regimes (Arsel and Bean, 2013), we propose a place-focused framework of taste in which the spatial aesthetics of the contemporary marketplace are equally responsible for the orchestration of consumers' field-dependent musical tastes. Our findings indicate that our informants attempt to create a spatial form of habitus which is grounded in their aesthetic experiences, in the festival and concert hall marketplaces, and is attached to specific places, namely the Primavera Sound festival and the Bridgewater Hall. They utilise their aesthetic experiences to embody these places and further develop their musical tastes. Our study delves deeper into the lived dimensions of taste and their interplay with specific consumption fields and extends prior research that dealt with the development of more contextualised understandings of taste (Arsel and Bean, 2013; McQuarrie et al., 2013; Thornton, 1996). In this regard, we concur with previous claims about the role of aesthetic experiences in the ongoing formation of consumers' tastes (Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008). We also add to the emerging stream of consumer research that deals with the spatial aesthetics of

the contemporary marketplace (Debenedetti et al., 2014; Chatzidakis et al., 2012; Maclaran and Brown, 2005). We illustrate how consumers undertake habitation by continuously re-enacting their habitus to appreciate their aesthetic experiences. As part of this process, they spatially co-create the value of their aesthetic experiences (Üstüner and Thompson, 2012). We delineate how their aesthetic experiences within the festival and concert hall places reveal signs of place attachment (Debenedetti et al., 2014), which occur through the physical, socio-cultural, and/or historical meanings of these places.

In sum, our findings suggest that more attention should be paid to the diversity of ways that specific places are associated with consumers' tastes. Future consumer research should delve deeper into consumers' place-dependent identity investments and aim to uncover the physical, socio-cultural, historical and/or political meanings of place and address how they influence taste. Future studies should investigate the consumption *of* space and place and how it tends to shape and/or potentially transform taste. Finally, we call for consumer researchers to further explore issues of aesthetic value co-creation and delineate how consumers co-create this in the spatial context of their consumption experiences.

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