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Performance Space: Shaping the Arts Scene in Asheville, NC

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Elizabeth Adair Ahrens entitled "Performance Space: Shaping the Arts Scene in Asheville, NC." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Geography.

Ronald A. Foresta, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Thomas L. Bell, Leslie C. Gay

Accepted for the Council:
Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

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Performance Space:

Shaping the Arts Scene in Asheville, NC

A Thesis Presented for

the Masters of Science Degree

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Elizabeth Adair Ahrens

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Abstract

While many factors influence an arts scene, performance space shapes the scene in many discernible ways. Performance space is an integral part of the arts scene. Every artist, musician, actor and dancer must perform in order to participate in the arts scene. The spaces of these performances are often overlooked when considering how the arts scene functions or how to best support the arts in a community. Through interviews with owners and managers of performance spaces in Asheville, I determined how performance space shapes the local arts scene. I defined the arts scene as the quantity, variety and quality of art being displayed or performed publicly and the diversity and size of the artist and audience base. Based on this definition, I discuss aspects of performance space that influences the quantity, variety and quality of art and artists in Asheville, and the size and diversity of the audience base. I found that performance space was connected to the arts scene in many interesting ways. The availability of space influenced the number of performances and displays. A variety of space led to a variety of art forms, likewise, high quality space allowed high quality art to be performed. Each space impacts a part of the arts scene, and all together performance spaces shape the entire scene.

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Chapter I: Introduction

This study focuses on the space of performance in Asheville's entire arts scene. As such, it is necessary to define an arts scene. Unlike "art" or "music," definitions for which have long been debated, "arts scene" does not have a ready definition. How does one define a scene? A city can have multiple scenes. For instance, there can be a punk music scene and a country music scene in one city, with very little overlap between the scenes. A music scene can also be a cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist, and the relationships between those different musical practices (Straw, 1991). It can be a social group or a physical space.

Academics studying music use the term 'music scene' to describe several distinct contexts. These can loosely be divided into three types: local scene, translocal scene and virtual scene. The local music scene is music clustered around a specific geographic focus. A translocal scene includes widely scattered local scenes that are brought together around a distinctive form of music and its lifestyle. A virtual music scene has people scattered across large physical spaces that create a sense of a scene through the internet (Bennett & Peterson, 2004). The term is, therefore, confusing because "it suggests a bounded place but has also been used to refer to more complex spatial flows of musical affiliation" (Hesmondhalgh, 2005, p. 23).

I am interested in all types of art that make up the arts scene, including music, visual arts, theater, dance and uncategorized performance art, like puppetry. I want to be as inclusive as possible to minimize the risk of excluding a type of art based on my own preferences. For the remainder of this study, when I use the term art or artists, I include music and musicians, plays and actors, dance performances and dancers and any other kind of self-expression people choose.

The arts scene is more than just art. It includes the artists themselves and it includes performances and gallery shows. When someone says a city or neighborhood has a vibrant arts scene, they do not mean simply that there is art in that place. It implies that there are many artists, a lot of art happening publicly, many different kinds of art in the area, or the quality of the art is high. Conversely, if a city does not have much of an arts scene, there is not much art being performed or shown publicly. This does not mean there is not art

happening in the town, as many people may play music with friends or paint as a hobby, but it is not publicly available. For this study I consider the arts scene the quantity, variety and quality of art being displayed or performed publicly and the diversity and size of the artist and audience base.

In this study, I take the view that an arts scene is local with a limited geographic context, as opposed to a translocal or virtual scene. The area I focus on is within the Asheville city limits. I limited the area so I could have a full understanding of the arts scene. Including the whole county or focusing on a larger city would have made it impossible to have a complete study.

This thesis investigates performance spaces. Performance space in this study includes visual art galleries and displays, because that is the medium through which visual artists present their work to the public. Performance space is different than arts space. Arts space might include where art is created, where it is presented to the public, places it is enjoyed privately, and temporary or transient spaces. In order to keep this study focused, I do not investigate studio or rehearsal space. This type of space can have an impact on a region; in many places having artists move their studios into a neighborhood will instigate gentrification. However, I want to understand how the space of performance specifically shapes an arts scene, so I limited my scope to performance space. I am interested in how the arts can be used for community and city development, so, for my purposes, I include only permanent performance spaces that are open and available to the community at large. These are the spaces that will impact the entire community, especially how it is viewed by tourists. I exclude church choirs performing for their congregation, school plays attended only by the students' friends and families, house concerts, and similar. Performances of this type can be very important to the people involved; indeed, it can make up the majority of an individual's experience with the arts (Finnegan, 1989). However, I am looking at performance spaces from the view of urban planning and development, so this type of amateur or 'hidden' performances, to use Ruth Finnegan's term, is beyond my scope.

Additionally, temporary stages or art displays set up for festivals and special events are not included in my study. This type of performance can have a significant and lasting effect, even if it is temporary. In fact, Asheville's own Belle Chere Festival greatly

impacted the city by attracting people downtown during a time of decline. It is one of the factors that lead to the resurgence of the downtown. Temporary space is, in its nature, difficult to identify and track. The location and nature of temporary space has less of a direct impact on the type of performance within it. For instance, a temporary stage at a music festival accommodates many different kinds of music, whereas the stage at jazz club will be best suited for jazz music. In order to keep this study focused, I excluded temporary space.

In this thesis, the term shape means to influence and have an effect on. So, performance spaces influence and has an effect on the arts scene. The space influences who will perform at a venue or show at a gallery, and consequently in the entire city. The number of performances that take place in the city is shaped by the space. Who attends a performance is shaped by the space. The quality of art displayed or performed is also shaped by the space. Several aspects of the space can shape the scene, including the audience capacity, size of stage, cost of renting the space and tickets, the location and the atmosphere. Overall, performance space shapes the arts scene.

The initial momentum for this research came from my own life. Music performance has been a part of my life since the fifth grade, when I first picked up the violin. I have performed in school auditoriums, arenas, churches, large venues, outside, in friends' living rooms, and countless other places. These performances have been as part of duets, quartets, chamber orchestras, symphony orchestras and bluegrass bands. The audiences have varied from a few close friends to several hundred strangers.

Although I have performed many times, I have been an audience member more. I frequent music concerts of all types, from rock to old-time to opera. I attend performances of plays, including small student productions and large professional shows. I seek out all kinds of performance wherever I am. This has included all kinds of dance by students and professionals alike, poetry slams, sketch and stand-up comedy, puppet shows, aerial art performances and many others. Additionally, with an art major for a sister, I check out visual art in a variety of settings, from famous art museums like the Tate Modern to informal shows in warehouses converted into studio/galleries.

After traveling throughout the country, I noticed that places with strong arts scenes are often exciting, desirable places. The arts scene seemed to make a city an attractive place to visit or live. Arts events brought people out of their homes, gave tourists a reason to visit, and added to the cultural life of a city. I wondered - how does a vibrant arts scene develop? The physical space of art looked like it had a big impact on the scene, and I realized that for the average resident and tourist, what really matters is performance space. Studio and rehearsal space may be important to artists, but this has little impact on most people. My next question was how do performance spaces shape the arts scene?

Surprisingly, in my review of the literature, I found little written about performance space per se, although many articles mention the connection between arts groups and the space they use to perform. Consequently, the literature review in this thesis examines the arts' broad relationship to the city. First, I review literature on how the arts fit into the wider community. Then I tease out the spatial aspects of the arts.

Literature Review

Arts in the Community

The arts and artists themselves can shape a community, either through individual efforts or city-level planning. One extraordinary story of an individual impacting her community comes from North Philadelphia. The Village of Arts and Humanities sits within a defeated neighborhood full of abandoned buildings and empty lots. Started as a garden in one of those lots, the Village has bloomed to fill a ten-square-block neighborhood with color and energy. Lynne Elizabeth and Suzanne Young (2006) describe artist and founder Lily Yeh's work with the community as a way to use art to "transform the grittiness of everyday life into energy, beauty, joy, strength" (p. 27). The Village now contains many murals, mosaics and gardens, and puts on a yearly festival full of art and music to celebrate its transformation and look towards future changes (Elizabeth & Young, 2006). The Old Town School of Folk Music represents another example of an individual arts organization revitalizing a community. Located in the once downtrodden Lincoln Square neighborhood of Chicago, the school, which offers music and dance classes as well as concerts,

transformed the neighborhood. Instead of empty store fronts there are a variety of shops and restaurants. Instead of worrying about safety, the neighborhood has become a desirable place to live.

Cities have used the arts to revitalize certain areas, usually their downtowns. Several cities in Connecticut, for example, have renovated older theaters to bring life back downtown. These efforts received funding from private donors, corporations and the state. Part of the renovations created extra space for community groups and touring shows, allowing more people to benefit than a single theater could accommodate. These theaters inspired restaurants and bars to open nearby (Felson, 1999). North Adams, MA opened the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art to boost its economy (Zukin, 1995). Because of its declining industrial economy, North Adams turned to the arts in an attempt to save the city. Another declining industrial town, Cowichan, British Columbia, painted murals on many of its buildings after its last major company, a sawmill, left. The effort at murals successfully attracted tourists and new businesses, including, surprisingly, a sawmill (Goodey, 1994).

On an even larger scale, New York City gives an example of how the arts can change a community and fuel urban growth. Elizabeth Currid (2007) described how New York's economy is driven by cultural industries. She found that cultural agglomeration provided benefits to the arts scene, as well as the city as a whole. It is important for any artist hoping for an international career to be in or near New York City, yet high rents make this difficult (Plattner, 1998). Hoboken, Jersey City and Newark, all along a rail line into New Jersey, are good choices for artists displaced by high rents in the city (Cole, 1987). Some localities encouraged artists to immigrate to them, but many artists felt the efforts were not really aimed at them, but were instead meant to attract wealthy residents and raise property values (Cole, 1987; Grodach & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2007). Artists displaced low-income residents in their new locales and initiated gentrification, in part because of their willingness to break racial barriers and live in run-down places (Cole, 1987). The fact that artists were moving into an area shaped how the community developed.

Consequently, artists themselves can change a neighborhood. David Ley considers artists the agents of gentrification (2003). The creation of an aesthetic disposition usually

involves middle-class origins and advanced education, so artists, even those with low incomes, fit in the middle class aesthetic (Ley, 2003). The aesthetic disposition, cultural capital and middle class origins of the artist turns into capital when wealthy people move into artist-laden areas and increase property values. This makes sense when you consider the importance of cultural capital to the modern cities' symbolic economy (Zukin, 1995). Some property-owning artists benefit from the land use change they instigate, but many artists are victimized, along with low-income residents, by gentrification. They may lose access to their studio space and be forced to find new, affordable space. Artists feel they are part of a controversial neighborhood change in which they have no control (Ley, 2003).

Arts-related development can, of course, change a neighborhood. These changes have a spatial aspect, such as the migration of artists out of high rent areas of New York City for New Jersey (Cole, 1987). The artists' choice of where to move had everything to do with geography: was it close to New York with easy access? Did it have appropriate studio space? Gentrification resulted, in part, due to the middle classes' desire to be close to artists, or even live in the same spaces (Zukin, 1982). A neighborhood can also benefit from the space-defining properties of public art. A well-situated sculpture can make a space or neighborhood memorable. This idea has been used in many communities to attract visitors (Goodey, 1994). Seattle's Fremont neighborhood, for example, installed a 15-foot concrete troll under a highway overpass, instantly giving the space a new whimsical feel.

The arts can shape a community or city, but what shapes the arts scene? A willingness on the part of the artists to create their own studio or performance space can mitigate a lack of readily available space. Along with this, availability of adaptable space can impact the scene. Artists need space that can be easily adapted to suit their needs, which vary from artist to artist. The cost or rent of arts space determines which artists and how many artists will be able to reside in a given area. If the rents are too high, artists will look to other areas to locate their galleries, studios, venues and rehearsal spaces. Public funding can alleviate some high rent problems. This usually aids non-profit organizations that house education spaces, and performance and exhibition spaces. Public funding can also impact the arts scene not just through space, but also by funding arts education, art supplies, administrative costs, etc. Along with public funding, links between the arts and

commerce greatly influence the scene. Many music venues, for instance, are also bars and restaurants. Having businesses interested in furthering the arts scene means there will be more opportunities for artists and musicians to perform or display their work.

The arts are used to fuel the "urban growth machine" through arts-centered development coalitions (Whitt, 1987). These coalitions consists of large corporations, developers, arts groups, arts advocates, government officials, city planners and historic preservationists. Coalitions support the goal of building performing centers, and make many arguments in favor of using the arts to support the urban economy. The arts encourage physical development and preservation, add vitality to city streets, and contribute to the local quality of life. Better yet, it's a clean industry.

The economic impact of the arts as an industry on a community has not been overlooked. A recent report by Americans for the Arts showed the importance of the non-profit art sector to cities (Americans for the Arts, 2007). The report contains extensive data on the industry, both from the audience side and the organizations' side. Americans for the Arts surveyed audience members to determine their expenditures when attending an arts event. They surveyed organizations on their expenditures, as well as information like employee numbers. They found that the arts sector is a significant industry in many cities. In the US it drives a $166 billion industry that supports 5.7 million full-time jobs and generates nearly $30 billion in government revenue annually (Americans for the Arts, 2007). To those 5.7 million full-time employees, the arts mean business. Allen Whitt (1987), and Carl Grodach and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (2007) and have argued that much of the arts industry, especially in the city center, benefits the rich over the poor, and puts economic goals ahead of the public good. Cities lack studies on the risk, costs, revenue and expenditure patterns to expect from cultural plans, letting cultural planning become captive of real estate interests, cultural industries and cultural elites (Markusen, 2008).

There are questions regarding the proper relationship between art and the drive for profit, but many artists want commercial involvement at some level (Whitt, 1987). Will artists always desire a commercial connection? Its difficult to know, but even now some artists stay away from blatantly commercial opportunities (Plattner, 1998).

Artistic diversity in a community stems from the diversity of its residents. A gentrified neighborhood, even if it started as an artists' neighborhood, will not necessarily continue to be artistically diverse. Economic inequality promotes artistic life, while educational inequalities restrict activities. To explain, according to Judith Blau and colleagues, a general population without a high level of education lacks interest in participating in high art events, such as symphony concerts. An artistic disposition generally forms through higher education. Economic diversity in a community creates the need for artistic diversity. Wealthy people can support all types of arts, but often support high art as a way to "draw a symbolic boundary between themselves and the populace" (Blau, Blau, & Golden, 1985 p. 327). Poorer people do not have the resources to support high art, leading them to support different kinds of art. Additionally, economic inequality increases the differences between social classes, and consequently their cultural and artistic preferences (Blau, et al., 1985). Having a diversity of people (i.e. economic diversity) leads to a diversity in artistic tastes and a higher proportion of artists in the community to fill the needs of the populace (Blau, et al., 1985).

The Spatial Side of Art

The literature on spatial aspects of the arts scene is minimal, but it is possible to pull useful information from sources not entirely spatially focused. For example, Carl Grodach examined the impact of two flagship cultural projects on local arts development. As part of this project, he mapped all arts spaces, mostly galleries, within one mile of the flagship buildings. While it is difficult to precisely measure the impact of the cultural flagship projects on arts development, Grodach determined that one of the factors for success was the attributes of the local context, like how much vacant, usable space surrounded the cultural institution (Grodach, 2008). Even this article focused on the benefits of flagship projects presents a spatial component.

Scholars, such as James Bau Graves (2005), and Ann Markusen and Greg Schrock (2006), have differing opinions regarding the amount of space arts groups need in the city. The arts began receiving increased private and public funding in the late 1950s, leading to an explosion in performing arts groups and programs, and creating, in turn, a housing

shortage for the arts (Whitt, 1987; Zukin, 1982). At that point the physical development of performing centers became a goal of many cities. James Bau Graves believes that there are still not enough arts facilities, especially for the diverse needs of ethnic groups in most communities (Graves, 2005). According to him, one way to encourage the arts is to give artists more space. Having appropriate space for performances enhances the entire arts scene. In other words, space produces more art as space is produced (Leyshon, Matless, & Revill, 1995). On the other hand, several scholars argue that cities should diversify away from entirely 'bricks and mortar' subsidies (Grodach, 2008; Markusen & Schrock, 2006). Artists need more than just new buildings to create art. They need funding for salaries and supplies, factors often overlooked in the rush to put up buildings.

Performance can happen anywhere, but it is important to look at where it usually takes place, and why. For instance, classical music tends to be performed in large, beautiful halls, perhaps to make a statement: this music is important (Knight, 2006). Yet, orchestras can also perform in outdoor settings, in smaller halls, at schools or a variety of other places. The space in which a concert takes place has an effect on the listener (Knight, 2006). Western classical music, however, is in many ways placeless compared to other types of music. It has a wide reach, but does not obviously come from a particular region. Performing classical music in concert halls eliminated variability in listening. The concert halls have become regularized and with the invention of scores, the performance was under total control by the composer (Leyshon, et al., 1995). The space of the performance greatly influenced how classical music developed.

The same is true for theater. The space of performance affects how the audience understands plays. There are two basic styles of theater: one with a proscenium arch and one without. The proscenium arch is the arch set at the front of the stage dividing the stage space from the audience space. In proscenium theaters the audience faces the stage directly and is separated from the performers by the arch, which is where the curtain runs. "The basic western device to create a theater of dreams is the curtain which reveals and conceals, effecting a gap between the embodied human being in the here-and-now and the 'heart' which has its place elsewhere. The curtain creates the specter of a more profound truth behind it" (Wiles, 2003, p. 209). Theaters without the proscenium arch bring the audience

into the story, because audience and performer occupy the same space (Wiles, 2003). This difference in the basic arrangement of a theater greatly impacts how audiences experience a performance. The space also impacts the kind of plays performed. Productions with large casts and sets need the proscenium theater, but many plays require a strong connection between the audience and actors, in which case a thrust stage with no arch works much better.

To the innovative theater architect Andrew Todd, theater and architecture are both about the relationship of the body to space, and architecture needs to help tell the story performed in a theater (Heathcote, 2009). Great modern architects have not made great modern theaters because today's theaters need a certain amount of incompleteness; they need to be a responsive vessel for others to flesh out (Todd & Tompkins, ND). Architects have a difficult time creating this kind of incomplete space. Theater groups themselves make the most innovative, appropriate performance space (Todd & Tompkins, ND).

Peter Brook, a well-respected theater director, always took the space of performance into account when he produced a play (Todd & Lecat, 2003). The set in his plays was minimal, but the whole atmosphere of the space, including the audience area, was important. He traveled extensively with his theater troupe. When planning a performance in a new city, he looked everywhere for an appropriate space. Often the selected spaces were not set up for theater. He would have seating built, a stage area set, and any other adjustments made that he felt would improve the theatrical experience. He even made adjustments when he performed in an existing theater, because he felt the space had a real impact on the play (Todd & Lecat, 2003). Preferring non-proscenium theaters, Brook would at times build a thrust stage out past the arch and have the majority of the performance take place in front of the proscenium arch. According to David Wiles (2003)., when Brook toured, he wanted spaces that had a certain feel, and regretted "the way that many of the raw, found spaces which he created on world tours had their life removed when sponsored by local authorities, smartly fitted out and packed with technology" (p. 264). For the permanent theater he came to occupy, he needed "a space crafted with skill and imbued with history" (Wiles, 1997, p. 4). He found just a space in the Bouffes du Nord, a theater in Paris, which had been abandoned for years before he started performing

there. It had a physical sense of history, and the right feel to draw the audience into the performance (Todd & Lecat, 2003).

Theater groups and directors know the kind of space they need for a given story, and often use untraditional spaces to fulfill this need. For instance, the Neo-Futurists, a Chicago theater group, performed a play about craft brewing in a craft brewery, a 'found' space. Todd views this kind of reuse and adaptation of space as a sustainable path for performance space. These found spaces satisfy the need for roughness and grit and leave an openness for improvisation and imagination (Heathcote, 2009). The ultimate place for improvisation is the street. Street performers transform urban space into a theater. Sometimes performers use chalk to draw a stage or use other aspects of the urban space to delineate the space, like a small ledge or stairs. An audience circled around a street performer comes together in a way an audience in a theater with set chairs and a stage does not (Harrison-Pepper, 1990).

Many physical aspects of a space influence the art performed within it. As mentioned earlier, the arrangement of a space impacts performances. The size of the space does the same thing. It also dictates the size of the production and the number of audience members that can participate in the performance. Performance spaces often fill niches within the arts scene. Bars will show music that would not necessarily be seen in a more formal space. The feel of the space allows certain types of performances. For instance, churches host musical performances that fit their space, usually classical music, which does not require amplification. Gallery owners design their space to fit the art they plan to display. High art is displayed against white walls in open, uncluttered environments. Raw spaces allow innovative theater to be performed. Performance is greatly impacted by performance space.

The informal arts are an important, yet often overlooked, section of the arts scene. I will discuss their geography later in this section. The informal arts consist of amateur groups, such as a community choir or a hobby painter. Everyone recognizes formal arts groups, like symphony orchestras, but the informal arts also add vitality to the community and the larger arts scene. Yet, the informal arts are generally hidden from view and often unrecognized, even though there is widespread participation (Graves, 2005; Wali,

Severson, & Longoni, 2002). It is hard in many cases to even distinguish between formal and informal groups. Ruth Finnegan (1989) had this difficulty in her study of the amateur music scene in a British town. Even within a single band there could be musicians who use the income as their entire salary and those that it is a side income. One would be considered professional, the other amateur. Finnegan found it difficult to distinguish between amateur and professional in the music scene (Finnegan, 1989). Likewise, both amateur and professional musicians perform in the same spaces, making it difficult to say if it is a professional or amateur performance venue.

The connection between formal and informal arts is not widely known (Wali, et al., 2002). For instance, many formal arts groups, like the renowned Steppenwolf Theater of Chicago, started out as informal groups, a small suburban theater troupe in the Steppenwolf's case (Wali, et al., 2002). The connection between formal and informal arts can also be as simple as individual connections. Every successful professional performer has connections to amateurs in the form of students and admirers, and amateurs have similar connections to beginners, which creates the informal arts sector (Graves, 2005). People involved with the informal arts come from diverse backgrounds, which can lead to an energetic arts scene (Wali, et al., 2002).

Informal art has its own geography. Informal groups are dispersed throughout the city, even in 'arts-poor' areas (Wali, et al., 2002). Many groups often change rehearsal and performance locations, since they do not have the resources to own or in many cases even rent a space. Many amateur and semi-professional orchestras, for instance, do not have their own space, so have to use school, church, civic or university facilities (Knight, 2006). Informal groups are at the mercy of these institutions for use of the space. People need informal groups they can participate in, because communities come together through weeks and years of working together on an artistic endeavor, not through a one-time event. Consequently, informal arts groups need spaces they can use for an extended period of time.

The importance of the quality and quantity of performance space is established, but the precise role it plays in the whole of an urban arts scene is not well understood. In order

to take a close look at how performance space shapes the arts scene, I conducted a case study of Asheville, N.C.

Study Site: Asheville

Asheville is known throughout the Southeast for its vibrant arts scene. It boasts galleries of all types, with a focus on crafts. Music is everywhere, even on the streets from an array of street musicians. It has professional dance and theater troupes, a symphony and opera, as well as a network of informal, start-up or otherwise transient arts groups. Big acts come through the city. Smaller groups perform at the numerous venues throughout town. The arts scene is an integral part of Asheville's reputation, and it often makes it on lists of arts cities. In 2009, American Style Magazine ranked Asheville number two in its list of small cities that are arts destinations ("Top 25 Arts Destinations," 2009). In 2008, Where to Retire Magazine listed the city as a top town for art and music lovers ("Eight Enriching Towns for Art and Music Lovers," 2008). The arts scene makes the city a desirable tourist destination and place to live.

Another way to view Asheville's artistic concentration is through Etsy, the most highly trafficked online marketplace for indie crafts. An artist or crafter rents a section of the website where she or he can sell their crafts. While the art sold here is quite different than high art as seen in New York City, it is still a good proxy for the artistic prevalence of Asheville. The city has a high percentage of artists with Etsy accounts, indicating a strong artistic presence. Data on Esty accounts per 10,000 metropolitan residents show that Asheville ranks number six in the entire country, in the same league as well-known arts places like Portland, OR and Austin, TX (Shultz & Xu, 2010).

I chose to study Asheville for many reasons. It is large enough to have a significant arts scene, but small enough to be manageable in the time frame of this project. Additionally, its proximity to Knoxville, where I was located, made it feasible for me to study first hand. Asheville has a reputation as an arts town, and there are many artists and musicians there. So, although the population is smaller than other well-known arts places, like San Francisco, there is enough of an arts scene that it yielded an interesting study.

Also, the smaller population means that many artists know each other, like in any community. This helped me identify the appropriate people to interview.

Asheville rests in the mountains of western North Carolina. As of 2008, it has about 75,000 residents in the city itself, over 400,000 in the metropolitan statistical area (U.S. Census Bureau). The city has been a tourist destination for years, at first for its natural hot springs, mountains and the famous Biltmore Estate, and now for the outdoor amenities and art and music scene. In the 1920s, Asheville had a booming economy, and the city built many expensive municipal buildings including the public library and courthouse. When the depression hit, the municipal government accumulated a great deal of a debt surrounding its municipal buildings. This financial crisis was not fully resolved until 1977 when the last bonds were paid (Scherer, 2007). The city experienced another hardship in the 1970s when businesses left the downtown for suburban malls (Chase, 2007). In 1973, the Asheville Mall was built on the outskirts of town, effectively pulling all retail activity out of downtown and leaving it almost entirely abandoned (Anderson, Brown-Graham, & Lobenhofer, 2006). Perhaps the earlier debt problem can be thanked for leaving the city with no money to demolish unused buildings in the central business district (CBD). It left a rich architectural heritage untouched. Many of the great buildings in Asheville were built in the 1920s boom, and are now being renovated into business and residential spaces. In 1980, a developer proposed a downtown mall, which would have leveled many historic buildings. The project failed, in part because of the efforts of historic preservationists to preserve buildings downtown (Anderson, et al., 2006). This started an effort to revitalize the downtown (Anderson, et al., 2006).

Now Asheville is immensely popular for the many amenities offered, such as nearby hiking trails and the vibrant arts scene. It is widely regarded as a hip place; larger nearby cities are said to have ‘Asheville envy.’ Asheville is a travel destination, but also draws new residents from a wide region. People move to Asheville without a job, and when faced with a difficult job market, they become entrepreneurs. Artists and musicians are also drawn to Asheville because of its lively scene.

The superintendent of cultural arts for the city of Asheville told me that the city’s art scene seemed to happen in spite of itself. She sees the art scene as very individualistic,

without a strong community. Others involved in the arts had similar sentiments about the formation of the arts scene. The managing director of the Asheville Community Theater, for one, said, “I tell a lot of people, Asheville is what it is today through zero planning. It just happened” (P. Atwood, personal communication, May 4, 2009; all interviewees and interview dates are listed in Appendix III). Others echoed this with comments like “it grew up all by itself” and “a lot of what happened with Ashville was organic growth” (H. Maloy and J. Ellis, personal communications, May 11 and May 6, 2009, respectively).

Specific individuals and institutions have furthered the arts scene in Asheville. Several crafts schools, like the Penland School of Craft, are near Asheville. These institutions have been in existence for many years. The area is recognized as a place for making art in part because of these craft institutions (B. Skidmore, personal communication, May 7, 2009). Individuals have also influenced the development of the arts scene. Several informants mentioned John Cram as a catalyst to the arts scene in Asheville (Ellis, Atwood and Bonds, personal communications, May 6, May 4, 2009, and Jan. 20, 2010, respectively). He renovated buildings and opened galleries while others were afraid to go downtown (J. Cram, personal communication, Jan. 21, 2010). Other individuals also played a role. As the director of the Asheville Contemporary Dance Theater said, “the artists have done it themselves” (G. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009), indicating that it was the artists that built the arts scene. Artists started the River Arts District by buying an old warehouse and converting it into studio space (W. Whitson, personal communication, May 8, 2009). This led other artists and developers to renovate further buildings into art studios. In other towns this type of district is instigated and designated by the city government, but in Asheville it was the artists themselves.

Once Asheville started to be known for the arts, artists and performers were drawn to the city. There is a general understanding in the region that if you are planning on being an artist, Asheville is the place to do it (B. Skidmore, personal communication, May 7, 2009). The influx of artists created a critical mass in Asheville, which is a good environment for artists to live. Wherever you go in Asheville, there is art or music. It is difficult to find a place to eat on a Friday evening that does not have music. As the managing director of the Diana Wortham Theatre explained it, Asheville is the kind of

place where you bump into the arts on a regular basis (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009). Art is not something you have to seek out, it is everywhere.

Even with what seems like a great variety of art, some feel Asheville's arts scene is lacking. Connie Bostic, an Asheville artist, wrote in a 2009 *Mountain Xpress* newspaper article that Asheville's galleries do not show thought-provoking work and only show work that will be liked by most customers. She believes this is a result of the overcommodification of art. At least some accomplished artists living in Asheville do not show their work in the city, because, according to Bostic, there is no place for the type of art they create. She acknowledges that artists need to pay the bills, but wonders whether the city should value the arts industry or the art itself (Bostic, 2009). On the flip side, artists from outside Asheville show their work in Asheville's galleries. Asheville's art scene, like any art scene, does not have well defined boundaries.

The Chamber of Commerce has a limited influence on the arts. The chamber houses the visitor center, which holds pamphlets and flyers for many different galleries and arts groups. The River Arts District Artists joined recently, and have their pamphlets at the chamber for tourists to peruse. A tour bus starts at the chamber, and one of its stops is the River Arts District. At least one gallery, however, joined the chamber but did not renew because they felt it did not enhance their business.

The media does not appear to have a defining role in Asheville's arts scene. There are two main newspapers: the Citizens-Times and Mountain Xpress. Shows and gallery openings are listed in both papers. Radio stations, as well, announce and sponsor shows. Beyond that, the local media does not have a large impact on the arts scene. Most performance space managers did not mention the role of the local media, besides using it to advertise shows. I contrast this with WDVX, which greatly enhanced the Americana music scene in Knoxville through its daily live performances, choice of songs, and sponsorship of music events throughout town.

While many feel that the arts scene in Asheville happened on its own, the municipal government does have a role in the scene. The city government puts on the Bele Chere Festival, the Asheville Film Festival, and a July 4th celebration with bands and local vendors. Bele Chere is a summer music and visual arts festival attracting about 300,000

visitors to Asheville's CBD. The city also maintains public art and the W.C. Reid Center for Creative Arts. There have also been at least a couple instances where the city leased or sold land to arts organizations so they could build performance spaces. For example, the Asheville Community Theater bought the land for its building from the city in the 1960s. At that time, many cities were working on urban renewal. The Asheville government had seized and torn down several old buildings and sold the land to non-profits for reasonable prices. Consequently, the Asheville Community Theater bought a piece of land and built their theater, which opened in 1972 (P. Atwood, personal communication, May 4, 2009). Pack Place, which houses the Diana Wortham Theatre and Art Museum, is built on land owned and leased from the city (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009). Additionally, the new Performance Center in Asheville is slated to be built on land currently held by the city government (J. Milin, personal communication, May 5, 2009). Aside from these things, the city has had little to do with promoting the arts. It does not give much funding to artists, or maintain much space for arts performance.

Many involved with the arts scene are frustrated with the lack of support from the city government. One performer said, "They're very smart; they realized that the artists are doing it without any help. They don't put in 25 cents! There is no budget. They advertise it all over the US and abroad, the arts of Asheville, but there is no budget" (G. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009). This sentiment is repeated by other performers. "They take it for granted that the arts are here and they use it as a tourism boost without supporting it at all" (H. Maloy, personal communication, May 11, 2009). These frustrations are amplified by a worry that the arts scene is fragile, so may fade away as quickly as it expanded, especially if there is no support from the municipal government. People feel that since a large part of the economy is based on the arts, the local government should do more to support it. Of course, the critic would say, the arts are thriving in Asheville, why spend money on it? When posed that question the administrative coordinator of the Performance Center of Asheville responded, "that's interesting, because that's the public façade. The reality of the situation is that it may appear that the arts are thriving, because there is so much activity in this town, but everyone is struggling" (J. Milin, personal communication, May 5, 2009).

Lack of support from the city government means that all performance space in the city has to be created and maintained by individual businesses or non-profits. This influences what type of performance spaces will be available in the city and who uses the spaces.

Finding Spaces, Mapping and Interviews

An important step towards understanding performance space is to know all the performance spaces. By scouring the Internet and local newspapers, walking the streets and asking informants, I compiled a list of performance spaces in Asheville. If I was unsure if a space had art, live music or theatrical shows, I confirmed it with an employee via email or telephone. I included only spaces that are open and attended by the community at large. For example, schools that have concerts or plays attended only by parents were not included. This shows what is really available in the arts scene to the entire community. I also excluded temporary spaces, like street musician locations and temporary stages, in an effort to show only the ongoing, relatively consistent performances and displays in the arts scene. A map was created showing the location of all performance spaces (Figure 1; this and all following figures are in the Appendix). Three maps showing only music venues (Figure 2), visual art displays (Figure 3) and performance art (theater, dance, etc.) spaces (Figure 4) were also made.

I requested interviews with managers at a variety of spaces on the complete list of performance spaces. Interviewees were selected to provide a broad overview of the performance space in Asheville: small and large, different types of art, and varying locations. Each interview lasted between 30 and 90 minutes, and took place either at the performance venue, a coffee shop or the interviewee's office. I recorded and transcribed each interview. In a few cases, an in-person interview was not possible, so I conducted phone interviews for those individuals. In these cases, I wrote a summary of the interview instead of a full transcription. The interviews were semi-structured. I asked preset questions, but often used unscripted follow-up questions to explore an interesting topic. The questions I asked all interviewees dealt with audience composition, reasons for opening the venue, choice of location, likes and dislikes of the space, connection with the

city government, view on competition, and types of musicians or artists who performed or showed work there, respectively (Appendix II. Interview Questions).

I interviewed 22 people involved with the arts scene in Asheville (Appendix III. List of interviewees). Each is involved with a performance space in a management capacity. Several are directors of a performance space, such as John Ellis, the managing director of the Diana Wortham Theatre. Others own the spaces, like John Cram with his galleries and movie theater. A couple organize performances within a space, such as Peggy Ratusz, the booking manager at Jack of the Wood. Additionally, I stopped into many other performance venues, mostly galleries. On most occasions of doing this, I was able to talk briefly with the proprietor or clerk about the space. I chatted with 19 such people.

I compiled all the interview transcriptions and summaries. From there I analyzed for major topics and themes related to how performance space shapes the arts scene in Asheville. Based on the interviews, I divided the performance spaces into three categories: music venues, theater and dance space, and visual art galleries and displays. These were the clearest groupings of the spaces, even though several spaces fit into multiple categories. For example, the BoBo Gallery has music events as well as visual art displays.

Chapter II: Description of Asheville's Performance Spaces

Location of Performance Spaces

To best understand the role of performance space in Asheville's arts scene, I identified all the performance spaces in the city. Most performance spaces are clustered in the CBD. Within the CBD there are discernible patterns. Many performance spaces are along two streets: Broadway Street and Patton Avenue. While these streets are considered the major thoroughfares in Asheville, it is not a main-street city. It is set up in a grid pattern, with many streets serving as business corridors. Lexington Avenue and Haywood Street, for example, are both lined by shops. Performance spaces in the city are distributed throughout the CBD's grid, with concentration on Broadway and Patton (Figure 1).

Most of the large, well-known performance spaces for all types of art are located in the CBD (Table 1). This includes the Civic Center, Art Museum, Diana Wortham Theater, Blue Spiral 1 and Orange Peel. Notably, two larger venues are outside the downtown. These are the Lipinsky Auditorium and the Grey Eagle. While being outside the CBD, both of these venues are within clusters of activity. Lipinsky is on the University of North Carolina, Asheville (UNCA) campus and the Grey Eagle is in the River Arts District. So, even though they are not in a normal location downtown, they still benefit from a clustering of activity like that of the CBD.

Performance spaces outside the CBD are mostly located within secondary clusters, including the ones mentioned previously (Table 1). The River Arts District is the most notable cluster. It is located a couple miles southwest of the CBD in what was once an industrial section. Artists converted warehouses into studios and now display and sell art from their studios. There are more than 120 artists working in the district. An area called West Asheville, along Haywood Road, also has a cluster of performance spaces. This area, slightly farther southwest from the CBD than the River Arts District, has a combination of music venues, like the Rocket Club, and visual arts spaces, like the metal sculptures seen at Steebo Design. West Asheville is located within a residential neighborhood. Another secondary cluster, Biltmore Village, which is near the Biltmore Estate, has several galleries. This tourist area markets to Biltmore Estate visitors. Finally, there is a cluster of

performance spaces on the UNCA campus. This includes galleries, space for theater and dance performances, and music venues geared towards students at the university.

Table 1 illustrates which performance spaces are in the CBD and which are outside the CBD in the secondary clusters or otherwise. The table includes the type of art hosted at each space (music, visual art, theater, etc.), as well as the main purpose of the space, if its not performance focused. Capacities for non-visual arts spaces are also included in the table. Spaces range in capacities from about 20 to 7600 people.

There are at least 52 music venues within the city limits of Asheville at the end of 2009 (Figure 2). The CBD, unsurprisingly, has the most venues. The large venues, including the Diana Wortham Theatre and the Orange Peel, are located downtown. Also, most of the bars, restaurants and coffee shops that have live music are located in the CBD. Another area with less significant clustering is West Asheville, a neighborhood a couple miles from the CBD. West Asheville has three music venues: The Rocket Club, The Admiral and Westville Pub. Venues that exist outside the CBD and West Asheville are churches, venues on UNCA's campus, and the occasional out-of-the-ordinary space, like the Hop Ice Cream Café, which infrequently has children's concerts.

There are about 20 performance spaces for theater, dance, comedy and other types of performance art (Figure 4). This is significantly fewer than the number of music venues and visual art displays, but is still a large number for a town the size of Asheville. These spaces are clustered in the CBD. Many of these spaces are multi-use, so host music as well as other performance art. Other spaces, however, are focused on one type of performance. There are two spaces focused on theater and one on dance: NC Stage, Asheville Community Theater and the BeBe Theater, respectively. None of these are on major streets in Asheville. NC Stage is down an alley, Asheville Community Theater is on a less used road on the edge of the CBD, and the BeBe Theater is on the backside of buildings on Patton, across from a parking lot. The comedy clubs are in more obvious locations, as are the multi-use spaces. UNCA has several venues for this type of performance, but other than that, there are no performance spaces in other secondary clusters in Asheville. There are a couple arts centers outside the CBD, which are focused on classes, and one outdoors stage for an annual Shakespeare festival.

There are at least 71 spaces displaying visual art (Figure 3). There is even more significant clustering of visual arts spaces than music venues. Most are very centrally located on main streets in the CBD. A gallery walk happens several times a year, which brings customers to the galleries in the CBD. Those outside the CBD are in tight clusters in the River Arts District, West Asheville, Biltmore Village and UNCA. Virtually the only visual art display not in a cluster is the Grovewood Gallery, located near the Grove Park Inn north of the CBD.

There are interesting differences in the spatial ecologies of the various art forms. The visual arts tend to be tightly clustered, and located on main streets. This is necessary for galleries, because much of their business is made of passer bys. Being located on a main street in an arts cluster puts them in contact with more customers. Music venues are similar, but do not need to be as focused on the main streets. Music venues tend to be located downtown, and are often on a main street, especially the bars that serve as music venues. Many of their customers are people walking by and who stopped when they heard music. However, it is not as imperative for music venues to be in these clusters. Churches, for example, host music and are located throughout the city. Some music venues in the CBD, like the Orange Peel, are not necessarily located on a main street, because they can draw in customers principally for a show they are hosting. Performance spaces for theater and dance do not have the same clustering tendencies as the galleries and music venues. These spaces may be on a side street downtown, or even in an area outside the CBD. Theaters are destinations, not a place where someone will haphazardly stop. For that reason, they can be located anywhere, although many are still in the CBD. This is in sharp contrast to the art galleries, which need to be on main streets in the CBD.

Description of Performance Spaces

In this section, I give the reader a basic overview of the performance spaces in Asheville before discussing the ways that the spaces shape the arts scene. There are at least 130 performance spaces in Asheville. These spaces include a wide range of buildings of varying size and function. I will discuss the performance spaces in each of three categories: music venues, theater and dance performance space, and visual arts galleries and displays. Many spaces are multi-use, that is, host performances in more than one category.

There are at least 52 music venues in Asheville (Figure 2). Very few, however, are strictly music venues. In fact, only three are exclusively music venues (The Orange Peel, The Grey Eagle and The Garage at Biltmore). These are open only for concerts, unlike a bar with live music that would open even when a band was not performing. Others have formal stages, but host theater events or other types of performances as well as music concerts, such as the Diana Wortham Theatre or Lipinsky Auditorium at UNCA (9 of 52 venues). Bars and restaurants that have live music make up the highest percentage of music venues in Asheville (21 bars and restaurants). Churches that host concerts outside their normal services make up 11 of the 53 music venues. The rest of the venues are an assortment of coffee shops, record stores or the odd space.

The three spaces that are exclusively music venues are some of the biggest, most well-known and respected spaces in Asheville. The Orange Peel, which has a capacity of 942 people, gets many big name bands like Smashing Pumpkins, the Flaming Lips, and Ben Harper. The venue draws people from throughout the region for its audience. The Grey Eagle has a capacity of 550. The Orange Peel and Grey Eagle were mentioned by many of my informants, while the Garage at Biltmore was not, indicating it is less well-known than the other two venues. It also has a smaller capacity of 300.

Other venues, the multi-use spaces, are as large as or larger than these three music venues. The largest venue in Asheville is the Asheville Civic Center Arena, which can accommodate about 7600 people. It hosts the shows that are expected to have very large audiences, such as the popular Christian rock band Third Day. The Thomas Wolfe Auditorium is located within the Civic Center and is, as one of my informants said, "woefully inadequate by today's standards" (J. Milin, personal communication, May 5,

2009). It is a 2400 seat theater built in 1939 and renovated in 1971 (The Asheville Area Center for the Performing Arts Inc.). The space lacks a good acoustics and modern backstage facilities. There is a group in Asheville working on building a new 2000 seat venue that would take on many of the functions of the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium. At this point, Thomas Wolfe hosts the Asheville Symphony, Asheville Bravo Concert Series, and other touring groups expected to attract a large crowd, like Willie Nelson. Both the arena and auditorium host non-music events, like the basketball team the Globetrotters or the author David Sedaris as a speaker.

Many bars and restaurants in Asheville feature live music, often on a regular basis. For some places, music is quite integral to their business. For instance, Jack of the Wood and Tressa's Downtown Blues and Jazz both regularly host music performances. It attracts customers, and in the case of Tressa's is the major focus of their business. Others, like the Fiddlin' Pig, are mainly restaurants or bars, but have music as an added attraction. Some venues have mostly local performers, like Tressa's. Others have a mix of touring and local groups. Local groups usually attract a bigger audience at bars, so at least some bars lean more towards local musicians. Very few bars feature only one genre of music, although many have distinct inclinations. For instance, the Emerald Lounge leans towards funk and Magnolia's focuses on top-40. Mo-Daddy's tried to be a blues club, but found they had to expand to other genres to be sustainable. Most allow any genre to perform, often rock, indy, bluegrass, folk and reggae.

Almost all churches in Asheville have a choir and music as part of their service, and some have music performances not connected with their religion. These performances are usually classical or acoustic music. For instance, the Asheville Choral Society performs at Central United Methodist Church. Most churches do not host music often, some only a couple times a year. St. Matthias Church is an anomaly in that it has a series of music performances, mostly classical, but also jazz. The church had 35 performances last year. Most churches only have local performers, but sometimes a touring group will perform.

Aside from the previously mentioned spaces, a few other music venues exist in Asheville. There are a few coffee shops that host live music, such as Izzy's Coffee Den, which has experimental music. Like many restaurants, the coffee shops are not focused on

music as an integral part of their business. The Hop Ice Cream Café is an unusual venue. It has children-themed performances sporadically throughout the year. Another unusual venue is Static Age Records, a record shop that has live music on weekends.

There are significantly fewer theater and dance performance spaces in Asheville. There are 20 venues in Asheville that host the performing arts (Figure 4). This includes theater, dance, puppetry, and stand up comedy. Many of these performance spaces overlap with the music venues. For instance, Lipinsky Auditorium at UNCA and the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium both host music and dance performances.

There are two venues focused on theater: the Asheville Community Theater and the North Carolina Stage Company. The Asheville Community Theater has a large main stage with an audience capacity of 399 and a small theater in the lower level called 35 Below. This black box theater holds 49 audience members. These theaters produce several plays every year. 35 Below hosts the more adult-oriented productions, while the mainstage has the more traditional, family-friendly theater works. Owning the building is a big asset to the theater group, so they try to utilize it to its fullest extent. Both stages, especially 35 Below, are rented by groups in need of a space to perform. For instance, stand up comedians have performed on the main stage, and smaller theater troupes perform in 35 Below. A music series has also been initiated to utilize the space. There are about two or three performances a week at the theater.

The North Carolina Stage Company produces four to six professional plays in their 99-seat theater each year. They also use the space in other ways, such as having the Catalyst Series. This series opens the space to small theater groups that lack a performance space of their own. NC Stage curates the series, so it is not open to any group that wants to put on a performance. Like the Asheville Community Theater, they try to utilize the space to its maximum.

The BeBe Theater is the only performance space focused on dance, although it also has theater performances. The BeBe Theater is the performance space for the Asheville Contemporary Dance Theater Company. They have rehearsal space attached to the theater, which is also used for classes. The theater can hold about 60 audience members, although at times they will put cushions on the floor to accommodate more. The junior dance

company and guest dance artists also perform in the space, as well as class recitals and the occasional dance festival, like the Men's Dance Festival. Aside from that, groups often rent the space to put on their own performances. Asheville Contemporary Dance Theater also performs at the Diana Wortham Theatre.

The major performance venues, like Diana Wortham Theatre, host dance performances as well. This includes Thomas Wolfe Auditorium and Lipinsky Auditorium. Other smaller multi-use venues, like the Grotto at UNCA and the BoBo Gallery, may have dance performances as well, but not as often as the larger venues.

Asheville also has some informal spaces for performance. These are probably transient. I stumbled across one when I stepped in the Royal Peasantry clothing store and found a small space being used for puppet shows. Several shows are put on every Friday evening, in an effort to draw pedestrians off the street and into the store to shop. The space holds about 20 people. Likely there are other such spaces, but they are difficult to find and likely very fleeting.

The last type of performance space I examined was visual art spaces (Figure 3). There are 71 spaces that display art. About a third of these only display art and have no other function. It is difficult to give a concrete number of those that only display art because some spaces are primarily for art display but also frame artwork or have a small studio space. The spaces used exclusively for art display include the premier visual art in the city. Examples are the Asheville Art Museum, Blue Spiral 1 and the Haen Gallery.

Many spaces have visual art display as a major focus, but have another function as well (~15%). Again, it is difficult to give an exact number, because it is hard to determine the major focus of a business. Some are clear. For instance, the Woolworth Walk has art display in the vast majority of its space, but on the side is a small food counter. Tree Gallery & Gifts mainly displays and sells art, but a small section of the space is used by the owner to paint.

The rest of the spaces in my list have something besides art display and/or sale as the main function (~50%). Many are still focused on art, but the space is primarily a studio or classroom, and only used for display on the side. Many of the spaces in the River Arts District, like the Warehouse Studios, have this function. The River Arts District has days

set throughout the year as Studio Strolls, where most of the studios are open for visitors. Other artists have hours set every week when their studios are open. Even for those artists, the space is closed to visitors most of the time and used primarily as a studio.

Many spaces that display art, and are included in my analysis, do not have visual art as a major focus at all. Restaurants will display art on their walls, and even sell art, but their main business is food service. This is true for several cafes and coffee shops in the city as well. There is also a gallery in the lobby of the Asheville Community Theater. The building is primarily used for theater, but they decided to use the lobby to display art by local artists. There is even a salon with a gallery. These spaces can still be effective in displaying art; it is simply not the major function of the space.

Most displays of art in Asheville are in for-profit businesses, whether that is a gallery or restaurant. One of the places that non-commercial art can be seen is the Asheville Area Arts Council's gallery space. Because of financial strains, the council rented out some of its gallery space in 2009 to a professional artist, effectively diminishing the amount of space available for non-commercial art (Sandford, 2008, 2009). The Asheville Art Museum is another non-profit visual arts space, as are the galleries at UNCA. Some of the galleries in Asheville are co-ops or collectives, but these are still hoping to make a profit through the sale of art.

Many of the performance spaces in Asheville are multi-use spaces. By this I mean there are multiple types of art performed in these spaces. Several of the larger spaces in Asheville are multi-use, such as the Diana Wortham, which hosts dance, theater and music performances. The Lipinsky Auditorium is similar to the Diana Wortham in its variety of performances. Smaller spaces are also multi-use. The Firestorm Café hosts a variety of events; any group that is looking for a space with a community feel can perform there. They have hosted a wide variety of music groups, film viewings, speakers and other performances.

It appears that it is becoming more popular to have multiple types of art in a performance space, like the Asheville Community Theater that I mentioned above. The primary focus there is theater, but they have opened the lobby to visual artists and are hosting music and stand-up comedy on the stages. NC Stage also has started displaying

visual art in its lobby. The studio-gallery space is part of this phenomenon. Previously, the studio space was quite separate from a gallery, but now it is more common to find a combination, especially in the River Arts District.

Chapter III: Performance Space and the Arts Scene: Discussion

Performance space directly shapes the arts scene in several ways. An arts scene consists of the quantity, variety and quality of art being displayed or performed publicly and the diversity and size of the artist and audience base. This definition gives a way to measure the health and vibrancy of a given arts scene. For this study, I break down the definition of the arts scene and discuss in depth how performance space shapes each. These categories are:

1. The quantity of art
2. The variety of art
3. The quality of art
4. The diversity and size of the group of artists performing in a region
5. The diversity and size of the pool of audience members

I combine my discussion of the diversity and size of the artist group with the three previous categories on art. In other words, in the scheme of this thesis, the diversity in the artist base is similar to the variety and quality of art, and the size of the artist base is similar to the quantity of art being shown. Therefore, they will be discussed in conjunction.

There will be several themes that I mention repeatedly as I discuss each of these categories. These include the availability of space, cost, quality or feel, location, and personal influence. Each comes up several times in the difference categories I defined above. For example, the availability of space and the cost of space greatly influence both the quantity of performances and the quality. There are many other ways that the space shapes the scene. I will discuss these in detail as they pertain to the categories mentioned above and how it applies to different types of art, that is, music, theater/dance and visual art.

Quantity of Art

Most people agree that Asheville has more art events than an average town its size. You can find a music performance any night of the week, which is atypical of a town of 75,000 people. There are gallery openings and shows all the time, and films at the Fine

Arts Theater nightly. Looking purely at the number of performances is one way to evaluate the arts scene. The more performances in a city, the more vibrant is the arts scene. Furthermore, when there is more performance space available, there are more performances and more visual art. That is a simplification; there are many aspects of the space that influence the quantity of art performed.

The availability of performance space, however, cannot be overemphasized as a factor that shapes the arts scene. Even if there were millions of artists and musicians in Asheville, if there were no place for performance or art display, the arts scene would be dull. John Ellis felt that the Diana Wortham Theatre, for which he is the managing director, allowed a lot of performing arts groups to form because the groups would have a place to perform. He argues that several groups, including Terpsicorps Theatre of Dance, would not exist in Asheville had the Diana Wortham not been built.

> In my stump speech I refer to the theater as a testament to vision, because when it was built no one really knew what would go in, who would run it, how it would work. It's kind of like building an industrial park when you don't have a company to be in it yet and you go, 'how can we attract a company if we don't have a space?' So, the Lyric Opera was developed here because there was a theater in which they could perform. Terpsicorps, when Heather [Maloy] was looking to create her own dance company coming down from Charlotte, Asheville not only had a reputation of being an arts community, but there was a theater in which she could perform that was correctly spaced for a small organization. The Asheville Puppetry Alliance, the Jazz Society. A lot of these organizations were started because the theater was there and available for them. (J.Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009)

Having the space available added greatly not only to the quantity of performances, but to the size of the artist base in Asheville. Not only would Terpsicorps perform elsewhere if there was not an appropriate venue, but Heather Maloy and the other dancers would not even be in the city.

Along with the pure amount of space available, how much time is available for performance at each space shapes the scene. This does not matter as much for visual art, but for the performing arts, this is important. Peggy Ratusz, booking manager at Jack of the Wood, emphasized this fact. Many bands approach her hoping to perform at Jack of the Wood, but she only has a few nights a week she can book because some nights are taken up with other events, like jams. A jam is a musical event, but one where musicians play music

together without performing for an audience or with a set plan. Ratusz wishes she could accommodate more bands.

> [Ratusz would like] more nights a week that we could have a band, rather than a jam. I don't want to take anything away from the jammers. The jams on Wednesday and Thursday have been going on for years, and there's a good contingent of people that relies on that. But there are so many bands that want to play, Lily, and I can't get them in because there are only two nights a week! (P. Ratusz, personal communication, Sept. 1, 2009)

The amount of time available, or the number of nights a week that a venue has live music, can limit the amount of art performed. So, even if a venue exists, its contribution to the arts scene depends on the amount of time available for performance. Some spaces are used for other events and purposes, making it difficult, if not impossible to host more performances. For example, Jack of the Wood, while known for its music, also has a weekly trivia night, which decreases the amount of time music can be performed there.

The nature of a space affects how much time and space is given to arts performance. For instance, a restaurant may display art, but since its main purpose is food service there will not be as much art in the space as a gallery. Many spaces are not focused on the arts, so performances have to fit around other uses. Andrew Davis is the director of music ministries at Basilica of St. Lawrence. While one of the roles of the Basilica is to offer space for music to the community, it obviously has other purposes. Davis said it is sometimes difficult to accommodate groups that want to perform at the church. It has so many of its own services and activities that it is hard to find any open time for outside groups to use the space (A. Davis, personal communication, Oct. 26, 2009).

The manager of a performance space can influence the quantity of art performed, in some cases the management is more important than the quality of the space. For instance, John Ellis is credited with increasing the number of performances at the Diana Wortham Theatre. "John Ellis's place up there wasn't great for a long time until John Ellis came in and programmed the Diana Wortham Theatre, because it was dark a lot of…more than half the year. And he programs that thing fiercely" (J. Cram, personal communication, Jan. 21, 2010). In bars and restaurants, places that do not require art or music, it is often the desire of the manager or owner that allows performances to happen. Barley's Taproom, for

example, is not well set-up for music performances, but because the owner wants music, it is a music venue.

> The way they were built, and I can't tell you why, like they have a tin ceiling. It's very boomy in there. No one sounds great there. But the fact that the proprietor wants music in there, has music in there, pays for music in there, especially because he has strictly jazz. The jazz musicians desperately need more places to play. Those highly skilled musicians still play there, even though they may not sound so good, just because the proprietor loves music and pays for music. (P. Ratusz, personal communication, Sept. 1, 2009)

The same is true for other bars, including Jack of the Wood and Mo-Daddy's. In the case of Jack of the Wood, music is not needed. However, the owner enjoys music, so he made his space a music venue.

> The fact that Joe, the owner [of Jack of the Wood], really loves music and is willing to do that, and have it pay for itself, I mean, he doesn't have to. Whereas, at Tressa's … they're a bar. They have sandwiches; they're not a kitchen. She relies heavily on music. Having music is part of the staple of her being there. I don't think Jack of the Woods has to have music. Maybe they do now, because they have a reputation and it would be a shame to not to all of the sudden. (P. Ratusz, personal communication, Sept. 1, 2009)

The owner of a space can also influence the quantity of art in the scene by selecting artists and art organization as tenants. Landlords sought out people who wanted gallery or studio space, or they waited for the right tenant. Jim Samsel looked for specific tenants for his building; he wanted artists or other creative tenants.

> He had a place to rent, because he has a building down the street, 60 Biltmore Ave, and he was not renting just to anybody. He had a vision for Asheville. People were trying to rent his space … he wasn't interested in computer repair, but he wasn't interested in a lot of the stuff offered to him. He set his sights high. (J. Cram, personal communication, Jan. 21, 2010).

The cost of space shapes the quantity of art in Asheville. Many groups find it cost prohibitive to perform in certain spaces, such as the Diana Wortham Theatre or the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium. The cost determines *where* a performance takes place more than *if* the performance will take place. Put another way, a group is more likely to find a performance space that fits their budget than not perform at all. Barbara Halton-Subkis, director of cultural and special events at UNCA, finds it cost prohibitive to produce shows at the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium. She is also charged with having most events on the UNCA campus, so only has shows in an off-campus venue if she expects a large turn out (B.

Halton-Subkis, personal communication, Sept. 1, 2009). So, although she finds certain spaces too expensive, she is able to use her university's own space for performances. The cost does not inhibit her ability to produce performances.

Charlie Flynn-McIver, artistic director of NC Stage, also finds some spaces in Asheville too expensive for his performances. For instance, he would not make enough money to justify the expense of performing at the Diana Wortham Theatre. NC Stage shows cost $30 - $40,000, and with the added cost involved with the Diana Wortham, he would be unable to recover enough to make it feasible (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010). But the cost does not keep him from performing plays. He produces plays at his own venue, unless he anticipates enough interest in a show to go to the Diana Wortham. Directors of Asheville Contemporary Dance Theater Susan and Giles Collard also found spaces in town expensive, so they, like Flynn-McIver, created their own space:

> One of the main reasons why we created a space was to be able to survive financially and be able to showcase our work in the community, and offer the space to artists who are like us, who can't afford to perform in a larger house. (S. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009)

Now they perform about once a year at the Diana Wortham, but produce most shows at their own venue. If they had not created their own performance space and were forced to perform at the Diana Wortham every time, it is unknown what their organization would look like today. Perhaps fewer performances throughout the year, or perhaps they would have difficulty surviving financially. The high cost of some performance spaces, if not worked around, could have a negative impact on the quantity of art performed.

Churches are important in the cost equation. They offer an alternative to expensive performance spaces. They usually charge nothing or a small fee (A. Davis, personal communication, Oct. 26, 2009). This can be a great option for some arts groups, especially classical musicians. In fact, churches are de facto venues for classical musicians. Touring classical music groups or groups from local universities will often turn to churches as accepted places to perform. Churches are set up for performances with a stage, audience seating and usually good acoustics. The cheap cost for using the space makes it accessible to many classical groups, which may not be able to collect enough in ticket costs to offset

the cost of performing elsewhere. Typically, theater, dance and other types of music do not perform at churches. So it is an alternative limited to only a few arts groups in Asheville.

Less intrepid performers than the ones discussed here may not have found a way around the expensive performance spaces. The Asheville arts scene, like any arts scene, constantly has arts groups forming and disbanding, and artists moving into and out of the area. These groups may not be around anymore, so it is difficult to know if the cost associated with performing contributed to their dissolution. My interviews indicate that cost affected some groups, but most were able to find cost-effective alternatives if they were priced out of some spaces.

The size of the performance space can also affect the amount of art in Asheville. In the performing arts, the size of a space may influence how many performances will be given. Some groups prefer performing in venues with a small audience capacity, because it gives them the opportunity to put on more performances. For certain types of art, having multiple performances allows the production to develop, which is important to the performers. If they performed at a large venue, they might saturate the market for their production in one or two shows, but if they perform at a smaller venue, they can have many more performances.

> The other thing is because if you're in a big theater and you say your audience is going to be 700 people. 350 people each night. You work 6 months on this performance, and then you do two performances. And that's it. And if you say, okay, we have 700 people here, at 60 people a night [at their venue], well, we have 12, 13, 14 performances, which gives us time to do a run and clean-up, to change things, and, since its dance theater, there are these relationships, hate, love, whatever, and you are able to really work on it and it suddenly becomes reality. The bigger theater doesn't give you a chance to do this quite like this. You're not going to do 12 performances. (G. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009)

The smaller size of some spaces allows more performances of a given show. This is typically only the case for theater or dance performances. Music groups usually do not have a performance run of more than a couple shows. Generally it is one performance. However, for music the size of the stage and the audience capacity could be limiting. Some of the stages at bars and restaurants can only accommodate small music groups, which may keep certain groups from performing. Also, having small audience capacity could negatively impact some spaces. The Orange Peel, for instance, would not be able to attract

and afford some of their performers if they had a smaller capacity (K. Ramshaw, personal communication, May 11, 2009).

A larger space can allow more performances to happen. The Firestorm Café is a worker-owned coffee shop and book store that allows its space to be used for community meetings and also music performances. The café modeled its business off another worker-owned space in another state. The workers at the established space advised the Firestorm Café to rent a large space, so that they could have more events and sell more things in the space.

> They told us, get the biggest space that you can, because with the worker-owned project, the biggest expense is labor, not rent. So you get the biggest space you can, and then you can sell as much as you can, and more things can happen if you're doing events. So we were looking for a tiny, divvy place downtown thinking we would spend six months fixing it up. But that was one of the most valuable pieces of advice we ever got. (K. Donovan, personal communication, Sept. 21, 2009)

The size of a space can also limit the amount of visual art displayed in Asheville. The square footage of galleries and display areas can limit the number of pieces of art shown and the number of artists shown. Blue Spiral 1 and the New Morning Gallery are some of the largest galleries in town at about 12,000 sq. ft (J. Cram, personal communication, Jan. 21, 2010). The Grovewood Gallery is also quite large, at 9,000 sq ft. ("Grovewood Gallery,"). These galleries are able to accommodate a large number of artists. The Grovewood Gallery shows work by over 500 artists, and the Blue Spiral 1 represents about 100 artists, a huge number compared to neighboring fine art Haen Gallery, which represents 18 artists. The total number of art shown is, of course, influenced by how often shows are changed. Galleries tend to put up a new show every couple months. The galleries at UNCA, however, are changed every two or three weeks to accommodate the large number of art students that are required to put on a show as part of their degree (V. Derryberry, personal communication, Sept. 21, 2009).

The amount of art shown in a gallery is also influenced by how it is displayed. This difference can be illustrated by looking at the Grovewood Gallery and Blue Spiral 1. Both are large spaces, but Grovewood is arranged as a gift shop while Blue Spiral 1 is a fine art gallery. Grovewood has paintings close together on the walls, jewelry in a display case, crafts set together on tables and so forth. Blue Spiral has all the art spread apart on bare

white walls, so that each can be looked at individually. Consequently, Blue Spiral shows about 100 artists, as mentioned previously, and Grovewood has work from over 500 artists.

Artists and performers in Asheville want more space to perform. Even in a city with an arts scene as vibrant as Asheville's, there could still be more art and performances. One of the limitations to increase the quantity of art in Asheville is the availability of performance space. Some people created new performance spaces because of the need. Charlie Flynn-McIver created NC Stage and Giles and Susan Collard created the BeBe Theater because there was not an appropriate space available to them. Flynn-McIver saw the importance of space when he decided to open a theater instead of just a theater company. He found that performance space was under-supplied in relation to the desire to perform within Asheville's theater community.

> I guess we noticed that there was so much static out there in terms of so many theater groups and this and that, that the calculated risk we took was that we felt the only way we are really going to cut through the noise was if we developed our own space. That was not our original plan. But then, all these things sort of worked out, to where it would be possible. And that is when our calls got returned from the local papers. We had already said we were starting a theater company, and they never got back to us. When we said we were starting a 100-seat theater, that's when they called us back. (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

The availability of performance space, more specifically, the availability of appropriate performance space shapes the arts scene. Features of the space, including the cost, size of stage, audience capacity, the design of the space, management and use policies all influences the quantity of art in Asheville.

Variety of Art

Having a variety of performance spaces is integral to having a variety of art in the arts scene. While self-evident in general, the specifics deserve discussion. Different types of art require different types of performance space. The space itself influences what will be presented, how it will be presented and how audiences will respond. Although one might assume that, for example, all music can be played in any setting, that is not the case. If there were only churches for music performance, a city might never hear rock music. Many assume the same about theater - that the space does not affect the performance, but in truth it does.

In his search for appropriate theater space for each of the plays he toured, the world-renowned director Peter Brook demonstrated that having a variety of space available in a city allows different kinds of plays to be performed. Brook went through different stages in his philosophy of theater space. He felt he could produce a play in an 'empty space,' that is, once a play was performed there, it became a theater. This is quite at odds with how he actually produced theater. He spent a large part of his career on the road with his theater troupe. Instead of performing in any space that was available, as the idea of the 'empty space' may imply, he took great pains to find appropriate space and modify it by changing the arrangement of seats and stage (Todd & Lecat, 2003). Even when Brook found a permanent venue for his troupe, the feel and layout of the space meant a great deal to their performances. Bouffes du Nord, Brook's theater in Paris, definitely was not an empty space. Brook moved the acting space in front of the proscenium arch, so it was surrounded by the audience on three sides. He also adjusted the audience seating, so that the first row was on the same level as the acting space. More importantly, the history of the space could be seen on the rough walls, which Brook did not repaint. (Wiles, 2003).

Several characteristics of performance spaces shape the variety of art seen in Asheville. Many characteristics are similar to the ones that determine the quantity of art in Asheville, as I discussed in the previous section. However, in this section I will look at how the characteristics manifest themselves in the variety of art in Asheville. These include the size, cost and nature of space. Competition between performance spaces also plays a role in the variety of art.

Variety in Asheville's theater environment is seen in the size of the spaces. These range from the 49-seat 35 Below Theater to the 500-seat Diana Wortham Theatre. The size dictates, to a certain extent, the plays that are performed in the space. Popular plays that are expected to attract a big audience are performed in the larger spaces, while relatively unknown, less popular or challenging plays are performed in the smaller spaces. The size of the audience determines, to a certain extant, what kind of play will be produced. This is true of the Asheville Community Theater, which has two stages, a 399-seat main stage and a 49-seat black box theater called 35 Below. Edgier plays are produced in the black box

theater, while family-friendly plays with mass appeal are produced on the main stage. Phil Atwood described the difference between the two stages:

> The thing that is really neat about it here, particularly with the resurgence of Asheville, is the ability to do the more modern and edgy. We do all of those in 35 Below, that's the name of the theater. So everything is done in 35 Below, and then up here [on the main stage] is still primarily family-oriented type things. You can use bad language downstairs, but you can't upstairs. (P. Atwood, personal communication, Sept. 14, 2009)

Charlie Flynn-McIver will take an NC Stage production to the large Diana Wortham if he expects it will draw a large audience (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010). These tend to be family-friendly plays, such as their production of "It's a Wonderful Life," which was so popular they performed a couple nights at Diana Wortham. For most of their plays, however, the smaller size of NC Stage, their own space, fits the plays better. The audience is quite a bit closer to the performers in their own space. The first row of seats at Diana Wortham is farther away than the first row at NC Stage, and because the Diana Wortham is so much larger, many of the seats are farther away from the stage than at NC Stage. No one at NC Stage is more than 20 feet from the actors (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010).

Performance space comes with norms, such as what type of language is appropriate or what type of art can be displayed or theater performed. These norms are often management driven, but are also driven by the audience. If the audience is mostly older, and traditional, the management will produce quite different shows than for an audience of college students. The audience, in turn, is driven by the space. Audiences are drawn to different types of spaces based on their preference for formal or informal and other variations.

Along with size, the arrangement or design of a space shapes the variety of art performed there. The Diana Wortham Theater has a proscenium arch and a raised stage. At the black box NC Stage, there is a thrust stage with no proscenium arch. The first row is on the same level as the acting surface. This gives quite a different feel than a performance at Diana Wortham. Audience members told Flynn-McIver, the director of NC Stage, that they prefer seeing his productions in his own space rather than at the Diana Wortham. The

audience is closer to the actors, so at NC Stage it is easier to convey a feeling and tell a story.

> As a performer, I've noticed the same thing performing a play here and performing the same play over at the Wortham. For me, it's like, here, it's like touching the accelerator and you get an immediate response from your car. Over there, it's a little sluggish, because you touch the accelerator and it takes half a second to a second to feel the motor engage. So you do something, and it happens instantaneously here and you do something over there and it takes a little bit for the information to get to the audience and for their information to get back to you. So, a lot of our people, when they have the choice to go see something over there, will say "I guess I liked it better at your place. It felt more immediate and more tangible." (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

The NC Stage performance space has a different feeling, based on its size and arrangement, than larger theaters in Asheville. Giles and Susan Collard also prefer their small 60-seat black box theater, called the BeBe Theater, for their dance performances. They find it more gratifying to perform in a packed small theater, then a large venue half empty. "Psychologically, it works a whole lot better for the dancer and the audience" (S. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009). The small size allows all the audience members to be close to the dancers.

> Susan: We have a very intimate theater here. We do work that is totally intimate here, that works really well in the space and you take the same piece and put it on the stage at Diana Wortham and it won't work.
>
> Giles: Its just too big.
>
> Susan: At Diana Wortham we're separated from the audience, and we're separated by bars and they're out there. Here, you can touch them. They're real. (S. and G. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009)

This makes certain performances work better there, although some performances would not work as well in the same space. Flynn-McIver said that certain plays were too big for their space, since the acting area was relatively small. They can never produce plays with large casts or ones that require elaborate sets. There is simply not enough room (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010). Likewise, another dance troupe in town, Terpsicorps, could not perform at the BeBe Theater. According to Terpsicorop's artistic director, Heather Maloy, they need a larger stage for their work (H. Maloy, personal communication, May 11, 2009). Terpsicorps' choreography is larger and moves around a lot. It needs a large stage. It also has less need for that intimate feel that the Asheville

Contemporary Dance Theater requires. Terpsicorps performs at the Diana Wortham Theatre, and Maloy feels that that stage and seating capacity are both a good size for their work. So, we can see that having a choice of performance spaces of quite different sizes has allowed two dance companies, with quite different artistic penchants to prosper in Asheville.

The cost of performance space also plays a role in determining the variety of art in Asheville. Having different price points for rental spaces gives options to groups with different budgets. Most start-up groups have very little to spend on a performance. Most start-ups are also innovative and edgy. They do not need a formal, professional space; a reasonable price point is more important to them. For other, more established groups the cost of renting a space is less important, but having a professional space is essential. For example, one could not imagine the Asheville Lyric Opera performing at the BeBe Theater, one of the venues available for rent at a low cost. The opera needs a large space that is prominent and accessible. For that organization, the Diana Wortham makes a perfect home. To have a variety of performing arts groups, having a variety of rental fees is important. This is more significant, obviously, to the groups working on a tighter budget. Yet, if there were only inexpensive places to rent, the more professional groups would be at a loss. The professional groups want prestigious, formal spaces, and they are willing to pay for it.

Most gallery owners said that downtown gallery space all cost about the same amount; being able to find a cheap space downtown is not an option. Because of that, the cost of gallery space has less of an impact on the variety of visual art seen downtown. The location was more important to them. However, there is still a connection between cost and the diversity of art shown. There is a large contingent of artists selling art out of their studios in the River Arts District, where inexpensive studio space can be rented. These artists are perhaps less accomplished, or, like Wendy Whitson, enjoy meeting the people buying art (W. Whitson, personal communication, May 8, 2009). Not all artists are like Whitson; some want to focus on their work without interruptions from visitors. But, for the artists that turn their studio into a combination studio-display space, cost is a big factor. They could have the same studio-gallery set up downtown, but it would cost so much more that it would be difficult to maintain. Besides, they would not get nearly as much square

footage downtown as they can afford in the River Arts District. For artists that want to have studio space that doubles as a gallery space, cost is an important factor. Having cheaper space available lets this type of artist thrive. In turn, that adds variety to the visual art displayed in Asheville.

The cost of space was also important for Laurie Corral, owner of Bookworks, a business focused on handmade books, papermaking, printmaking, and letterpress. They hold classes, exhibits, lectures, and annual events like BookOpolis and Edible Book Festival at their space in West Asheville. The type of art at Bookworks is quite different than other places in Asheville. Corral said she could not get such a large space for the price she needed downtown. Besides, her business does not really need a storefront; it is more of a destination. The fact that Bookworks may not exist in Asheville if there was not a inexpensive space to rent shows that having space available at different prices lets different types of visual arts thrive.

The nature of the space, additionally, is an issue for galleries. Several of the gallery owners I spoke with related how when they first stepped into the space, it felt perfect for a gallery. They had a hard time articulating what made it feel like a gallery, but many mentioned high ceilings and openness (C. Foley and B. Thompson, personal communications, Jan. 20, 2010 and May 6, 2009). Of course, most people looking for a gallery also wanted something that was move-in ready. They did not want to do a lot of work to turn the space into a gallery (B. Thompson and I. Lyles, personal communications, May 6, 2009).

The nature of the space, once established, shapes the type of art displayed in a gallery and, consequently, the variety of art displayed in Asheville. The way a gallery was arranged or designed spoke to the type of art displayed there. This is most evident in the fine art galleries. These spaces were very open with white walls and hardwood floors. Each piece of art was displayed so it could be seen individually, without other pieces pressing in on it. When artists look for galleries to show their work, the way it is displayed is significant. Whitson, for one, likes to visit a space in which she is considering showing work. “There is nothing like actually walking into the physical space, and seeing the other artists work, and how it’s displayed and the lighting. How are you greeted? I mean, all

these things are important to me" (W. Whitson, personal communication, May 8, 2009). Whitson works in fine art, so this aspect is important to her. For other artists, perhaps amateurs, having the art displayed on bare white walls, with perhaps only a few pieces on a wall is not ideal. In the Woolworth Walk, a converted five and dime store that rents display booths to visual artists, it is clear that the arrangement preferred by fine art galleries is not everyone's preference. The artists at the Woolworth Walk set up their work, and customers browse on their own, taking pieces to the front counter for purchase. The artwork here is a great deal less expensive than at fine art galleries. Most of the booths are packed with artwork on the walls, counters, and hanging from the ceiling. If they were expected to hang only a couple pieces in their booths, they would expect much fewer sales. By having both types of spaces, fine art galleries and the Woolworth Walk, a variety of art is displayed in Asheville.

More simply, having a variety of types of galleries adds to the variety of art. There are many craft galleries in Asheville, showing pottery, textiles and other crafts. There are blown glass galleries, co-op style galleries, fine art galleries, galleries showing only local art, and spaces showing only the work of a few artists. One of the ways that this diversity in spaces occurred was through competition between spaces. When an individual opened a gallery, he or she chooses purposefully not to show the same type of art as another gallery. This adaptive radiation forces people to find new niches within the arts scene. The space drives differentiation. Even John Cram, when he opened a space, did not replicate other galleries, including his own. He picked a niche for each gallery that was unique within Asheville.

> When I opened the craft gallery it was defined as American Crafts. I decided that wasn't going to be regional, because we had a great regional craft store, or craft mechanism in the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, so why would I want to repeat them? Then I had different things, because you don't want to show the same material that they do… and they don't want to show what I show. … Each one [of his galleries] is distinct part of the market place and have the uniqueness factor. When I opened Blue Spiral, people thought, "oh! You're opening New Morning Gallery downtown." I said, "No, no, no, no, no. Its different." This is paintings and sculpture. And craft as fine art. Each one of them holds its own niche, I think, just walking through, its very evident what's what. (J. Cram, personal communication, Jan. 21, 2010)

I heard this same sentiment from several other gallery owners. In fact, one of Blue Spiral's neighbors, the Haen Gallery, had to consider the Blue Spiral's focus. The Haen Gallery shows fine art, mostly paintings, from throughout the country, while Blue Spiral is focused on fine art crafts from the Southeast. Carol Bonds and Chris Foley, gallery manager and director of the Haen Gallery, differentiated themselves from other local galleries, including their neighbor, the Blue Spiral, by filling the niche of nationwide fine art.

> Bonds**:** They [Blue Spiral 1] have been here for so long and they're, I mean, they have a huge gallery, and they have quite a few artists. They do really well with three-dimensional work, as well as, paintings and that sort of thing. So, because they have an excellent gallery reputation, we really wanted to be different from them. If we just did southeastern artists and we were three doors down, that's just sort of ridiculous. But, we really wanted to open it to other galleries out of state, and there are a lot of galleries… there is a blown glass gallery, there is a gallery with ceramics, and each one has its own thing, and for us, the choice was to kind of stay away from the craft world, and to focus more on paintings and wall art.
>
> Foley**:** Fine art.
>
> Ahrens**:** And you did that as a reaction to the other galleries? If there were no galleries in Asheville would you still….
>
> Foley**:** My background is painting and sculpture.
>
> Ahrens**:** So you would still show similar art to what you have now?
>
> Foley**:** Yeah, I can't really speak knowledgably about ceramic pottery and its not really my interest.
>
> Bonds: I think Chris is right, that's our background. And again, there are really not that many galleries in town, if any, that are focused on that. So it kind of gives us an edge in that way. (C. Bonds and C. Foley, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

This was a successful tactic for the Haen Gallery. Their effort to avoid competition with other galleries in Asheville led them to open a unique gallery. It created more variety in Asheville's arts scene, which art buyers and browsers welcome.

> It sets us apart. People have said, 'Thank you for not having a million pieces of blown glass. I love looking at them, but I don't want to look at them in every space I go into!' It's not that we don't appreciate that, but it's nice to have something different. (C. Bonds, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

Along this same vein, owners of performing arts venues also have competition among themselves. The competition for audience members led venues to develop niches. The competition, therefore, led to an increase in the variety of performing art in Asheville. Barbara Halton-Subkis, director of cultural and special events at UNCA, saw this

correlation quite clearly. She brings in performers that would not be shown anywhere else in town, partly because she has to compete with so many other venues. She also brings in performers not seen elsewhere in Asheville because UNCA is an institution of education. The bottom line is not as important to the university as what the students will learn from the performer. Halton-Subkis developed a niche for the type of events happening at UNCA to fit an educational mission as well as compete with other performance spaces in Asheville.

> That's why I've developed this niche of, what can we [UNCA] do that no one else is going to take a chance on. No one else would present experimental musicians. Nobody else would take a chance on bringing in John Waters to talk. Turns out he was drop dead funny. No one else would take a chance on Mary Oliver, who was an exquisite speaker. I'm trying to present things here that will appeal to our students that they can't see anywhere else. That's the kind of things we're doing. And have to! The Orange Peel is down there with 1,000 spaces standing, and that's probably where students go the most. (B. Halton-Subkis, personal communication, Sept. 1, 2009)

If there were not the competition with places like the Orange Peel, UNCA would probably host more mainstream, safe performers. But, because the university has to compete with the draw of downtown, they show experimental work, effectively adding to the variety of art performed in Asheville.

Even with the competition, there is still quite a bit of collaboration within Asheville's arts scene. The venue and gallery managers find the collaboration helpful in growing audiences for all the performance spaces. Economic geographers call this an agglomeration economy. When similar businesses locate near each other, all the businesses benefit. It is an agglomeration benefit. Collaboration applies to more than just the arts. Restaurants and bars help bring audience members to performance spaces. Increasing the size of the audience will be discussed more in a later section [see Diversity and size of audience base].

An interesting aspect of collaboration I saw from many informants was the idea of locating a performance venue near an existing, well-established space. This allowed the new space to feed off the success of the established one. By allowing new spaces to benefit from the success of existing spaces, more variety crept into the arts scene. It is very difficult to establish a new performance space, for example, a new gallery. Many galleries

open and fail within a couple years. These new galleries are likely showing something different from other galleries in town, for the reasons I explained earlier, and since it is in the interest of the arts scene to have more variety, it is also in everyone's best interest to have new galleries survive. Locating a gallery, or any performance venue, near a well-known space helps it survive. This creates synergy, as well as allowing the new gallery to receive spillover customers from the established gallery. The Haen Gallery, for example, picked its location to pull in customers headed to the well-known Blue Spiral, as John Cram pointed out.

> Our friend down at the Haen Gallery said to me more than once, he has been opened for two and a half years, he said "Its very intentional that I opened next to you, because I get this spill over. People who are art-minded are attracted to you, and they see me, of course." And that is the synergism, and that's good, that's what its about. (J. Cram, personal communication, Jan. 21, 2010)

The performing arts had the same thing happen. John Atwater opened Mo-Daddy's in part to feed off the success of the neighboring Orange Peel.

> Having the Orange Peel next to us helps a lot. If there's something going on there, we benefit, mutually, actually. Its kind of been the quiet end of the street, for years. People are starting to come this way, and walk down to the Orange Peel to check out what's going on there. (J. Atwater, personal communication, Sept. 14, 2009)

Atwater's plan for Mo-Daddy's was to offer an intimate venue for music, something he felt Asheville was lacking. He said the other 'intimate' music venues in town were typical bars with music as an afterthought. Those types of places have small stages that seemed like an addition instead of something that was there from the start. He wanted a different kind of space, where music, in an intimate setting, was the focus (J. Atwater, personal communication, Sept. 14, 2009). In other words, the venue added variety to the music scene, and a major part of its success was its proximity to the popular Orange Peel.

Location in an active part of town, not necessarily next to an established space, also helped performance spaces thrive, thereby adding to the variety in the arts scene. Most galleries wanted to open downtown on an active street so they would get a lot of foot traffic. This was also true for bars and restaurants that hosted lived music. Other performing arts spaces could be in less obvious locations. NC Stage, for instance, sits at the end of an alley "adorned at both ends by dumpsters" (C. Flynn-McIver, personal

communication, Jan. 20, 2010). That kind of performance space is more of a destination, so it is able to thrive in an out-of-the-way location.

A lack of space for a particular form of music or art prompted the creation of at least a few performance spaces. This is slightly different than a gallery deciding to diversify away from what is already shown in Asheville. This happens when there is a need for performance space for particular type of art. For example, Izzy's Coffee Den began hosting experimental music because, as the barrista told me, there was nowhere else in town for that kind of music to be heard (personal communication). St. Matthias Episcopal Church hosts a classical music series. There were several reasons why this church began hosting concerts. Ron Lambe, organist at St. Matthias, started the series because he thought the space was great for chamber music, and he wanted to raise money to maintain the church building. However, one of the main reasons the series grew so much was that there was not another space in Asheville that hosted small chamber and amateur classical musicians (R. Lambe, personal communication, Sept. 14, 2009). The series at St. Matthias and Izzy's Coffee Den are examples of variety being added to the arts scene based on a need for performance space for a particular type of music. Even though the church already existed in a form suitable for performance, it was not until there was a need from musicians that it was utilized as a music venue.

Quality of Art

New York City, certainly, has the best arts scene in the United States. It also has the highest quality art in the country. A vibrant arts scene could exist without high quality art, but in most people's minds having good art is important. How do performance spaces shape the quality of art? Asheville suggests that the most important aspect is having desirable professional space available. By professional space, I mean space that is respected and well established in its field. Professional space allows artists to be taken seriously. Professional performance space can come in many forms, and it certainly does in Asheville.

For Asheville arts groups, having professional space available lets them assert their quality. Jan Milin said the type of space that the Asheville Choral Society performs in is

important: “Absolutely, I think professional spaces legitimize groups. They really do. You’re not doing it in somebody’s basement” (J. Milin, personal communication, May 5, 2009). They perform at Diana Wortham and churches in Asheville. I heard this same idea from Susan Collard referring to the Asheville Contemporary Dance Theater performing at the Diana Wortham Theatre. She said, “you need to be in there once in awhile to be credible” (S. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009). This group prefers performing at their own BeBe Theater, but they see the importance of being in a more professional space. The space testifies to the high quality of their work.

Having professional spaces also allows higher quality touring groups to visit Asheville. The Orange Peel, for example, brings in many great music groups that would not otherwise perform in Asheville. It has gained a good reputation, making it a desirable place for bands to perform that may normally play at larger venues. Why do bands want to perform at the Orange Peel?

> We’re scrupulously honest with bands. If there is a nickel on the table and it belongs to them, they get it. Which, we’ve discovered, is not always the case in the music business. We get really good crowds at the club. There is a very nice relationship between the stage and the floor. So it’s really easy for the band to feel very, very connected to the crowd, which is a plus for the crowd, but its also a plus for the band. There is an energy that is created from the positioning of the band and the fans, and they really like it. We get that over and over. We’ve actually had bands who under play, you know, they could go to the Thomas Wolfe and play to [an audience of] 2000, and they started asking if they could play two nights at the Orange Peel, because its more fun for them. Their fans have a better time, they have a better time. (K. Ramshaw, personal communication, May 11, 2009)

By creating a desirable and professional performance space, the Orange Peel can attract higher quality performers. The previous quote reveals that is it actually aspects of the space, combined with the professionalism of the staff that makes the venue desirable.

Additionally, it is the size of the Orange Peel that allows it to bring in great groups. It is a large venue, even if it is not as large as Thomas Wolfe. It can attract high quality musicians with its capability to attract a large audience. With a good reputation and large capacity, better and better bands can be attracted to the venue, thereby increasing the quality of music in Asheville’s scene. Asheville may also be located advantageously between other major cities, making it a good stop over for national acts.

This is true for other performing arts venues as well. NC Stage has a reputation for high quality theater, and the space is set up specifically for theater. It is not a multi-use venue that needs to host music as well as theater or any other type of performance. This makes it attractive, obviously, to theater groups. NC Stage hosts the Catalyst series, which brings in local theater troupes that do not have their own venue. Flynn-McIver wants actors and theater groups that participate in the Catalyst series to think of the theater as an artistic home, that they have freedom to try new plays and push the envelope artistically.

> We try to instill that in as many of our Catalyst groups as possible: that they feel that this is an artistic home for them, and we do the same thing for our actors. It's like the woman I was telling you about from Knoxville. It's our hope that she feels that this is an artistic home for her. So that if she has a project she wanted to do… 'I've always thought about doing this play. Have you guys thought of it?' Yeah. It is a venue, but it's our venue and our influence on it is sort of palpable. I would rather have my crappy-ass little theater and it would be mine, and have people know me and my company, than be a renter with two dozen other groups at a state of the art place. I would lose my identity. I would no longer be viable. (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

Having a space as an artistic home allows for risk taking, which is what makes good theater. As the artistic director of NC Stage, Flynn-McIver has an influence on the work performed in the space. Something a manager of a purely rental space does not have. He has made his theater into a space that shows quality and cutting edge work. Flynn-McIver has made his space one where you can produce edgy plays, something that cannot be done at all theaters.

> And we have several people at Flatrock that feel this is their artistic home outside of their own venue, because there are certain plays that we could get away with doing [here] that they could never get away with doing [at Flatrock]. Because their patron base is all 80-something years old, and they depend on doing comedies and musicals and mysteries. Lots of farces down there. They could never get away with doing *Beauty Queen of Nan*. Never ever, ever, ever. We got away with it fabulously. People loved it. They would have riots down there. (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

High-end galleries attract high-end art. The high-end galleries in Asheville make themselves that way, in part, by making the space conducive to the display of fine art. I discussed how a fine art gallery is distinguished from other galleries in the section on variety of art, but it deserves another look in this capacity. Fine art galleries usually have white walls, wood floors, and high ceilings. The art is displayed in a manner so that it each

piece can be viewed individually. The managers of the high-end galleries I spoke with had clearly thought about how they wanted their space arranged more so than at other galleries in Asheville. Chris Foley, gallery director of the Haen Gallery, said that in his space,

> You can focus on a piece, it's not crowded. Everything doesn't run together. There are angles in the gallery. That's very important. Instead of a straight line, you want to be able to turn the corner, go around something and look. Have a wall have another side to it, have a back to it. That way, people aren't just shuffling to the side. (C. Foley, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

This kind of space indicates to artists and customers that it is a high art gallery. By arranging the space in such a way, the gallery can attract high quality artists, amplifying the quality of art in Asheville's arts scene.

Presenting high quality art is important to the vibrancy of an arts scene. Having a good reputation, based at least partially on having quality art, will attract people looking for art, both from within and outside the community. Remember, the arts scene is the quantity, variety and quality of art being displayed or performed publicly and the diversity and size of the artist and audience base. Now I will turn to space and the audience.

Diversity and Size of Audience Base

A performance could not exist without an audience. Even more relevant to this discussion, performance spaces would be pointless without an audience. While this is especially the case for-profit spaces, even non-profit places could not survive without an audience. Some non-profit spaces, such as the Asheville Area Arts Council Gallery and the galleries at UNCA, could probably continue without an audience, although it is not preferred. Every kind of art needs an audience, needs someone to react to the art. An audience gives prestige to a performance, serves as a way to educate the public and makes the artist feel that they are being heard in the community. Most performance spaces, however, need an audience for funding. This includes spaces that sell tickets and galleries that sell artwork.

Aside from funding a performance space, audiences are integral to a performance itself. Artists, musicians and actors want to have their creative work seen and heard. In the performing arts especially, the audience adds to the performance. Musicians often talk about the energy of the crowd. Actors work at creating a connection with the audience.

David Wiles wrote that there are three main relationships in theatrical events: between performers, between audience members, and between performer and audiences (Wiles, 2003). If there were no audience, two of the relationships would not exist. The audience is integral to the actual performance.

The size and diversity of audiences can indicate how vibrant an arts scene is. Low audience numbers point to a dull arts scene. There would probably be fewer performances as well, because so many performances and performance spaces are dependent on audience members. The diversity of the audience also contributes to the arts scene. If only one class of people attend performances, the arts scene would likely lack variety and interest. Also, it is important to let people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds within a city participate in the arts scene. Having a connection with culture, either cross-culturally or with one's own heritage, often happens through experiencing and participating in the arts.

Asheville's performance spaces illustrate how the size and diversity of the audience base for an arts space influences the arts scene. I will discuss the size of the audience base first, followed by how performance spaces influence the diversity of an audience.

Similarly to how the size of performance spaces shapes the quantity of art in the arts scene, one of the biggest factors affecting the size of the audience at any performance space is the size of the space. Larger spaces attract more people, and can hold more people. This pertains especially to performing arts venues, where the capacity is often listed on the website and discussed in my interviews by venue manager.

Size is often considered when looking for a space to open a performance venue. For example, the Firestorm Café, which hosts a variety of performances, rented a space larger than they originally planned, so they could hold more events, and bring more people into their space (K. Donovan, personal communication, Sept. 21, 2009). When Public Interest Projects opened the Orange Peel, they looked for a lot of specific characteristics in the venue. What was the most important factor?

> First of all, it was large enough so we could have a reasonable capacity; we were looking for something 750 or 1200. A lot of that is so you can make the numbers work to get a band to come through Asheville, which is slightly off the beaten track. You have to be able to pay them enough money to make it worth their while, and you can't afford to do that unless you sell more tickets. So, the size of the building was important. (K. Ramshaw, personal communication, May 11, 2009)

By opening the Orange Peel in a space that could accommodate a large number of people, they increased the size of the audience base of the arts scene.

A large space allows more people to participate in the arts scene; a space too small can limit the number of audience members. Barbara Halton-Subkis said that UNCA needed a larger performance space. Shows in their largest venue, the Lipinsky Auditorium, often fill to standing room only or sell out (B. Halton-Subkis, personal communication, Sept. 1, 2009). Instead of advancing the arts scene through open opportunities, a constricted space turns away audience members. Sell outs were also mentioned at the BeBe Theater and NC Stage. Both of these spaces are small and produce shows with longer runs. Even so, they sometimes sold out or placed last minute seating cushions on the floor to accommodate audience members. Flynn-McIver said NC Stage had been toying with the idea of moving to a bigger space, in part so more people could attend their plays (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010). Turning people away from a show is always avoided, but it also indicates that the arts scene in general, and the popular space in particular, are doing well.

Aside from simply having a larger capacity, the bigger spaces are destinations. Large spaces can hold more art, get big name performers and have a strong presence.

> Why did I use places so darn big? Why is New Morning 12,000 ft, why is this [Blue Spiral 1] 12,000 ft., which is huge for a gallery! Well, we live in a very, very small town. And, think about why this is such a tourist town, because there is a very, very big home. Biggest in the country, yaddy, yaddy, yah. Big attracts! These places become destination points for people who are looking or buying, and I kind of grew my businesses to a point that they are almost unmanageable. Big makes you a destination, destination brings traffic. (J. Cram, personal communication, Jan. 21, 2010)

Cram used big spaces not only so he could show a lot of art, but also so he could pull in a lot of audience members.

Not only does a large size make a space a destination within Asheville, but it makes Asheville a destination. I heard from the managers of large performing arts venues that an important part of their audience came from outside Asheville. Large spaces create extra-local audiences. Managers of most of the smaller venues said their audience was almost exclusively locals. Audiences at the large spaces were, of course, by and large locals, but people came from out of town to see shows there as well. The Orange Peel, for instance,

has a wide regional draw. Customers who buy tickets online for the Orange Peel are tracked to see where they live. Last year 90,000 tickets were sold to the venue; 60% of those were sold online. A third of those buying tickets online, about 29,000, were from people who drove over 120 miles to see a show (K. Ramshaw, personal communication, May 11, 2009). People come from such a wide area because the Orange Peel is a desirable venue to see a good band. It is smaller than where a fan might normally see a band, and Asheville itself is a desirable place to visit.

> People come from the Tri-Cities, a lot of college cities, like from Boone. We have a lot of people that drive up from the Charlotte area. We have people that come over from Knoxville to see a band. There are a couple reasons. We're a small venue for good bands. So, a lot of folks would rather drive a little further to see them in the Orange Peel with 942 people, than see them 45 minutes away in a seated venue of 2000, like what would be the equivalent of the Thomas Wolfe. It's just a different experience. And Asheville is a draw. People go out to eat, and hang out. They just like Asheville. I think the first time they come, they come for the band. Then they think it's a really cool place. (K. Ramshaw, personal communication, May 11, 2009)

Ramshaw stressed the fact that the Orange Peel is a comparatively small venue. It is large in Asheville, making it a destination within the city, but small compared to venues in other regional cities, which also makes it a draw for audience members. The Diana Wortham, another fairly large venue within Asheville, also attracts people from outside the city. About 15% of the customers at the Diana Wortham are from outside of Asheville's metro area, according to John Ellis, which translates to roughly 3-5% of the sales (core customers attend multiple shows, and out of market customers likely only come to one show),

> But, if they are 3-4-5% of my business that's a crucial part of your business, and so we can do things here in Ashville, we did a week long run of the off Broadway show "My Mothers Italian, my Father is Jewish and I'm in Therapy" and we had people from 18 different states, from Maine to Florida to California. Sometimes we will have someone come here to see Arlo Guthrie and a lot of them will say, 'give me another reason to come to Ashville, give me an excuse.' (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009)

The Diana Wortham hosts performances by Terpsicorps, among other groups. Director Heather Maloy said that while most of their audience is made up of locals, they have a lot of people from out of town on their mailing list. People come to Asheville just to see one of their shows (H. Maloy, personal communication, May 11, 2009). Performance

spaces draw audience members into the arts scene. The large spaces are able to grow the size of Asheville's audience by attracting people from outside the city. As my informants said, people will come to Asheville first to see a specific show, then they look to the performance spaces as excuses to visit Asheville again.

The location of the performance space also impacts the size of an audience. Venue managers were often concerned with audience members being able to easily find the performance space. What was the second aspect Ramshaw mentioned when she described searching for the Orange Peel's space?

> For us, the location. We were definitely looking for something downtown. We weren't that interested in anything outside of the downtown core. We needed it to be on a primary street. Asheville is a tourist town, and a lot of people come from out of town, and we knew we would have to draw from out of town to make it work, so people had to be able to find this. (K. Ramshaw, personal communication, May 11, 2009)

The proper location guarantees that audience members will be able to find the space. This is a very basic issue regarding audience participation in the arts scene.

Location is especially vital for galleries to pull in audience members. Most galleries rely on out-of-towners for their customers, so locate where tourists can easily find them. Furthermore, galleries need to be located where there is a lot of foot traffic. Carol Bonds felt the location of the Haen Gallery on a main street in the CBD has been significant in attracting customers.

> I think our location downtown [is important], and where it is downtown. There were a couple galleries that had a really hard time because they were on downtown streets that weren't main drags. I would say that 50% of the people that come into the gallery are people that just happened to be wandering by. And that includes the people that are buying from us, too. There are a lot of people that come in and say, I was just walking around today, I wasn't intending to get anything, but I just saw this and I couldn't help myself! It really seems to be a lot of people, you know, they are walking to the bakery, or wherever. (C. Bonds, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

She brought up this sentiment again when explaining her decision to let her membership with the Chamber of Commerce expire. She felt the Haen Gallery's location was better than the chamber's.

> It just wasn't doing anything for us. We had flyers down there, but it seems like our location is a much better marketing tool than… actually, the Chamber of Commerce is in a weird location, it's not downtown. It's across the way over there. So people

> are more likely to stumble into the gallery than they are into the Chamber of Commerce! (C. Bonds, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

Gallery representatives in Asheville saw their location as an important way to attract audience members. They felt it necessary to be located downtown, and most wanted to be on main streets. Unless the gallery was a destination or had a non-tourist audience base, like the galleries at UNCA, it was important that the space be downtown. Their location was their best tactic to pull in customers. The only alternative was to be in the River Arts District, which also draws a lot of foot traffic. Both the River Arts District and downtown have an accumulation of art galleries, which is significant. A cluster of performance spaces is a destination, which attracts more audience members to all the spaces.

Many informants stressed that they wanted to grow their audience, and the best way to do that was to collaborate with other performance spaces in town, much as the River Arts District did. That area started with individual artists owning and renting studio spaces. Now there is a formal group, the River District Artists, that organizes studio strolls and does marketing. By collaborating, they increase the audience for everyone. This is true for the rest of Asheville as well. Karen Ramshaw helps groups that may be considered the Orange Peel's competition. For instance, she allows the Diana Wortham Theatre to put up posters at the Orange Peel. “I think the way to really make an arts city is for people to collaborate and share audiences, because then everybody grows their audience” (K. Ramshaw, personal communication, May 11, 2009). John Ellis at Diana Wortham agrees, “The idea is you’ll all be better off growing the market rather than fighting for your share” (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009).

Collaboration and audience growth extends beyond the arts to other types of businesses. Having a variety of businesses clustered together can increase the audience for all the spaces. This creates a district affect where there are multiple reasons to go to a location; there could be a combination of restaurants, shops, and galleries. The district affect is different from an agglomeration benefit where similar business group together. The district affect has a variety of businesses, giving more reasons for visitors to spend time in the area. Wendy Whitson, a painter in the River Arts District, said that the

restaurants and cafes in the area have created the district effect and help draw in more customers.

> That fact right there, adding the restaurants makes it more of a destination, because, 'Hey! We can have lunch.' And we can go walk around and see some art. It's more of an outing, a complete outing when you can have these little rest periods and food, and they serve beer and wine and that's great too. …Yes, see, we have after-hours activities here too now! (W. Whitson, personal communication, May 8, 2009)

I heard this same idea from managers in the Grove Arcade. People will go there for lunch and end up buying a handmade craft. Or they will make a special trip to the yarn store, and stop for lunch. By working together, and building off one another, all the businesses and performance spaces within Asheville can grow their customer base. Phil Atwood at the Asheville Community Theater had also felt that a variety of businesses helped draw in customers.

> Everybody depends on everyone else. People come for the brewery scene and help out the restaurant people; maybe they come to one of our plays [at the Asheville Community Theater]. They come for the experience. We're the same way, we attract certain people, and they go out for dinner before the play. There is all of that interplay, and that's why it's really important that everybody is supporting everyone else. (P. Atwood, personal communication, May 3, 2009)

All my informants stressed the importance of collaboration among performance spaces. Carol Bonds pointed out an important aspect behind this collaboration:

> Because we're all here, people want to come and do the gallery walk. You can't do a gallery walk with one gallery. So, we all kind of add to that. The reputation that Asheville has is because we're all here. And we're all within walking distance. (C. Bonds, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010)

She sees clustering as an important part of what makes the collaboration between performance spaces. This goes back to location influencing the size of Asheville's audience base.

The total size of the audience base is important to the arts scene, but so is the diversity of the audience. A vibrant arts scene will have more than one type of person attending performances and viewing art. A city wants people of different ages, ethnic groups and economic classes participating in the arts scene. Audience diversity can be influenced by several factors, including the nature of the space, location and size of space.

Audiences are different at different venues. Audience members had certain performance spaces they frequented, and would not necessarily follow an arts group to a

new location. For instance, when NC Stage took their plays to the Diana Wortham to perform in a larger venue, the audience did not follow (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009). Customers tend to go to places they know. They build a relationship with a performance space.

> The conventional wisdom is that brand loyalty doesn't exist anymore. Everybody will be a shopper and they will go to what's being offered. They don't care about the venue or the space. But, I think the smaller venues build up a relationship with their customers, and therefore, in a town like this where there are 40-60 restaurants, people may go to one or two. Go where you're comfortable. I know where to park; I know where the restaurants are. So, this area defies that idea, so there is the concept of a place or venue or personality that they will come for, and you build relationships. (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009)

Similarly, audiences would often go to a certain group's performance at a venue, but not performances by other groups in the same space. John Ellis told me about a study done with the mailing lists of 12 arts organizations in Asheville to examine the overlap between audiences. It turned out there was almost no overlap. Of about 22,000 households on the mailing lists, only two addresses were on all 12 lists, and a very small number were seen on two or more. This showed that "there are different audiences; there is no monolithic audience for an arts scene" (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009). Even in his own space, the Diana Wortham Theatre, Ellis notices different audiences. For example, the audience at an opera may not go to the main stage series, and the audience at the main stage series will not go to the operas. Even dance performances have little overlap. The audience for Terpiscorps' dance performances has only a 20-25% overlap with the main stage dance programs (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009).

Each space and each arts group has a core audience, and audiences do not overlap with other performance spaces in Asheville. So, there are multiple, different audiences. Each space appeals to a certain audience. By having the different spaces, the city can have a more diverse audience base. Likewise, Ellis pointed out that even in one venue, the audiences do not overlap. People are individuals and seek out different types of art. Having a variety of performance spaces and a variety of art happening within them has been important to create diversity within Asheville's audience base.

Performance spaces locate within their target audience. For most of the spaces, that would be downtown, since it is central to most of the city and pulls outsiders. For some

spaces, however, another location is best. Ken Visklowski opened his bar and music venue, the Rocket Club, in West Asheville. The people he caters to, the people that make up the Rocket Club's audience, mostly live in West Asheville. It made sense to locate among his audience base (K. Visklowski, personal communication, Sept. 14, 2009). By putting his performance space in West Asheville, Visklowski dictated who his audience would be, that is, the 20 and 30-somethings living in West Asheville. Likewise, UNCA's performance spaces are also located within its target audience. The performance spaces at UNCA market to students first, then to the campus community, which is intergenerational because of the on-campus Center for Creative Retirement, and finally the community at large (B. Halton-Subkis, personal communication, Sept. 1, 2009). The university knows who its audience is, so instead of managing a venue downtown, all the performance space is on campus. On occasion, the university will collaborate with another organization, like the Asheville Art Museum, in which case the performance may be downtown. For the most part, however, it has all its sponsored performances in spaces on campus. By doing so, the main audience, the students, can easily get to the performance.

The nature of the space also impacts the diversity of the audience. For instance, a large number of the music venues are bars, and most of these are limited to people 21 years old and over. This automatically limits the diversity within the venue. Kila Donovan and the other worker-owners of Firestorm Café had young people in mind when they opened their community event space. They tried to make it a place for all age shows.

> There is a need that we're not totally filling right now, but a need for an all ages show space. Really, venues almost always put age limits, because of the alcohol thing. Because they don't make money [on the performances], they make their money selling alcohol, so a lot of times they won't let kids in. But we don't sell alcohol. A place where you can have performances, and we've got a kids chalkboard - we're totally family friendly. We wanted a place where interesting things were going on every night that did not revolve around alcohol. (K. Donovan, personal communication, Sept. 21, 2009)

The worker-owners wanted to increase the diversity within the audience of Asheville's arts scene by including teenagers and kids in their audience. To do this, they opened a café, instead of a bar. The nature of the space influenced the audience diversity.

Donovan mentioned that the feel of the café influenced who came to performances. The feel is a part of the nature of the space. Donovan said that the Firestorm Café is a

friendly environment; they strive to make everyone feel welcome (K. Donovan, personal communication, Sept. 21, 2009). Ron Lambe also commented that St. Matthias is a friendly environment. He caters to his audience, which is mostly elderly, by having a shuttle bus from the parking lot to the church (R. Lambe, personal communication, Sept. 14, 2009). This kind of detail is geared towards a particular group of people, and by having this available they are able to increase the diversity within the arts scene's audience. Bars, while certainly working to attract and welcome their audience, may discourage certain groups of people from attending a performance. For instance, women may feel uncomfortable attending a show at a bar by themselves. This is not to say that women are not at bars in groups, but the nature of the performance space, as a bar, may limit the diversity of the audience by not pulling in single women. Other types of people may feel uncomfortable in bars, such as older people, but they may also not be interested in the performance. Bars do, however, create an atmosphere to which their audience is drawn. Each performance venue adjusts the nature of its space to appeal to its own audience, which can be quite different from space to space.

Giles Collard, at the BeBe Theater, mentioned that minorities attended performances in certain places, but not others. Most informants did not talk about this aspect of their space, but if it happens in one space, I believe it happens in other spaces. Collard explained why minority populations attend performances at the BeBe Theater:

> Traditionally there are audiences that will not go into a theater because they were discriminated for the past 150 years. They're allowed to go now, but tradition says, don't go. The Latino population will come to the BeBe Theater, but they won't go to the Diana Wortham Theatre because here it's more relaxed, it's more comfortable, they can see the people close up. There, it's like you walk in and, uh, should I wear a tuxedo here, how do I dress, where do I go? (G. Collard, personal communication, May 7, 2009)

Ticket cost influences the type of people in an audience. Ticket cost results, in part, from the cost of the space. Informants often mentioned how expensive it was to perform at a place like the Diana Wortham Theatre. Most of these groups would have to pass the cost on to the ticket buyer. This would limit the number of people able and willing to pay for the performance. Most bars had to charge a cover for their concerts. Typically, the cover went to pay the band, and sales at the bar covered the venue's expenses. Covers are a necessity, but managers of the space also acknowledged that the cover deters some people

from coming to the show (J. Atwater and K. Visklowski, personal communications, Sept. 14, 2009). Other spaces, like a church or the Firestorm Café, have little or no fees, and consequently most of the performances are free. This allows people of all income levels to attend shows. This, of course, is not possible for most spaces. Additionally, there is a paradox in the ticket price; lowering ticket prices allows poorer people to attend a performance, but also reduces the perceived quality of a performance. Heather Maloy felt this paradox in ticket prices for Terpsicorps.

> Its funny here too, because if we were to lower our ticket price, first of all, I think it would be demeaning to the dancers and the level of quality we are showing. But, we would have probably a lot more young people, but a lot less older people, because they would think, well, that show must be crap because it doesn't cost all that much. (H. Maloy, personal communication, May 11, 2009)

It is not a simple equation of decreasing ticket prices to increase the size or diversity of an audience. Even so, cost does have an impact on the audience.

The last aspect of audience diversity I will discuss is the tourist audience versus the local audience. Some informants said they tried to attract both audiences; many acknowledged that they appeal to one more than the other. The galleries were more likely to mention tourists as their audience. This is why they located their spaces downtown, where tourists were likely to walk by. This is also why so many, including the River District Artists, were members of the Chamber of Commerce. Chamber membership allowed them to put pamphlets advertising their space in the visitor center, a tourist's first stop in Asheville.

Managers at performance spaces for theater and music, however, more often said their audience was mostly or entirely locals. This was surprising considering Asheville's reputation as a tourist destination. Even the spaces, like the Orange Peel and the Diana Wortham that had people come in from out of town to see a show, had more locals in their audiences. Their core audience, the ones that came to multiple shows a year, were more likely locals. The core customers are the ones that spaces like Diana Wortham try to grow, because even though they are fewer in number, they make up a higher percentage of the total sales (J. Ellis, personal communication, May 6, 2009). Other spaces, especially those like the Rocket Club and Westville Pub that were outside the downtown, said their customers were almost exclusively locals. The locals-only audience is quite different from

an audience of tourists. Attracting audience members from both within and outside Asheville adds to the total diversity of Asheville's audience base.

Chapter IV: Conclusion

Many cities are experiencing a loss of vitality in their downtown, characterized by empty storefronts and deserted streets. Arts groups can use space downtown to bring energy back to the city. Many cities encourage the arts, and often performance space plays a large role in redevelopment plans. Some scholars have divided city-implemented culturally led strategies into categories (Griffiths, 1995). These categories help define and aid in understanding how the arts are supported but should be used with caution. For instance, many revitalization projects fit into several categories. Additionally, there are many factors at play that determine which strategy a city utilizes (Griffiths, 1995). It is shortsighted to judge a city's strategies without carefully examining the existing arts scene, budget, and residents.

Carl Grodach and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris outline three strategies that municipalities use in cultural development: entrepreneurial, creative class, and progressive strategies (2007). Entrepreneurial strategies are proactive, market-driven methods guided purely by economic objectives. Creative class strategies seek economic development through promoting the quality of life and recreational amenities of a city. This attracts people, the creative class, who will, in turn, attract new economies. Progressive strategies use a grassroots and neighborhood-based approach that responds more directly to the needs of local communities and arts organizations. Progressive strategies strive to widen access to, and participation in, the arts, revitalize disadvantaged neighborhoods and bring about social unity (Whitt, 1987).

Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris found that most cities' strategies fall in the entrepreneurial category. Only large cities, like Chicago or New York City, are able to spread budget money among all three strategies. No city focused solely on progressive strategies. Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris believe there has been a shift away from community-based strategies towards entrepreneurial methods in recent years. Cities work to attract new residents and tourists, and have increasingly economic, citywide goals. Cultural affairs departments are often encouraged by their city leaders to justify their

existence in economic terms, as opposed to cultural or public good achievements (Grodach & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2007).

A portion of the literature gives these strategies a critical examination. Often only a couple of successful projects are discussed when city governments are making plans for revitalization, which may explain why cities implement the same kinds of projects (Miles, 2005). The use of similar projects makes all cities seem the same, and possibly leads to overcrowding of certain cultural industries (Griffiths, 1995). There are also critiques that question the economic benefits, specifically, the kinds of jobs that arts-led regeneration create (Griffiths, 1995). Many strategies create tourist attractions, which need mostly minimum wage employees. Another worry is that linking cultural policy to regeneration hurts other cultural development, such as taking money from education funds (Griffiths, 1995).

Scholars critique the top-down nature of city implemented culture-led regeneration projects. Such projects cause a multitude of problems. The leaders alone decide what type of arts to promote; this is usually high art or 'safe' art (Miles, 2005). Many of the experimental and thought-provoking works are not encouraged, which hurts the evolution of the local arts scene. A city's focus on high art causes only those with disposable income to use cultural space (Miles, 2005). This is one of the main critiques of these strategies; they benefit almost exclusively the middle and upper classes. The benefits are unevenly distributed, both spatially and among income groups. City leaders prefer over arching, consensus-making and conflict-free art. This sounds fine, but can actually mask a city's real culture, which may have variety and conflict (Miles, 2005; Whitt, 1987). This can be divisive among cultural groups and demeaning towards those deemed undesirable, whose art is not chosen to represent the city. Additionally, government leaders favor professionals in the field, like planners and designers, over neighborhood dwellers. This places the focus on cultural economies over local cultures (Miles, 2005). Planners end up using strategies that focus on particular districts and favor tourists over local residents. The planners fail to build decision-making frameworks that include artists and small organizations, because the planners lack clear goals and do not consider institutional alternatives for achieving cultural vitality (Markusen, 2008).

With all these critiques, how should a city use the arts for revitalization? There are basic problems involved with handling such projects. For instance, who is the audience? Where is the geographic focus? Should the strategy be focused on the production of art or on consumption, that is, increasing audience numbers? Should money go for building spaces for arts activities or for the activities themselves (Griffiths, 1995)?

There are different kinds of arts-led growth, and different ways to attract artists to a city. Some are drawn by the lower cost of living, some by the recreational activities, and others by a diverse artistic culture or an already existing arts scene. A city hoping to support the arts should look at what draws artists to the area in the first place and develop that niche (Markusen & Schrock, 2006). To attract local people into arts participation, many working in cultural fields believe cities should encourage informal arts groups. This could involve increasing funding for and visibility of informal groups, enhancing arts activities in public places, and conducting social and economic research (Graves, 2005; Wali, et al., 2002).

Arts projects are clearly significant tactics used in revitalization efforts. The space used in these projects is also significant, but the specifics are not well understood. I found that performance space shapes Asheville's arts scene in many discernible ways. Having an abundance of performance space available created an environment where a great deal of art was performed or shown. A wide variety of arts spaces allowed a variety of art to be performed. In order to have high quality art, there had to be high quality performance spaces. And, having plenty of diverse performance spaces attracted a large, diverse audience. These findings are common sense, but the many dimensions of the relationship between performance space and arts scene is the real finding.

Arts space creates an arts scene, but an arts scene also creates arts space. For example, the Diana Wortham Theatre allowed the Asheville Lyric Opera to form, but artists created the studios and galleries in the River Arts District. It is a classic chicken or the egg question. Which needs to be in a community first: the arts scene or the performance space? While I cannot answer that question, it is clear that performance space can shape the arts scene.

It is difficult to cleanly separate the qualities of the arts scene that constitute my definition. Each part can influence another. For example, the variety of art in the scene influences the diversity of the audience. Conversely, audiences can influence the type of art available. The diversity of artists in the community creates the diversity of art, and artist diversity is shaped by performance space in much the same way as the diversity of art. The quantity of art can influence the variety of art. That is, if there were very little art in a community, it would have to either appeal to a wide variety of people or alienate part of the community. With more art, each establishment is forced to diversify away from the center. Because of these kinds of overlap between parts of the arts scene, it was difficult to discuss how performance space influences only one part of the arts scene. However, it is clear that all the performance spaces impact the scene as a whole.

There were several factors that came up multiple times in the analysis of performance spaces. These included the size of the space, location, and cost. These factors influence everything from how many people attended a show to what kind of art was presented. It was not necessarily better to always have a bigger space, or a cheaper space, or be downtown. In fact, having a variety of spaces - big and small, downtown and on the fringe, pricey and inexpensive – shaped the arts scene positively. By having a wide variety of performances happening, which are shaped by the availability of performance space, a wide variety of people can participate in the arts scene.

Competition and collaboration between performance spaces also influence the arts scene. When opening a new space, competition with other spaces influenced the choice of art displayed or performed. No one wanted to repeat what was already being shown, so each would find a niche. Collaboration, on the other hand, helped new performance spaces succeed by building on existing spaces. When a new space opened it drew audience members from nearby established spaces. This was not a competitive move; in fact, the established space saw this as a way to grow their audience as well. New spaces established niches, and when enough spaces built up in a location, you see agglomeration benefits. Competition created diversity among performance spaces, while collaboration helped grow the total audience.

This study has implications for how an arts scene can be supported. Clearly, the space in which performance happens is important. When creating a new performance space, many often want a state of the art facility. This study has shown, however, that 'state of the art' is not necessarily desired by all performers. Informants rarely mentioned technology or great equipment when they discussed their space. The music venue managers would point out a good sound system, but a lack thereof did not hold back any venue from hosting good musicians. Some spaces had limitations in what could be performed, but that did not make a space unused or disliked. In fact some of this rough space was preferred over clean, up-to-date spaces. This is not to say, however, that having modern, updated performance space was not beneficial to the arts scene. Some groups only want to perform in high quality spaces, and many complained about the inadequacy of the Thomas Wolfe Theater. Having state of the art space available in Asheville is important, but not vital to the arts scene.

Having a variety of space was more important. Moreover, Asheville could use more performance space. Most informants commented on the fact that they need more space. Visual artists thought there should be more galleries. UNCA wanted a larger venue. Peggy Ratusz hoped for more nights devoted to bands at Jack of the Wood. Indeed, several spaces opened because they felt there was not a space in Asheville for a certain type of art. The addition of any performance space would benefit the arts scene, but the type of space should be carefully considered. For example, coffee shops can host certain styles of music, but not other genres. If coffee shops, but no bars, are opened to host music, the variety of music would decline. The size of the space should also be considered. It is not useful to the arts scene to have many spaces the same size.

The location of the space should be considered as well. Most galleries and venues found it necessary to locate in an area already known for the arts, like downtown or the River Arts District. A location next to a well-established performance space was desirable as well. There were spaces, however, that were off the beaten path, such as the BeBe Theater, the Rocket Club and NC Stage. These places, which focus on locals, made themselves destinations and had a positive impact on the neighborhood. NC Stage used to say it was across the street from Zambra Spanish Wine Tapas restaurant, but now that it is a

destination, Zambra says it is across the street from NC Stage (C. Flynn-McIver, personal communication, Jan. 20, 2010). The BeBe Theater is one of the few consistent businesses on its out-of-the-way street in downtown Asheville. They have made the street feel less deserted with people coming and going to dance classes and performances. Now there are a couple other businesses on the street, including Firestorm Café.

Obviously, an arts scene cannot be created, but it can be nurtured and encouraged. There are many policy conclusions regarding the importance of performance space that can be pulled from this study. A good way to encourage an arts scene is to make performance space available. Also, make sure buildings are available to be turned into performance space. This can be done by enacting policy that leaves older buildings standing, instead of being torn down. Small grants or loans could be made available to arts groups or individuals to remodel a building into a performance space. This would allow a great deal of flexibility in the type of space created, since it would allow many types of spaces to be created. Also, it would ensure that the space created would suit the needs of artists in the community, because it was designed by the artists themselves. Small grants and loans would also be a cost effective way to support the arts scene. Instead of one large sum being spent on a single performance space, smaller amounts could be spent on multiple spaces, which would add even more to the arts scene. Funding should go to the buildings instead of just the artists.

Another policy suggestion focuses on the business side of the community. Many of the performance spaces I saw in Asheville were connected to commerce. Bars hosted music, restaurants had art on the walls, and frame shops acted as galleries. By having the Chamber of Commerce or other business groups encourage their members to make connections to the arts scene, all parties could benefit. Businesses could be encouraged to make space for performance, whether that is a singer/song-writer night at a restaurant, visual art displayed in a bookshop, or a poetry slam at a coffee shop. Events like this would bring customers into their space, as well as provide performers with space to perform. Churches could also be encouraged to host music or other types of art. Churches represent perfect opportunities for furthering the arts scene. Because they already have an appropriate set-up for performance, it is a very affordable way for musicians, mostly

classical musicians, to perform in the community. This is beneficial to churches as well, by giving them exposure and having new people encounter the space.

Audience members are particular in which performance spaces they attend. I heard this time and again from performance space managers. Some audience members attend venues or galleries for their reputation. They prefer the prestigious spaces. Others enjoy edgier spaces, the ones known for pushing limits in art. Performers themselves prefer certain spaces over others, based on the type of art they do or the make-up of the audience at certain spaces. A lot of these preferences come down to the space itself. To encourage a diverse array of participation in the arts scene, there needs to be a diverse array of performance spaces. If a city wants to encourage the diversity of audiences, it should implement policies that encourage a diversity of spaces. The types of performance spaces available are clearly important to the arts scene, and it is essential that those wanting to support the arts scene understand the role of performance spaces.

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Appendices

Appendix I. Figures and Tables

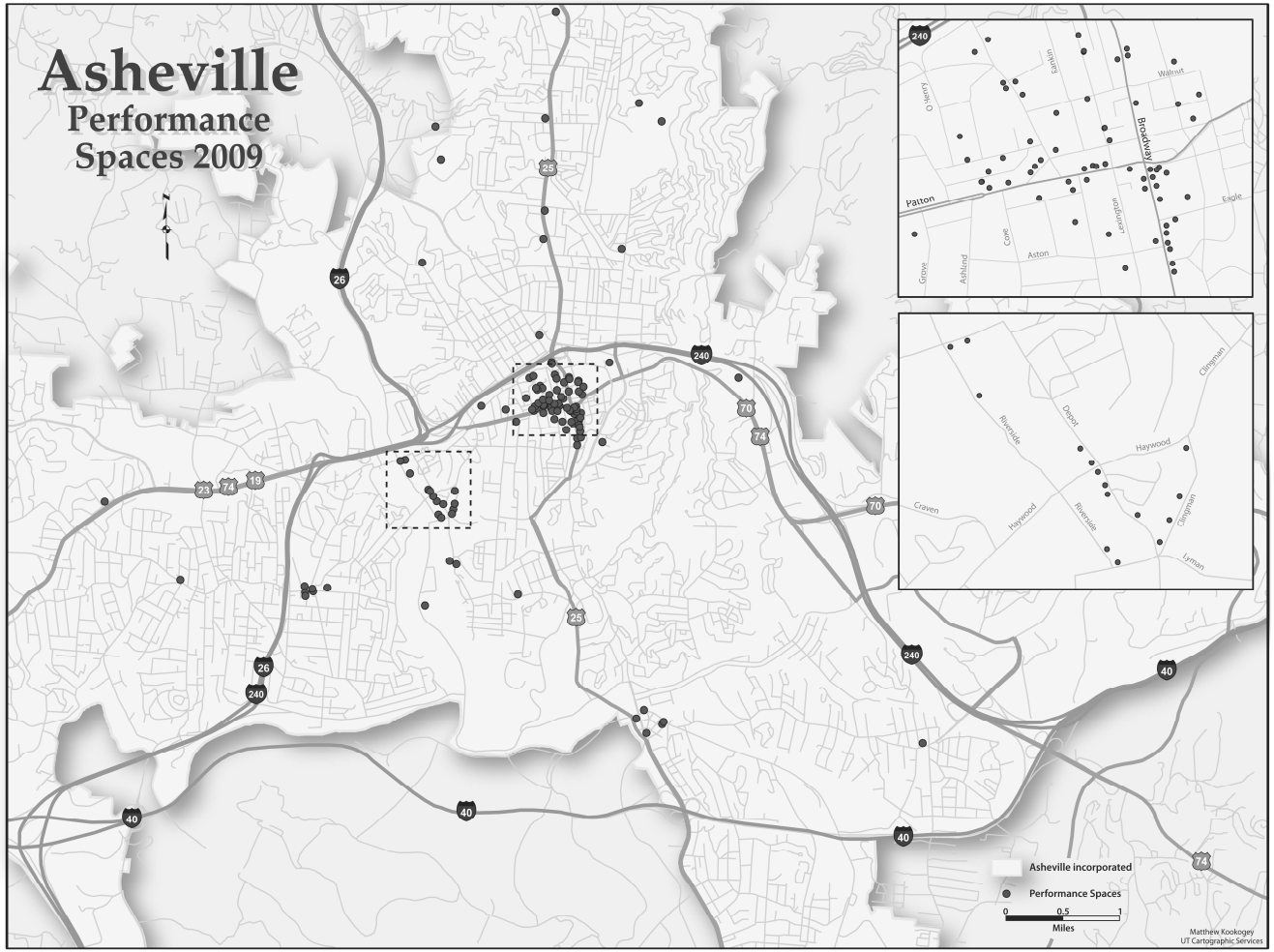

Figure 1. Asheville's performance spaces, 2009

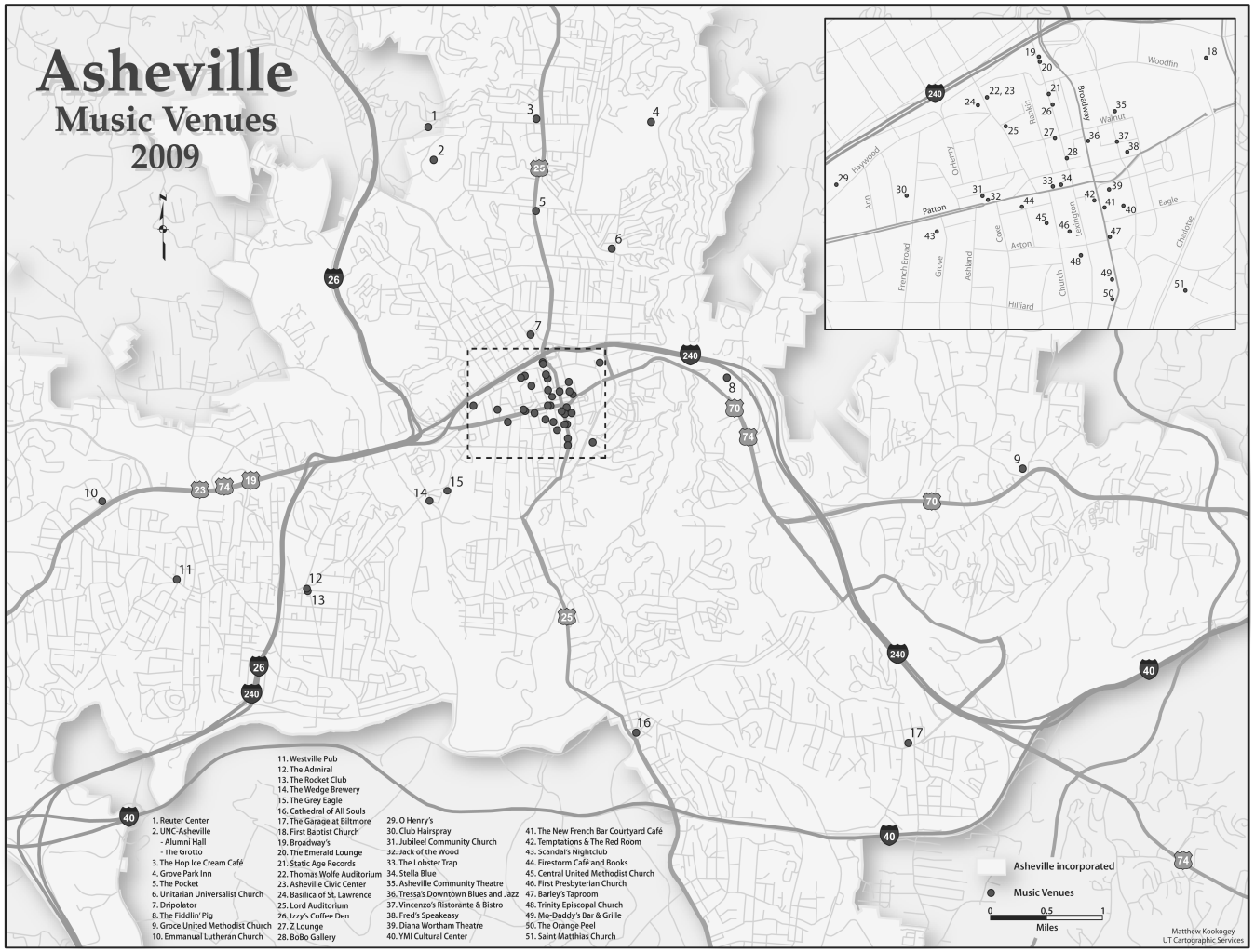

Figure 2. Asheville music venues, 2009

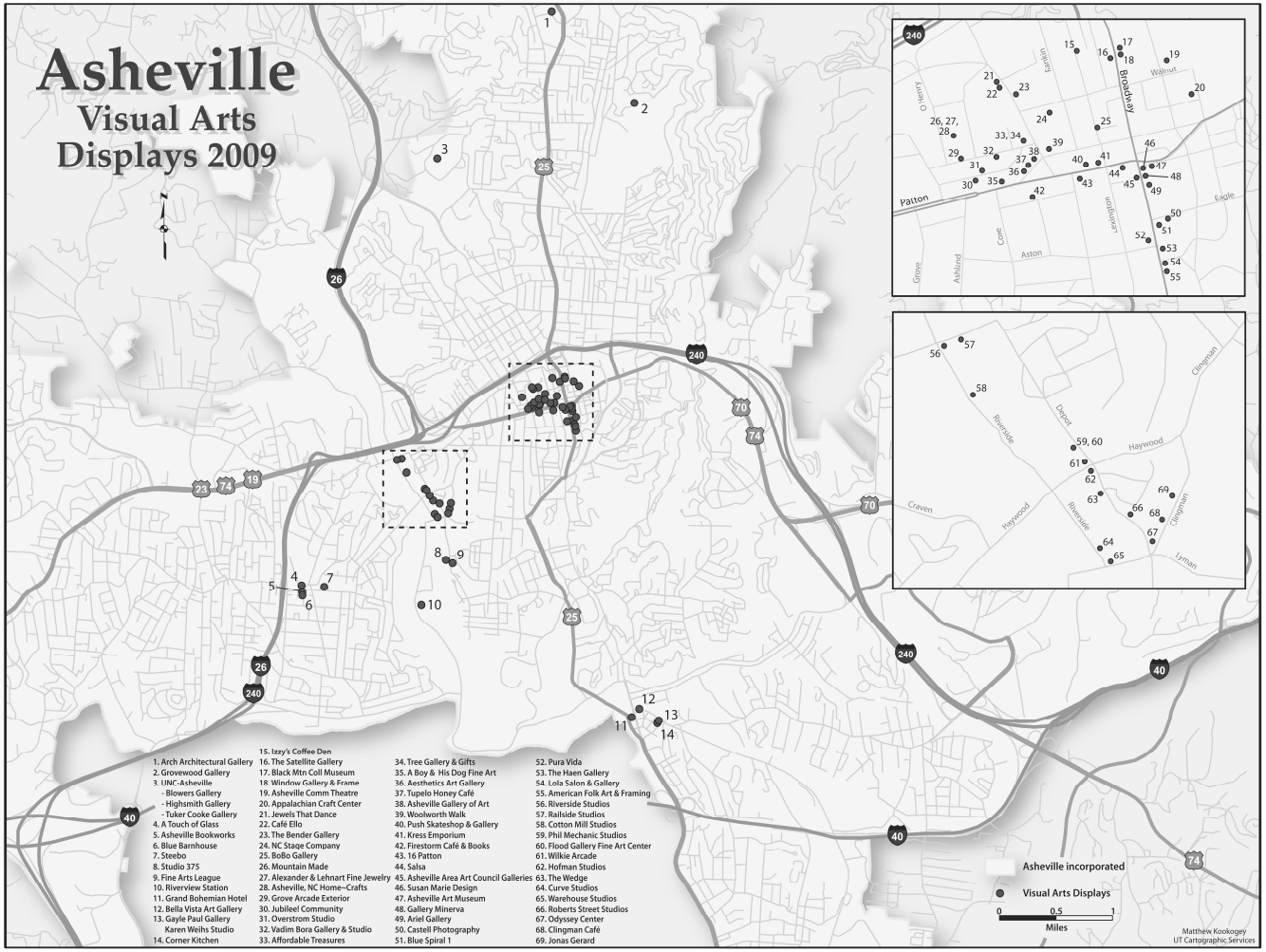

Figure 3. Asheville visual arts displays, 2009

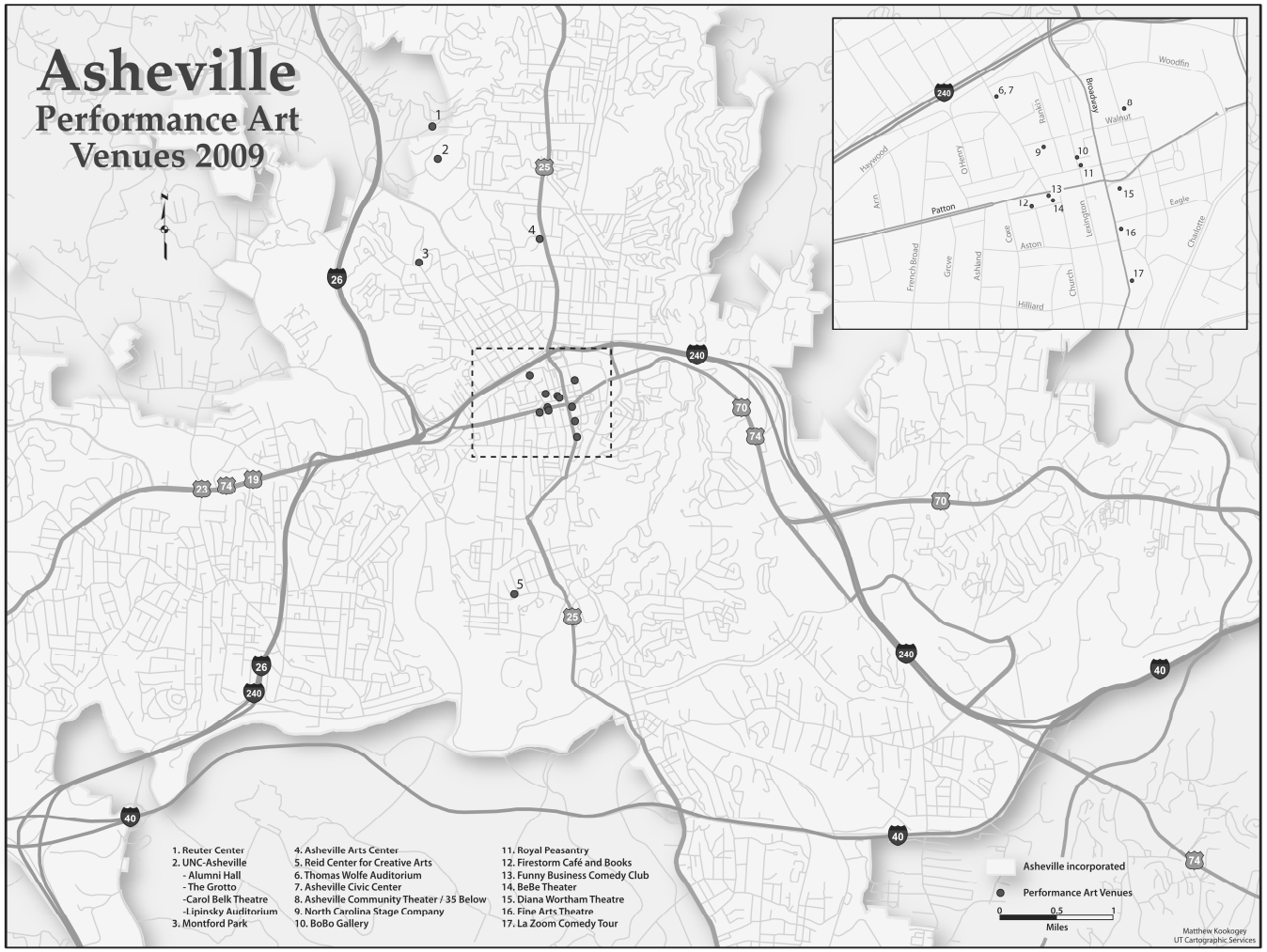

Figure 4. Asheville performance art venues, 2009

Table 1. Performance spaces divided by location in Asheville

Performance space	Types of art/performance	Address	Approximate capacity	Other/main use
Music				
Central Business District				
Asheville Civic Center Arena	music, dance, theater	87 Haywood St.	7,654	
Barley's Taproom	music	42 Biltmore Ave.	297	Bar
Basilica of St. Lawrence	music	97 Haywood St.	500	Church
BoBo Gallery	visual art, music, dance	22 Lexington Avenue	50	Bar
Broadways	music	113 Broadway St.	227	Bar
Central United Methodist Church	music	27 Church St	550-650	Church
Club Hairspray	music	38 N. French Broad Ave.	299	Bar
Diana Wortham Theatre	music, dance, theater	2 S. Pack Sq.	500	
Dripolator	music	190 Broadway #102	50	Coffee shop
Emerald Lounge	music	112 N. Lexington Ave.	95	Bar
Firestorm Café and Books	music, poetry, visual art, performing art	48 Commerce St.	49	Café, bookstore, community space
First Baptist Church	music	5 Oak St.	1200	Church
First Presbyterian Church of Asheville	music	40 Church St.	400	Church
Fred's Speakeasy	music	122 College St.	100	Bar
Izzy’s Coffee Den	music, visual art	74 N. Lexington Ave	49	Coffee shop
Jack of the Wood	music	40 Wall St.	145	Bar

Table 1. Continued				
Jubilee! Community Church	music, visual art	46 Wall Street	undetermined *	Church
Lord Auditorium	music	Pack Library, 67 Haywood St.	150	Library
Mo-Daddy's Bar & Grille	music	77 Biltmore St.	99	Bar/restaurant
New French Bar Courtyard and Café	music	12 Biltmore Ave.	100	Café
O Henry's/LaRue's Backdoor	music	237 Haywood St., 254-1891	undetermined	Bar
Orange Peel	music	101 Biltmore Ave.	942	
Scandals Nightclub/Grove House	music	11 Grove Street	450	Bar
Static Age Records	music	82-A N. Lexington Ave., 254-3232	49	Record shop
Stella Blue	music	31 Patton Ave.	360	Bar
Temptations & The Red Room	music	5 Biltmore Ave	undetermined	Bar
Thomas Wolfe Auditorium at Asheville Civic Center	music, dance, theater	87 Haywood St.	2,400	
Tressa's Downtown Blues and Jazz	music	28 Broadway St.	150	Bar
Trinity Episcopal Church	music	60 Church Street	450	Church
Vincenzo's Ristorante & Bistro	music	10 N. Market St	66	Restaurant
YMI Cultural Center	music, visual art	39 S Market St	250	Cultural center
Z Lounge and Old Europe Bistro	music	41 N. Lexington Ave.	undetermined	Restaurant

Table 1. Continued				
Non-Central Business District				
Admiral	music	400 Haywood Rd	90	
Alumni Hall	music, speaker, dance	UNCA, 1 University Heights	undetermined	
Asheville Arts Center	music, theater, dance	308 Merrimon Ave	91	
Cathedral of All Souls	music	9 Swan Street	200-300	Church
Emmanuel Lutheran Church	music	51 Wilburn Pl.	240	Church
Fiddlin Pig	music	28 Tunnel Rd.	303	Restaurant
Garage at Biltmore	music	101 Fairview Rd. Suite B	300	
Grey Eagle	music	185 Clingman Ave.	550	
Groce United Methodist Church	music	954 Tunnel Road	250	Church
Grotto	music, theater, dance	UNCA, 1 University Heights	undetermined	
Grove Park Inn (Elaine's Piano Bar, The Great Hall Bar)	music	290 Macon Ave.	undetermined	Hotel
Hop Ice Cream Café	music	640 Merrimon Ave	75	Café
Lipinsky Auditorium	music, speakers, dance	UNCA, 1 University Heights	625	
Lobster Trap	music	35 Patton Ave	97	Restaurant
Pocket	music	389 Merrimon Ave.	60	Bar/pool hall
Reed Memorial Baptist Church	music	756 Fairview Rd.	undetermined	Church
Reuter Center, NC Center for Creative Retirement	music, theater	UNCA, 1 University Heights	undetermined	

Table 1. Continued

Rocket Club	music	401 Haywood Rd.	285	Bar
St. Matthias Church	music	1 Dundee St.	200	Church
Unitarian Universalist Church	music	1 Edwin Pl.	299	Church
W.C. Reid Center for Creative Arts	music, theater	133 Livingston Street	250	
Wedge Brewery	music	125B Roberts St.	18	Brewery
Westville Pub	music	777 Haywood Rd.	195	Bar
Visual art				
Central Business District				
16 Patton	visual art	16 Patton Ave.	N/A	
A Boy & His Dog Fine Art	visual art	89 Patton Ave.	N/A	
Aesthetics Art Gallery	visual art	6 College St.	N/A	
Affordable Treasures	visual art	1 Battery Park	N/A	
Alexander & Lehnert Fine Jewelry	visual art	1 Page Ave # 126	N/A	
American Folk Art & Framing	visual art	64 Biltmore Ave	N/A	Frame shop
Appalachian Craft Center	visual art	10 N Spruce St	N/A	
Ariel Gallery	visual art	19 Biltmore Ave	N/A	
Asheville Area Arts Council Galleries	visual art	11 Biltmore Ave	N/A	
Asheville Art Museum	visual art	2 S Pack Sq	N/A	
Asheville Community Theatre	theater, visual art	35 E. Walnut St.	399	
Asheville Gallery of Art	visual art	16 College St.	N/A	

Table 1. Continued

Asheville, NC Home~Crafts	visual art	1 Page Ave, Grove Arcade	N/A	
Bella Vista Art Gallery	visual art	14 Lodge St.	N/A	
Bender Gallery	visual art	57 Haywood St	N/A	
Black Mountain College Museum & Art Center	visual art	56 Broadway	N/A	
Blue Spiral 1	visual art	38 Biltmore Ave	N/A	
BoBo Gallery	visual art, music, dance	22 Lexington Avenue	50	Bar
Café Ello	visual art	64 Haywood St.	N/A	Café
Castell Photography	visual art	2 Wilson Creek Dr	N/A	
Corner Kitchen	visual art	4 Boston Way	N/A	Restaurant
Fine Arts League of the Carolinas	visual art	362 Depot Street	N/A	Classes
Firestorm Café and Books	music, poetry, visual art, performing art	48 Commerce St.	49	Café, bookstore, community space
Gallery Minerva	visual art	8 Biltmore Ave.	N/A	
Haen Gallery	visual art	52 Biltmore Ave # 101	N/A	
Izzy's Coffee Den	music, visual art	74 N. Lexington Ave	49	Coffee shop
Jewels that Dance	visual art	63 Haywood St	N/A	Studio
Jubilee! Community Church	music, visual art	46 Wall Street	undetermined	Church
Kress Emporium	visual art	19 Patton Ave.	N/A	
Lola Salon & Gallery	visual art	60 Biltmore Ave.	N/A	Hair salon

Table 1. Continued

Mountain Made	visual art	1 Page Ave # 123	N/A	
North Carolina Stage Company	theater, visual art	15 Stage Lane	99	
Pura Vida	visual art	39-B Biltmore Ave	N/A	
Push Skateshop & Gallery	visual art	25 Patton Ave.	N/A	Skateshop
Salsa	visual art	6 Patton Ave.	N/A	Restaurant
Satellite Gallery	visual art	55 Broadway St.	N/A	
Susan Marie Design	visual art	4 Biltmore Ave.	N/A	Studio
Tree Gallery & Gifts	visual art	1 Battery Park	N/A	Studio
Tupelo Honey Café	visual art	12 College St.	N/A	Café
Vadim Bora Gallery & Studio	visual art	30 1/2 Battery Park Ave	N/A	Studio
Wilkie Arcade	visual art	97 Roberts St.	N/A	
Window Gallery & Frame Shop	visual art	58 Broadway St.	N/A	Frame shop
Woolworth Walk	visual art	25 Haywood St	N/A	
Non-Central Business District				
A Touch of Glass	visual art	421 Haywood Rd.	N/A	
Arch Architectural Accents and Gallery	visual art	1020 Merrimon Ave.	N/A	
Asheville Bookworks	visual art	428 1/2 Haywood Road	N/A	Makes fine art books
Blackbird Frame and Art	visual art	365 Merrimon Ave.	N/A	

Table 1. Continued				
Blowers Gallery, Ramsey Library	visual art	UNCA, 1 University Heights	N/A	Library
Blue Barnhouse	visual art	428-B Haywood Rd.	N/A	Custom letterpress
Clingman Café	visual art	242 Clingman Ave	N/A	Café
Cotton Mill Studios	visual art	122 Riverside Drive	N/A	Studio
Curve Studios	visual art	6 Riverside Dr.	N/A	Studio
Flood Gallery Fine Art Center	visual art	2nd Floor Phil Mechanic Studios, 109 Roberts Street,	N/A	Studio
Gayle Paul Gallery & Karen Weihs Studio	visual art	#1 All Souls Crescent	N/A	Studio
Grand Bohemina Hotel	visual art	11 Boston Way	N/A	Hotel
Grovewood Gallery	visual art	111 Grovewood Rd	N/A	
Highsmith Gallery	visual art	UNCA, 1 University Heights	N/A	
Hofman Studio	visual art	111 Roberts St.	N/A	Studio
Jonas Gerard	visual art	240 Clingman Ave	N/A	Studio
Odyssey Center	visual art	238 Clingman Ave.	N/A	
Overstrom Studio	visual art	35 Wall St	N/A	Studio
Phil Mechanic Studios	visual art	109 Roberts St.	N/A	Studio
Railside Studios	visual art	166 W. Haywood St.	N/A	Studio

Table 1. Continued				
Riverside Studios	visual art	174 W. Haywood St.	N/A	Studio
Riverview Station	visual art	191 Lyman Street	N/A	Studio
Roberts Street Studios	visual art	140 Roberts Street	N/A	Studio
SteeBo Designs	visual art	355 Haywood Rd.	N/A	Studio
Studio 375	visual art	375 Depot St.	N/A	Studio
Tuker Cooke Gallery	visual art	UNCA, 1 University Heights	N/A	
Warehouse Studios	visual art	170 Lyman St.	N/A	Studio
Wedge	visual art	111-129 Roberts St.	N/A	Studio
Performing arts (theater, dance, other)				
Central Business District				
35 Below	theater	35 E. Walnut St.	49	
Asheville Civic Center Arena	music, dance, theater	87 Haywood St.	7,654	
Asheville Community Theatre	theater, visual art	35 E. Walnut St.	399	
BeBe Theater	dance, theater	20 Commerce St.	60	
BoBo Gallery	visual art, music, dance	22 Lexington Avenue	50	Bar
Diana Wortham Theatre	music, dance, theater	2 S. Pack Sq.	500	
Fine Arts Theatre	art films	36 Biltmore Ave	several hundred	
Firestorm Café and Books	music, poetry, visual art, performing art	48 Commerce St.	49	Café, bookstore, community space

Table 1. Continued				
Funny Business Comedy Club	comedy	56 Patton Ave.	200	
La Zoom Comedy Tour	comedy	90 Biltmore Ave	38	
North Carolina Stage Company	theater, visual art	15 Stage Lane	99	
Royal Peasantry	puppetry	16 N. Lexington	20	Clothing store
Thomas Wolfe Auditorium at Asheville Civic Center	music, dance, theater	87 Haywood St.	2,400	
YMI Cultural Center	music, visual art	39 S Market St	250	Cultural center
Non-Central Business District				
Alumni Hall	music, speaker, dance	UNCA, 1 University Heights	undetermined	
Asheville Arts Center	music, theater, dance	308 Merrimon Ave	91	
Carol Belk Theatre	theater	UNCA, 1 University Heights	199	
Grotto	music, theater, dance	UNCA, 1 University Heights	undetermined	
Lipinsky Auditorium	music, speakers, dance	UNCA, 1 University Heights	625	
Montford Park, Hazel Robinson Amphitheatre	theater	park near Montford Ave.	300	
Reuter Center, NC Center for Creative Retirement	music, theater	UNCA, 1 University Heights	undetermined	
W.C. Reid Center for Creative Arts	music, theater	133 Livingston Street	250	
* Managers at the space did not respond to inquiry.				

Appendix II. Interview Questions

1. How did this performance space come about? What is its history?
2. What kind of performance happens here?
3. What is the primary use of the space? (Music, performance, restaurant, church)
4. Is this public or private space? Commercial or non-profit?
5. Rent? Cost of space (if owned)? Square footage?
6. How many groups use the performance space?
7. How often is there a performance at this location?
8. What kinds of groups perform here?
9. Do local artists perform here? What percent is local vs. non local?
10. What were the reasons for establishing this as a performance space? (size, location, ambience, cost)
11. Why do artists use this space as opposed to another space?
12. Does the space satisfy the needs of the groups? What could be changed to make it better?
13. How do performers get to use this space? (formal route, personal contacts, they created it?) Are performers ever turned down from a space they want?
14. Is there any connection between the performance space and the city government?
15. From where does funding for the space come?
16. Who is the typical audience? Are they locals or tourists?
17. Is there competition among venues?

Appendix III. List of interviewees

John Atwater, owner, Mo-Daddys Bar and Grille, Sept. 14, 2009

Phil Atwood, managing director, Asheville Community Theater, May 4, 2009

Susan and Giles Collard, directors, Asheville Contemporary Dance Theater and the BeBe Theater, May 7, 2009

John Cram, owner, Blue Spiral 1, The Fine Arts Theater, New Morning Gallery, Bellagio Art to Wear and Bellagio Everyday, Jan. 21, 2010

Andrew Davis, director of music ministries, Basilica of St. Lawrence, Oct. 26, 2009 (phone interview)

Virginia Derryberry, chair of art department, University of North Carolina, Asheville, Sept. 21, 2009

Kila Donovan, owner/worker, Firestorm Café and Books, Sept. 21, 2009

John Ellis, managing director, Diana Wortham Theatre, May 6, 2009

Charlie Flynn-McIver, artistic director, North Carolina Stage Company, Jan. 20, 2010

Chris Foley, gallery director, and Carol Bonds, gallery manager, The Haen Gallery, Jan. 20, 2010

Barbara Halton-Subkis, director of cultural and special events, University of North Carolina, Asheville, Sept. 1, 2009

Robin Rector Krupp, artist, River Arts District, May 8, 2009

Ron Lambe, organist, St. Matthias Episcopal Church, Sept. 14, 2009

Heather Maloy, artistic director, Terpsicorps, May 11, 2009

Jan Milin, board president, Asheville Choral Society; administrative coordinator, the Performance Center of Asheville, May 5, 2009

Karen Ramshaw, vice-president, Public Interest Projects, which owns The Orange Peel, May 11, 2009

Peggy Ratusz, booking manager, Jack of the Wood, Sept. 1, 2009

Brent Skidmore, director, Craft Campus, University of North Carolina, Asheville, May 7, 2009

Ken Visklowski, owner, The Rocket Club, Sept. 14, 2009 (phone interview)

Wendy Whitson, painter, River Arts District, May 8, 2009

Vita

A Spokane, WA native, Lily Ahrens received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology and Environmental Studies in 2005 from St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN. Following graduation, she spent several years in Chicago working for a biotech business journal. It was not long before the desire to pursue an advanced degree took her to the University of Tennessee's Geography Department. Upon completion of her Master's degree, Lily will return to Chicago where she will attend arts events as often as possible.