NEIGHBOURHOOD + CINEMA

The role of place and community

in the Helsinki area's neighbourhood cinemas

Jeroen Sebrechts

Master's Thesis

Arts Management

Sibelius Academy

University of the Arts

Helsinki

Spring 2021

ABSTRACT

Thesis

Title	Number of pages
Neighbourhood + cinema: the role of place and community in the Helsinki area's neighbourhood cinemas	98 + appendix (1)

Author	Semester
Jeroen Sebrechts	Spring 2021

Degree programme
Arts Management

Abstract

This study aims to create understanding on the role of place and community in the operations of the Helsinki area's new neighbourhood cinemas. In doing so, it hopes to inspire locality-based innovation in the film exhibition sector. Additionally, the importance of local audience is questioned, and common denominators between the case areas are explored, in order to better outline the features of the Helsinki area's contemporary neighbourhood cinemas.

This is a multiple-case study, examining the approaches of four different neighbourhood cinemas towards place and community through qualitative content analysis. The cinemas have recently started or renewed their film activities in different locations within the Helsinki area. My primary data consisted of interviews with these cinemas' managers and spans the period 2016-2018. Following an interpretive paradigm, the study doesn't aim for a general theory, but seeks particular understanding of these case studies.

Instead of a traditional strategic business perspective, this study approached the material through an anthropological-sociological looking glass. Urban anthropology is a supporting pillar both in the domains of cultural mapping and New Cinema History, all three of which were combined into this study's theoretic framework.

The study found that the three neighbourhood cinemas with (suspected) high shares of local audience are also integrating the neighbourhood into their service design and marketing. Strong social capital, and related concepts of place attachment and sense of community, prove to be rich resources for the new neighbourhood cinema in Helsinki area. In turn, neighbourhood cinemas offer an opportunity to strengthen sense of community and aim to maximise this by adding social functions. On the level of the venue, sense of place and authenticity are returning elements that cater to both nostalgia and urban experiences. The venue's history is used as a resource in programme, marketing and experience design.

Keywords
neighbourhood cinema, place, community, film exhibition

Additional information

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In 1910, Helsinki was among European capitals well advanced in its vast number of cinemas: 24 single-hall venues, a real cinema city (Sundman 1996). From 1939 onward, Helsinki cinemas were divided according to size and facilities into classes: class IA and IB were the premiere cinemas (*ensi-iltaelokuvateatterit*), and class IIA, IIIA, IIIB and IV were neighbourhood cinemas (*korttelikinot*) (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004). This division defined the order in which they could get screening copies and fixed their admission rates. Premiere cinemas were most often located in the city centre, and neighbourhood cinemas outside of the central districts were to serve local residents. Also size and architectural beauty played a role in the division (ibidem). Ilmari Vesterinen (2015) distinguishes four concentrations of cinema locations in Helsinki, of which the first group is made up of the centre (usually premiere) cinemas, and the other groups of cinemas in and near Töölö, Punavuori and Kallio areas. At its peak, during the second World War, the total amount of cinema venues in Helsinki only had risen to 51 (Aaltonen et al. 2015) and in 1955, the average Finn went to the movies 8 times per year (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004).

After television and VHS had pounded many a cinema venue bankrupt in two waves, respectively in the early 1960s and late 1980s, annual cinema visits per capita decreased dramatically and Helsinki's cinema landscape in the mid-1990s looked back like in 1910, where the remaining cinemas were located in the city centre (Aaltonen et al. 2015). Among these were the multiplexes, i.e. venues with multiple film screening halls, which from the 1980s onward completed "the death of the neighbourhood cinema." (Sundman 1996:12). This evolution in the Helsinki cinema landscape largely follows the trends of other European capitals in the past century (Gubbins 2017). By 2013, despite generous grant policies, the transition to digital projection had pushed the decline in cinema numbers even further down and the remaining independent cinema halls in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area

were scarce, with few fully operational ones left in Helsinki city centre. When also they (Kino Engel and Bio Rex) closed their doors for renovations in 2014, the only full-time cinema venues in Helsinki city were in the hands of multiplex chain Finnkino - though only for a very brief moment.

In the past few years, the number of new independent cinema venues has increased in the Helsinki area. Kino Tapiola in Espoo arguably kicked off the new vibe already in 2010, when they reopened after renovations under a new management. In Helsinki, WHS teatteri Unioni opened their doors in late 2014, quickly followed by Kino Sheryl, Korjaamo Kino and Riviera. Remarkable, after all these years of decline. In 2018, the renewed Kino Engel reopened in the centre of Helsinki, and Orion switched ownership when the Film Archive opened its doors in the new Kino Regina. Some other venues are in private ownership and/or are rental venues, offering irregular screening activity.

Helsinki city's neighbours Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen were not cities in their own right until the 1970s. They were not urban environments during the cinemas' golden age, and so their cinema history is vastly different. There was no dichotomy of neighbourhood cinema opposed to the premiere cinema as such did not exist there. However, Espoo's suburban Tapiola district and its cinema Kino Tapiola are an exceptional case. Given its particular history and its key role in the revitalisation of the urban neighbourhood cinema network, Kino Tapiola is worth studying.

In a speech at the Finnish Film Foundation's gala in 2016, Kino Sheryl's manager Ilmari Arnkil shared his insights on Helsinki's neighbourhood cinema revival:

> *Helsinki's new neighbourhood cinemas are local actors in their own districts and have more in common with village cinemas than with their predecessors in the city. They are small, local, adaptable, experimenting and above all else, they reflect their own community's specific characteristics. These urban newbies take their own place in the social ecosystem of their area. (Ilmari Arnkil, personal communication*, January 12, 2017).*

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* Own translation. Own translations are henceforth marked with a * sign.

Illustrating this image of the 'ecosystem', Arnkil says that neighbourhood cinemas in the Helsinki area may also function as a local performing arts centre, cinema restaurant, or meeting place for the elderly, depending on their location – examples by which he likely refers to respectively WHS Union, Korjaamo Kino Töölö and Riviera, and Kino Tapiola.

In this research, I will study these exact cases mentioned above. By doing so, I want to offer a future-oriented view on the changing face of the neighbourhood cinema landscape in the Helsinki area.

1.2   Problem formulation

In 2017, Europa Cinemas, a vast European network of independent cinemas, published a study called 'Strategic investments in the future of film', which finds that independent cinemas' often creative and progressive strategies mostly arise out of necessity (Gubbins 2017). In contrast to chains and multiplexes, single-hall and independent cinema venues are not scalable. A cinema requires a lot of start-up capital (screening equipment, seats) and high maintenance costs (large venue rental, staff, equipment, film purchase), with traditionally small profit margins.

In the study's editorial, Europa Cinemas' directors Claude-Eric Poiroux and Nico Simon state that, in order to compete with new habits of film viewing and keep up with consumer demand, the cinema today needs to innovate to sustain what it alone can offer: the pleasure of the shared experience of cinema-going. The study breaks down four types of strategic focal points among Europa Cinemas' member venues: investment in film, investment in the cinema experience, investment in people and, finally, investment in communities (Gubbins 2017). The authors of the Europa Cinemas study note that "one of the critical differences between independent cinemas and some of the bigger commercial chains is that they are based in, and belong to, their own communities" (Gubbins 2017:9). This creates an argument for an environment that offers new growth opportunities for independent cinemas, to pay particular attention to community as a key point of differentiation. This argument is historically founded by Jancovich and Faire (2003)'s claim that the value of the neighbourhood cinema in its golden age lay mostly in its social and community function, rather than in the films that were

screened.

Finland's National Audiovisual Institute's head of communication Outi Heiskanen states that there have been no sociological studies written on cinemas in Finland (personal correspondence, 2021, April 13). Also on a global scale, there is only scarce research material at hand on the interaction between cinemas and their surroundings that would also regard an exhibitor's perspective. We need a better understanding of the dimensionality of cinema as a place, and of the role that place and community can play in the revitalisation of (neighbourhood) cinema networks. Particularly in Helsinki area, the turning point in cinema growth is remarkable and deserves to be documented and studied.

1.3 Aim of the study

This research aims to create understanding on the role of place and community in the operations of the Helsinki area's neighbourhood cinemas. By collecting observations and particular management actions related to place and community, I welcome the interviewees' insights.

The outcomes of this research may serve to map opportunities for the existing and budding cinema entrepreneur in Helsinki area, and inspire locality-based approaches to neighbourhood cinema entrepreneurs in urban areas elsewhere.

My main research question is:

> *How do neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area use place and community in their operations?*

In the research, I also aim to answer the following questions:

- *What are the common characteristics of the neighbourhoods where neighbourhood cinemas choose to operate - what constitutes 'fertile soil' for neighbourhood cinemas?*

- *What is the role of local audience to neighbourhood cinemas?*

The data collection took place between 2016 and 2018, therefore this research is not addressing the effects of the pivotal Covid-19 pandemic situation which occurred in 2020.

1.4   Research Approach

I started this study with a quite general aim of getting strategic insight into Helsinki's new neighbourhood cinemas. The focus on place and community grew only through the recurrence of these elements in the interviews with those cinemas' managers. Gradually, this study came to regard film exhibition as a socially and spatially embedded happening, and subsequently employs a methodology that reflects a qualitative and anthropological perspective on film industries.

Throughout my research period, the larger purpose always remained the same: to gain insight that serves the film exhibition sector. With this idea in mind, I insisted on maintaining a manager's perspective. In order to offer a wide and diverse range of the potential roles of place and community in cinema management, I discuss four case cinemas within Helsinki area in parallel with their local context.

The complexity and particularity of the different cases call for a qualitative multiple case study. By examining the connection and interplay between neighbourhood and cinema in multiple cases, I work towards creating a deeper understanding of the neighbourhood cinema as a phenomenon in a contemporary urban context. This doesn't necessarily lead to a generalised theory or scalability beyond this context of Helsinki area. I hereby take an explicitly constructivist philosophical position.

My main data consists of interviews with the neighbourhood cinemas' managers. These were supported by a wide range of both qualitative and quantitative data: historical records, newspaper articles, demographics of the area, film-related statistics, and existing customer surveys. The data is examined using a content analysis methodology.

1.5   Structure of the thesis

In chapter 2, I present this study's theoretical framework. The frameworks applied are outlined in separate sub-chapter: in the first part, I focus on urban anthropology and several central concepts (2.1.), followed by the related disciplines

of cultural mapping (2.2.) and New Cinema History (2.3.). Chapter 3 explains this study's research methodology, outlining respectively the employed approach, the data collection and analysis processes, as well as critical reflections on the process. The analysis and results are presented in chapter 4. First, I present a context survey (4.1.), and then each case is presented separately: Kino Tapiola (4.2.), Korjaamo Kino Töölö (4.3.), Riviera (4.4.) and WHS Union (4.5.). Every case starts with an extensive case survey, after which I discuss the case's central place- and community-related actions separately.

The study's conclusions are presented in chapter 5. The last chapter 6 bundles discussion and recommendations for further research.

2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research studies the new neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area, and their place and community elements, with mainly qualitative, but also quantitative data. As such, cultural mapping provides an organic framework. I will outline the main views of this domain, paying particular attention to the views of Patrick Geddes and Lia Ghilardi. The domains of cultural mapping and planning are rooted in the perspective of the policy-maker, yet Bianchini (2013) and Ghilardi (2019) state that the cultural assets, themes and narratives revealed by mapping can be used very well in business development strategies in the creative industries.

Even though this study deals with place and community as resources, I choose not to deploy the term resource in the way it is commonly used in strategic management. Instead, I choose to frame 'resource' as 'cultural resource' in the framework of cultural mapping, in line with Bianchini and Ghilardi, and present a fresh perspective to cinema entrepreneurs.

Urban anthropology and sociology are pillars on which the domains of cultural mapping and planning lean (Skot-Hansen 2009). In the urban anthropology framework, specific interest is paid to notions of place and community, and their related concepts.

This research can also be situated in a broader movement called New Cinema History, a term coined by Richard Maltby (2011) to describe a 21st century direction within film research that pleads for collaborative and interdisciplinary research in cinema cultures (Biltereyst & Meers 2014, Hallam & Roberts 2014).

These frameworks constitute a complementary combination for this research.

2.1 Urban anthropology

2.1.1 Place, neighbourhood, community

The field of urban anthropology is dedicated to research urban space and place, with a great degree of overlap and mutual influence with the fields and interests of urban sociology and humanistic geography. Tim Cresswell (2009) and John Agnew (1987) condense a rich history of the concept of place, from the ancient Greeks until today in a clear summary, which provides a useful framework and language to think about place from different perspectives, both external and internal: "*Place is a meaningful site that combines location, locale, and sense of place*" (Cresswell 2009:1):

- Location refers to an absolute point in space with map coordinates. It's the 'where' of place.

- Locale refers to the way a place looks. It is the material setting for social relations, the visible and tangible aspects of a place.

- Sense of place concerns the feelings and emotions a place evokes, and the meanings it gathers this way. These meanings can be either individual or shared.

(Cresswell 2009)

Kalandides (2011) aligns with Agnew (1987) and Cresswell (2009) in stressing that place is definitely not a static construct.

As an applied example: in the case of the neighbourhood cinema network in Helsinki in its heyday, the cinemas and their neon lights offered notable locale elements to the city and its citizens. They even had a guiding function in the capital and had a connective impact on Helsinkians: "*Something was close to Axa, and Joukola wasn't far, Tuulensuu was a bit further*" (Vesterinen 2012:135*). Urban planner Kevin Lynch would understand this 'visual readability' of buildings as an inherently positive social value: the stronger a place is defined by a visual identity, the stronger people experience a positive sense of place and belonging (in Sennett 2018). Also on the inside, cinemas' characteristics created a sense of place related to comfort, design or programme: "*Premiere cinemas Adlon and Ritz represented*

the rich Töölö, but both had bad seating. And in different cinemas you couldn't see the screen properly from everywhere. Some cinemas were always screening westerns, like Hesperia. That one always had intermissions too." (Koski 2004, quoted in Vesterinen 2012:135*)

We need to address the separation of the two inter-related concepts 'neighbourhood' and 'community'. Whereas neighbourhood can be defined as "*a collection of people who share services and some level of cohesion in a geographically bounded place*" (Park & Rogers 2015:20), the word 'place' is essential to distinguish neighbourhoods from communities. Community can also refer to a group of people united by values, interests or culture, not necessarily geography (Chaskin 1997, Park & Rogers 2015). Ever since online and non-place-based communities gained traction, this proposed concept of community as not essentially place-based caused some researchers to step up: for example Campbell (2000) refutes its claim to 'community' as denominator altogether: "*where rootedness does not exist, (...) community also does not exist*" (Campbell 2000: 35, quoted in Thompson 2013). According to Thompson (2013), Campbell's rigid view originates from Jane Jacobs' approach to community.

Urban activist Jane Jacobs (1961) was notably influential in championing community as an ideal, juxtaposed to the destructive combined forces of racism, capitalism's ruthless demand for progress and top-down urban planning. In her view, community becomes almost synonymous to 'neighbourhood' and 'place', in the face of capital-driven urban planners promoting dehumanised 'space' (Thompson 2013). According to Thompson, the example of Jacobs illustrates well how the concept of community is both fluid and politically malleable and therefore requires critical examination.

Young (1990) was arguably the first researcher to publicly question this community ideal in the line of Jacobs, claiming that the unity and consensus that it promotes, implies an exclusion of otherness or difference. This criticism makes sense, especially in the light of rising phenomena such as NIMBYism (*Not In My BackYard*) that misuses the community integrity argument to promote intolerance or change. Instead of 'community', Young coins 'city life' as an inclusive alternative concept. Building on Young's critical view of the community ideal, Thompson

(2013) asserts that the potential for non-spatial communities to arise is unprecedented, and refers to the Arab spring and the Occupy movement. In a complex, contemporary urbanised context, he argues, 'community' rises beyond the neighbourhood scale and requires an updated definition or a complementary community ideal, which could embrace inclusivity (ibidem).

Manzo & Perkins (2006) propose a holistic framework (Figure 1) creating an overview of the different domains in which place and community can be considered, on different scale levels. With this framework, Manzo and Perkins explicitly aim to enlarge the scope of urban planners beyond the political and economic realms. In doing so, they make the bridge to the interests of cultural mapping. In particular, the researchers plea for more attention to phenomena which occur on an individual level, such as place attachment and sense of community (Manzo & Perkins 2006).

| | Environmental Domains (or Forms of Capital) | | | |
	Physical	Social	Political	Economic
Individual	Place attachment/ identity Incumbent upgrading Residential pride and satisfaction	Sense of community Community attachment and identity Neighboring behavior	Citizen participation Empowerment	Personal investments Real estate decisions Monetary contributions
Social group/ organization	Shared place meaning Participatory planning and design Design Resident associations	Mutual assistance Networking Social cohesion	Empowered organization Level of participation	Fundraising Resource sharing Business associations
Neighborhood	Community physical conditions Upgrading, gentrification, or deterioration Abandonment Zoning	Informal social networks	Extent and power of community organization in neighborhood Organization in neighborhood External connections Representation	Private investment/ disinvestment Public investment (for example, community development block grants)
City/region/ society	Urban growth/sprawl Transportation systems	Social services (health, education, safety) Demographic diversity	Local, state, federal agencies Political institutions (lobbies, coalitions)	Regional/global economy Local/state/federal/ housing and economic development policies

Figure 1 An ecological framework for community planning and development exploring multiple environmental domains and levels of analysis. Source: Manzo & Perkins (2006).

The framework of Manzo & Perkins offers a quite complete overview of different levels of analysis of place and community to take into consideration, yet the researchers are the first ones to admit that as such it might be too complex for

practical use. Induced to selectivity, I take particular interest in the key concepts of 'social capital' and 'place attachment', and how they relate to the concepts of 'sense of community' and 'empowerment'. These key concepts are often considered community assets (Manzo & Perkins 2006); this asset-based orientation to community development aligns well with the management point of view of a cinema entrepreneur.

2.1.2 Social capital

Conceptualizations of social capital varied substantially. Putnam's (2001) view of social capital as a property of collectivities and individuals has been particularly successful in policy work because of its greater ease of operationalization and measurement. Lin (1999) and Manzo & Perkins (2006) provide a different approach to social capital. They refer to the value derived through both formal human networks (such as social organisations and urban movements) and informal human networks (such as neighbouring). Being a member in such social networks or relationships can offer a number of benefits, and the strength of social capital is 'measured' by the ability of its members to secure these benefits. In line with Lin and Manzo & Perkins, Palvia & Pancaro conveniently condense social capital to be "*the resources accumulated through the relationships among people*" (2010:1).

Let's consider for example a community in the face of an environmental threat to their area. The amount of social capital in that community, on both an individual level (*sense of community, community attachment*), social group level (*networking, cohesion, formal networks*), neighbourhood level (*informal neighbour networks*) and sometimes even city level (*social services, diversity*), will define the resilience and ability of that community to sustain itself and cope with this threat in unity. Access to the social capital of a neighbourhood can be a considerable asset in community planning and urban development, Lin (2008) and Manzo & Perkins (2006) claim. As such, it has particular value in the creation or preservation of an environment.

Manzo & Perkins (2006) demonstrate that formal and informal neighbourhood

networks are intrinsically linked to a person's individual motivations and behaviour. In particular the way a person experiences 'sense of community' helps to build social capital, whereby sense of community refers to feelings of membership or belongingness to a group, including an emotional connection based on a shared history. When people experience a high sense of community, it motivates people on an individual level to engage in informal neighbouring activity and joining formal neighbourhood networks (Manzo & Perkins 2006). If collective action can result in efficiency and change, communities will experience empowerment through their actions, and their sense of community increases (Rapoport 1987, Manzo & Perkins 2006).

Some researchers, such as Putnam (2000), expressed concern that place-based or offline social capital is disappearing due to the take-over of non-place-based or online communities. Many researchers (e.g. Lin 2008, Manzo & Perkins 2006) claim however that there is ample evidence of the existence and value of social capital, and state that social capital is thriving. More recently, a study by Gil de Zuñiga et al. (2017) supports their claim, and found that offline social capital continues to be robust, and can even be strengthened and predicted by social media social capital. Parallel to Thompson's (2013) plea for an expanded view of community beyond the neighbourhood and beyond spatiality, Gil de Zuñiga et al. (2017) advocate an expanded view of social capital.

2.1.3 Place-making: where place identity & place branding come in

Making a 'place' is to spatially transform and resignify a territory through the active participation of people (Augé 2000). In a historical perspective, claiming space as a meaningful place implies the recognition of local social identities, based on a level of indigenousness (Järvelä 2009). However, as e.g. Augé (2000) and Järvelä (2009) argue, the complex individual mobilities and higher stages of modernisation in postmodern times are redefining urban sociability and require a new approach to make sense of space as a meaningful place.

Castells (1998) and Sen (2000) suggest that by organizing and hosting social actions to transform a neighbourhood, social mobilisations such as urban movements are likely to generate a sense of belonging, and hereby promote new place identities. This is why, Velasco (2005) argues, that the need for input from

the local community is highly desired in any place-making process. The sum of their concrete actions creates new collective memories for that neighbourhood and thereby new affective relationships between people and their neighbourhood (Sen 2000). Castells (1998) and Järvelä (2009) conclude that, in urban postmodernity, claiming (ownership of) a space is no longer about who 'owns' the space in an anthropological sense, but rather about who gets involved in the production of collective meaning. This aligns well with Zukin's (1995) statement that public space is inherently democratic and everyone has the right to occupy it. Creating shared meaning for a space therefore requires a certain collective process, preferably an intense dialogue with local inhabitants (Järvelä 2009).

On a critical note, I suggest that the implied mobility and modernity of lifestyle, as an argument for a broader definition of place identity and ownership, holds truth on a general level, but ignores and excludes individual perspectives. For example Jancovich & Faire (2003) demonstrate that, when mobility is created for one group of persons, that might imply less mobility or accessibility for another.

Before continuing a critical review, I first propose a brief review of place identity literature. Kavaratzis & Hatch (2013) separate two common views on place identity: a static view and a dynamic view. Representing the static view, Mayes (2008) claims that the intrinsic features and history of a given place are constituting a place identity. Kavaratzis & Hatch (2013) rightly criticise the static view on place identity for describing it as something to be tapped, defined, and manipulated. Govers & Go (2009) and Kalandides (2011) on the other hand, propose a dynamic view on place identity, which sees place identities as constructs of different discourses. Place identities are viewed as a process, never immobile and never fixed (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013).

From this position, Kalandides (2011) identifies five elements of place identity: place image (reputation), materiality (buildings, streets, squares), institutions (laws, regulations, organisations), relations (of power, class, gender), and people and their practices (traditions, repetitive actions, everyday life). Kalandides (2011) stresses that all these elements signify that place identities are processes rather than outcomes (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013).

If we regard the notion of place-making in postmodern times described by e.g.

Augé (2000), Castells (1998) and Järvelä (2009) in the framework of Kavaratzis & Hatch (2013), it becomes clear that they adopt a dynamic view on place identity. However, when social movements and actions can promote new place identities, it may create conflict with so-called indigenous locals who may hold a static view on place identity, in which they hold the right to the place. This is also Velasco's (2005) concern when he calls on including the local community in any place-making process. If they are not included, Augé's (2000) and Castells' (1998) reasoning and dynamic view on place identity may create an argument to take away or diminish locals' rights to place.

Even though I principally underscribe Zukin's (1995) notion that public space is inherently democratic and everyone has the right to occupy it, I suggest to discuss also private spaces for public use. For this is another story, far less discussed. The neighbourhood cinema is a prime example of such a private-public blend. While a cinema venue is often privately owned, the local community also contributes to shaping the place identity and therefore, as Jancovich & Faire (2003) will demonstrate in the New Cinema History chapter of this study, also their own sense of community. The local community's sense of ownership ought to be taken into account. Who holds the right to the neighbourhood cinema?

With that question in mind, let us venture off the edges of urban anthropology to consider the concept of 'place brand'.

A place brand, in essence, represents an experience of a sense of place (Govers & Go 2009). Zenker (2021) defines place branding as the process of building, changing, managing and using a place brand. The central aim of place branding is to satisfy the consumer's needs and wants (Berglund & Olsson 2010, Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2006). Often wrongly interchanged with place branding, *place promotion* describes a process that tries to find the right consumers for an existing product (Govers & Go 2009, Zenker 2021). Place promotion takes a supply orientation, whereas place branding is more strategic in nature and takes a demand orientation (Zenker 2021, Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013).

Both Zenker (2021) and Kavaratzis & Hatch (2013) plea for an identity-based approach to place branding, for it needs to be adapted to the unique and complex characteristics of place. Kavaratzis & Hatch (2013) criticise place branding practice

for rather consistently adopting a rather static view on place identity as something that can easily be articulated and communicated for the purposes of branding a place. They argue that this approach is limited, as it does not reveal the full complexity of place identity and limits the role and potential of place branding. Instead, place brands should be adopting a dynamic view on place identity, they argue. Their criticism resonates with the call for a more holistic approach to place branding urged by Bianchini & Ghilardi (2007).

A neighbourhood brand promises an experience of the neighbourhood's sense of place. If we see place branding from a dynamic viewpoint on place identity, as recommended by Kavaratzis & Hatch (2013), it becomes quite organic to invite public participation in the neighbourhood branding process – which is exactly what Govers & Go (2009) recommend. They confirm that the practice of place branding has indeed shifted from pure marketing to getting involved in not merely projecting but altering place identity – in effect, in place-making (Govers & Go 2009, Berglund & Olsson 2010). This changing attitude has developed in the wake of the popularisation of Augé's (2000), Castells (1998) and Sen's (2000) postmodern notions of urban space and the right to transform it.

2.1.4 Place attachment

In his seminal work *Place and placelessness,* human geographer Edward Relph describes how "*in both our communal and our personal experience of places there is often a close attachment, a familiarity that is part of knowing and being known here, in this particular place*" (1976:38). This attachment, Relph states, constitutes our roots in places. He concludes that "*to be attached to places and have profound ties with them is an important human need."* (1976:38)

Many researchers (e.g. Jacobs 1961, Kemmis 1995, Razem 2020) have pointed out that place attachment is a valuable community asset. Attachment to the neighbourhood serves as a precondition for the development of a sense of community among neighbours. Place attachment and sense of community complement each other in that they both affect people's well-being, and can both be valuable when tied to practice (Rollero & De Piccoli 2010, Manzo & Perkins 2006).

In an attempt to structure different perspectives in the expanding place attachment literature, Scandell & Gifford (2009) propose a framework that considers place attachment in three dimensions (Fig. 2), as a concept with person, psychological process, and place dimensions.
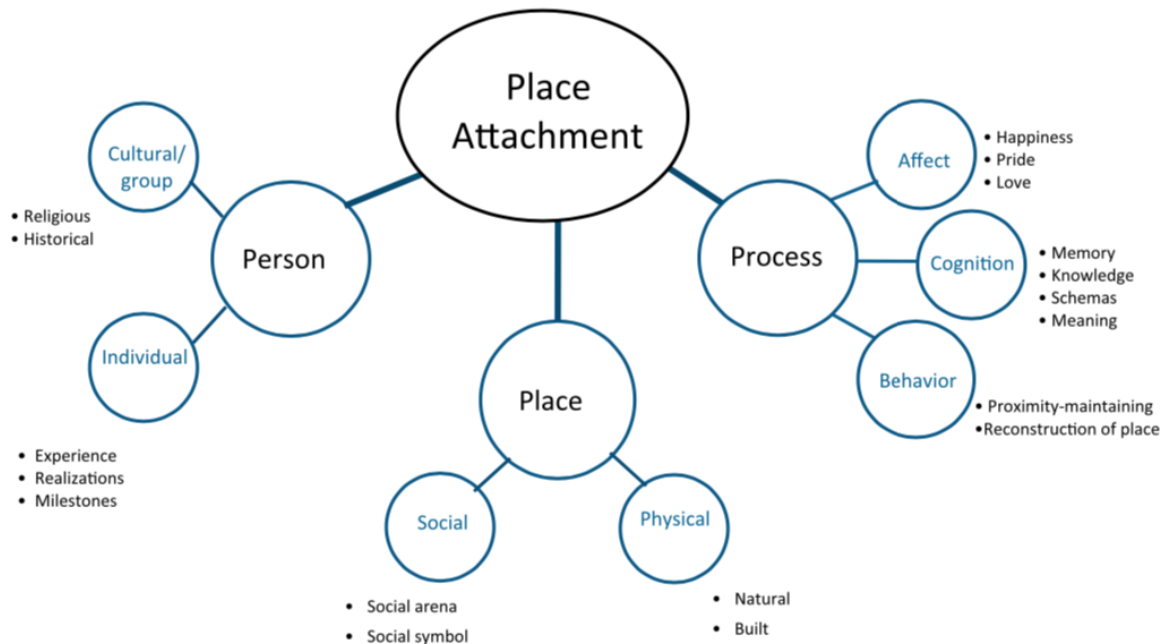
Figure 2 The tripartite model of place attachment. Source: Scandell & Gifford (2009).

The 'person' dimension considers who is attached to a place, and to what extent the attachment is based on individual and collective meanings. As pointed out by different researchers (e.g. Altman & Low 1992), factors on both an individual and a collective level can work to improve place attachment, and the two may overlap. Attachment on a collective level is about the symbolic meanings of a place that are shared among community members (Low 1992). Notably, Virden & Walker (1999) demonstrate that shared historical experiences and other experiences common to community members links them to place, and speculate that these meanings are transmitted to subsequent generations.

The second dimension considers in what way the individual's and group's place attachment is experienced and manifests itself. Various place attachment research focuses on the psychological processes of *affect, cognition,* and *behaviour* which reflect the multiple ways that people relate to place and community. For example

Altman & Low (1992) combine the cognition and affection perspective in defining place attachment as people's cognitive-emotional bond to a meaningful setting. On a cognitive level, research literature focuses on the ways that place meaning is conceived through memory and connected to the self, i.e. the construction of both place identity and community identity. The affection level considers the different feelings that people experience towards place, such as pride, well-being, belonging, much in line with Relph (1976) who expresses the people-place bond in emotional terms. This is most often the domain of human geography (Scandell & Gifford 2009). The behavioural processes present in place attachment are considered in literature that focuses on the actions inspired by place attachment, such as protest, return, rebuilding, pilgrimage (ibidem).

The third dimension in Scandell & Gifford's framework is the place itself, with its characteristics: what is it about the place that people are attached to? Riger & Lavrakas (1981) suggest to regard place attachment as a combination of both physical factors ('rootedness') and social factors ('bondedness'). This social attachment consists of social ties, belongingness to the neighbourhood, and familiarity with fellow residents and neighbourhood children. People are attached to places that facilitate social relationships and group identity (Scandell & Gifford 2009). Physical attachment, on the other hand, is predicted by length of residence, ownership, and plans to stay. Altman & Low (1992) found out that out of all these elements, the following elements are most likely to increase place attachment: *housing ownership, long-term residence, local memories of significant life experiences*, and *social involvement in the local community*. They further add that place attachment is likely to increase with the age of a person (1992). Similar to Castells (1998) and Järvelä (2009), they argue that out of these four elements, community involvement is the most consistently influential element to create place attachment. Assessing the importance of scale in place attachment, Hidalgo & Hernández (2001) found that, compared to city or house level, the neighbourhood is in fact less often the object of place attachment.

Altman & Low's four factors of place attachment are phrased to facilitate and measure an individual's perspective, and although they are also valid on a collective level, its practical measuring is difficult and problematic. Still, some of them allow for generalisations. For example, Jancovich & Faire (2003) have

pointed out that individuals' meaning of cinemas has often been connected to individual local memories of significant life experience, in particular childhood and courting. Yet these experiences were so systematically reproduced that the connection held truth on a collective level. In measuring place attachment on a collective level, Riger & Lavrakas' (1981) notion of bondedness and rootedness proves somewhat complementary to Altman & Low's four-factor framework.

Ujang (2012) demonstrates the link between place attachment and place identity suggested by Jancovich & Faire (2003). Her study found that place identity and sense of place are indeed significantly influenced by emotional place attachment. Consequently, she makes the case for the importance of identifying place attachment dimensions in place-making processes (Ujang 2012).

Place attachment, and just as well community attachment, are closely related to the idea of 'authenticity' in place, shows Sharon Zukin (2010), whose work has been particularly influential in her conceptualisation of place authenticity, which in turn draws on the legacy of Jane Jacobs (1961). In the framework of Scandell & Gifford (2009), we could place Zukin's (2010) writings in the cognitive-emotional approach to place attachment. Authenticity not only refers to the *look* and *feel* of a place, according to Zukin (2010), but also to the social connectedness that the place inspires. In fact, she claims, the idea that a neighbourhood that is true to its origins gives way to real community, is a myth and a mirror: yearning for authenticity *"reflects more about us and our sensibilities than about any city block"* (Zukin 2010:220). Although we like to think that authenticity is about a neighbourhood's innate qualities, Zukin (2010) contends, it actually expresses our own anxiety about how places change.

2.2 Cultural mapping

Cultural mapping and cultural planning, inherently attached to each other, are in essence interdisciplinary fields and build mostly on the insights from urban anthropology and sociology (Skot-Hansen 2009). I particularly highlight the contributions of Patrick Geddes and Lia Ghilardi to the cultural mapping domain.

Cultural mapping, simply stated, is the generating of new qualitative and quantitative knowledge about culture. This knowledge base needs to be refreshed constantly and serves to create so-called 'indicators for cultural citizenship', leading to benchmarks to influence cultural policy (Mercer 2006). The kinds of *quantitative* data that cultural mapping is after, may be, for example, population profiles, tourism levels, heritage, or cultural industries' profiles. *Qualitative* knowledge may be obstacles to accessibility, impact evidence of culture, or senses of place. Together, these data constitute a set of 'cultural resources' (Ghilardi 2003, Skot-Hansen 2009).

Cultural planning is the practical application and sense-making of this knowledge base of cultural resources. Originated as a counterreaction to cultural policies that instrumentalised culture for aggressive urban renewal or city marketing purposes, cultural planning is a strategic, holistic and 'culturally sensitive' approach to urban development which aims for culture to fuel the revitalisation of city life (Bianchini 2013, Skot-Hansen 2009). Culture is regarded through an anthropological looking glass and within a limited area, for example a local community (Skot-Hansen 2009). Cultural planning aims to ensure that the existing culture of a given place is thoroughly considered in urban planning. Cultural planners scan for communities' cultural resources and make their SWAT-analysis for the sake of a considerate cultural policy creation. Ideally, a cultural planner comes into the picture as soon as new urban development plans are being considered, to point out what are the structures, rituals and sites of the local life that need to be taken into account (Mercer 2006).

Bianchini (2013) and Ghilardi (2019) insist that cultural mapping is not only useful to planners, but also to other actors in urban settings:

> *[B]ecause places never stand still, 'planning culturally' doesn't propose a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather emphasises intentional and adaptable responses. These are based on the evidence gathered through engaging local communities and their civic leaders together in exercises of stocktaking and local DNA mapping. Thus, mapping embraces the dynamism of cities and can be used by a range of actors, including local governments, cultural organisations, business and*

non-profits, and citizen groups. It employs open and iterative processes, and builds on the creative potential unleashed by social interaction. (Ghilardi 2019:533-534)

Hereby, Ghilardi urges organisations and businesses to get involved in (mapping) the social fabric of their locality, and to consider its cultural resources actual resources.

She describes how the following environmental analogy lies at the heart of the concept of cultural mapping and planning: *"the idea of a territory as a living ecosystem, made up of diverse resources which need to be surveyed by the (...) community at large before policy can intervene"* (Ghilardi 2001: 117–118, quoted in Mercer 2002). The neighbourhood as a living ecosystem is a useful metaphor, which is also intuitively employed by Ilmari Arnkil in the introduction chapter. It relates well to the biologic viewpoint of Scottish botanist, biologist and sociologist Patrick Geddes, whose works and ideas are acknowledged to be at the origins of cultural mapping and planning. (Mercer 1997 & 2006, Hysler-Rubin 2011, Bianchini 2013)

2.2.1 From Geddes to Ghilardi

Patrick Geddes was one of the founding fathers of modern town planning in Britain in the early 20th century (Bianchini 2013). Although Geddes' contribution is critically debated, Hysler-Rubin (2011) gives him credit for offering an organic vision, and a philosophical and practical understanding of city life, to early town planning.

The ideas of Geddes and Ebenezer Howard, the founder of the Garden City Movement which arose in the late 19th century in Britain, are known to have been mutually influential to one another (Hysler-Rubin 2011, Bianchini 2013). Essentially, the garden city's idea was to combine the healthful green surroundings and community values of the countryside with the benefits that the city offered, in an attempt to solve typical urban social problems (Nikula 2006). In Howard's garden city ideal, human society and nature are meant to be enjoyed together. Community-owned land, sufficient employment opportunities and a controlled population size were the key conditions of social transformation (Johansson,

2012). Riitta Nikula (2006) shows that the garden city, and particularly its planning in unitary neighbourhoods, have been highly influential to urban planning in Finland.

Geddes insisted that all planning must consider three fundamental coordinates: Folk-Work-Place (Figure 3), which implies that planners need to know how people live, work, play and relate to their environment. They need to be, or coordinate with, anthropologists, economists and geographers (Mercer 1997 & 2006). Town planning had to be about people planning (Ghilardi 2016). This is Geddes' first principle: *Planning is not a physical science but a human science* (Mercer 1997 & 2006).

Another Geddes principle is the following: *Cities produce citizens.* Planning should not be focusing on the production and development of goods and commodities but of people, of citizens (Mercer 2006).

A final principle, central to Geddes' planning theory: *Survey before plan.* Geddes describes: "*We must excavate the layers of our cities downwards, into its earliest past (...) and thence we must read them upwards*" (quoted in Mercer 2006:5). Geddes is calling for an approach that places areas in their existing environmental, social and economic context and understands them in that context, before planning or designing anything at all. Geddes' surveys were said to include folk-, work- and place elements: a place's geographic setting, weather factors, as well as economic processes, social dynamisms and historic heritage (Bianchini 2013, Ghilardi 2018). In short, transposed to contemporary times: Geddes calls for cultural mapping (Mercer 1997 & 2006).

Mercer pleas for cultural planners of the 21st century to return to the spirit of Geddes' work and his three central planning principles (Mercer 1997, Bianchini 2013). This last principle, 'survey before plan', has become idiomatic for urban planners today, but has perhaps gotten isolated from the spirit of Geddes' body of work (Bianchini 2013, Hysler-Rubin 2011). Throughout his work, Geddes has repeatedly insisted on strengthening the community while decentralising power and planning. The existing structure and texture of a community is of key importance, in Geddes' view, but needs to be gently but purposefully guided (Leonard 2004). This somewhat critical view of top-down planning paved the way
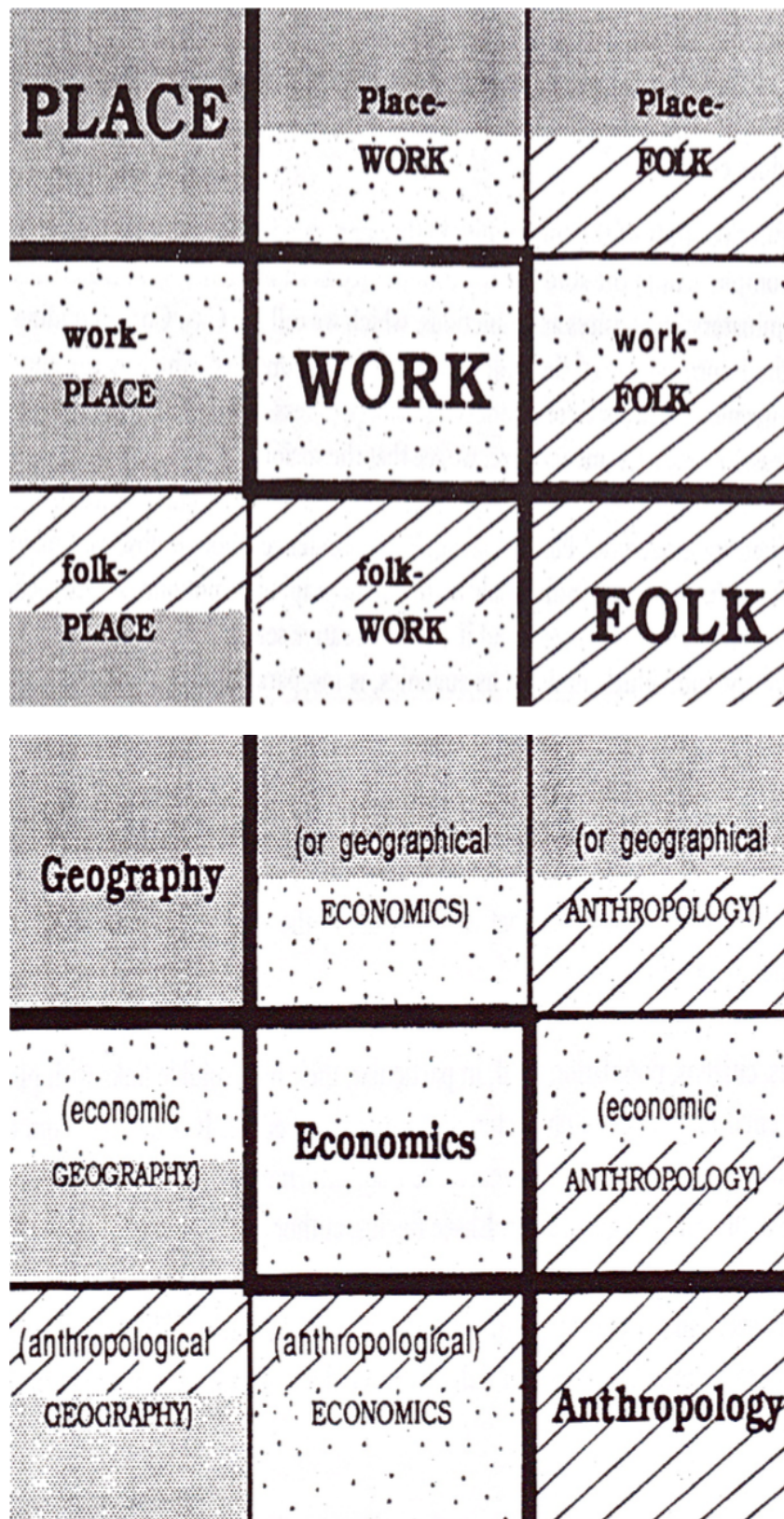
Figure 3. Folk-Work-Place. Source: P. Geddes (1906) 'Civics: an applied sociology', Part II,
Sociological Papers, ed. V. V. Branford, London: Macmillan, p. 90. Taken from: Mercer, 1997.

for urban activists and place-makers of the 20th and 21st century (Hysler-Rubin 2011), and marks a difference with Howard's planning philosophy. In her review of Geddes' biographies, Hysler-Rubin (2011) suggests that what Geddes might have been after is the actual creation of a sense of community. Sophia Leonard (2004) agrees and believes even that Geddes saw public participation at the core of planning.

From these principles, which should serve as a guide towards a new urban planning approach, we get a sense of the human focus of the early town planning movement incited by Geddes, which finds it renaissance in the fields of cultural mapping and planning, proposed by the likes of Mercer, Bianchini and Ghilardi.

> *In essence — and not unlike Geddes a century ago — we need to see cities as ecosystems, each with their own unique texture of interconnected social, cultural, spatial and economic dynamics in a constant state of change. (Ghilardi 2016:4)*

Much in the spirit of Geddes, who saw cities as a living organism, Ghilardi insists on prioritizing people and their relation to space and place in urban development. She calls this 'thinking culturally about place' (2019). In her work as a cultural planner, Ghilardi puts the stress on the process of mapping. In particular she mentions the need to understand local perceptions as well as external image, and to examine the indigenous urban texture and character (2011). Echoing Bianchini's (2013) view that cultural mapping should also consider the creative milieus and emerging cultural talent of a city, Ghilardi states that the cultural identity of a place includes "*who the people are and their backgrounds, tastes, rituals, experiences, diversity, talents, and aspirations for the future*" (2011:22). As a next step in the mapping process, she mentions the need to capture the specificity of the local interaction between people and place (Ghilardi 2011). In Ghilardi's view, mapping processes result in a shared understanding of what should change in a place, and why. This enables the distinctive voices of local cultural identities to emerge, and give power and legitimacy back to them (Ghilardi 2016). In reference to David Harvey and Henri Lefebvre, she calls this 'spatial justice' (Ghilardi 2019).

Summarising her object of mapping, Ghilardi (2011 & 2019) uses the terms 'urban and cultural DNA', or shorter 'place DNA', instead of cultural resources. By using

that term, she puts the stress on the distinctiveness of a place.

2.2.2 Criticism

Among the critics of cultural planning, Deborah Stevenson (2004) questions the very broad definition of culture proposed by cultural planning. Cultural planning can in her view only be effective and relevant when planners adopt a "*cohesive and rigorous understanding of culture as* something, *rather than* everything" (Stevenson 2005: 46, cited in Skot-Hansen 2009). She argues that a more clearly defined strategic thinking is required in order to avoid cultural planning to become a tool of social and economic development instead of cultural development.

Stevenson hereby claims that cultural planning's broadness carries the risk of inefficiency or reduced impact, perhaps even instrumentalisation, but in doing so, I believe she rejects the very complexity and implied interdisciplinarity of the word 'culture'.

Echoing Stevenson's critique, Dorte Skot-Hansen (2009) argues that cultural planning alone is not enough to guarantee a city's cultural diversity. Whereas Geddes placed the 'production' of the citizen at the centre of cities' cultural policy, albeit in an entirely different context one century earlier, Skot-Hansen puts cultural diversity at the centre. She calls for 'reflective' cultural planning and sees that the challenge lies in mobilising the city's own resources, "*instead of mindlessly copying models and concepts which have been developed elsewhere*" (2009:207). The cultural diversity that Skot-Hansen is after, can be strengthened via diversity in organization, diversity of cultural events and diversity of voices, she suggests.

Also Jenny Johannisson (2009) and McGuigan (2004) acknowledge the criticism towards cultural planning, but balance their view in stating that the goal of cultural planning is to create a democratic alternative to market-oriented city planning. Johannisson (2009) also adds that cultural planning has helped highlight the importance of place in cultural policy.

Countering Stevenson's criticism by nuancing that policy-makers in all fields should not simply be making an instrumental use of cultural resources as tools for achieving non-cultural goals, Bianchini (2013) proposes that they should instead

learn from the thinking in artistic processes. According to Bianchini, a fitting mindset to apply cultural planning is holistic, experimental, critical, humanistic, informed and, not least, non-instrumental.

While cultural mapping is said to have roots in Geddes' ideas, the idea of mapping cultural resources is also much related to the theory of production of space, proposed by the 'father of urban anthropology' Henri Lefebvre, as follows. Developing the young domain of cultural planning in 2002, Colin Mercer proposes that it should enable culture to walk together with economics, social life and relations, politics and governance, and the individual, by means of a framework of four orientations to facilitate this interdisciplinarity. Mercer acknowledges this framework to be inspired in particular by Arne Martin Klausen (1995), which in turn draws on Henri Lefebvre's (1974) proposed concept of 'production of space'. Lefebvre essentially proposes that the physical creation of a certain space is always the product of four parameters: the social, economic, ideological, and technological factors. These parameters largely overlap with Mercer's and Klausen's concerns.

And so, while these frameworks intersect in different fields, they serve to illustrate the concerns of both urban anthropology and cultural policy. I believe that the social production lens through which Lefebvre studies the factors that shape and give significance to a given space is complementary with the folk-work-place surveying approach by Patrick Geddes, and both resonate in the work of contemporary cultural mappers such as Ghilardi. A contemporary cultural mapping approach may feed the cinema entrepreneur's understanding of the resourcefulness of place and community.

2.3 New Cinema History

Cinema data is characteristically highly complex, heterogeneous, and interlinked. Therefore, Verhoeven & Arrowsmith (2014) argue, the research of cinema data requires collaboration between previously unrelated disciplines. In New Cinema History, the topic of research is not the film, its genre or director, as it has been throughout film studies during most of the 20th century, but rather the film

industry and the contextual events that shape cinema practice (Maltby 2011, Verhoeven & Arrowsmith 2014). Typically, qualitative and quantitative research methods are combined to support each other (Hupaniittu 2015). This setup, a crossroads of disciplines mostly developed in the 21st century, with a combined approach of quantitative and qualitative research, bears striking resemblance to the domain of cultural mapping and planning.

In the following subchapters, I will explore how New Cinema History research relates to place and community. I equally build on insight from Hupaniittu's research from 2015 which analyses Finns' cinema visits of the previous 100 years, in order to better frame the particular context of film exhibition culture in Finland and Helsinki.

2.3.1 Place

Robert Allen and Douglas Gomery pioneered the shift of film studies towards studying exhibition (Jancovich & Faire 2003). For Allen, the location of exhibition is essential to understand the meanings of cinema (ibidem). Gomery's study *Shared pleasures* (1992) considers many innovative perspectives on film exhibition, not least ethnographical ones. He finds that in the early days of cinema, many audience members weren't particularly interested in which film was being screened inasmuch as the film theatre itself, its architecture and its surrounding show – such as a newsreel, a music programme, or even an actual stage show (Gomery 1992).

In 2003, Jeffrey Klenotic first introduced a geospatial component in film exhibition research by means of online geographical information systems (GIS) (Maltby 2011). According to Klenotic (2014), a geospatial analysis can help understand the shifting forms of film exhibition and moviegoing, as well as the role of its location in relation to other resources. Many New Cinema History researchers (e.g. Maltby 2011, Biltereyst & Meers 2014, Caquard et al. 2014, Verhoeven & Arrowsmith 2014) have followed in the footsteps of Klenotic, and the field developed a slight mapping mania, not least with the use of GIS technology. Hallam & Roberts (2014) call this 'the spatial turn' in film studies research, in which the focus is on the cinema as a site of social, cultural, and economic exchange. Consequently, the duo edited a collection of essays called 'Locating the

moving image: new approaches to film and place' (2014) which gathers New Cinema History studies that developed these geospatial influences in cinema history.

Roberts (2012) and Hallam & Roberts (2014) identify five thematic areas that constitute this spatial turn in film studies: (1) maps and mapping in films; (2) mapping of film production and consumption; (3) movie mapping and place marketing; (4) cognitive and emotional mapping; and (5) film as spatial critique.

The majority of existing research in New Cinema History can be situated in the second category of 'mapping film production and consumption', although most of that research has adopted a predominant quantitative perspective and places the emphasis on geographical mapping. Yet Hallam & Roberts (2014) note that this category can just as well be matched with an orientation that places emphasis on film practice as a socially and spatially embedded happening, and subsequently a methodology that reflects a more qualitative and anthropological perspective on film industries. In this sense, also this study on Helsinki area's neighbourhood cinemas can be situated in the second category: its interest is not in geographical mapping but rather in the ways that film exhibition nestles in wider social, cultural, and economic processes of spatial production and consumption.

Also Klenotic (2014) argues that the geographic maps rendered by GIS technology should not merely be seen as an end goal, but rather as a tool. He calls for an open, multiple, and fluid approach to GIS that chimes with a view of cinema history as a study aligned with people's history. For example, in Klenotic's (2014) case study research of the cinema landscape in the 1910s in the small town of Milford, New Hampshire, he suggests ways in which place and space mattered, both as features of community identity and as forces shaping the development of film exhibition in the context of rising urbanisation. Hallam & Roberts (2014) seem to align with Klenotic's position, and propose that mapping in New Cinema History would position itself in close relation to anthropology and sociology. They reason that spatial practices are inevitably also socially embedded, and so if cinema history is reframing film practices in a geospatial way, it also invites broader consideration of how 'cinematic geographies' contribute to the social production and consumption of space and place.

This dialogic attitude between disciplines is without a doubt a valuable evolution. Nevertheless, as this body of research carefully investigates the mutual influence between film-related geographies and their surroundings, their value remains mostly historical – as the term 'New Cinema History' already denotes – and this historians' viewpoint is often imbued in a sort of top-down perspective. This somewhat limits its usefulness to current cinema exhibition practice. This criticism is in the line of what both Gomery (1992) and Jancovich & Faire (2003) expressed as their motivation to create their respective books *Shared pleasures* and *Place of the audience*: the audience experience had been largely ignored in film studies. The spatial turn taken by New Cinema History is not necessarily a social turn either.

Offering a case study that actually caters to the exhibitor's perspective, Gregory Waller (1995, in Jancovich and Faire 2003) demonstrates that the context of films proved a decisive factor in the popularity of film-going in the early days of cinema. Studying a particular film's cinema screenings around Lexington between 1896 and 1930, he perceives that every cinema contextualized the film differently. The choice between cinemas therefore became a choice between different kinds of experiences, and the various cinemas came to be associated with their particular service design. Audiences started either identifying or disidentifying with certain cinemas. From this case study, Jancovich and Faire (2003) argue that the place of showing even transforms the film viewing experience.

2.3.2 Community

While this study mostly regards (local) community as context for a cinema's operations, it is equally necessary to touch upon the community-shaping power of the cinema itself. In an anthropological sense, this no longer addresses the social *production* of a space, but rather the social *construction* of space, i.e. how human behaviour constructs and transforms a space (Low 2014).

We could think of the cinema experience as a pure community idyll: everyone in the audience is subject to the same collective experience, and left to react to it together. As Benedict Anderson (quoted in Jancovich & Faire 2003) notes, a cinema provides the rituals for a sense of imagined community. During the war and post-war period, cinemas increasingly generated this sense of community

(Jancovich & Faire 2003). Not coincidentally their golden age, the cinemas' meaningfulness doubled. Cinemas were no longer only places of entertainment and social happening, but they increasingly became places of information about the world situation, places of processing war traumas, places of escapism, places of envisioning a better world (Gomery 1992).

More than just the films it presented, the historical importance of cinemas has been in its social and community function (Jancovich & Faire 2003, Corbett 2001) – and it still is. In their case study of Nottingham, Jancovich & Faire (2003) note that many locals saw cinemas of the past indeed representing a period of community. Jeff Richards (1984) compares the neighbourhood cinema's importance for the local community equal to the church' and the pub's. The decay of the cinema consequently resulted in nostalgia to a dying traditional way of life and to a lost sense of community (Jancovich & Faire 2003). Throughout the neighbourhood cinema's existence, its meaning of place changed diametrically from emblemising progress to emblemising nostalgia.

In larger towns or urban settings, it was not uncommon that cinemas were associated with class, usually strengthened by the formal categorisation organised by film distributors (Maltby 2011). Also in Helsinki, this became the case in 1939, when cinemas were labelled into classes. Ticket prices were fixed accordingly, and so the neighbourhood cinemas served mainly poorer audiences. (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004)

The very term 'neighbourhood cinema' denotes a different social experience, a sort of embodied communality. Respondents in the Nottingham case repeatedly brought up the word 'intimacy' in relation to their cinema preference (Jancovich & Faire 2003). The respondents referred to both the experienced sense of warmth and comfort as to the sense of community within the audience. At the same time, they associated 'intimacy' with 'personality', as opposed to the 'impersonal' multiplex (ibidem). So, the sense of community is experienced as inherent to the cinema's place identity and its particular service design. This outcome complements well with Zukin's (2010) demonstrated link between the human need for sense of community and the experienced authenticity of a place.

The Nottingham cinemas also had their ways to get embedded in their local

community, Jancovich & Faire (2003) highlight. One way was to offer community services, such as a children's matinee once a week with free snacks. Another way to cater to the town's different communities was to offer a diversity in programme, which in the early days of film exhibition included a whole stage show. Especially Sundays, the worker's class' only free day, screamed for 'their type' of entertainment (Jancovich & Faire 2003).

The nostalgia to a certain cinema or to a neighbourhood cinema experience is mostly related to the sense of community that the venue embodies. This sense of community is in turn integrated in Zukin's (2010) notion of place authenticity and Jancovich & Faire's (2003) notion of place identity. From the anthropological perspective of both cultural mapping and New Cinema History, the integration of a cinema within a community jumps clearly forward. Although nostalgia is a phenomenon that dies with a generation, sense of community and related concepts of place authenticity and place identity are arguably more lasting phenomena.

3   RESEARCH METHOD

3.1   Methodological Approach of the Study

This research called for an interpretive approach, because I seek understanding of management actions within their particular context (Welch et al. 2011). The research is mainly qualitative in nature, which is suitable because it studies a complex social phenomenon (Prasad 2018). Moreover, qualitative paradigms are broad and well compatible with interpretive aims (Harrison et al. 2017)

This is a multiple case study. My choice for case studies is motivated by the interconnection between the cinema's management and the particular context in which it occurs (Stake 1995, Prasad 2018). Furthermore, case studies enable the rich contextual description essential to understanding (Welch et al. 2011). Those cannot be treated separately from each other and should therefore be evaluated in an integrated manner, by means of case study (Stake 1995, Boblin et al. 2013). According to Prasad (2018) and Baxter & Jack (2008), case studies are particularly useful in answering how and why research questions, because they allow for an in-depth exploration of a complex and particular reality. Following the views of Stake (1995) and Prasad (2018), the collective design of the case study will enable a better understanding of place and community in neighbourhood cinemas' management, particularly in the Helsinki area. The study outcome does not necessarily allow for a generalisation or scalability beyond this context, but it may inspire a way of looking and assessing other particular contexts' resourcefulness. This illustrates my constructivist position at the basis of this interpretive sense-making process. I acknowledge the subjective nature of the interviewees' collected observations and embrace the particularity of their contexts (Welch et al. 2011).

My cases are: Kino Tapiola, Korjaamo Kino Töölö, Riviera and WHS Teatteri Union. I chose to study these particular cases because they (a) cover diverse neighbourhood profiles in the Helsinki area (see Figure 4), and (b) have started

activities recently, and I am interested in the characteristics of this rejuvenation. Rather than engaging in a comparative study between the former or remaining neighbourhood cinema and the newcomers, I choose to study representatives of the 'new generation' and evaluate their integration of place and community into their operations. A third reason (c) is that these cinemas united under the flag of Korttelikinot ry ("*Neighbourhood Cinema Association*") in 2016 together with old-schooler Kino Engel. In other words, they define themselves to be neighbourhood cinemas - and colleagues.
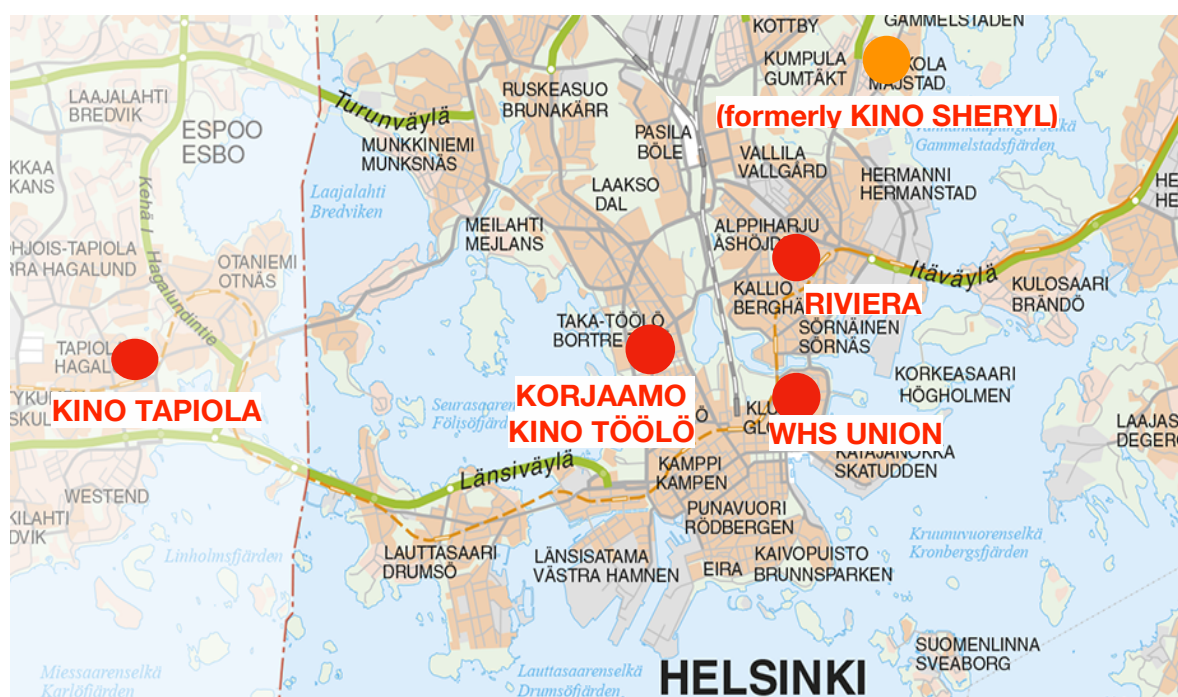
Figure 4 Case study locations

I initially also collected data from a fifth case, Kino Sheryl, but I eventually chose to leave the case out given its abrupt closure mid-2017, during my research period. Kino Sheryl closed because Aalto University, who operated the facilities, moved to Espoo. This made it impossible to organise a timely second round of data collection, resulting in inconclusive and incomplete data. However, I include the Kino Sheryl interview in my context survey chapter, for two reasons. First of all, this was the first data that I collected so it provided a set of assumptions for the other cases' data. Secondly, Kino Sheryl's manager Ilmari Arnkil was the initiator of the Neighbourhood Cinema Association. I consider it valuable to communicate the drive to found this association, and therefore to include his point of view.

3.2 Data Collection

I started my research with a number of pilot interviews which served the purpose of developing relevant lines of questions and getting a general understanding of a cinema manager's perspective. The pilot interviewees were respectively Katia Rossini (Cinema Nova, Brussels); Jon Michelena and Jan-Willem Van Eemeren (Cartoon's, Antwerp); Ville Purjo (Kino Engel, Helsinki); Vesa Kuosmanen (Salakino, Helsinki). These interviewees were chosen on the basis of easy accessibility and out of personal interest. The pilot interviews affected my proposition, research questions, case selection, interview structure, interview style and questions.

My main data consists of semi-structured interviews with each of the case venues' decision makers, in three cases the general managers and in the case of Korjaamo Kino Töölö the programme director. Examples of the interview questions can be found in the study's appendix.

Hannele Marjavaara	Kino Tapiola
Sanna-Maria Nikula	Korjaamo Kino Töölö
Atte Laurila	Riviera
Ville Walo	WHS Teatteri Union

According to Yin (2003), interviews are particularly essential sources of information in case studies. In tune with his recommendation, I opted for a more fluid, 'guided conversation'-approach with an open-ended nature, at the same time satisfying the needs of my line of inquiry. This approach is deemed most beneficial in a case study interview (Yin 2003) and indeed allowed the interviewees' areas of focus to rise to the surface. Generally, I adopted the following interview structure: first, interpretation of the context of the rise in neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area. Second, reviewing the case's business model and specifically measuring the impact of place and community on all aspects.

Every case venue manager was interviewed twice, with an interval of one to one and a half year. A first round of data collection occurred in the period August 2016 - January 2017. A second round of data collection was organised in the period

February - April 2018. In this second period, possible changes in management were tracked and the role of place and community in their operations was further explored. In the case of Kino Tapiola, the second interview took place over the phone. I chose to have a second round of interviews mainly because of the youth of the different cases, typically a period of considerable change. Overall, I felt a second round of data collection would increase validity of the findings.

As secondary data, I incorporate a number of historical records and newspaper articles on the case venues, their neighbourhoods, and the neighbourhood cinema tradition in Helsinki area, as well as a speech by Kino Sheryl's manager Ilmari Arnkil spoken at the Finnish Film Gala of 2016. The multitude of sources — customer surveys, demographic, historical and strategic documents — follows the case study's rationale of using multiple perspectives to increase the validity of the research (Simons 2009).

Two of the presented cases, Riviera and Kino Tapiola, had recently commissioned customer surveys and therefore have reliable data where their visitors come from. In these cases, those data were incorporated in the analysis. The two other cases, Korjaamo Kino Töölö and WHS Union, had at the time of this research not done any customer surveys, therefore analysis of customer profiles is based on the interviewees' own observations only.

Further on the quantitative side, film-related data were retrieved via the Finnish Film Foundation, the Finnish Film Chamber, the Finnish National Audiovisual Institute and research from Hupaniittu (2015). I present main demographics of the cases' neighbourhoods as well as the Helsinki and Espoo city context, taken from the online Aluesarjat database and (bi)annual city reports. I take particular interest in the demographics that Biltereyst & Meers have proved to be relevant for film exhibition research. There are many different academic viewpoints on the size and spectrum of a neighbourhood – for a concise literature review, I refer to Park & Rogers (2015). In Helsinki's and Espoo's urban planning offices and database services, data are however readily available per subdistrict, district and major district. I choose to work with the unit of subdistricts, which seems to correspond best with the interviewees' notions of 'their neighbourhood'.

It is noteworthy that many changes occurred in the cinema landscape of Helsinki during the course of the data collection, and many more occurred already between data collection and publication or are planned for in the near future. The changes during the course of the data collection are discussed in the context survey chapter.

3.3 Data Analysis

My data is analysed in a qualitative manner. For every case, I first conjure up a case survey of the area's historical, demographic and sociocultural context, as well as the venue's history and operational model. Then, I propose an analysis of the management actions related to place and community. After the individual case studies, I propose conclusions.

The purpose of the analysis is to create new information on the subject, supported by all collected data. According to Stake (1995), analysis is the most difficult stage in case studies because techniques cannot be applied mechanically. Typical for qualitative studies (Baxter & Jack 2008), my data collection and analysis processes overlapped.

Right after the interviews took place, first observations were written down. I transcribed all interviews, and in parallel wrote down a number of preliminary insights. Then, a content analysis was performed on each transcription in Excel. A number of preliminary themes were identified, which I divided into sub-themes. All these potential classifications were listed and graphically linked on a one-page summary - which I named 'theme canvas' - with the aim of not tying the sub-themes into definite themes too early, and leaving space to 'breathe'. Also, this approach made it convenient to scout for linkages. These theme canvases served as a case study database, which increases reliability of the entire case study according to Simons (2009). I made notes of the most plausible themes and linkages.

I left the theme canvases untouched until I had collected and produced all eight of them (2 interviews x 4 cases). Towards the end of the first series of interviews, the focus on place and community had come forward as a clear element of unity. During the second series of interviews I dug further into this area of focus. By now,

my research question had become clearer and functioned as a guideline throughout the interview.

After the second set of interviews, I familiarised myself in-depth with the secondary qualitative data. I read the historical documents and wrote my reflections down on the cases from a historical perspective. Then, I analysed *all* secondary qualitative data according to their relevance to my study into themes, and gathered useful citations which I translated when necessary. Translated citations are marked with a * sign.

When I finally had produced all eight theme canvases with sub-themes and their potential connections, I continued structuring each case individually. The eventual research findings initially sprung forward from the individual cases and were extended by thematic comparisons across cases. This strategy of moving between cross- and within-case comparisons is legitimate, according to Ayres et al. (2003). I cross-analysed the context interpretation separately from the cross-case synthesis.

Only at this point, I collected demographic and film-related quantitative data, which I combined and analysed. New insights from this quantitative analysis made me redraft the context and case chapters, and allowed me to write the cross-case synthesis. After the cross-analysis, I drafted conclusions.

Throughout the whole analysis process, I let my research questions serve as a guideline in my analysis, which is a most recommendable general approach according Stake (1995) and Welch et al. (2011)

I familiarised myself with the theory already before and during my analysis. This was mainly a process of narrowing down, inevitable in order to create a working frame and get a good grasp on the context of my research. This theoretic scouting and scavenging influenced my analysis considerably: I integrated parts of the theory into analysis, and altered my data search according to other research outcomes. After writing the analysis, I had a thorough understanding of the theoretic space I was moving in, and then wrote the theory chapter down.

I revisited my drafts and conclusions after several comment rounds from my mentor and colleagues.

3.4 Critical Reflections on the Research Process

In the constructivist view of Stake (1995) a case study seeks to understand the particular rather than to generate law-like explanations through an interpretive sense-making process (Welch et al. 2011). The researcher accepts the subjective views of the informant, yet needs to prevent his own biased views from blending in. Reviewing my own role as a researcher, I acknowledge that I have had to fight my own managerial opinions from seeping in during and after the interviews. Yet I have at all times maintained cautiousness to avoid being suggestive or overtly opinionated both during data collection and analysis. Instead, I took an active and enthusiast 'conversation partner' attitude and a semi-structured, associative interview style. I believe that this approach has provoked an increased willingness to share, and therefore led to more data and insights. Simply put, I aimed to make my role as a researcher a strength to build on. Prasad (2018) adds that the use of multiple cases helps the researcher to overcome bias.

I made sure to have more than two different data sources converging on the same facts and hereby assure proper data triangulation. Due to their private nature, business model disclosure and management decisions in my main data were not always possible to objectively retrace or get another source to confirm.

Instead of a multiple-case study, it is possible to think of this research design as a single case study - either 'the neighbourhood cinema landscape of Helsinki area' or 'Korttelikinot ry'- with embedded units, but in both cases the picture would be incomplete. Given the rapidly evolving compositions of these structures, treating the cinemas as multiple individual cases appears the most longstanding solution.

All interviewees permitted their full names to be disclosed, and gave their permit for publication. Before publishing, I let the informants review their quotes and information given, to make sure to avoid confidentiality breach. All interviews were conducted in English, which is not the mother tongue of the researcher nor of the interviewees. Yet given the fluency in English of all participants there was at no point any suspicion that this would have led to less validity of the data.

4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In order to analyse and discuss the role of place and community in the operations of new neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area, I will first survey the benevolent context creators for the neighbourhood cinema rise, derived from my data. In the spirit of cultural mapping, I consider both this context description as well as individual case descriptions cultural surveys, and therefore part of the analysis.

Each case survey offers a thick description of the cinema's neighbourhood and venue from historical, geographical and socio-economic perspectives. Eventually, the surveys hold the middle between a mapping of the neighbourhood's fabric, and a managerial view on the cinema's operational model. After every case survey follows an analysis of the different ways that the cinema uses place and community in their operations.

In my own analysis, I choose not to use Ghilardi's term 'DNA', which has an unalterable connotation and adopts a static view on place identity. Instead, I opt to use the term 'fabric', which feels more suitable to the organic, dynamic and slowly transitory nature of both place identity and community identity.

At the end of each case survey, I apply Agnew's (1987) and Cresswell's (2009) dimensions of place in order to sketch dimensional case description summaries and facilitate cross-analysis. Briefly re-iterating the definitions: *location* refers to a place's point on the map, *locale* refers to what a place looks like, and *sense of place* refers to the feelings and emotions a place evokes (Cresswell 2009).

4.1 Context survey

Drawing on both qualitative and quantitative sources, this chapter outlines the main factors that formed a landscape of opportunity for film exhibitors in the Helsinki area. My primary data are the interviews with the case cinema's managers and former Kino Sheryl manager Ilmari Arnkil. Secondary data, both quantitative and qualitative, include the cinemas' communications, historical documents of the

different areas and the cinemas, strategic documents of the Helsinki area's construction plans, demographic data of the Helsinki area and data on cinema visits per capita from the Finnish Chamber of Films.

4.1.1 Growing urbanisation

The recent growth in the number of screens in Helsinki area looks remarkable (Figure 5), but the nod upward in screen amount in 2017 needs to be framed: due to the ease of digital reporting, also non-commercial theatres are counted from 2017 onwards, which increased the number of total theatres as well as screening rooms by seven (all in Helsinki) (correspondence Tero Koistinen, CEO Finnish Film Chamber). WHS Union is one of those seven. Nevertheless, even when deducted by seven, the figures of 2018 still testify a confidence in growth potential for cinemas in the Helsinki area. The confidence is surprising given the steady figure of 2.5 to 3 cinema visits per capita overall in Helsinki area over the last two decades. In Helsinki, the figure has almost halved in 20 years, but is compensated by the increased cinema-going figures in Espoo and Vantaa, which can be fully attributed to new Finnkino multiplexes. Even though overall cinema-going has been more or less stable over the past 20 years in Helsinki area, the number of

Figure 5 Amount of cinemas and visits per capita, Helsinki area 2000-2018. Sources: Helsingin Seudun Aluesarjat www.aluesarjat.fi ; Finnish Chamber of Films, received through personal correspondence with Tero Koistinen (2020, December 22).

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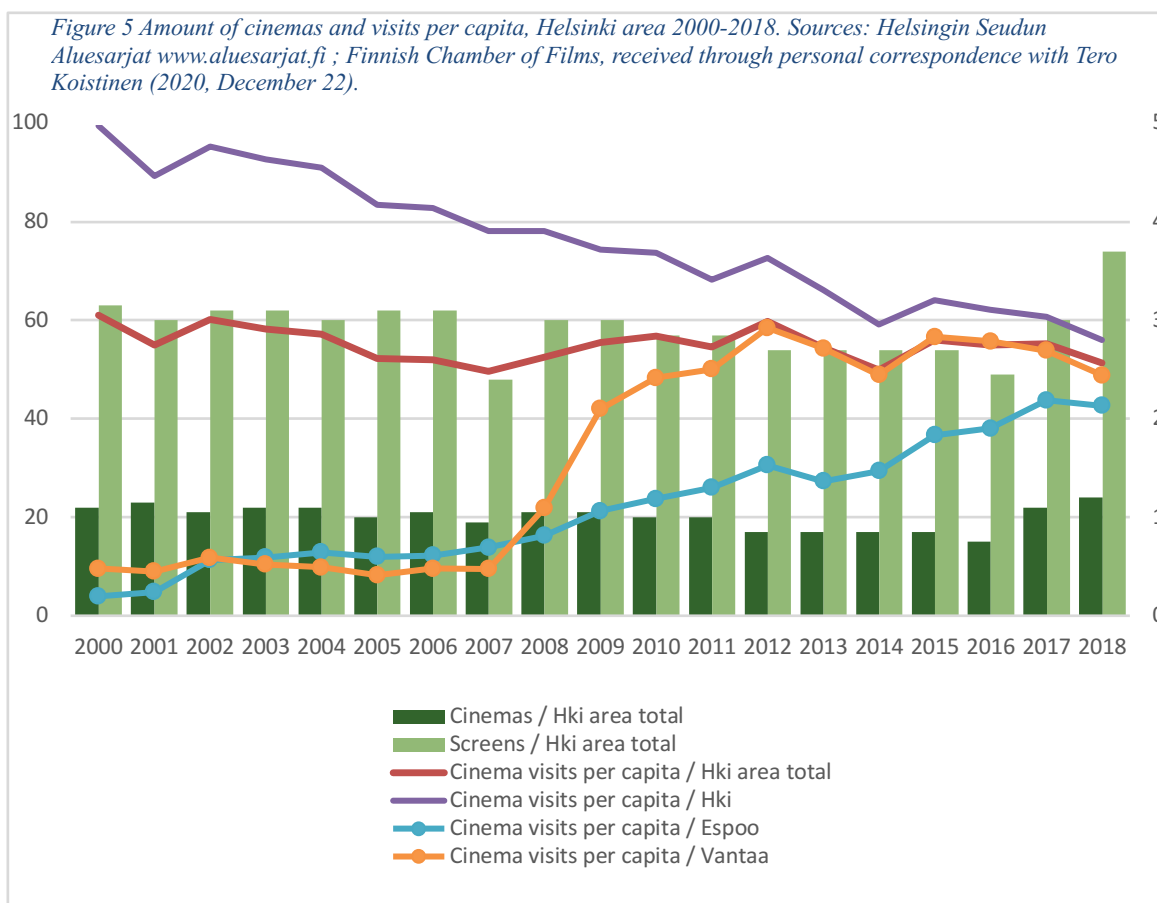
screens is on the rise. Is this a simple demand-and-supply story where an increasing amount of the Helsinki area's population needs to be 'granted' access to a cinema nearby? And how to frame the renewed coming of the neighbourhood cinema in particular? Statistics alone won't explain that.

In their extensive mapping research of film exhibition history in Belgium's Flanders region, Biltereyst & Meers (2014) conclude that it is safe to generalise their central finding: population density proves a good indicator to explain the presence of cinemas in a town, city or village. They note that *"it is remarkable how cinemas were in general located precisely within those areas where population density was the highest"* (Biltereyst & Meers 2014: 98). Moreover, Biltereyst and Meers find that the population density of the location of cinemas can even be linked to the size of the cinema and the amount of movies shown there.

In fact, this correlation is not as evident as it seems at first, as population size and population density are two separate variables. As Richard Sennett (2018) points out with examples, the small French village of Le-Pré-Saint-Gervais hosts more people per square meter than New Delhi, and despite an enormous amount of inhabitants, New Mexico is not that dense because of its huge land area. This shows that the correlation of population density with neighbourhood cinema presence is not merely about having a lot of people around. A neighbourhood cinema needs a lot of people around *who live close to each other.*

Faced with strong population growth that exceeded past predictions, Helsinki's deputy mayor for urban environment Anni Sinnemäki outlined that in 2017-2021 the city aims to condense the urban structure, both by launching new vertical building projects and encouraging complementary construction in existing housing stock (Sinnemäki 2017:13). Also fast-growing Espoo's urban planning office considers similar measures (City of Espoo 2020 a:10-11). This means that population density is again slowly increasing in Helsinki and Espoo.

> *Helsinki is being re-planned to be denser than before. So now that we are finally turning Helsinki into a European capital, its cultural offering should also develop. It's clear that the cinemas' rejuvenated, diversifying network is moving out of the centre's downtown area. (Ilmari Arnkil 2016, personal communication*)*

In this fragment of a speech given at the annual Finnish Film Foundation's gala in 2016, Kino Sheryl's former manager Arnkil observes that the new neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki city are not located in the city centre, and links this to Helsinki's growth and urban development.

The nature of my cases' four neighbourhoods – Tapiola centre, Taka-Töölö, Torkkelinmäki/Alppiharju, Kruununhaka/Siltasaari - are presented in more detail in each chapter, but indeed the three Helsinki cases can be said to be located in the big circle just around the city centre. The degree to which local residents make up the audience of these neighbourhood cinemas is not always clear. Out of four cases, only Riviera and Kino Tapiola have reliable data about their visitors' geographical origins.

I propose to review the current surge in neighbourhood cinemas and the area demographics in parallel with the neighbourhood cinemas' original enabling conditions. During the early 1950s, Helsinki area saw a period of major population growth. In accordance to the findings of Biltereyst & Meers (2014), also the cinema network density was at its highest then and the average annual cinema visits per person in Finland grew from 6.4 in 1950 to 7.9 in 1955 (Hupaniittu 2015). In this golden age of the neighbourhood cinema, people were used to smaller housing (0.68 rooms per persons in Helsinki in 1950) (Official Statistics of Finland 1956), which brought about more of a street culture. This was especially true in urban workers' areas that were most densely populated, often even overcrowded. Vesterinen describes how Töölö youth in the early 1950s didn't just hang around in the streets anymore – "*instead we would gather in modest, or even posh, cinemas. We went to the movies a lot, many times a week*" (2012:98*). Also in the suburb of Tapiola, R. Ramberg describes how Kino Tapiola used to be filled with local residents who wanted "*out of their humble, cramped flat or away from the early winter's slippery streets*" (2020, paragraph 9*). Both testimonies add that also the cheap ticket prices and the nearness of the cinema made the cinemas organic meeting places, especially for youth. People's lives happened largely within their own neighbourhood. Especially for the working class, limitations in mobility, travel time and finance meant that the alternative to a neighbourhood cinema was no cinema at all. This combination of factors was a golden ticket for a flourishing neighbourhood cinema scene in the 1940s and 1950s.

*Table 1 Comparison of the cases' subdistricts' key demographics. All data from 31.12.2018 except * from 31.12.2019. Sources: Helsingin Seudun Aluesarjat, aluesarjat.fi (2020); Helsinki Region Infoshare, hri.fi (2020); Helsinki Alueittain 2019 (2020), City of Helsinki (2020), City of Espoo (2020c)*

	Age 0-15 (%)	Age +65 (%)	Higher educated (%)	Single households (% dwellings)	Dwelling density (m2/person)	Average size (m2/dwelling)	Population density (residents/km2)
Espoo	**20,5**	**14,7**	**47,2**	**37,3**	**36,1***	**81***	**909**
Tapiolan keskus (Kino Tapiola)	11,9	28,9	62,7	51,4	38*	-	3 321
Helsinki	**15,1**	**17,0**	**43,7**	**48,9**	**34,1**	**63,3**	**2 993**
Taka-Töölö (Korjaamo Kino Töölö)	10,3	18,1	58,8	56,4	35,3	57	7 973
Torkkelinmäki (Riviera)	3,4	9,2	48,0	72,9	28,7	37,7	30 965
Harju (Riviera)	3,8	12,8	44,6	73,6	28,7	38,2	25 043
Kruununhaka (WHS Union)	12,5	17,0	61,2	48	38	68,8	13 125
Siltasaari (WHS Union)	7,8	15,6	55,7	53,3	31,8	51,4	11 070

Figure 6 Comparison of the cases' subdistricts' age structure. All data from 31.12.2018. Source: Helsingin Seudun Aluesarjat, aluesarjat.fi (2020)
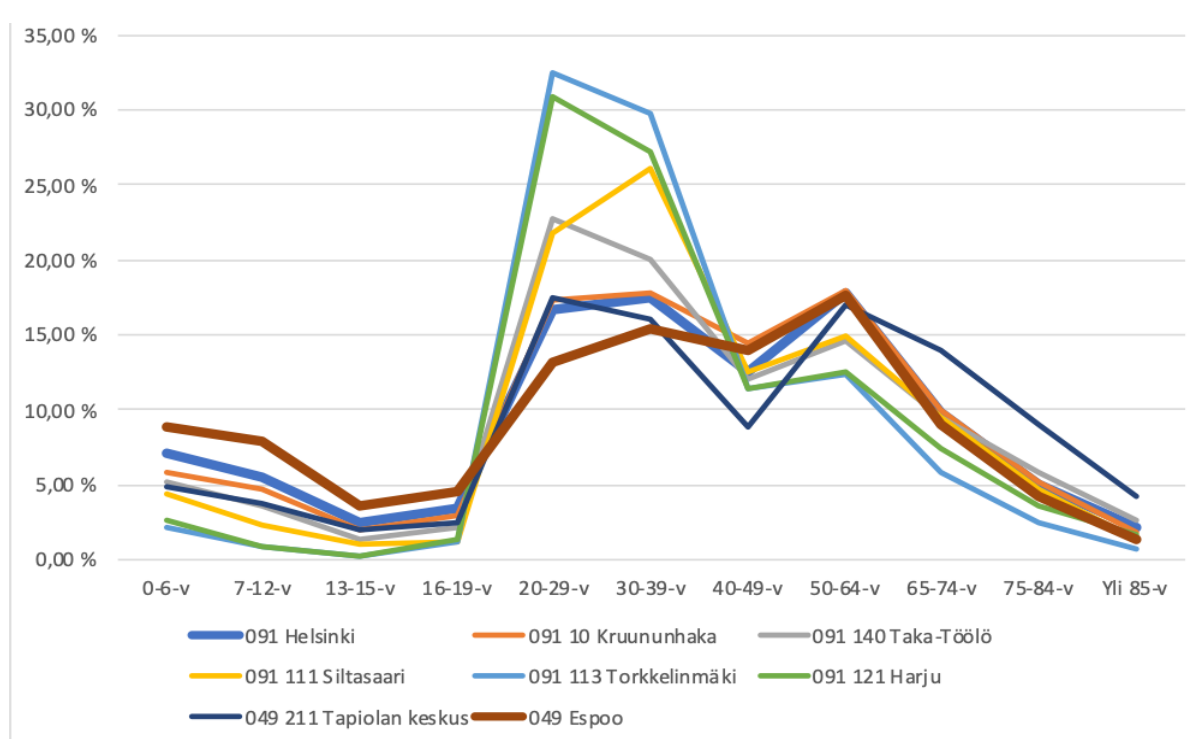

Table 1 collects key demographics of the cinema's different neighbourhoods, compared with Helsinki and Espoo averages. Figure 6 visualises the age structure

of the cases' subdistricts' populations in more detail.

Today, dwelling size or dwelling density does not seem to play a key role. The need to get out of cramped flats is no longer an important drive. Helsinkians' average floor space per person has doubled since 1950 to 1,31 rooms per person (City of Helsinki 2020 b). This increasing housing size standard, plus the increasing real estate prices in the centre, have also led families to move out of Helsinki's central areas' old housing stock, where they are replaced by one- and two-person households (Stjernberg 2010). Also in contrast with the 1950s, urban citizens now have access to more complex individual mobility (e.g. Augé 2000, Järvelä 2009), decreasing their dependence on the own neighbourhood services. In the 1950s, a street culture drove especially youth to the neighbourhood cinemas. Today, the neighbourhood cinemas are located in areas low on children.

The case cinemas' neighbourhoods are remarkably consistent in their high percentage of higher educated residents and single households. The only exception is Kruununhaka's share of single households, which is just below the Helsinki average. Also the age structure of the cinemas' subdistricts have similarities: their percentage of children are consistently below the cities' average, and the share of 20-40 years old is higher in those subdistricts — running up to twice as high in Riviera's neighbourhood. Likely, this latter age group is the category in which the single households are most represented.

Yet most significantly, figure 6 shows that neighbourhood cinemas in the Helsinki area are consistently located in densely populated areas.

Existing research tells us that these demographics have a logical chain of order: Helsinki's densely populated urban areas are nowadays on average less attractive to families with children, but more so to singles and childless couples (Stjernberg 2010). Those most densely populated areas in Helsinki are the city's central areas, which have increasingly high housing costs (City of Helsinki 2020 a), therefore more affordable to people with higher income, which is correlated to higher education (Statistics Finland 2016). So although the demographics of education, age, income, household size and dwelling size testify the characteristics of Helsinki area's neighbourhood cinemas' subdistricts, they can be regarded subordinate to population density.

In conclusion, and in line with Biltereyst's and Meers' (2014) findings, population density jumps forward as the key demographic to drive neighbourhood cinema presence in the Helsinki area today. Even though the combination of factors of the neighbourhood cinemas' golden age is not present nowadays, the increase in population density seems to offer a promising element of sustainability

4.1.2 Demand for diversification

During this turn towards a denser city planning, Helsinki was in 2014 at a point where multiplex chain Finnkino was left as the only, monopoly player in film exhibition - Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen, however, still have a few 'old-school' small cinemas surviving, usually family businesses. Hupaniittu's research from 2015 found that Finnish cinemas are increasingly concentrated in the bigger cities and in multiplexes, with Finnkino's market share being significant.

Kino Tapiola's manager Hannele Marjavaara believes that Finnkino's monopoly situation created a need for a 'quality environment' to watch films: "*a place where you can go and just immerse in the film and it doesn't look like blinking, flashing shopping centers. Life is so hectic that you don't want to go to yet another hectic place*" (2016). Riviera's manager Atte Laurila confirms this: "*Now, when you go to the 'normal' cinema [Finnkino], it's very much an 'in and out' experience. Going there, staying for the movie, then going away. The feeling has become more mechanical. I think people are hungry for real social experiences.*" (2017) Marjavaara and Laurila align on this need for a quality environment, denoting both quietness and social elements, as a point of differentiation from the Finnkino multiplex chain.

According to WHS Union's manager Ville Walo, the Finnkino monopoly created above all else a need for more diversified programme offering in Helsinki: "*They [Finnkino] decided which films people are going to see. So I think we needed this impact, not* against *them, but to offer more variety in films and do different kinds of cinema events.*" (2016)

In what appears a competitive counterreaction to the need for a social quality environment, Finnkino in turn redesigned former cinema Maxim in Helsinki centre. Vanha-Majamaa (2017, July 15) claims that the redesign was purposefully

bringing in the social features of the new neighbourhood cinemas into the venue. This could be interpreted as Finnkino's experiment or flirt with new film-going trends, or a confession that indeed their monopoly position caused a need for diversification.

4.1.3 Digitalisation

Previous to digitalisation, film prints needed to be managed physically through tight schedules to get from one venue to the next. This caused a certain hierarchy among cinemas where especially small cinemas and cinemas in rural areas were facing long waiting times to get their hand on a film print, of which a limited number had to circulate around the country (Hupaniittu 2015). The digital format takes away that burden and disadvantage, since there is immediate access to new film releases. Marjavaara argues: "*Digitalisation has meant democratisation, as all cinemas in Finland are equal now. (...) Now everybody simply chooses what they want to screen*" (2016). Digitalisation has equally opened up access to event cinema content (live and recorded screenings from operas, theatres, musicals, etc.) from all over the world. Marjavaara also notices that digitalisation caused the catalogues of cult & classic films to become more available, at reasonable prices. Laurila sees digitalisation even as the number one enabler for his cinema. It is nowadays possible to get the same movies in a small cinema at the same time as the big ones, costs have gone down and the possibilities to screen new movies have gone up, he argues. Both Laurila and Marjavaara claim that digitalisation has reshaken the cards in the film value chain to the advantage of film exhibitors and the disadvantage of film distributors. Laurila describes how digitalisation enabled more independence and a window of opportunity for vision and experiment. Modern technology enables non-traditional movie enjoying, he says. He feels challenged by the realm of possibilities that it opens up and mentions to be experimenting and testing different ideas. It seems fair to say that digitalisation is giving neighbourhood cinemas new-found arm-length to experiment and innovate.

It should also be noted that a supportive cultural policy has been essential to assist the transition to digital. The Finnish Film Foundation has generously provided grants to cinemas in order to equip themselves digitally, acknowledge all case

cinema managers. This has likely minimised the amount of cinema closures (Finnish Film Foundation 2020).

4.1.4 Key findings

In short, the Helsinki area's urbanisation, Finnkino's monopoly and digitalisation created a context where neighbourhood cinemas were in demand. Urbanisation is causing Helsinki and Espoo city governments to build denser, and this increased population density drives neighbourhood cinema viability. The Finnkino monopoly is said to cause a need for social innovation and programme diversification. Arguably, the key factor to enable the neighbourhood cinema's rise was digitalisation, ironically the same factor that previously seemed to threaten their continued existence. Digitalisation is claimed to make the cinema's business model more viable and open up a window for experiment. The combination of these factors created opportunities for a new generation of neighbourhood cinemas in the Helsinki area, in their own interpretation.

In the following chapters, the different cases' neighbourhoods and venues will be described from geospatial, demographic and socio-economic point of view, after which I will examine how and which of those elements are being integrated into the cinemas' management.

4.2 Kino Tapiola

Kino Tapiola is arguably the cinema that kicked off the 'new wave' of neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area. The cinema has been around in Tapiola, Espoo, ever since the whole neighbourhood was created in the 1950s, but revived in 2010 after a bankruptcy, renovation and change of ownership.

4.2.1 Case survey

Tapiola, a suburb of Espoo and close to the Helsinki border, is an exceptional urban planning project in many ways with a strong user-centric approach present since its day of inception. Discussing this approach may serve to create better

understanding on the case of Kino Tapiola, its unique environment and its embedment in the local community.

In 1950, Espoo's population was only 25 000 (City of Espoo 2020 b), but city living was in high demand. The Housing Foundation (*Asuntosäätiö*) was founded to provide new solutions to the prevailing housing shortage. Close to the Helsinki border in Espoo, the Foundation launched a construction project for a remarkable new suburb: a 'garden city'. Tapiola was to be the modernist renaissance of the garden city utopia.

Architect Aarne Ervi's proposal won the competition to design Tapiola's whole central area in 1954 (Tuomi 1992). He designed it for walking from place to place. The centre of Tapiola was to be a car-free mini-town that combined residential areas for different socio-economic backgrounds with workplaces, services and cultural life, all in walking distance from each other. Tapiola would be the hallmark for Finland's new kind of living environment at the dawn of welfare society (Kauste & Lahti, 2010). It became indeed internationally famous in the 1960s, when it was shown off in foreign newspapers as an outstanding example of a Finnish approach of "*living next to nature*" (Manninen 2003). Also Kino Tapiola was designed by Ervi, and as such, integrated into the suburb's design from the very beginning.

An overview exhibition of architect Aarne Ervi's work in 2010 carried the title 'Aarne Ervi: Space for People'. 'Space for People' refers to the essence of Ervi's architecture, a user-centric vision perhaps best proclaimed by his design for Tapiola (Kauste & Lahti 2010). According to fellow architect Pertti Solla, Ervi saw himself as the mere executor of a scheme instructed by the community (Solla 1970). His care for the preservation of the present surroundings and landscapes was considered particular at the time. "*Ervi's goal was to create a totality in which the building, designed for a human scale and human functionality, integrates harmoniously in the environment.*" (Museum of Architecture website 2017*)

The functionalist-style one-screen cinema building was ready in 1955 and had its first screening in October of the same year. Ervi gave the cinema a central location in Tapiola's urban planning. Apart from Ervi as an architect, the cinema building had its own interior designer, garden designer and even colour designer. During

the first years of Kino Tapiola's existence, people nicknamed the cinema building 'Glass palace' ('*Lasipalatsi*') because of its hall's many large windows. The place was "*designed to breathe and open the space to the outside world*" (Tuomi 1992:12). Originally, Kino Tapiola included a much larger entrance lobby designed to also host parties and meetings, and equipped with several little kiosks. In 1965 however, the lobby was subdivided and a large part accommodated a store, later turned into a restaurant. At the beginning of this research period in 2016, the remaining cinema lobby offered a fair amount of comfortable vintage seating next to large windows, a small unused ticket sales booth and a bar counter. At the end of the research period, in 2018, the lobby was respectfully refurbished, the ticket booth disappeared and the bar re-oriented towards wine serving.

The first owner-manager of Kino Tapiola was Urpo Hovilainen (1955 - 1974), nicknamed 'Kinosaurus'. It was essentially a family business. After him, the ownership went through the hands of Adams Filmi and Bio Jaseka until 1988, when a long-time projectionist of Bio Jaseka, Peter Puisto, bought the cinema and kept it running under the flag of Bio Jaseka until 2007, when a new manager was found. In 2008, asbestos was discovered in the rooftop and the management was unable to afford the renovation costs. The cinema had to close and file for bankruptcy. (Kino Tapiola website 2017)

Within the Tapiola community, a movement was born that started lobbying with the city of Espoo to save 'their' cinema. As one of the original Tapiola buildings, the cinema had gained a protected status in the early 2000s, so the options to repurpose the building were limited anyhow. The city and the cinema's real estate owner Tapiolan Lämpö decided to renovate the building if they could find a responsible manager who could make the cinema flourish. Eventually Espoo Ciné, a successful film festival based in Tapiola, was chosen as the natural candidate to run it. The festival's non-profit association founded a limited company in an umbrella construction to run the cinema and soon appointed Hannele Marjavaara as the cinema's manager.

According to Marjavaara, audience members love the fact that there is a cultural organisation behind Kino Tapiola. The festival and cinema organisations are intertwined and somewhat influence each other. For example, Espoo Ciné's focus

on quality European and domestic films was naturally extended into Kino Tapiola's profile. According to survey results, this is very much in line with what the audience wishes for (Parametra 2016). In turn, this high percentage of European films allowed for the cinema's membership to Europa Cinemas, a network which provides to their members annual operational grants, a quality label, training opportunities and a European peer network.

According to a survey by Parametra in 2016, Kino Tapiola's audience consists of roughly 70% female patrons and over 50% patrons are over 55 years old. About 65% of the visitors comes from within a 5km radius of Kino Tapiola, of which 33% from Tapiola itself. The audience satisfaction is very high (94% rates the theatre 9 or 10 out of 10) and the commitment equally high: about 66% of the audience reports to visit Kino Tapiola at least once every month. 88% of the visitors deems it very important that Tapiola has its own cinema. In comparison to other cinemas, Kino Tapiola's audience counts a high percentage of older (55+), highly educated people, high job positions and single households (Parametra 2016).

> *I don't know if in any other suburb of Espoo, it would be at all viable to run a cinema that has a European art-house profile. I guess not. It's only here, it has to do with the specific nature of this area. (Marjavaara 2016)*

Marjavaara hints that Tapiola statistics would reveal remarkable demographics. Table 2 shows that Tapiola sub-district has a striking percentage of older and higher educated type of population nowadays, much in line with Kino Tapiola's audience — even though Tapiola was originally designed for people of varied socio-economic backgrounds. Especially single households and higher educated residents are well represented among Kino Tapiola visitors. Generally, Helsinki

*Table 2 Espoo and Tapiola demographics in relation to Kino Tapiola visitors. All data from 31.12.2018 except * from 31.12.2019. Sources: Parametra (2016), Aluesarjat (2020), City of Espoo (2020c).*

	Age 0-15 (%)	Age +65 (%)	Higher educated (%)	Single house-holds (%)	Population density (residents/ km²)	Dwelling density (m²/person)	Average size (m²/ dwelling)
Espoo	20,5	14,7	47,2	16,5	909	36,1*	81*
Tapiolan keskus	11,9	28,9	62,7	30	3321	38*	-
Kino Tapiola audience	13	25	84	35			

region's other municipalities are more attractive for families with children than Helsinki itself (Stjernberg 2010). In that sense, the low figure of children in Tapiola is striking. Compared to Espoo's or Helsinki's other central sub-districts, Tapiola is not so densely populated (City of Espoo 2020 c) although a lot of construction schemes for Tapiola are being planned and have been executed already in recent years (City of Espoo 2020 a:10, Aluesarjat 2020). The amount of space available per person in Tapiola is in tune with the Espoo average.

Kino Tapiola's *location* is Tapiola, one of the four centres of Espoo city. The cinema's 'original design', its glass walls in the hall that look out on the landscape, the surrounding green and walking areas, would all classify as elements of *locale*, describing the material setting. Yet there are a number of indicators that Kino Tapiola is capitalising on, and in turn investing in, its *sense of place*. Cosy, homey, beautiful, tranquil, friendly, quality, world-class neighbourhood cinema: these are some of the adjectives and feelings that visitors attribute to Kino Tapiola, in queries by Kino Tapiola itself (2015) and Parametra (2016). I would add that Kino Tapiola's authenticity, its embedment in the neighbourhood and its culturally protected status also contribute to its sense of place.

4.2.2 Confirming place attachment

Kino Tapiola's architect Aarne Ervi designed both the cinema and the whole neighbourhood around it. As such, the cinema was part of a vision for a 'garden city', a place where people could walk from home to work to leisure (Manninen 2003). Current manager Hannele Marjavaara's strong focus on Tapiola as an architectural concept unveils the importance she attributes to the cinema's uniqueness and relation to the neighbourhood. Her repeated use of the 'we'-form when talking about the Tapiola community reveals Kino Tapiola's integration of community attachment into management: *"We were the architectural wonder of where to go, how to build a beautiful suburb with gardens and housing and schools and cinema. (…) So it's been part of the vibe, that Tapiola has its own cinema."* (2016)

In 1967, an anonymous local described the community as follows: *"They are happy with their lives — they are Tapiola people. It's a new breed of humans.*

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People of the suburb — the garden city's locals" (Solla 1970:28). The Housing Foundation who gave the assignment to build Tapiola, specifically instructed to build "*not houses or dwellings but socially healthful surroundings for contemporary man and his family*", which the planners interpreted as developing "*a thriving self-contained community*" (Spreiregen & von Hertzen 1971). In other words, Tapiola has always been a community design project. Nevertheless, Riitta Nikula (2006) quotes Ossi Hiisiö's (1970) critical view of Tapiola, when he argues that people in Tapiola are not specifically engaging in the act of neighbouring any more often than people generally in cities. In other words, he questions its social capital. Nikula, a former resident of Tapiola herself, acknowledges that in this respect, Tapiola has indeed an urban-like character.

The strength of the Tapiola community fabric was tested in 2008 when the cinema business faced a threat of being torn down, repurposed or stripped of its public nature. The community set up a movement to save 'their' cinema and started lobbying with local authorities— with success. Marjavaara refers back to this moment regularly, as a turning point that marked Kino Tapiola's reason of existence: "*The thing has been that the locals saved this cinema. It's been one of our… We are existing* for *them.*"

Edward Relph's (1976) perception that a place-person bond is an important human need seems to hold a lot of truth for Kino Tapiola and its community. The cinema has been part of the neighbourhood fabric as long as the first generation of residents of Tapiola. For some customers, Kino Tapiola is the strongest tie to their 'Tapiolanness' (Liukkonen 2013). These deep roots have resulted in the community's attachment to the cinema building. The movement born to save Kino Tapiola testifies after all the local community's social capital and high sense of community.

According to Altman & Low (1992), *housing ownership, long-term residence* and *local memories of significant life experiences* are some of the elements that tend to increase community attachment. But beyond those, the most consistently influential element of them all is the *social involvement in a community* (Altman & Low 1992, Sen 2000, Manzo & Perkins 2006). Although hard to measure on a collective scale, most of these elements can be applied to the Tapiola community:

In 1971, Tapiola was reported to have a 90% rate of owner-occupied housing (Spreiregen & von Hertzen 1971). Yet Tapiola's original housing, which is the cinema's immediate neighbourhood, is largely owner-occupied. This was largely accomplished by the fact that 80% of the dwellings were built to be sold as state-subsidised loans, enabling home ownership to people with different socio-economic backgrounds and hereby realising the garden city's vision of socio-economic mixture (Nikula 2006). Nikula even states that this was a foundational characteristic to the Tapiola community texture. Tapiola's communality, she claims, was realized through ownership (Nikula 2006). By 2019, the owner-occupation figure had run back to 53,9% (Aluesarjat 2020) due to new high-rise building projects.

Tapiola also had an exceptional high rate of long term residents in 1971 (Spreiregen & von Hertzen 1971), which applies again to the cinema's immediate surroundings. No recent figures of long-term residency are available, but Marjavaara's observations seem to confirm a strong presence of 'original' Tapiola residents among her audience. This is in line with Altman and Low's (1992) finding that local attachment is likely to increase with the age of a person.

Even though the memories of significant life experience are mostly individual, the pride instilled in the original community by their place brand and international admiration, suggested by Johansson (2012), could be deemed of collective significance to place attachment. And when Kino Tapiola was threatened in 2008, the Tapiola community experienced this as a disruption of place attachment, much like when a doctor would unexpectedly suggest a foot amputation, and raised their voice in protest. This protest became an act of empowerment and confirmed the locals' social involvement, which in turn marked the further stimulation of the community's collective place attachment and left Kino Tapiola intrinsically embedded in the Tapiola community.

Through their campaign to save the cinema, the 'proud' people of Tapiola regained a sense of ownership over Kino Tapiola and confirmed their emotional attachment to the cinema. Marjavaara keeps this sense of ownership alive by engaging in an active discussion with the locals, and respectfully listening to their wishes and concerns:

We always want to listen to [the locals] a lot. When we opened, we asked the locals 'Please tell us, what days are the best days for watching films? When, what time?' Our audience knows that if they tell us 'Oh please, have a re-run of this film, because I missed it' - that it's worth telling us, because we will listen. And that makes sense: we are here for them. Because of them. (Marjavaara 2016)

Marjavaara indicates that acting in dialogue with locals is like an acknowledgement of a shared sense of ownership, where Marjavaara takes a serving role towards the community. The Tapiola community holds the right to their neighbourhood cinema, she shows through her actions. She establishes a strong two-way commitment between the cinema and its audience this way. This participation can be understood in the larger framework of maintaining locals' place- and community attachment.

4.2.3   Integrating the neighbourhood fabric in the service design

In a sense, Marjavaara's community-driven approach is part of a local tradition. Handing over decision power to the locals is an attitude that has been prevalent in Tapiola since its inception. When Tapiola was still uncultivated, the area only had a Swedish name: Hagalund. At the start of the garden city project, its Finnish name became the subject of a public competition. Among over four thousand submissions, eleven suggested the same name: Tapiola — a reference to the Finnish god of the forest. Eventually, a street name committee made the final pick (Tuomi 1992). Later, the Housing Foundation's director and founding father of Tapiola, Heikki von Hertzen, stated that giving the occupants places to meet from the very early stages of Tapiola's creation — *"for example a community center, a movie theater, ..."* — (Spreiregen & von Hertzen 1971:18) would give them power of decision in community matters. This statement indicates that the Kino Tapiola venue has played a foundational role to the Tapiola community fabric. Nowadays, this type of collaborative approach would be considered standard in any place-making process. We could regard these early communal decision-making schemes in Tapiola as fundamental contributions to the locals' place attachment and sense of community, part of the Tapiola fabric, still ringing through today. Not only the

building is a piece of heritage, so is the communal decision-making.

Marjavaara actively maintains warm customer relationships with the local community via both online and on-site channels, in direct interaction, paper and digital formats. These channels mostly allow for two-way communication - they not only focus on 'How to reach the customer?' but just as much on 'How can the customer reach us?' Especially the on-site channels prove to be effective in reaching the older, mostly local, audience. Getting an incentive like 'Wish for a re-run' to work indicates a successful establishment of their channels. This has resulted in valuable feedback:

> *In our latest survey we got such high scores of satisfaction. Really, really committed audience. And they mentioned things like 'you can actually request things', 'it's very cosy, you feel like you're at home' and 'you have a beautiful screen and a beautiful, quiet place where you can watch quality films'. So it really has worked. We have a dialogue with our audience. (Marjavaara 2016)*

One customer's feedback became somewhat of a slogan for Kino Tapiola: "*A world-class neighbourhood cinema*". Marjavaara labels personal service and quality feeling as elements of Kino Tapiola's value proposition, which reflects in this slogan.

As another outcome of this constant dialogue with her audience, Marjavaara redesigned the lobby by integrating a wine bar. Marjavaara felt confirmed by both the survey outcomes and by direct customer feedback that a wine bar would very well suit the cinema's audience profile, the neighbourhood fabric and the venue. Ervi originally designed for a human scale and functionality, and now every new addition needs to fit the original design and purpose. Auditing the wine bar proposal was an essential act to verify its validity in the eyes of the audience and the locals.

Much like the whole Tapiola project itself, Kino Tapiola has a very user-centric operational model. Integrating the neighbourhood fabric and its co-operative nature in its programme and service design, reflects and strengthens the locals' sense of ownership of the cinema. This shared sense of ownership continues to shape the cinema's *and* the neighbourhood's place identity.

In conclusion, we can say that Kino Tapiola continues to maintain and strengthen its position at the core of Tapiola's thick neighbourhood fabric by creating a co-operative business model that mirrors the community's features and its participatory culture.

4.3 Korjaamo Kino Töölö

4.3.1 Case survey

Töölö is the more common collective name for two subdistricts close to Helsinki centre, the southern one of which is Etu-Töölö and the northern one of which is Taka-Töölö, literally indicating the 'front' and the 'back' of Töölö in relation to the city centre. The formal division between the two subdistricts was made only in 1959. Etu-Töölö, where the Parliament House and several education institutions are located, is more connected to the city centre, whereas Taka-Töölö forms its own district and was planned for residential use (City of Helsinki 2020 a). Korjaamo Kino Töölö is located in the heart of Taka-Töölö.

In the second half of the 19th century, Töölö was somewhat of a separate village close to the city centre, a collection of barracks for poor worker families near Helsinki's oldest factories which stood in Taka-Töölö (Vesterinen 2012, City of Helsinki 2020). On the western shorelines, some older villas mark the beginning of the fancy Töölö (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004: 112). In 1898-1900, Töölö became the subject of the first ever town planning competition in Finland (Nikula 2006). The eventual winning plan was a forced collaborative endeavour between representants of the old guard and the new generation of town planners, respectively Gustaf Nyman and Lars Sonck (Nikula 2006, Lindh 2002). The new generation was particularly influenced by the romanticist ideas of Camillo Sitte, who plead for harmony and esthetics in urban planning. Etu-Töölö was built first, in late art nouveau and neo-classicist style. Construction started only in the 1910s, during which city planner-architect Bertel Jung considerably simplified Sonck's and Nyman's plans for Töölö (ibidem). Although Jung had been a proponent of Sitte's ideas earlier, the end result had little influence of Sitte left (Nikula 2006).

Construction accelerated particularly in the late 1920s, when Helsinki was expanding at fast pace and needed to provide more housing for its growing population (ibidem). Already in the 1930s, modernists heavily criticized the already built Töölö as old-school urbanism. Perhaps in response, Helsinki's new city planner-architect Birger Brunila replanned Taka-Töölö in the less crowded functionalist style, even bearing its own nickname of 'Töölö functionalism' (Lindh 2002). Taka-Töölö was built mainly between 1934-1939 and quickly became a popular district for large middle class families and the cultural elite (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004).

As soon as it was built, Taka-Töölö attracted filmmakers and actors, such as grand Finnish film stars Ansa Ikonen and Tauno Palo. Combined with the presence of the important film production company Suomen Filmiteollisuus' offices, the photogenic subdistrict also quickly became a popular area for location film shoots (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004). Taka-Töölö got film into its neighbourhood fabric already early on. The presence of many cinemas in the area, and even premiere cinemas, could well be the consequence of this 'film fabric' — and in return, the cinemas' presence strengthens it.

Regarding the area's typical architecture dubbed 'Töölö functionalism', I am reminded of Kevin Lynch' assertion (in Sennett 2018) that the stronger a place is defined by a visual identity, the stronger people experience a positive sense of place and belonging. This is arguably the case for Taka-Töölö.

In the 1950s, the number of families with children was at its peak (Vesterinen 2012). Apartments in Taka-Töölö were small for the household sizes they hosted, and courtyards were plenty, which drove youth to gather on the streets. This changed in the aftermath of the Winter Wars, when cinemas became a fast growing network of meeting places for the youth (Vesterinen 2012). Vesterinen suggests that a sense of community was strengthened by Töölö's rich and dynamic cinema landscape. Especially during the war- and post-war period, it was not uncommon for cinemas to increase sense of community (Jancovich & Faire 2003).

In his sketch of the cinema network at its densest, in the mid-1950s, Vesterinen (2015) divides Helsinki cinemas in four concentrated areas, of which the first one is the city centre with its premiere cinemas, and the second one is Töölö, with a

mixture of premiere cinemas and neighbourhood cinemas. This indicates some of the importance of Töölö in the cinema landscape at that time.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, there was still a high concentration of cinemas in Taka-Töölö. In the late 1980s and 1990s however, during the 'second wave' of cinema bankruptcies, all of Töölö's remaining cinemas shut down in a short timeframe (Vesterinen 2015, National Audiovisual Institute 2020). An anonymous local resident who has witnessed the rise and fall of the cinemas in Töölö captures the bitter-sweet nostalgia as follows:

> *I achingly remember how sweet it was to go to a certain cinema and to know up front their smells, carpets, pictures on the wall, old door posts, shabby toilets, ticket booths, or even certain seats that we should try to get. The whole cinema visit was much more than just the film. It was the ensemble of the place and the picture. (quoted in Vesterinen 2012*)*

In 2013, an interesting phenomenon occurred which illustrates just how much the Töölö community still missed their local cinemas: former cinema Axa was put up for sale by its then-owner, a religious organisation. This gave way to a new movement to rehabilitate the cinema and recommence "*community-centred and modern film and cultural activities in Taka-Töölö in the former cinema Bio Axa*", as described in a project presentation (KinoAXA 2013). There is a strong resemblance between the Axa movement and the movement to preserve Kino Tapiola in Espoo, with the big difference that the Helsinki City government did not weigh in on the citizen movement's negotiations with the private owner. Eventually, the Axa movement was unsuccessful: it did not reach its ambitious crowdfunding goal necessary to buy the cinema.

A comparison between Helsinki's and Töölö's current demographics (Table 3) tells us that Taka-Töölö is no longer a very family-centred area, yet the same time its share of elderly is only slightly above the average. The figures for the higher educated and single households are remarkably high. Research (e.g. Stjernberg 2010) has pointed out that increasing housing size standards have led families to move out of Helsinki's central areas' old housing stock, to be replaced by one- and two-person households. This movement is well visible in Taka-Töölö. Currently,

	Age 0-15 (%)	Age +65 (%)	Higher educated (%)	Single households (%)	Population density (residents/ km²)	Dwelling density (m2/person)	Average size (m²/ dwelling)
Helsinki	15,1	17,0	43,7	25,3	2 993	34,1	63,3
Taka-Töölö	10,3	18,1	58,8	33,5	7 973	35,3	57

over 90% of Taka-Töölö's housing stock dates from before 1960 (Aluesarjat 2020).

The subdistrict's population density is more than the double of Helsinki's average, which is not surprising given its closeness to the centre. In fact, the figure only poorly reflects the dense and residential nature of the area west of the central road Mannerheimintie, because Taka-Töölö also covers a large area east of it which is full of large non-residential buildings and their parking spots (the Olympic stadium and swimming stadium, two other large sports event halls, the Winter Garden greenery), as well as large green areas. The quite vertical functionalist housing still dominates the image of residential Taka-Töölö.

Korjaamo Kino Töölö is a part of independent cultural centre Korjaamo Culture Factory, a former tram depot. The name Korjaamo ('*repair workshop*') refers to this former depot function. Following a period of occupational activism on the site in the early 2000's, owner and founder Raoul Grünstein rented Korjaamo's space from the City of Helsinki to set up Korjaamo Culture Factory. After an expensive renovation and years of operation at a loss, Korjaamo applied for company restructuring in 2014. Grünstein gathered Korjaamo and his other enterprises (such as open-air swimming pool Allas Sea Pool and an ice-skating rink by the Helsinki railway station) under the wing of a new mother enterprise Töölö Urban Oy in 2016. The same year already, the company turned to profit. (Tammilehto 2016)

According to Grünstein, Korjaamo aims to become the living room of Töölö residents and to host community-developing activities (Tammilehto 2016). Earlier the same year, a gallery space in Korjaamo that did not bring profit was turned into a cinema with 125 seats after it topped the Töölö residents' list of suggested additions in a Korjaamo survey. Korjaamo Kino was born, and Sanna-Maria Nikula was appointed to be its first programme director. Nikula is in charge of

Korjaamo Kino's programme planning, booking and audience development as well as management, albeit in dialogue with both Korjaamo's founder and CEO, and marketing, together with Korjaamo's head of sales. Nikula has a background as the former head of Espoo Ciné Film Festival.

In 2017, Korjaamo won a bid to manage Bio Rex, a former premiere cinema with 554 seats in the heart of Helsinki city centre (and also since many years the central venue of the Helsinki International Festival, which Korjaamo's then-CEO Sara Norberg used to lead). Since then, Korjaamo Kino has run two venues. Bio Rex' programme is less regular and more event-based, and the space is part of the Amos Rex art museum. Korjaamo Kino was re-baptised into Korjaamo Kino Töölö.

During both interviews, in 2016 and 2018, Nikula mentions the need of doing a survey among customers. So far, her programming and strategic decisions are based on observations on-site:

> *Even though we don't have the data, I strongly feel that especially the older people who come here are from the neighbourhood. (…) Every time I've been on the counter, visitors are like, 'I live just around the block!' I heard this sentence so many times. (Nikula 2016)*

Korjaamo Kino Töölö is said to attract a dominantly older, female and local customer base. Throughout the interviews, Nikula uses the older audience base in synonym with the local audience in Töölö, even though Taka-Töölö demographics reveal a quite diverse age mix among residents. This older audience came as a surprise to Nikula and other Korjaamo staff, who were used to hosting younger audiences in Korjaamo and expected the same customers to find their way to the cinema. Yet only the special screenings, such as concert films, film clubs and screenings in collaboration with film festivals really found their way to 25-50 year olds, according to Nikula's observations. Regular screenings were mostly popular with older audiences. Nikula describes the regular programme loosely as 'Almodóvar stuff' or 'commercial art-house'. Besides boasting quality film and projection quality, Nikula's presentation of Korjaamo Kino Töölö is in tune with the traditional neighbourhood cinema: a small, nice cinema around the block.

Although its buildings carry a long history, Korjaamo Culture Factory is as a cultural venue fairly young. It offers an umbrella both as an organisational

structure and as a venue for Korjaamo Kino Töölö. In both ways, it offers benefits to the cinema. Organisationally, the cinema benefits from Korjaamo's financial and human resources, as well as from its communication, brand and customer base. In a spatial way, it benefits from Korjaamo's size and its cross-pollination of spaces.

Entering Korjaamo, visitors are guided into a spacious lobby towards a general ticketing and info counter, where they can buy both candies and tickets for their cultural department of choice in Korjaamo, including cinema. Besides the regular screening hall, Korjaamo Kino Töölö also has Kulmasali, a dining space with 50 seats and a screen, which initially hosted a 'film restaurant' concept once in a while, but later mostly third party rentals. Also in the regular screening hall, built-in tray tables give the option of eating during the film. Nikula tells she is inspired by the Amsterdam film scene, where she noticed that every single cinema had a nice cafe or restaurant. Following their business model, she ensures smooth collaboration with the bar and restaurant services in Korjaamo.

Besides a couple of restaurants and bar, Korjaamo also houses a stage for concerts and an outside yard with a flexible setting. It was equally host to a theatre stage until late 2017. The cinema's collaboration options with the other cultural departments of Korjaamo are explored in different ways. When Korjaamo's theatre stage was still up and running, the cinema programme was in tune with their theatre festival's line-up. Whenever Korjaamo is host to a special music event, combination tickets for concert and film would often be on sale. Besides the cultural offerings within Korjaamo, Nikula also sets up similar collaborations with local pop music- and film festivals for audience development purposes.

Nikula deems Korjaamo's overall brand and reputation a strong asset to the cinema: "It is a familiar name for many people living in Helsinki. (…) Now it is just about giving the message that people can also see films in Korjaamo" (2016). Nevertheless, transforming the cinema's familiarity into customership, let alone regular customership, is a work-intensive and slow process according to Nikula. The degree to which the existing customer base of Korjaamo benefits the cinema is unknown. She tells that the cinema's re-baptising into Korjaamo Kino Töölö offered a good opportunity to launch and market the cinema anew. The inclusion of the area's name into their rebranding was mainly done in order to differentiate

from Bio Rex in the centre.

The *location* of Korjaamo Kino Töölö is at the heart of Taka-Töölö, a subdistrict quite near to the Helsinki city centre, as a part of Korjaamo Culture Factory. As far as *locale* concerns, the material setting elements of Korjaamo Kino Töölö include residential surroundings in a functionalist architecture, a revamped old tram depot, a colourful neo-classicist facade, a modern urban interior, classic red cinema chairs, a summer garden. *Sense of place* of the cinema, as described by Nikula, would be 'small' and 'nice'. Korjaamo's surroundings offer a modern, urban vibe. The neighbourhood's sense of place carries a rich film heritage.

4.3.2 Relating to the neighbourhood

Although no customer surveys of Korjaamo Kino Töölö were organised before or during my research period, the elder customer base is a cornerstone of the audience according to Nikula:

> *I feel that we have this kind of audience that wouldn't go to Tennispalatsi or like that. That it's close by and easy to come here. Like these ladies who say "I live just around the block" and "It's so nice that we have a cinema in Töölö again, it's been such a long time". It's really nice if they feel nostalgic here in this new cinema. Probably it reminds them of the good old times when there was a cinema in every corner of the city. (Nikula 2016)*

Nostalgia is suspected to be a key motivator to drive them to the local neighbourhood cinema. This elder customer base bore witness to the area's rich cinema history. The movement born in 2013 to buy and preserve Bio Axa seems to confirm this nostalgia for old-school cinema-going.

The elder local quoted in the case survey chapter also confirms that Finnkino's nearby multiplex Tennispalatsi is not a place that embodies any of that 'film magic' nostalgia (Vesterinen 2012). On the contrary perhaps, the multiplex is often seen as a main responsible of the death of the neighbourhood cinema (Sundman 1996, Vesterinen 2012). Nikula does not claim to see Finnkino as a competitor because of their size difference, but nevertheless refers to it often. She also compares her cinema's location and audience often to the other new neighbourhood cinemas in

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Helsinki area, whom she describes as colleagues.

> *We really want to be a neighbourhood cinema. But it's still kind of…*
> *Especially with the older audience. If you compare to Riviera, there*
> *are young people. There you have these normal ways of contacting*
> *them, like Facebook. But here with this really old audience, we still*
> *struggle with how to find them, stay in contact with them, tell them*
> *that we are here and what we are screening. (Nikula 2018)*

Nikula admits to have trouble reaching and maintaining contact with the elder customer base. Even though Korjaamo Kino Töölö is producing program leaflets and Nikula writes film reviews in the local district newspaper Töölöläinen, she seems unhappy with those analogue channels and the limited control they offer.

Nikula also indicates that Korjaamo and Korjaamo Kino Töölö attract different audiences. The preference for digital channels, and audience development initiatives with pop music festivals seem to indicate that Korjaamo Kino Töölö is investing in outreach to younger audiences.

Long-term residence and *community involvement* are two of the elements of Altman & Low's (1992) and Manzo & Perkins' (2006) theories of place- and community attachment which could be said to be present in Taka-Töölö as well. The amount of long-term residents in Töölö are not known, but Nikula suggests that the nostalgic older customer base finding their way to Korjaamo Kino Töölö are indeed long-term area residents. As far as locals' community involvement in Korjaamo is concerned, the activism at the root of Korjaamo Culture Factory in the early 2000s comes to mind – yet the amount of locals involved in that activism is unknown. But different from the Kino Tapiola or Bio Axa activism, Korjaamo's activist movement aimed to preserve the building's beautiful architecture, not specifically a cinema function. Another element at the root of strong place attachment, the average *housing ownership* rate, is in Taka-Töölö just below the Helsinki average (40,3% compared to 41,3%) (Aluesarjat) and so it does not apply. There are no indications either for the presence of the remaining element, *local memories of significant life experiences,* on a collective level.

Töölö's community fabric and rich film heritage are not particularly addressed or reflected in Korjaamo Kino Töölö's branding or customer experience. Likely, it is

the neighbourhood cinema *label* which evokes locals' nostalgia to Töölö's rich cinema history. But whether or not locals experience a real sense of place attachment towards Korjaamo Kino Töölö as a venue is debatable. We could ask ourselves whether it would now succeed in generating the same movement than Bio Axa did in 2013, if it were threatened.

The movement born to preserve Bio Axa at least showed that the cinema soil in Taka-Töölö was still fertile back then. This movement might in fact serve as a learning case for Korjaamo Kino Töölö to create a regular customer base or community attachment. Perhaps the hip look and feel of Korjaamo clashes with the place authenticity that nostalgic Taka-Töölö residents look for. I suggest that it indicates a weak sign that place authenticity is experienced stronger when the venue actually inhabits a past function as a cinema.

Likely, the difference in audience between Korjaamo and Korjaamo Kino Töölö is not facilitating a sense of community either. Although Korjaamo's mother wings offer a number of scale benefits to Korjaamo Kino Töölö, they might in this sense be a disadvantage for community attachment. This needs to be researched further through audience query.

4.4 Riviera

4.4.1 Case survey

Riviera is located on the border between Torkkelinmäki and Harju subdistricts, respectively Kallio and Alppiharju districts in Helsinki. Its visiting address is located in Harju. However, because of the borderline case, and the importance of Kallio district to Riviera, I will discuss both areas. In the minds of many locals, Alppiharju is often perceived as part of Kallio (Mäenpää 1991, Mäkelä 2013).

In the second half of the 19th century, the first industry arose in Helsinki's Kallio district. Wooden housing for the workers was built nearby the factories and harbours, soon followed by pubs and brothels — the start of Kallio's bad reputation. A first wave of stone housing construction took place around the turn of the century, but most of the city district was built in the 1920s and 30s, with a

last wave of buildings arising in the 1960s (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004 ; City of Helsinki 2019). The area's population density is remarkably high, because it is full of small apartments, originally intended for workers and their families (Karhula 2015). In fact, the population density of the two subdistricts on whose border Riviera lies are the two highest in Helsinki, even in Finland, at respectively 30 965 (Torkkelinmäki) and 25 043 (Harju) residents per km², compared to 3 058 for Helsinki overall (Table 4). Kallio reached its highest population density in 1955, with on average 1.8 persons per room (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004), precisely during the neighbourhood cinemas network's glory days.

Table 4 Helsinki's, Torkkelinmäki (Kallio) and Harju (Alppiharju) subdistrict's demographics on 31.12.2018. Sources: Aluesarjat (2020), City of Helsinki (2020).

	Age 0-15 (%)	Age +65 (%)	Higher educated (%)	Single house-holds (% popul.)	Single households (%dwellings)	Population density (residents/ km²)	Dwelling density (m²/ person)	Average size (m²/ dwelling)
Helsinki	15,1	17,0	43,7	25,3	48,9	2 993	34,1	63,3
Torkkelinmäki	3,4	9,2	48,0	55,2	72,9	30 965	28,7	37,7
Harju	3,8	12,8	44,6	54,3	73,6	25 043	28,7	38,2

The building where neighbourhood cinema Riviera is located was one of the first buildings in the area in 1907 as, built in a modest Jugend style by architect Kaarlo Lappalainen (Styrman 2003, Aaltonen et al. 2015). Torkkelinmäki area was built in a short timeframe in the 1920s and represents both the classicist architecture as well as the 'garden city' conception of its time, according to Heiskanen & Santakari (2004). Riitta Nikula (2006) explains that Torkkelinmäki was indeed inspired by a garden city ideal in terms of green areas and community living, but Helsinki's city planner-architect Bertel Jung was ready to compromise on population density in the workers' areas. Quite ironically it was precisely this area, together with Töölö's most dense areas, which was used as a contrast to promote garden city living in Tapiola. (Moll 2017)

Since the 1960s, as Helsinki city expanded and the standard of living improved, the workers' families moved out of the small apartments of Kallio and more single households moved in, causing a dramatic decrease in population until the early 1990s. In 2018, despite the high density figures, almost 3 out of 4 of those apartments house single households. Compared to the 1960s, Kallio's and

Alppiharju's population after 1990 has a clearly higher ratio of young adults, and a much lower ratio of children (Karhula 2015). In Kallio and Alppiharju, many young adults have their first home of their own (City of Helsinki 2020).

Kallio has seen rapid changes over time, both in its population and in its outward appearance. Already since the early 1990s, Kallio has been perceived and discussed as an area of gentrification (e.g. by Mäenpää 1991). Besides, Grodach et al. (2014) find that film industry, alongside music and design-based industries, emerge as strongly associated with gentrification in urban areas undergoing rapid change (as cited in Crossick & Kaszynska 2016). Karhula (2015) however, questions this notion and finds that demographic statistics are not strongly reflecting Kallio's gentrification: the evolution of population's income levels and education levels is consistent with those of Helsinki's overall population. However, he argues that Kallio's average per square meter prices have doubled between 2005 - 2015, which is indeed an indicator of gentrification. Karhula suggests that while Kallio can only partially be said to be gentrified, this strong perception of gentrification likely stems from a change in the district's identity and image, reflected in the street view that features numerous bars and restaurants, and in an increased urban attitude among its inhabitants.

Kallio used to be a neighbourhood cinema hot-spot (Vesterinen 2015), or, in fact, two: Siltasaari-Hakaniemi area had its own set of cinemas and then Torkkelinmäki-Kurvi area had its own, a bit more spread. Most of the first group's cinemas were in 1939 categorised in group IIB and the latter group's cinemas in IIIB (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004, Styrman 2003). Most of the cinemas that were ever around in Alppiharju were located by the Helsinginkatu axe that divides Kallio from Alppiharju. (ibidem)

Before its cinema history, Riviera had been a garage and iron workshop (Riviera website 2018, Styrman 2003). The venue first opened its doors as a cinema in 1955, relatively late in the *korttelikino* era, under the name of Bio Kruunu. In 1966, its interior was renovated and the cinema changed ownership from a certain V. Tikkanen to Lii-Filmi Oy, which ran besides multiple cinemas also a newsreel production company ("Helsingin Kruunu" 1966, Hänninen 2017). At the time when its ownership changed, many of Kallio's neighbourhood cinemas had already

closed.

In 1977, the cinema changed ownership again and turned its name into Riviera. The new owner was Freddy Kamras, a film distributor and film theatre mogul of colourful reputation. His firm Kamras Film Group held the biggest cinema chain of the country around that time, but had to file for bankruptcy in 1982 after a debt claim of millions. He sold almost all of his theatres, including Riviera. From 1982 until 2008, the venue served as a religious centre, and later as a music theatre venue called Bolero, which stopped activities in 2014 (Aaltonen et al. 2015, National Audiovisual Institute 2020).

Current co-owner and manager Atte Laurila opened Riviera in late 2016. Instead of traditional cinema seating, the venue has large armchairs and sofas, totalling only 55 seats, with small tables next to the seats. Classic red drapery opens up to the screen. The lobby was turned into a bar and the projection room into a kitchen, open also on the cinema side and during the screening. Before opening, Riviera's management lobbied with policy makers to allow alcohol consumption in screening halls. During the first year of operation, the cinema had screenings 2-3 times per day, with most screenings fully booked in advance for several weeks. The cinema operates as a limited liability company, with film exhibition and bar under the same management.

Riviera's *location* is the border of Kallio and Alppiharju, two densely populated areas quite near to Helsinki's city centre. *Locale* elements of the neighbourhood include relatively old housing stock, many bars in the street view, and the venue has a visible back-story as a previous cinema and theatre. *Sense of place* could be said to include the area's creative and urban vibe, the gentrified perception, the venue's authenticity and hip, laid-back atmosphere.

4.4.2 Co-creation with communities

Laurila defines Riviera as a 'social cinema': "*Our mission is to bring people together*" (2016). That seems to apply both for the actual social event of movie-going as well as for creating new concepts for the venue, which he approaches as a 'big-screen-based entertainment venue' rather than a traditional cinema. Already since Riviera's inception, Laurila has engaged with both existing communities as

well as a 'Riviera Fight Club', a group of 200 people who bought stakes in Riviera and are regularly consulted for their opinion. With these communities, Laurila organises test screenings and workshops to think about the best possible movie-going experiences for them. Customers are eager to innovate these type of experiences, he claims. As an example in practice, Laurila mentions the development of a new type of film club:

> *People have been approaching us that there is the possibility of doing film clubs. That's an angle that I hadn't thought of. My angle is more of the music scene, what's happening there, and taking that into the cinema. But actually a film club is an old tradition. And probably what we are gonna try is something between the old film club and the modern music club. (Laurila 2017)*

This quote illustrates how concept development happens hand in hand with customers. Sometimes there are organisers or audience members who approach Laurila with a request for 'a special', which Riviera then took further. According to Laurila, almost every special came as an audience request. This welcoming attitude towards customer initiatives contrasts to other interviewed neighbourhood cinema managers, who admit to be hesitant to customer initiatives because of the financial risk. It must be added that Riviera's 55 seats make it a considerably smaller venue compared to Korjaamo Kino (125 seats) or Kino Tapiola (194 seats).

For the regular programme, Laurila and a programming team, notably including Hannele Marjavaara from Kino Tapiola, initially selected a number of films and gradually based them on the audience's taste, but later they changed approach. Now, they let the audience vote through their website from all films available from Finnish distributors. The most voted ones will be screened. Voting goes with one click, without registration. This method gives a remarkable amount of programming power to the audience.

In short, Riviera engages different communities, not necessarily local, to co-create programme, customer experiences, and new concepts.

In between two interviews, during the first year of operation, Laurila increased focus on local audiences. During the second interview, instead of 'different communities' or 'subcultures', he increasingly talks about 'local communities'. He

would like to see locals participate quite a lot in service design, and deems it really important to involve them as much as possible. This increased highlight on local is noticeable on different levels in his choice of words. Laurila explains that when the venue was launched, media were keen to label Riviera as a neighbourhood cinema, which was initially much to his disliking. In the first interview he claims not to identify as a neighbourhood cinema.

> *We're serving more than just the neighbourhood, and more than just art-house audience. We want to serve communities, but not based on where they live. We have so many types of people living here and they have so many options on entertainment. If I see that our competitors' advantage would be on their location only, that's like crazy. (Laurila 2017)*

Apart from accessibility, Laurila initially did not consider location that important. Yet one year later, Laurila had a customer survey done: 58% of his audience came from within walking distance. Confronted with those numbers and his previous statement, he admits having changed perspective:

> *In a way, we are really a neighbourhood cinema. But in a way, we are not. Here, you have to book tickets two weeks or one month in advance. So in that sense, we're not such an easy access neighbourhood cinema. If you think about neighbourhood services, like a neighbourhood bar, that's where you can go ex tempore really easily. But this cinema is not like that. Just our bar is. (Laurila 2018)*

In Laurila's opinion, a neighbourhood service requires easy access, which the long reservation queues of Riviera prevent. He aims for the bar to have this easy-access neighbourhood profile, and for bar visitors to be exposed to the cinema services during their night out, and vice versa.

4.4.3 Integrating the venue's history, neighbourhood fabric and neighbourhood brand into service design

Although the working class history and the young, urban, creative population are very similar features of both Alppiharju and Kallio, Kallio has gained a much

stronger reputation for it, likely because Alppiharju is often seen as extended Kallio. This urban identity of Kallio is perhaps best reflected in the Kallio movement ('Kallio-liike'), an influential citizen movement organising civil activities and an annual block party in Kallio. This movement builds on the Kallio identity, and arguably strengthens it in turn. According to Kallio-based filmmaker and activist Vesa Kuosmanen (pilot interview 2016), Kallio-liike kickstarted a DIY culture in Helsinki, as well as a mindshift among Helsinki city policy makers towards bottom-up activism. The movement was born in 2011 as a counterforce against the Not In My BackYard phenomenon, highlighting their explicitly tolerant character towards all lifestyles in their neighbourhood (Karhula 2015). Kallio-seura, a more traditional neighbourhood association, equally acknowledges the district's tolerant identity and links it to Kallio's quickly changing and diversifying population throughout its history, from strong Jewish presence over Finnish countryside workers to Somalis moving in (Kallio-seura website 2020).

Laurila has a strong background in marketing, both in film and other industries, both in Finland and abroad. To him, the neighbourhood is very important brand-wise: *"I like us to be a movie theater with a personality, and our location is very important in that. I hope people from Vantaa would like to visit this place that is distinguishable as a Kallio cinema."* This integration of the neighbourhood fabric and brand into Riviera's brand has been present from the cinema's conception and remained consistent throughout the two interviews. Riviera's website address rivierakallio.fi and slogan refer to the area — 'Riviera. The best and only cinema in Kallio' — using a drop of arguably Kallio-ish humour.

A few months after our 2nd interview, Laurila appears on a radio show from national broadcaster YLE called *Kevyet Mullat*, which explores nostalgic themes in Finnish cultural history. Using a strong Helsinki dialect, Laurila describes Kallio area as a diverse and tolerant area. He explains how Riviera supports this diversity of Kallio both by hosting a varied programme and by incorporating diversity into its mission statement: *"Riviera's cultural mission is to create diversity in our city culture and cinema culture. We do things a bit different from others so that we create a more multifaceted city for us citizens."* (Laurila, in Laitaneva 2018*)

Riviera is doing what it can to mirror the area's identity on all fronts. *"Kallio comes*

up in everything that we do," Laurila sums it up, and claims not to put much money in paid communications. Rather, Riviera's marketing is in the choice of drinks served, or what kind of events happen, what kind of atmosphere there is in the bar, what kind of films are played. Those are the areas where the Kallio brand is visible, according to Laurila. The overlap between Riviera's marketing and the customer experience is very thin, especially since the neighbourhood is strongly accentuated in both of them. This testifies his holistic approach to service design.

Laurila wants Riviera to be human- or customer-centred, in contrast to being film-centred or consumption-centred. When asked about pressure to make profit, Laurila answers that it comes up only second after customer experience. 'Creating experiences that people like' is an absolute priority in Riviera. This customer experience is strongly inspired both from neighbourhood and venue:

a) On the one hand, Laurila describes how Riviera personalises the customer experience based on the neighbourhood and its brand. But since their neighbourhoods and its residents are so different from each other, so are their cinemas, he claims. Riviera aims to *"give space and create feelings"* inspired by Kallio's identity: a feeling of diversity in programme offering, a creativity in the drinks served, a relaxedness in bar service, humour in the communication, tolerance in its openness for initiatives.

b) On the other hand, the feelings created in Riviera come from the venue, its history and authenticity. For starters, the name was kept. Laurila says he would like to continue doing more things that are related to the venue and its history. On Riviera's website, originally in a tab called 'Story' (later 'Experience'), the Riviera customer experience is marketed in parallel to the building's story – making abundant use of local slang.

In their redesign of the place, they left as many original decorations from the screening room untouched. This marks the legacy of different previous owners, such as the stage and curtains from Kruunu and Riviera times, or the Russian-style wall decoration from Musiikkiteatteri Bolero.

> *If we look at our customers' Instagram posts about Riviera, for example, 99% of the posts is from the screen and almost none from the bar. And the difference between the spaces is that the screening room*

is really authentic. People really seem to love that room. The bar is nice, but it's not something that creates super-unique feelings. So we decided to redesign the bar. I've been using the term 'post-digital' here. So many experiences nowadays are digital-based. And when you have an experience where you can touch and feel something, that has come up in value. Stories that are tangible. (Laurila, 2017)

Authenticity and feeling are keywords in Laurila's idea of customer experience, indicating that 'sense of place' takes up a central role in his definition of the new urban neighbourhood cinema. Laurila frames it as a counter-reaction to digitalisation.

Laurila inquires, tests and prototypes new ideas. When developing new concepts, such as the film clubs, he takes interviews from a group of people and asks what's important in their cinema-going, what creates value for them and what would be the best type of movie experience for them. I suggest that this customer thinking and the open attitude it requires, relates to considering and acknowledging different dimensions of place and community as resources.

Arguably, Laurila is engaging in a form of place branding, not just for Riviera but also for the neighbourhood, to an extent. By stressing and reflecting the diverse, open and humoristic characteristics of the people and their practices, he seems to adhere a dynamic view of place identity. In tune with what Govers & Go (2009) and Berglund & Olsson (2010) commend, Laurila approaches the practice of place branding holistically, where public participation and place development are intrinsically linked in the same process.

4.5 WHS Union

4.5.1 Case survey

WHS Union is located on the northern border of Helsinki's Kruununhaka subdistrict. Kruununhaka is separated from Kallio district (Siltasaari subdistrict) by the Siltasaarensalmi strait, over which is a bridge called Pitkäsilta ("*long bridge*"). Traditionally, the bridge symbolises the divide between the bourgeois

centre and the working class areas around Kallio, and has come to refer to the 'long distance' between the two universes (Kallio-seura website 2020). WHS Union is located next to the waterfront nearby this bridge, on the 'bourgeois' side.

Kruununhaka is a part of Vironniemi district, the administrative and financial centre of Helsinki (City of Helsinki 2020). The northern half of Kruununhaka, where WHS Unioni is also situated, has a more residential character, which is reflected in the subdistrict's fairly high population density of 13 125 residents/km² (Table 5).

Table 5 Helsinki's, and Kruununhaka and Siltasaari subdistrict's demographics on 31.12.2018.
Sources: Aluesarjat (2020), City of Helsinki (2020).

	Age 0-15 (%)	Age +65 (%)	Higher educated (%)	Single households (%)	Population density (residents/km²)	Dwelling density (m²/person)	Average size (m²/dwelling)
Helsinki	15,1	17,0	43,7	25,3	2 993	34,1	63,3
Kruununhaka	12,5	17,0	61,2	26	13 125	38	68,8
Siltasaari	7,8	15,6	55,7	32,9	11 070	31,8	51,4

Residents of Kruununhaka interviewed by Johanna Lilius (2008) describe their living area as 'a little village', where home, work, school and daily shopping are often bound within the district. According to the interviewees, there is a certain sense of community at least among families in Kruununhaka. Even though the subdistrict has the largest percentage higher educated residents in Helsinki (City of Helsinki 2020), Kruununhaka hosts a relative diversity of households: Helsinki University's strong presence in the neighbourhood draws both its students and employees to live in the area. Kruununhaka hosts a fair number of families as well for a central district (City of Helsinki 2020, Lilius 2008). Between 38-47% of Vironniemi district's households belong to Helsinki's richest 20% (City of Helsinki 2020:15), which seems to confirm the 'bourgeois' perception of the area, at least in terms of wealth. According to Lilius (2008), tolerance and sociableness are some of the central characteristics among Kruununhaka residents, who tend to appreciate an urban city culture.

Across the Pitkäsilta bridge on the 'worker's side', the large Hakaniemi square dominates the Siltasaari sub-district of Kallio. The square is host to an indoors and outdoors market place, which has always served as the central heart of the Kallio

district (see Chapter 4.4). Besides the market presence, the Siltasaari sub-district and Hakaniemi square are marked by workers' unions' and other office buildings. Siltasaari's population density is in the same category as Kruununhaka: fairly residential. Siltasaari's figures indicate a step away from Kruununhaka, towards Torkkelinmäki-Alppiharju: it is more attractive to single households than families, which is also reflected in the smaller dwellings.

The busy Union street (*Unioninkatu*), a central axe heavy on bus traffic which runs through the centre until the 'long bridge', is just round the corner of WHS Union, yet the cinema's street itself is remarkably peaceful. Even though the cinema is arguably located on the edge of the city centre, its moderate size and lack of glamour labeled it a neighbourhood cinema of class IIIA on a scale of 1 - 4 in 1939 (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004:167).

Kruununhaka was never a particular concentration of cinemas. Apart from WHS Union's venue, only few other cinemas were ever operative in the same subdistrict north of the Senate Square (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004).

Siltasaari, on the contrary, has been a real cinema cluster. The venue where WHS Union resides, has been used as a cinema as early as 1924, when it was called Union. Historically, it makes more sense to consider the venue as a part of the Siltasaari cinema cluster. Back in the early days of cinema in the 1900s, the Siltasaari cinemas were concentrated nearer to the bridge (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004). Cinemas came, went and changed names and owners at a fast pace. Part of that early cinema cluster, from 1907 until 1920, there was another cinema Union on the south side of the bridge, right nearby the other Union founded in 1924. Despite bearing the same name, the cinemas had different owners and no connection between the venues was found (Antti Kalliola, National Audiovisual Institute, personal communication, February 3, 2021). Later, as more buildings arose north of the bridge, the early cinemas disappeared from the area and concentrated a stone's throw up north around Hakaniemi square, where they stayed around for the cinemas' glory period in the 1950s (Heiskanen & Santakari 2004). Union was left isolated and displaced in Kruununhaka.

In 1929, the place's name was changed from Union to Regina and in 1933 to Unika, until it was taken over by Freddy Kamras (see also: Riviera) in 1968 and named

Alfaromeo. This was Kamras' first and last cinema ; it remained in his ownership until his death in 2000. In 1988, he changed its name to New York 1-2, referring to the two screens it had at the time. Kamras had earlier gained a reputation as a distributor of erotic films, after which he became the country's biggest cinema entrepreneur with at one point 37 cinemas in his ownership. His flamboyant personality is associated with Alfaromeo or New York 1-2. In Alfaromeo times, the venue had a hybrid programme which played mainstream, art-house and erotic films side by side, although that was not unusual in cinemas from the 1960s until the 1980s (Kantola 2019). Showing erotic films was one strategy of attracting cinema audience after the introduction of TV, because those films were not shown on the small screen (Aaltonen et al. 2015). When the venue changed name to New York 1-2, the venue left out the erotic films and focused on 'quality film' (Antti Kalliola, National Audiovisual Institute, personal communication, 2021, February 3). After Kamras' death, Helsinki City got ownership of the venue. From 2001 until 2012, the venue was let as a theatre venue by Koko-teatteri (National Audiovisual Institute 2020). In 2014, new circus- and performing arts association WHS started renting the venue and turned it into a cinema again in 2014, adding 'WHS' to the original name 'Union'. In 2014, WHS Union was the first new cinema to launch in Helsinki since the beginning of the 21st century (Antti Kalliola, National Audiovisual Institute, personal communication, February 3, 2021).

The WHS collective initially looked for a rehearsal space for their performing arts activities, but when they stumbled upon this former cinema, they thought it needed to be open to the public. The Finnish film institute funded their digital film projector, which allowed them to start cinema screenings, aside from their performing art shows. Soon after, they also acquired a 35 mm projector. Their partner network enabled an alternative distribution circuit for their films. The cinema counts only one screening room any more, with some 90 seats. The front side of the venue is a spacious lobby and bar with some seating and 'ruin pub-style' decoration. Initially the cinema had about 40 to 50 screenings per year (2015), but in 2018 it was up to about 200, with usually no more than one screening per day. Its programme is mainly structured in series around themes and each film is usually screened only once. The cinema operates under WHS collective's non-profit association, which allows them to combine ticket income and grants for both

cinema and performing arts operations, with private event rentals and bar sales on top.

WHS sees it as its mission to bring a variety in programme in the Helsinki cinema scene. Ville Walo, who acts as the main manager-programmer in the collective, states that WHS Union's cinema side is in fact more an over-developed hobby than a source of income. That is why he insists on the importance of 'doing their own thing' in programming, to maintain motivation. *"We really care about what we are doing and I think we have built up that kind of reputation. We don't do this because of the money. We do this because of the art"* (Walo 2016). Walo acknowledges that this artistic approach is made possible due to their not-for-profit status, mixing cinema with other artistic activities. Aside from Walo, who has a background as a juggler, the WHS collective includes video artist and magician Kalle Nio, and scenographer and costume designer Anne Jämsä.

Walo sees WHS Union as the perfect place for people who come to see movies because of the movies. This film-centric mindset can be identified as an important part to the cinema's value proposition. Disturbances are taken away: no smell of popcorn, no noise, no distractions from film viewing. Walo, or occasionally someone else, introduces the film with a short speech, which heightens the focus on the film, serves film buff audiences and enhances the personality of the service.

Another particularity of WHS Union is that they sometimes extend the film viewing experience into the bar and lobby by adding surprise elements. For example, they have invited bands to play in the lobby after the screening.

> *This is a kind of big living room. This is an easy-going place where you can go and speak to strangers about the films that you have seen or are going to see. This bar and the lobby are here with the idea to have a drink before or after the film. It's still quite a new thing, and that sounds maybe quite stupid if you come from Central-Europe, where you are used to having a casual beer. But here, we still have to educate people to come a little bit earlier and stay a little bit after. (Walo 2016)*

WHS Union pushed to introduce a bar culture in parallel to cinema culture, by European example. This arguably inspired other neighbourhood cinemas, but also Maxim (Finnkino), to include bar service as a part of their customer experience.

WHS Union's *location* is Kruununhaka, a largely residential neighbourhood near to, or on the border of, Helsinki's city centre. The cinema venue is on the northern border of the neighbourhood, by the Siltavuori strait. *Locale* elements of the area include the presence of the river, and the venue's distinctive appearance stems from the brick walls and raw interiors. *Sense of place* could be said to include the symbolic divide of upper class and working class, the hiddenness into a quiet area, in contrast to the busy main street nearby, authenticity, creativity, surprise, a highly personal customer experience and European personality, along with the former venue's presence and reputation.

4.5.2   Relating to the neighbourhood

Walo has also lived in Kruununhaka for twenty years, and so his perspective of the neighbourhood combines a resident's and a local entrepreneur's observations. His descriptions paint a dimensional view on the area. He calls it 'in the middle', but at the same time very quiet ; kind of upper class with lots of restaurants and antique shops, but at the same time full of students ; some big apartments, and then some really small ones.

In Walo's view, the cinema's surrounding area in the north of Kruununhaka signifies transit between two worlds, a zone in between identities. The Pitkäsilta bridge over the Siltavuori strait symbolizes the divide. The nightlife is also said to reflect this duality: there are a couple of nightclubs and bars around, but mainly offices and government buildings on the other side of the block. "*This Kallio hype, you know, 100 by 100 metres where all the hipsters are, we are never gonna have that situation here,*" Walo claims. After working hours, Kruununhaka becomes quieter and more residential again. But even residents are not always aware that there is a cinema up and running, or even that there ever has been a cinema at all.

> *In a certain way, this is hidden. This is a hidden place, and I think it's good for us. We are next to this Union street, where maybe the most buses per day pass in Helsinki. But we are not on that main street, we are around the corner. People going by here, over Pitkäsilta, they don't come here to see what this is. They just go on and see this second-hand shop and the record shop close to us. So we are a little bit away from*

that, and it tells something about this place and the programming as well: you have to take a couple of extra steps to reach us. (Walo 2016)

The mobility of Union street and Pitkäsilta, with its heavy bus and commuter traffic, is set in contrast with the quiet and static setting of the cinema venue around the corner. Walo explains how the cinema's location combines reachability and 'being hidden' and how he considers both aspects to be an asset for them. In his view, this location off the beaten track is attractive to their niche audiences because it represents the cinema's brand and its programming of hidden gems. Also, it becomes something of a privilege or insider information to know about the place, supposedly appealing to the regular visitors – a sense of secret community.

The location's differentness is accentuated by the venue's European outside appearance. Walo has been told by customers that the venue and its surroundings remind them of Berlin or Paris, and are untypical for Helsinki.

What is the idea of a neighbourhood cinema? Maybe the local cinema is Finnkino for most people living in Kruununhaka. (…) Most of the other neighbourhood cinemas have a similar programme to Finnkino. There's no real difference. So is it important to have a cinema in your local area? It's more about the programming. (Walo 2018)

Questioning what it really means to be a neighbourhood cinema, Walo proposes a very different programme than the main competitors', rather than to be a nearby independent cinema with a similar programme. He refuses any 'traditional programming' to serve the block, nor is he aiming to reflect any of Kruununhaka's or Siltasaari's neighbourhood fabric in its programming.

Nevertheless, local residents are warmly invited *"on condition they accept the programming"* (Walo 2018). In fact, he really works to reach local residents, by means of Facebook, paper post and articles in local newspapers. This is mainly in order to dig into a certain nostalgia for the small neighbourhood cinema experience and the venue's former lives in particular.

Under Kamras' ownership, the venue mixed erotic, art-house and mainstream films at the same time, yet somehow the erotic programming and shady reputation stuck with people - perhaps because of Kamras' personal reputation, or else

because of the contrast with its neighbourhood's upper class reputation. People knew that this venue sailed its own course. In this sense, WHS Union's deliberate rebel status in the neighbourhood is a continuation of the Kamras chapter in the venue's history. This could be considered an asset for its branding.

Also from a place image perspective, the WHS Union venue is historically more aligned with the Siltasaari cinema cluster. Kallio district's deep-rooted 'bad boy' reputation and its refusal to conform to the norm, stemming from 19th century rough nightlife, match the venue's brand well.

4.5.3 Highlighting the venue's history

Not the neighbourhood, but the venue and its particular history are a clear resource to Walo and his colleagues:

> *What is the idea of a neighbourhood cinema? Maybe the local cinema is Finnkino for most people living in Kruununhaka. (...) Most of the other neighbourhood cinemas have a similar programme to Finnkino. There's no real difference. So is it important to have a cinema in your local area? It's more about the programming. (Walo 2018)*

Having studied the venue's programme offerings throughout its history, the collective draws inspiration from it and they place themselves in a continued line from the venue's past, as illustrated by the erotic festival they hosted.

But they don't draw on Kamras' legacy only. When WHS Union opened on 14 October 2014, they screened exactly the same film as on the same day in 1924, 90 years earlier, when the cinema first opened its doors: *Der Favorit der Königin* (Germany, 1922). The screening was a big success. It confirmed the WHS collective in their choices and encouraged them to keep going. Besides the historical influence, the cinema programming is also influenced by the collective's performing arts activities, and ultimately defined by the collective's own taste.

Screening the same opening programme in 2014 as in 1924 is an action that underlined the venue's authenticity and history. This historical framing gives it a certain credibility, a sense that this venue's long-time function is restored and extended, that the meaning of the venue has preserved. This extended function

and meaning became highlighted and fixed when the WHS collective named the venue in reference to its very first name, 'Union'.

In return, the film programming influenced also the collective's performing arts activities. One film from their Soviet Union-themed screenings, *Aelita: Queen of Mars* (1924) inspired them to create a performing arts show based on, and interspersed with fragments of, the love story of Aelita. Walo's profile strongly resembled the male character's profile, inspiring them to extend the film live to the stage. This is a beautiful example of the creative dialogue at work between the collective and the venue, almost as if the venue were a living entity to be embodied.

Walo describes WHS Union as a venue without glamour, but with rather straightforward cinema features. 'No palace', 'modest', but 'authentic' are the words he uses to frame the venue. A sense of authenticity is central to the WHS Union experience, Walo claims. This authenticity is on the one hand preserved and highlighted, on the other hand the 'sense of authenticity' is recreated. The erotic illustrations hung in the toilets are an example of that recreation. Also elsewhere in the interior design, the space is designed to reflect a sense of authenticity: raw brick-style walls, yellowed wall-paper, vintage furniture, 'improved' old objects.

> *Of course this is designed. It's not just a coincidence that we have wallpapers like this or we have the mannequins here and our tables are like this. We have some items around that you can talk about or take selfies with. The space tells something about us. It's not this kind of we-just-hire-somebody. It's a personal thing. (Walo 2016)*

Like the programme choices, the interior choices not only highlight the presence of the venue's history, but also reflect the collective's performing arts activities and their own taste and creativity. The place looks the way it looks because "*it needs to be personal*" (Walo 2016). The interior design is an element of the dialogue and personal customer relationship that the venue managers keep up with their audiences. In a way, the interior design can be considered an extension of the place's outward European appearance and its displacedness in the Kruununhaka neighbourhood. All of these spatial elements contribute considerably to the WHS Union brand and service design.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this study was to research the role of place and community in Helsinki area's neighbourhood cinemas. I studied four neighbourhood cinemas who (re)started activities recently, and their interaction with their surroundings. Through a looking glass of urban anthropology, cultural mapping and New Cinema History, I set out to uncover the resourcefulness of place and community to these four cinemas. I also inspected the cinemas' local audience shares, and scouted the demographics of their neighbourhoods for common denominators.

Three factors which the informants said to contribute to Helsinki's benevolent context and momentum, are urbanisation, digitalisation, and the Finnkino monopoly. Demographics of the case areas show that the new neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area are located in areas with high population density, in line with Biltereyst's & Meers' (2014) findings. The three case cinemas in Helsinki city are located in the expansion zone of the centre, where population density is slowly increasing. The remaining case cinema in Espoo city is located in a suburb, which is also growing more dense and urban.

In the case of both Riviera and Kino Tapiola, local audiences make up the majority of those neighbourhood cinemas' audiences. In Riviera, 58% of the audience comes from walking distance, compared to 65% for Kino Tapiola, of which half from Tapiola itself. They are indeed serving the neighbourhood - though not only the neighbourhood. Also in the case of Korjaamo Kino Töölö, a high share of local audience is suspected but not proven. Only in the case of WHS Union, although unmeasured, it is unlikely that local audience would be a key ingredient. Similar to the neighbourhood cinemas' past, local audiences are still suspected to play a key role in the cinemas' audience consistency in three out of four cases in Helsinki area. However, additional data are required to support this.

It is equally worthwhile noting that the four neighbourhood cinemas collaborate and share resources under the flag of the Neighbourhood Cinema Association, Korttelikinot ry. They come together as colleagues, acknowledging that they are

each mainly serving their own neighbourhood's audiences.

In the following subchapters, I will present the different ways in which the neighbourhood cinemas choose to relate to their local communities and venues.

5.1 Interacting with neighbourhood and communities

The three neighbourhood cinemas with (suspected) high shares of local audience are also integrating the neighbourhood into their service design and marketing, to different extents. Kino Tapiola and Korjaamo Kino Töölö feature their neighbourhood's name in their own brand name. Riviera features Kallio in their website name and in their slogan. Riviera aims to reflect its neighbourhood's characteristics on all levels, notably customer experience, programme, cultural mission and communication. Riviera's focus appears to be more on the neighbourhood's brand, which is recognisable for many non-locals as well, while Kino Tapiola's focus is more on sustaining its role within the neighbourhood community's fabric. For Kino Tapiola, integrating the community characteristics and its participatory culture into the service design appears very organic. After all, Tapiola has such a strong history of community planning, in which Kino Tapiola is deeply rooted and even played a foundational role. This resonates with Jancovich and Faire's (2003) finding in the Nottingham cinema scene, where the different cinemas' intimacy and personality was valued by cinemagoers, both in the sense of service design and embodied communality.

Korjaamo Kino Töölö is located in an area with a strong cinema history and therefore appeals to older nostalgic audiences. Mother venue Korjaamo promotes itself as the living room of Töölö residents, but as a cinema in its own right Korjaamo Kino Töölö admittedly struggles to develop an own sense of place or appeal to a sense of community. Although material is at hand, Korjaamo Kino Töölö does not seem to take a lot of advantage from the neighbourhood's film fabric in its service design. Like Korjaamo Kino Töölö, WHS Union also communicates to local communities, but it's not aiming to reflect the neighbourhood's characteristics. After all, WHS Union's rebel status in the neighbourhood is deemed an asset for its brand. Given its link to the early Siltasaari cinema scene, it would however be worthwhile to explore how the

Siltasaari neighbourhood fabric or community could be part of WHS' service design.

The three venues who wish to mirror and integrate their areas' features all seem to have a sustainable neighbourhood community with strong social capital in common. This is not surprising if we consider Scandell & Gifford's (2009) understanding of social capital as a factor in improving communities' quality of life – which is what cinemas seek to contribute.

Both Tapiola centre and Torkkelinmäki (Kallio) have been designed for community living in a garden city spirit, albeit to different degrees and in different times. Both Tapiola and Kallio communities have proven to be resilient communities with strong textures, empowered by social movements (respectively the movement to save Kino Tapiola and Kallio-liike). As a result of the empowered Tapiola community, Kino Tapiola was stronger than ever at the core of their community fabric. Taka-Töölö, although the result of different urban planning visions, has a certain architectural unity and some historical sense of community. The social movement that aimed to save Bio Axa displayed a certain social capital, yet was not empowered through success.

In this sense, the study could be deemed a weak sign that a strong focus on community design in urban planning is important to neighbourhood cinemas – even a hundred years after the neighbourhoods were first constructed. If this would be developed further into a general theory, it could serve to support Colin Mercer's (1997 & 2006) conviction that cultural planners of the 21st century would do well to revisit the work of Patrick Geddes, who deemed urban planning a human science (see also: Bianchini 2013, Ghilardi 2018).

All three cases share a strong neighbourhood cinema history. Both Kallio and Töölö were hubs for cinema-going in the middle part of the 20th century. Although Tapiola featured only one cinema, it has been strongly embedded in the community culture. Strong neighbourhood cinema networks in their glory days have found their way into their own communities' fabrics, and tightened them even further, as Jancovich & Faire (2003) have proved. The movements to save Kino Tapiola and Bio Axa highlight the importance that those local communities attributed to the neighbourhood cinema, and the central role it played in their

community fabric.

The different factors that constitute place attachment (Altman & Low 1992, Low 2014) are difficult to measure on a collective level, but present to some degree in different case venues, most notably in Kino Tapiola. The social involvement in a community is deemed the most influential element, which is in the case of Kino Tapiola marked by the locals' protest movement to save the cinema.

Different case venues are inviting community participation to different degrees. In Tapiola, the community has enabled the continued existence of the cinema, and now regularly acts as a consultant to the manager. The manager sees participation as the local community's right. This is also a continuation from a local culture of participation. In Riviera, community participation even turns into co-creation: programme, new concepts and customer experiences are developed together with different communities. Where Tapiola maintains and extends its original geographical community through participation, Riviera engages not only with local community, but also with communities united by interest, and it even creates new communities through their engagement for the cinema (Riviera Fight Club).

Social capital appears as a resource and an enabler for the neighbourhood cinema in Helsinki area. Concepts that were found to be relevant to neighbourhood cinemas are place attachment, community participation, empowerment, sense of community. These concepts testify various forms of capital in the framework of Manzo & Perkins (2006): physical, social, and political, and occuring on individual, group and neighbourhood level. But, as both Lin (2008) and Manzo & Perkins (2006) have noted, especially sense of community is a key concept for the creation or preservation of an environment, since sense of community inspires other forms of capital.

5.2   Interacting with the venue

The wave(s) of cinema closures over the past decades has marked for many people the end of a period of community, which translates in a feeling of nostalgia. Jancovich & Faire (2003) have proven that local cinemas, or a local cinema-going culture, increase a sense of community among local residents. In Helsinki area, we

can see that nostalgia is aimed to be answered on two levels: on the general level of 'the neighbourhood cinema experience' (most notably Korjaamo Kino Töölö) as well as on the level of the particular venue (Riviera, WHS Union, Kino Tapiola).

Kino Tapiola, Riviera and WHS Union are all making use of their venues' place identity and sense of place. The feelings and emotions that these venues evoke, whether individual or shared, rely on a certain degree of authenticity. This authenticity consists on the one hand of physical aspects such as age and architecture of a building, and a being-part of the original neighbourhood constructions, but perhaps most of all, of a functional continuity. The three cited cinemas all continue the building's former function of a cinema. By doing so, they embed themselves in the venue's line of tradition and provide comfort to nostalgia. From these cases, we can make a careful proposition that nostalgia for the neighbourhood cinema experience is best catered by a place with an authentic cinema history, or at least an authentic sense of place. It would be worthwhile to investigate whether this is true on a more general level. After all, Jancovich and Faire (2003) have shown us that this nostalgia for cinemas is most often a longing for sense of community. Zukin's (2010) view is complementary and adds the element of place authenticity to the equation. She claims that perceived place authenticity is a mental cover-up for our longing for community, in the face of changing surroundings. The movements to save Kino Tapiola and Bio Axa underline the neighbourhood cinema's growing importance in defining an 'authentic' urban experience in Helsinki area.

The venue's history as a cinema is being subsequently used as a resource in different ways. Riviera uses the venue's backstory in its communication, but most of all the preservation of the screening room, with different visible layers of history, seem to cater to 'an authentic urban experience'. WHS Union is underlining its venue's authenticity in many ways in its endeavour to make the cinema visit maximally personal. Its programme offerings are inspired by the venue's history programme. The authentic spirit of the place is testified by the visibly lived interior, and highlighted by new interior elements. Also Kino Tapiola's interior design carefully reflects the times it was built in and honours the original design, even if it was renovated recently.

Mixed use of space is a returning element in all neighbourhood cinema cases. Both Korjaamo and WHS Union host other performing arts. Particularly the inclusion of bar services seems to offer benefits, in all four cases. What these functions have in common, is that they offer opportunity for social connectedness. They strengthen the socialized experience and extend the community function.

Even regardless of the nostalgic audiences, different research seems to suggest that neighbourhood cinemas may answer a need for sense of community. In our cases in Helsinki area, we have seen that Kino Tapiola is investing in maintaining and strengthening a sense of community, but also Riviera claims to contribute to their area's tolerant and diverse characteristics. The cinema managers of these cases are installing a two-way dynamic with the community: not only are they benefiting from a strong local sense of community in their neighbourhood, they are also involved in maintaining and strengthening this sense. Both Riviera and WHS Union aim to attract also non-local communities, and are perhaps even strengthening them just by offering this shared collective cinema-going experience.

5.3   A place-making approach

"*It needs to be personal*" (Walo 2016) – that sums it up quite well. In the face of a monopoly player, intimacy, authenticity and personality are deemed the points of differentiation for a modern neighbourhood cinema in Helsinki area.

It becomes clear that the actions of the neighbourhood cinemas are concerned with creating a sense of community, as well as a sense of place. In comparison to Finnkino, the neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area pay particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define their place. All cases are to some level investing in establishing a two-way dynamic with (local) communities.

I suggest to recall the postmodern notions of Velasco (2005) and Järvelä (2009) who stated that in any process that re-signifies public space, the involvement of local communities is highly desired. The more a neighbourhood cinema wishes to become 'public' domain, the more they ought to welcome local communities, engage in a dialogue, and let them claim their rights.

Many particular actions that the case cinemas have been taking in relation to place

and community – inviting community participation, fine-tuning to a venue's and community's fabric, enabling social experiences – are part of a place-making process. Also place branding is touched upon by Riviera. A neighbourhood brand promises an experience of the neighbourhood's sense of place. When approached holistically, which requires a dynamic view on place identity, place branding can contribute to creating that sense of place, and indeed becomes part of a place-making process.

In Helsinki area, both the neighbourhood and the cinema are many-folded resources to the neighbourhood cinema, beyond the share of local audience. In order to achieve their points of differentiation from Finnkino's monopoly, neighbourhood, Helsinki area's neighbourhood entrepreneurs are developing a varied place-making skill set. In doing so, they take the neighbourhood cinema into postmodernity.

6   DISCUSSION

This study examined the ways in which neighbourhood cinemas in Helsinki area are using place and community as resources in their operations. The primary sources for this research are limited to the period of 2016-2018 and acknowledges the subjective views of the interviewees. Small neighbourhood cinemas move in a competitive environment with not only multiplexes, but also many other offerings competing over consumers' free time. It is remarkable that several new players took up the challenge and started a small cinema, placing themselves in a local line of tradition of neighbourhood cinemas. This study examines this phenomenon from an urban anthropological viewpoint, and with the focus on place and community that the interviewees themselves brought in. The aim of this study is not to develop a general theory, but to achieve an understanding of the particular cases in Helsinki area. This may be a first step towards further research, examples of which are presented in the following subchapter.

The choice for an urban anthropological and cultural mapping framework may be assessed critically: this is not necessarily reflecting the business perspective of cinema managers, or takes into account their financially challenging realities. Also the pivotal impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has turned around realities for film exhibition and society at large. It remains to be seen how and if this study will remain relevant.

This study ultimately aims to provide a fresh perspective and illuminate resources that are available for any (aspiring) film exhibitor. Yet, they are not always identified as resources. Urbanisation and digitalisation, two of the identified benevolent context creators for the neighbourhood cinema, are after all megatrends that will continue to create context.

6.1   Further Research

Similar to the neighbourhood cinemas' past, local audiences are still suspected to play a key role in the cinemas' audience consistency in three out of the four cases

examined in this study. However, additional data and research are required to verify the cases' actual share of local audiences. Currently, this research has integrated the case cinemas' available audience surveys. Only two out of four had data, and these were only partly compatible. But beyond this particular case in Helsinki area, future research could go beyond suspicion and assess the share of local audiences in neighbourhood cinemas in different contexts.

I recommend a follow-up research of these cases over time, to see how these youthful cinema managements have changed, and whether they have been successful in attracting (local) audiences and generating sense of community, in a sustainable business model. Including a success assessment might help to identify particular success mechanisms.

Similar studies could be set up for different urban locations that would allow for comparison with the Helsinki area case. This could help develop a more general theory and understanding of the importance of place and community in film exhibition. In particular, driven by this study's findings, I suggest to examine whether nostalgia for the neighbourhood cinema experience is best catered by a place with a previous cinema history, on a general level. A more general theory and understanding of the potential of place and community in film exhibition could facilitate the development of a better adapted cultural policy.

Grodach et al. (2014) indicated a link between gentrified areas and film industry. It could be worthwhile to study correlations between gentrification and neighbourhood cinema presence. The phenomenon of gentrification is also related to growing urbanisation, yet not necessarily to population density.

This research studied the role of place and community from a manager's perspective. Yet the research could be complemented by an audience and community perspective, similar to what Jancovich & Faire (2003) did for the Nottingham case. This could clarify some of the meanings of the neighbourhood cinema to their audiences and local communities. In urban anthropological terms, this would come down to adopting a social construction point of view.

Stronger evidence is needed to back up Biltereyst & Meers' (2014) correlation between cinema presence and population density. Their findings were true for the 20th century cinemas in the Flanders region. I recommend further mapping

research to hunt for the same correlation in a) wider geographies, e.g. the Nordic region, and b) the 21st century. Because the film exhibition field has developed drastically, new benchmarks are needed.

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APPENDIXES

FIRST INTERVIEW: QUESTIONS

1. Please introduce yourself and your background.
2. What is your idea of the cinema landscape now in Helsinki area? What is changing / happening and why? Please share your insights.
3. Why do you think a neighbourhood cinema would now be able to thrive? And what is your strategy?
4. What is your programme like?
5. Who are your competitors?
6. Let's go over your business model

   key activities / value proposition / key partners / key resources / cost & revenue / customer segments / customer relations & channels
7. What have you learned from your first year(s) running a neighbourhood cinema? What are the challenges? What are the prospects?

SECOND INTERVIEW: QUESTIONS

1. Context: What general changes occurred in the past 1 / 1,5 year
   • in the film landscape in Helsinki area?
   • In your neighbourhood?
   • With the Neighbourhood Cinema Association?
2. Changes occurred over the past year in following areas?
   • business model
   • channels
   • programme decision-making (audience requests?)
3. Who is your audience? statistics/survey? amount of locals?
4. How do you use the neighbourhood community as a resource?
5. How do you use this venue as a resource?
6. Do you feel integrated in the neighbourhood? Why / how?
7. Back 1,5 year ago, you said… / you were referring a lot to … (quotes from previous interview) How do you feel about that now?