Universidade do Porto

Faculdade de Belas Artes

Reassembling the Dance Floor

*Exploring Interactions at After-Parties
in Spaces of Consumption of Electronic Music
in the City of Oporto in the years 2016-2018*

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of the requirements for the degree of
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Acknowledgments

Abstract

This thesis explores the interactions occurred during dance floor experience at after-parties involving the consumption of electronic music during DJ performances. This exploration is focused in the house music scene in the city of Oporto, Portugal, especially at the Lottus After-Hours, and it took place between the years 2016 and 2018. Resorting to ethnographic methods, such as participatory observation and interviews, this thesis discusses the dance floor experience as an act of mutual implication between different *social*, *technological,* and *material* aspects. Furthermore, the scope of this research explores the potential of design as the discipline capable to mediate between those aspects.

Through the thematic analysis of the data, this thesis *disentangles* relations and interactions among those actors into seven themes: *music, venue, audience, abilities, enthusiasm, stances* and *journey.* Subsequently, these themes are *reassembled* in four theoretical models: *the material assemblage, the social assemblage, the performative assemblage,* and *the experiential assemblage.* These four theoretical assemblages constitute our effort to explore the process of *shared agency* among social, material and technological aspects involved in the design of the dance floor experience. Finally, the four *assemblages* are *operationalised,* resulting in the proposal of a *Dance Floor Model Canvas* as an instrument for the analysis of the different factors involved in the design of dance floor experience. The aim of this model is to help other designers to *understand, modify,* and *design* similar club events and events and performances.

Keywords: After-Hours; Clubbing; Dance Floor; Design; DJ; Experience; Urban Ethnography.

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Resumo

Esta tese explora as interações ocorridas durante a experiência na pista de dança em after-parties envolvendo o consumo de música eletrônica durante performances de DJs. Esta exploração está centrada no panorama da house music na cidade do Porto, Portugal, em especial no Lottus After-Hours, e decorreu entre 2016 e 2018. Através de métodos etnográficos, como a observação participante e entrevistas, o presente trabalho discute as experiências subjetivas de *clubbing*, especialmente as de DJing, explorando a experiência na pista de dança como um ato de implicação mútua entre diferentes aspetos sociais, tecnológicos e materiais. Além disso, esta investigação explora o potencial do Design enquanto disciplina capaz de mediar entre esses aspetos.

Por meio da análise temática de dados, esta tese *desemaranha* as relações e interações entre esses atores em sete temas: *música*, *local*, *público*, *habilidades*, *entusiasmo*, *posturas* e *viagem*. Posteriormente, esses temas são reagrupados em quatro modelos teóricos: *o assemblage material*, *o assemblage social*, *o assemblage performativo* e *o assemblage experiencial*. Essas quatro *assemblages* teóricas constituem nosso esforço para explorar o processo de interação constante ou *agência compartilhada* entre elementos sociais, materiais e tecnológicos envolvidos na criação da experiência da pista de dança. Finalmente, as quatro *assemblages* são operacionalizadas resultando na proposta de um modelo (*Dance Floor Model Canvas*) como instrumento de análise dos diferentes fatores envolvidos na concepção da experiência de pista de dança. O objetivo deste modelo é ajudar outros designers a compreender, modificar e projetar eventos semelhantes e espetáculos de clubes.

Palavras-chave: Design; Clubbing; Experiência; Pista de Dança; After-Hours, Etnografia Urbana; DJ.

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Introduction

Context

Nightclubs and discotheques are hotbeds of popular culture. As centres of the avant-garde since the 1960s, they have been focal points for questioning social norms and experimenting with other levels of reality. Many clubs developed into a *Gesamtkunstwerk,* melding interior and furniture design, graphics and art, light and music, fashion and performance into a unique whole (Kries, 2018, p. 9).

Clubs like the *Dom,* in the 1960s, in New York City — called later the *Electric Circus* — where Andy Warhol under his artist name Andy Architect™ held the EPI performances; the *Maddox* in Platja d'Aro, near Barcelona — a club known for the introduction of many technological *wonders* already in the decade of 1960s; the *Space Electronic*, opened by the collective *Gruppo 9999* in the 1970s in Florence, Italy; or the *Palladium,* designed by Arata Isozaki — Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2019 — in NYC in the 1980s, are excellent examples on how clubs have triggered artistic, architectural, and technological experimentation during the last half of the last century, while demonstrating the relevance that clubbing has gained as an international phenomenon.

Even more influential, historic underground clubs like *The Loft*, the *Paradise Garage* — in NYC — and Chicago's *The Warehouse*, became pivotal spaces for the creation of house music and the development of DJ practices in the US during the 1980s. These underground clubs were also spaces for the exploration of utopian social and gender egalitarianism, considered security zones by African Americans, Latinos, persons who describe themselves as either lesbian or gay (Fikentscher, 2000p. 12), and transexual and transgender individuals (García, 2014; Lawrence, 2011). The cultural and musical

influence of these underground clubs was evident during the 1990s techno[1] and rave movement, especially — but not exclusively — in the UK and continental Europe (Thornton, 1995).

Since their appearance, the role that clubs, electronic music and subcultures play in the maintenance of youth communities and subjectivities have been subject of sociological studies (Marshall, 2009). It exists an important — but still limited — body of knowledge exploring clubs and different artistic movements around *Electronic Dance Music*. One major example of these efforts is the *Dancecult[2] Journal for Electronic Dance Music,* where different topics regarding clubs can be found, i.e. musicology, urban ethnography, and cultural and gender studies, just to mention a few. In general, studies on clubbing regard mainly English-speaking countries like the UK, the USA, Australia (in far less amount), and in the German capital, Berlin.

Yet, despite the cultural and artistic relevance of these spaces, there is still very little work regarding the relationship between clubs and the discipline of design in terms of history and legacy and in terms of how design can shape the intense experiences at the dance floor. Design studies approaching clubbing have the tendency to focus on what is *physically* evident, mainly flyers and graphic materials, leaving aside the role that other material and technological arrangements have in shaping the club night.

Another criticism to the actual context regarding the relationship between research studies in design and clubs is the lack of empiric evidence they present. With some few exceptions (s. Chapter 2), design studies on clubbing are mainly based in secondary sources of information, especially document analysis, photographs, architectural blueprints and historic interviews mainly with architects, designers and artists who participated in the design and construction of the clubs. However, there is little to no first-hand accounts about the dance floor experience itself.

Having said this, the present research explores the *dance floor experience* through the perspective of design not as a discipline constrained to pieces of furniture, decor, and the design of graphic material (Kries, 2018, p. 9), but as a discipline capable to *reassemble* the material social and technological

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[1] Here, it must be said that the origins of *techno* music is disputed in media and literature between Detroit, in the USA and Berlin, Germany.
[2] https://dj.dancecult.net/index.php/dancecult (last accessed, December 10th, 2020)

aspects of clubbing. This contribution is complemented with empirical data obtained through the implementation of ethnographic tools, such as participatory observation and interviews, carried along two years of fieldwork at after-hours parties occurred in the Portuguese city of Oporto as the main setting.

The Research Question

The dance floor experience is the result of different interactions among multiple material, social and technological aspects (Attias: 2013; Ferreira, 2008), hence no *hegemonic agency* can be assigned to DJs, music, interior decoration, drugs or social interactions as the exclusive source of the experience. Here *agency* is understood as the capacity that any aspect present in the dance floor has to exercise influence on the other aspects. In this regard, the present research echoes Ferreira's question about the relation among the different elements involved in the dance floor experience:

Does it still make sense to attribute agency to the DJ selecting the sounds or to the audience moving on the dance floor when they are both only mediators, alongside sound-reproducing machines, of the sound-movement relation? (Ferreira, 2008, p. 19)

Taking Ferreira's question one step further, the present work explores the *dance floor experience* not as a matter of *localized agency* by focusing on a single aspect present in the club — e.g. the DJ or the interior design — but as a matter of *shared agency* and interplay among different material, social and technological aspects. Our research question is:

How can we describe the process of shared agency among the material, social and technological aspects involved in the dance floor experience?

By raising this question, this thesis's primary aim is to describe the way different material, social and technological aspects of the dance floor experience influence each other, creating a network of mutual implication, moved by *shared agency* and constant interactions. Another goal is to expand the notion of design as a disciple capable to mediate among the material, social and technological factors present in club environments, influencing the dance floor experience.

Strategy

In order to achieve our research goals, we followed ethnographic methods including participatory observation and in-depth interviews. The setting for the observations were two clubs: the *Gare* and the *Lottus After-Hours* — the first known for its techno nights, while the second organises after-parties with house music. Participatory observation was an important methodological tool since it allowed us to learn from the dance floor experience not only by taking part of it, but by creating social bonds with community members while creating our own expertise about the subjective nuances of this activity. As a result of this process, we were able to establish rapport and contact with the DJs who later became our interview subjects.

This ethnographic strategy brought us to conduct the following roles: *doorman, dancer, DJ* and *researcher*. To undertake these different roles took us over two years. Chapter 6 offers a more detailed description of the data gathering process, including the methodological and ethical problems we faced and the solutions we gave to those difficulties. In this introduction, we present an overview of these roles in order to better illustrate our general strategy:

The role of the doorman. We undertook the role of doorman at the Gare club from June and until October 2016, overseeing the access to the venue in 38 events over 19 weekends, spending ca. 300 hours in the field. Initially, this position was seen as convenient in order to explore the social world of the night in Oporto since door staff is seen as experts in assigning social distinction based in economic, social, and subcultural capital, resulting in judgements of inclusion and exclusion and in the construction of a cohesive environment inside the club (Calvey, 2008; Rivera, 2010; Thornton, 1995).

This role was beneficial in terms of gaining contact with DJs, attendees and staff members; but also highly problematic in methodological ways, especially since this role forced us to remain constantly at the door while missing the events that happened inside the club, making it impossible for us to fully participate at the dancefloor experience.

On the other side, this role helped us to develop a *tool kit* of methodological strategies such as *image management* and the accumulation of our own subcultural capital. Together with the experience and

self-confidence required to handle different situations that are — sadly — *natural* parts of the setting such as toxic masculinity, discrimination, and some forms of violence. Having learned from this experience at the door, we decided to change the research setting to the Lottus After-Hours we conducted the rest of the roles.

The role of the dancer. During 2017 and until the end of the fieldwork, in 2018, we conducted participatory observations at the dance floor of the Lottus. Since social dancing is the main activity on the dance floor, to perform this role became fundamental to become a participant of the clubbing experience.

As a dancer, we paid attention to the different interactions among participants, while trying to trace if such interactions were site-specific (Biehl-Missal, 2016) meaning, conditioned by the music, the space — physical dimensions, spatial disposition of objects and speakers — or any other circumstance that can be subscribed to the environment of the dance floor. Similar to Gadir (2014, p. 42) and Calvey (2008, p. 910), rather than using a pre-decided theoretical framework to guide the fieldwork, our process aimed to create a *catalogue of interactions* and to recognize patterns of behaviours while directly engaging in the dance floor experience.

While doing so, our observations shifted among three general themes: social interactions, dance floor's atmosphere and materiality, and music. The result of these observations brought us to focus our attention in the DJ performance as the mediator among these aspects, hence, to explore the DJ performance as a gateway to understand the construction of the dance floor experience.

The role of the DJ. Once we started to focus on the DJ performance, we had to recognise our lack of knowledge on the technical nuances and vocabulary about this topic. In this matter, we were complete outsiders. Facing this situation, we undertook a 70 hours DJing course to help us acquire basic technical knowledge — between June and December 2017. Parallel to the course, and probably influenced by it, the observations focused on the DJ performance back at the Lottus became more intense.

Acknowledging that DJing requires to be executed in front of an audience, we started to play in public venues like bars and galleries, and small events like private birthday parties. These opportunities helped

us to gain understanding about how the interaction DJ-audience works. Playing in public and semi-public events required us to undertake all the preparation steps required to play in front of an audience — like music pre-selection and the preparation of music equipment. These experiences also gave us insights about the pressure DJ's have to manage the audience's musical expectations in order to not *ruin* the event. These early experiences helped us to gather *street credibility* (Bloustien, 2016, p. 231) and visibility as DJs, granting us our opportunities to play at our research setting, the Lottus.

In sum, to conduct the role as DJ worked as the *entrance door* to start understanding the process of mutual implication among technology, people's behaviour, sound, and setting occurred during the dance floor experience. Furthermore, it helped us to create rapport with our interview partners, the DJs, who knew us not only as DJ novices, but also as researchers — which is the next role to be described.

The role of the researcher. The role of the researcher was always in negotiation, and sometimes in conflict, with the other roles of *doorman, dancer,* and *DJ*. As researchers, we were required to collect the understanding of other participants at the dance floor by observing them, dancing with them — and *for them* in the case of the DJs — and by holding several informal conversations and interviews.

One of the main difficulties in conducting this role was to fully participate at the dance floor experience while constantly shifting our attention among other people's interactions, their reactions to the DJ's performance, and the spatial configuration of the club; while taking *mental notes* about all these aspects to be later recalled as field notes.

Additionally, this role required to create a *trust network* with staff members. This trust was gained by our persistent presence in the clubs, by showing genuine interest, good behaviour and by not holding any judgmental posture towards the events witnessed in clubs. More importantly, trust was granted by being open to them about our intentions to conduct research in their venues and workplaces.

In retrospect, we can confidently say that the role of the researcher was not *given* at the outset of the research, but it was learned through the process itself. Along the fieldwork we discovered that ethnographic research can hardly be seen as a process of *data mining* but as a process of *negotiation*, in

which the researcher has to find possible ways to create *honest rapport* with participants and DJs; and to negotiate access to *genuine conversations* and *dance floor experiences.*

The way we have found to conduct this role was by fostering personality traits, showing genuine interest, and learning new abilities. During the process, we created a *tool kit* consisting of strategies for *image management,* a *trust network* based on honesty and genuine interest, and the habit of constantly making reflections about the witnessed events and their possible relation with our research question. This process of constant reflection brought us to shape and ensure the in-depth interviews we conducted with ten DJs who anonymously and voluntarily gave us their time and knowledge.

Relevance

The relevance of the present work is related to the fact that the relation between Design and clubs has received little attention in design studies. This situation has been pointed out by the Vitra Museum through the exhibition *Night Fever: Designing Club Cultures 1960-Today* and the edition of the corresponding catalogue, which claims to be the first book to offer a comprehensive overview of the design history of the nightclub (Kries, Eisenbrand & Rossi, Eds., 2018).

This first and comprehensive exhibition took place during the year 2018, just parallel to our fieldwork, supporting our idea that there is an incipient but increasing interest in studying the relation between nightclubs and design. Furthermore, the content of the catalogue is in agreement with our vision of Design as a discipline capable to regulate and research the interplay between the material, social and technological aspects involved in the creation of the dance floor experience.

The use of empiric data, gathered through ethnographic means, is of relevance for the discipline of design, since it increases the catalogue of research tools and contexts available for conducting research in Design. Here the present research offers a detailed description of the various methodological and ethical challenges experienced during the fieldwork (s. Chapter 6) which can be used by other design researchers in similar contexts. Our ethnographic endeavour can also be of relevance for other disciplines such as Sociology and Cultural Studies, since it offers the perspective that Design

researchers can have while doing ethnography in clubs, possibly complementing other similar studies on clubbing.

Clubs and clubbing, in general, are less documented, probably because the *lifespan* of such spaces doesn't go beyond a couple of years, or because these spaces want to remain *underground.* In this sense, every documentation of clubbing is relevant from an historical perspective. Yet, by studying clubs and clubbing, specifically in the city of Oporto, the present research finds historic relevance for the city and it enriches the variety of countries and contexts in which clubbing has been studied.

On a final note, it is necessary to frame the present research in the current state of world emergency, caused by the pandemic of Covid-19. Along the current year 2020, this pandemic has also obligated the closure of all clubs in Portugal — including all the clubs mentioned in this work — and the cancellations of massive events such as concerts and music festivals. This has left DJs, staff personnel and many cultural stakeholders unemployed. With this obscure panorama as background, and acknowledging that just a few studies are devoted to clubbing from the perspective of design, it is possible that the present research is one of the last ethnographic accounts on clubbing as we knew it before the pandemic. In this regard, we feel *sadly lucky.* Let's hope that the future will bring us more opportunities to dance, drink and enjoy together, and why not, for new or reinvented dance floor experiences

Motivation

Recalling myself as a nineteen years old gay male in Mexico, the way to get to know other young gay people like me, remained possible by answering personal ads posted on the "lonely hearts column" on the last section of porn magazines; chat rooms over the internet; or by attending to bars or nightclubs. In the first two scenarios, the aim of contacting people remained the same: to generate romantic or sexually motivated encounters. Other types of relationships such as those based on same-sex friendship, common sport interest, cultural activities and social or political engagement were never part of my experience. Besides this, and by the time I started attending clubs (2001), the Internet was present in almost all Mexican cities but a telephone landline was needed to access the World Wide Web; wireless connection was not common, and the smartphones had not even appeared in the global market. This

was a world without dating apps, without social media networks and without information search engines.

In this world, I started attending to gay clubs seeking to meet other people who I might feel identified with, people who would fully understand my sexual orientation, people who were able to share my worldviews and beliefs while understanding the specific problems of being part of a sexual minority. What I can recall from those first experiences is that clubbing became more than a time for dancing and drinking with friends; clubbing became a political act of empowerment, a platform for expressing our intimate sexual citizenship, and it leads in many occasions to social participation and political action — i.e. volunteering into HIV prevention campaigns and participating on demonstrations in defence of LGBT+ rights. Night clubs, more specifically gay clubs, became spaces of empowerment for sexual and ethnic minorities.

But make no mistake, gay clubs were far from being sacred spaces where discrimination and the perpetuation of homophobic discourses did not exist. Even in a racially mixed society as the Mexican, segregation and racial discourses are perpetuated in many aspects of life. Concretely in gay clubs in those years, the social, economic and cultural status of the attendees were signified by clothes and music taste, degree of darkness of the skin colour, social belonging to groups, the use of slang and dance styles. All of those were actions and symbols carrying within them information to differentiate the individuals as part of specific groups. These early experiences and observations taught me how to *read* a club, meaning I learned how to consume or codify the symbolism and interactions occurred during the dance floor experience.

It was also via clubbing that I came to know techno and house music, awakening immediately my curiosity and a desire for a deeper understanding of these genres. I was fascinated by the DJ performance, by the fact of experiencing a musical set played in a continuous flow lasting for several hours within a space designed for dancing and equipped with potent and sophisticated sound systems. Those first encounters with the electronic music represented, and they still represent, an intense and fulfilling experience. Here, I also learned how to embody the dance floor experience through the act of collective dancing.

These aspects were experimented from a deeply personal perspective, transforming a simple dance floor into a space capable of merging superficiality and deeper meanings, within the physical frame equipped with specific sound technology and constituting a whole designed experience.

These personal experiences are relevant since they still trigger my curiosity on several key aspects of clubbing such as music, space, and social behaviour. This curiosity grew alongside with my studies in design, where I became aware of the relation between objects, technology and human social behaviours. Here, my enthusiasm to devote my doctoral thesis to the dance floor experience came from the combination between the positive relation I had created with clubbing, combined with my desire to better understand our material designed world — object, spaces and technologies — and its relation with our socially constructed reality.

Structure

This thesis is composed of eight chapters, grouped into three parts. Part I presents the literature review, addressing clubbing from three different perspectives:

Chapter 1 reviews different sociological studies approaching the phenomena of clubbing. The different sociological perspectives presented in this chapter help us to contextualize the type of clubs the present research is studying while giving us theoretical tools to effectively understand the social interactions at the dance floor.

Chapter 2 reviews the design of some historic venues that became influential in the development of the architectural typology of clubs. This chapter explores the material and technological arrangements present in such clubs, while contextualising the relevance that the discipline of design has in the material arrangement of these spaces.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the technical aspects of the DJ performance as the DJ tools — i.e. turntables, CDJs, MIDI controllers; the basic aspects of the house music — its metric, aesthetic and structure; and the basic DJ skills of *blending, equalisation* and *programming.* This chapter aims to create a common understanding and vocabulary around the DJ performance, describing aspects. Additionally, this chapter closes with an overview of the debate around the *authenticity* and *virtuosity* of the DJ performance.

Chapter 4 offers a summary of the most important points learned in the literature review of the previous three chapters. This chapter also exposes some theoretical notions suggesting that the dance floor experience can be seen as the result of a process based on *shared agency* among different factors, while exposing the research question and the general goals of this research while clarifying the notion of *agency* applied to the present research.

Part II is devoted to the fieldwork. It starts with a presentation of the context of the present study in **Chapter 5,** which presents an overview of the development of the rave movement in Portugal and the appearance of the clubs in the city of Oporto; and ends with the description of the Lottus After-Hours, which is the main setting of the present research.

Chapter 6 reports on the five stages of the fieldwork and it is written exceptionally in first person. This chapter offers a report of the different methodological and ethical challenges we encountered in the field and how they came to shape the data gathered and by extension the present research.

Part III encompasses the results, analysis, and conclusions into two chapters. **Chapter 7** presents the analysis and discussion of the results. It starts with the description of the methodology of analysis and then it presents the results in two sections. In the first of these sections, the dance floor experience is *disentangled* and presented in seven thematic maps corresponding to seven factors: *music, venue, audience, enthusiasm, abilities, stances,* and *journey.* In the next section, these factors get *reassembled* into four bigger themes*: material, social, performative,* and *experiential.* These *assemblages* are described and enriched with the notions as concepts from the literature review, constituting the theoretical contribution of the present research.

Additionally, in **Chapter 7**, the need and possible advantages in making the knowledge produced by the present research *operational* for the discipline of design has become evident along the research process. With this in mind, this chapter closes by presenting the *Dance Floor Model Canvas* (DFMC) as a tool to design, visualise or evaluate the different elements present in an after-party or in similar clubbing experience involving electronic music. This canvas explores the relevant aspects of the dance floor experience through a series of questions emanated from the four assemblages, *material*, *social*,

performative or *experiential.* The canvas is proposed as an aid to *understand,* and *design* similar experiences and scenarios like those encountered in clubs involving the consumption of electronic music as part of a DJ performance.

Finally, **Chapter 8** closes the present work with a summary of the work, enumerating its limitations and proposing future work.

Chapter 1. Socio-cultural Perspectives on Clubbing

1.1 Intro

The origins of contemporary clubbing can be traced all the way to the underground "club, disco, house, and garage scenes in New York and Chicago throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s" (St John, 2009, p. 2). Fikentscher (2000) documents how those underground scenes were treated as security zones by three marginalized groups of American society: "African Americans, Latinos, and persons who describe themselves as either lesbian or gay" (p. 12). More recently, scholars like García (2014) and Lawrence (2011) have offered more comprehensive reviews of the development of the club culture by including not only gay[3] and lesbian, but also transexual and transgender individuals. Some of those clubs were the *Paradise Garage* (Fikentscher, 2000), *The Loft* (Lawrence, 2013) in New York and *The Warehouse* in Chicago (Rietveld, 1998). These underground scenes also precede the appearance of the techno music in Detroit in the 1980s (Gadir, 2014; St John, 2009) and the rave[4] movement, which started in the second half of the 1980s in the UK where, conversely, the rave community was predominantly male, heterosexual and white (Thornton, 1995).

Practically since their appearance, clubbing and the rave movement have been the subjects of sociological studies foregrounding their social aspects and the role that clubs, dance music and subcultures play in the maintenance of youth communities and subjectivities (Marshall, 2009, p. 194). Given the well-established relationship between sociology and clubbing, it seemed adequate to begin the present research reviewing the literature on clubbing proceeding from the sociological arena. However — and remembering that the present research is developed in the area of Design — the focus of the present review is less on the *social* aspects of clubbing, but on *how* different sociological studies

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[3] Garcia's contribution is also remarkable for contrasting the *underground* spirit of the LGBT+ movement against another gay movement, the *circuit*; the latter being a *profit-oriented* phenomenon targeting predominant middle- and upper-class white gay males in massive dance events. For a further analysis of the *circuit*, please refer to Weems (2008) excellent ethnographic account *The Fierce Tribe*.

[4] The beginning of the rave movement was the so-called second summer of love, when massive clandestine events, raves, were organized in rural areas and abandoned warehouses in the UK. In these raves, the drug MDMA was consumed and also a new genre of music was danced: the acid house; turning the word *acid* into a term demonized by the media and used proudly by the attendees of such raves (Thornton, 1995). It is called *second* to differentiate it from the *first* summer of love, which is known as the summer of 1967 in San Francisco, which marked the hippie subculture by the consumption of rock music and marihuana.

have approached the *material* context of the club, including objects, spaces and technologies. Besides being fundamentally an exercise of literature review, the present chapter aims to explore how different sociological studies in clubbing have addressed the materiality of the club, meaning the club as technological, material and aesthetic arrangements.

After the present section, this chapter contains three main sections and an outro. Section 1.2 analyses the club as a space of *distinction*. It starts explaining the epistemological approach of *constructivism* and its relationship with the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) *Distinction*, who deals with the concept of objectification and embodiment of cultural capital. Later, the same section presents a selection of works that applied a *Bourdieuian*[5] perspective to distinct aspects of clubbing, underlining the way *value* is *assigned* to objects and technology.

Section 1.3 starts explaining the epistemological approach of the *symbolic interactionism* and resuming the work of Erving Goffman *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). The emphasis of this review is on the use of the *dramaturgical metaphor* to explain social interaction. In that section, the work of Ben Malbon (1999) serves as an example of how the *Goffmanian* perspective can be applied to a club. If section 1.2 made emphasis on objects and technology, the focus on section 1.3 is on *space* and on the way the material setting of the club is described as a *stage* for symbolic representation and performance.

Section 1.4 presents a review on the use of pharmaceutical technologies in clubs, a common topic represented in sociological studies and mass media, especially during the late 1990s. There, the emphasis is on the relation between drug consumption and *musical taste* in club contexts. Section 1.5 presents a resume of the most important points of the chapter.

1.2 Distinction

In order to understand the sociological perspective represented in this section, it is necessary to review the epistemological perspective of constructivism, which shapes the way different Social Sciences

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[5] Also named *Bourdieusian* for an easier pronunciation

conceptualize and study *reality*. Constructivism — also called *social constructivism* — accepts that subjects create reality through interacting with the world, hence meaning and reality are *constructed*, not discovered (Gray, 2004). John Creswell puts it this way: "Social constructivism believes that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects or things" (2014, p. 8).

Constructivism is largely applied to qualitative research focusing on the way individuals interpret or make sense of the world. It searches to unveil how the social reality is constructed based on pre-determinate ideas, concepts, and cultural backgrounds, which are carried out and expressed by their participants – e.g. in the language they use to communicate among each other. With this in mind, to hold a constructivist perspective helps to evaluate expressions such as slang and dance style as true symbols of ideas.

This previous review of *constructivism* may help to frame and better understand the work of Pierre Bourdieu *Distinction* (1984). Bourdieu's exhaustive work[6] on French society "argues that taste, the faculty of perceiving the flavours and the capacity to discern aesthetic values, functions to legitimize social differences and establish one's social orientation or *sense of one's place*" (Van Esterik, 1986, p. 456, my emphasis). In a later work entitled *The Forms of Capital,* Bourdieu (1986) explains how *taste* is then related to the amount of *cultural capital* – one of the values presented in Bourdieu's system together with *economic* and *social capital.*

> Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long lasting disposition of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.) … and in the *institutionalised* state, a form of objectification which must set apart because … confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee (Bourdieu, 1986, p.243).

Embodied cultural capital can be personified for example in possessing good manners, dance skills, language jargon, social practices and literacy, just to mention a few. In other words, embodied cultural

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[6] The work uses socio-economic and educational information from 1,271 subjects from Paris, Lille as well as from a small town in France.

capital is the sum of *cultural capacities* acquired — sometimes unconsciously, sometimes by inculcation — by the individual as a result of its social class.

Bourdieu (1986) further explains how objectified cultural capital acquires properties that can only be related to its embodied form. For example, a collection of paintings can be transferred in its ownership among individuals, but the means of *consuming* — or the capacity of understanding or to codify — the symbolic value of those paintings may not be transferred with them. In this way, cultural capital is found in two entities, the materiality of the paintings — objectified cultural capital; and in the capacities — literacy — of the individual to consume it. The embodied cultural capital can be expressed as *taste* and it could be used as an instrument of power by the upper and dominant class who set the *dominant taste* on the lower or working classes, exercising cultural authority or even a form of cultural violence (pp. 246-247).

This *Bourdieuian system of values* (Young, 2015 p. 365) has been applied to clubbing by different authors, as in the case of Sarah Thornton's influential work *Club Cultures* (1995), where she introduces the notion of *subcultural capital:*

> Just as cultural capital is personified in 'good' manners and urbane conversation, so subcultural capital is embodied in the form of being 'in the know', using (but not over-using) current slang and looking as if you were born to perform the latest dance styles. Both cultural and subcultural capital put a premium on the 'second nature' of their knowledge. (Thornton, 1995, p.11-12)

Thornton (1995) devotes a great part of her work to analyse the process of cultural *authentication* of recorded music by undergoing a historical analysis about how people went from dancing to live performed music to dancing *on records*. She argues that club cultures have rendered record technologies as *authentic* and essential to their community, privileging them over live performed music (p. 85-94). In this process, the DJ is a holder of both embodied and objectified subcultural capital: *embodied* in his/her taste for music and capacities for "orchestrating the event and anchoring the music in a particular place"(p. 97); and *objectified* in their large vinyl collections.

Differing from Thornton, who applied Bourdieu's system of values to *underground* clubs, Rivera (2010) studied door access policies and entrance mechanisms in a US *elite night club*. In his work, Rivera relies heavily on interviews with the club's doormen in order to describe a series of *cues* used to assign *capital* or *value* to customers and ensure their entrance, as in the case of clothing:

> Mohammad [one doorman interviewed by Riviera] describes, 'If you're wearing baggy clothes, you're not gonna (sic.) get in. They want nice clothes.' John agrees, 'You can have a thousand dollar sweatsuit on or even an Armani sweatsuit on, but that's not what we want. We want you in slacks, collared shirt, and shoes' (Riviera, 2010, p. 244).

Just as with clothes, Riviera points several times along his work the way some doormen give the *eye search* to potential clients, looking for cues that may help them to select the *right ones*. Here, embodied *social* and *cultural* capital, like slang, rage and gender are also taken into consideration.

In terms of spatial distribution inside the club, Riviera describes how the table reservations are used by frequent patrons to *show off* among them, since the *best* tables — positioned more central in the space, ensuring visibility and protagonist — are reserved for the clients with the higher bar bills.

Another way of embodied capital is *gender*, as in the work of Ana Ganavas & Rosa Reitsamer (2013) and Geraldine Bloustien (2016) where they explore the social networks and associations between different music events' stakeholders and male DJs in order to gain appearances at club nights. These authors provide insight into the struggles and difficulties women face to accumulate the necessary social and cultural capital to develop careers as DJs.

They also address the symbolic association between masculinity and the use of technology suggesting that, if — as we mentioned regarding the work of Thornton — part of the male DJs' embodied subcultural capital are his "skills, knowledge, taste, and enthusiasm" (Bloustien, 2016, p.228), the transfer of such skills may be reserved for male peers as a gatekeeping strategy. These authors suggest that technology among DJs is a *masculine attribute* (Bloustien, 2016) while offering evidence of :

> [a] symbolic association between masculinity and technology in society in general and in electronic dance music scenes in particular, such that technical competence has come to constitute an integral

part of masculine gender identity, and, vice versa, a specific notion of masculinity has become central to our very definition of technology. (Ganavas & Reitsamer, 2013, p. 56)

In sum, the work of Bourdieu (1984) and, by extension, the work of Thornton (1995) encountered a fertile field of application in the context of clubbing while exploring notions such as gender, door policies, and the assignation of reputation and prestige of both attendees and DJs, and the sense of *authenticity*[7] of record technologies. Nevertheless, even if the concepts of subcultural capital come to help to understand the symbolic function of objects, dance styles and slang in club cultures, it does little to describe the mechanics used by clubbers to interact, communicate and perform once inside the club. These questions are addressed in the next section.

1.3 Performativity

In order to understand social performativity in the club context, it is helpful to review the concept of *symbolic interactionism*. In the previous section, we acknowledged that words and actions are true representations of the ideas and backgrounds of participants, and that we can ascribe scientific value to these expressions as symbols. Then, it is also necessary to learn how these symbols are used in the real setting, i.e. how these symbols and their use create concepts. This means that social interaction with the world is mediated not only through symbols, but through the process of meaning-making or interaction. This perspective is held by interactionism or symbolic interactionism (Gray, 2004, p. 21).

Symbolic interactionism has a long tradition in Humanities. It helps to understand society through people's interactions. It looks at reality we create when we assign meaning to our interaction with objects, people, material culture or designed artefacts. With these notions in mind, we should observe the social interaction in clubs not as something fully given or learned, like a ritual activity that is just repeated every weekend, but as a process in constant construction, based on symbols, actions and

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[7] Here, the term *authenticity* is used the way Thornton (1995) does, meaning as "a cultural value anchored in concrete, historical practices of production and consumption" (p17), including the use of certain instruments, artifacts and methods to produce, play, compose, record and reproduce music. In other words, *authenticity* is the effect of the many cultural discourses surrounding popular music (p. 107), based in social forms of consumption, music instruments, music taste, musical genres or in specific artist or interprets, among many other possible aspects.

interactions. "Thus, meanings are not fixed or stable but are revised on the basis of experience. This includes the definition of 'self' and of who we are" (Gray, 2004 p. 21). Despite the many works that can be subscribed to this approach, the work of Erving Goffman *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) gains relevance given its *dramaturgical metaphor* which helps us explain sociological aspects, such as the sense of identity and belonging of club participants — aspects studied by Ben Malbon (1999) under a *Goffmanian* perspective.

In general terms, Goffman (1959) uses a *dramaturgical metaphor* to explain how individuals *play* social roles. In his analysis, the setting, consisting of front and backstage, the props and the costumes are taken into consideration. In the context of clubs, Malbon (1999) explores the process of dialectical communication within a club's crowd from the *Goffmanian* perspective of *performativity,* suggesting that members of a crowd in a club attach diverse meanings and roles to physical appearance, bodily actions, gestures and facial expressions as embodied information. This information — consciously or not — is performed, articulated, and learned to construct the identity of the self, and simultaneously, as a way of self-representation within the crowd.

Additionally, to the dramaturgical metaphor, Malbon (1999) includes in his study Judith Butler's (1990) notion of identity as a socially performed construct. As he explains:

> Butler criticises the commonly held idea that femininity and masculinity are merely the cultural expressions of the material maleness or femaleness of the body … For Butler, gender is constituted through the on-going and repeated stylisation of the body rather than through any notion of biological facticity or cultural understanding (Malbon, 1999, p. 27-28).

Malbon blends Butler's notion of social identity as performed constructions with Goffman's dramaturgical metaphor of social representation of the self to suggest that the crowd experience in the dance floor is dramaturgical and expressive — Goffmanian — and simultaneously constructive of the self — Butlerian (Malbon, 1999, p. 27). In this sense, the clubber learns to be a clubber by understanding and adopting *clubbing* practices — or embodying subcultural capital in Thornton (1995) terms — and it is through the performance of those practices that clubbers reaffirm their own identity.

Malbon's ethnography (1999) shed light on the process of acquiring such values *by performance,* while exploring the *sense* and process of *belonging* to a crowd. Regarding the spatiality of the club, for Malbon, the dance floor became simultaneously front and backstage, a place where the location and expression of bodily practices are learned and performed until becoming *second nature* (p.92). The *Goffmanian* perspective applied by Malbon (1999) helps to recognize clubs as spaces of performativity, while taking into consideration the material context — spaces, technology, clothes — in their function as symbols but given little attention to their function as objects.

Another kind of technology often mentioned in sociological studies is that of a pharmacological nature, i.e. the use of different drugs substances to complement the dance floor experience. These technologies are analysed in the next section.

1.4 Drugs

This section engages with one topic that can regulate social interactions and music perception within clubs: the use of drugs. It is fair to state that since the late 1980s, the use of drugs has been linked to the activity of clubbing and to different genres of electronic music — including house, acid house, techno, and trance. A reason for this is the generalized use of the drug *3,4-methylenedioxy-methamphetamine* — called MDMA or Ecstasy — during the occurrence of the rave movement in the UK during the 1990s (Malbon, 1999). Therefore, academic research tends to include drug consumption as part of their studies, as it is verifiable in many of the studies reviewed in this chapter. Additionally, diverse television documentaries from the late 1990s are focused on the subject of *drugs* as their titles reveal: *E is for Ecstasy* from 1992;[8] *Music is My Drug: Psychedelic Trance* from 1996;[9] *Small Town Ecstasy* from

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[8] 1992, directed by Howard Reid, produced for the BBC; available in: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oswILmuC06E&t=44s (last accessed, January 22nd, 2019).

[9] 1996, directed by Martin Meissonnier; produced for Canal +; available in: https://www.neurotrance.org/music-is-my-drug-psychedelic-trance (last accessed, January 22nd, 2019).

1997;[10] and *The Chemical Generation* from 2001.[11] Given the ubiquity of drug *consumption* as a topic in academic research and in media, it seems adequate to include it in the present chapter.

Malbon (1999) suggests that the dance floor experience is built by a combination of music and drug effects. Regarding the latter, the experience is characterized by the intensive sensory stimulation, provoking transitory euphoria and empathy, providing "powerful sensations of personal and group identity formation, amendment and consolidation" p. 106). Weems (2008) also suggest a link between musical genres and the use of certain drugs, he describes how the use of MDMA and Ketamine (a sedative and anaesthetic medicament) induces the emotional and introspective states in combination of the African-Latin and Afro-pop sounds, characteristics of the house music. On the other hand, Crystal-meth (a form of Methamphetamine) and the GHB (Gamma-hydroxybutyrate, also known as GABA) produce hyper-alertness and shortened attention spans — just as Cocaine. Therefore, these drugs tend to be *combined* at the dance floor with the strong driving beat of the techno music (p. 223). Despite this, the same author warns:

> Like most stereotypes, this division is oversimplified. Most people who use illegal substances will mix them up in a variety of ways. … There is no obvious connection that users of one set of drugs are somehow more spiritual than another group, especially since so many people in the scene utilize three or more substances at the same time. … In general, however, this division seems to hold true in terms of musical preferences. There appears to be a correlation between crystal use and faster, noisier music. Ecstasy, on the other hand, enhances emotional responses to music, so melody tends to be more valued by participants who are on MDMA (Weems, 2008, p. 223).

Attending this warning, other drugs such as tobacco, alcohol — which is largely consumed in clubs — and marihuana, should be added to the list of triggers of what Malbon (1999) calls the *oceanic experience*[12] at the dance floor. The many possible effects produced by the mix of these substances,

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[10] 1997, directed by Jay Blumenfeld; produced for HBO; available in
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c98D5yRmPWg (last accessed, January 22nd, 2019).
[11] 2001, directed by Boy George; produced for Channel 4; available in: https://technomood.org/the-chemical-generation-acid-house-documentary/ (last accessed, January 22nd, 2019).
[12] Malbon (1999) uses the term *oceanic* to describe "those experiences characterised by one or more of these sensations: ecstasy, joy, euphoria, ephemerality, empathy, alterity (a sense of being beyond the everyday), release, the loss and subsequent gaining of control, and notions of escape" (p. 107), which can be related to the use of drugs in combination with music at the dance floor.

combined with the many variables given by the possible consumer (weight, age, personality, amount, and quality of the drug consumed) make it extremely difficult to generalize the effects that *drugs* can have in the audience.

Additionally, it is suggested that the use of drugs may have a symbolic component, as Rief (2009) points out:

> [A] drug experience is not only determined by the pharmacological properties of a drug, but also depends on the meanings individuals ascribe to a drug by drawing on symbolic systems at hand, such as the meanings and knowledge circulating in peer groups (p. 118).

For Rief (2009) drugs remain a symbol of transgression and construction of group identity and *otherness* by creating the illusion of an alternative reality which is just experienced by those who consume them and grant *real* access to the clubbing experience and those who don't. Furthermore, Calvey (2008) extends the symbolic dimension of drug consumption to the space itself while applying a *Goffmanian* perspective and describing clubs as the backstage where deviance is temporarily legitimized, and people can present their *secret self* (p. 913).

Regarding all the attention that drug consumption received in different studies regarding club and rave cultures, Rief (2009) also warns against the *academic fetishization* of rave culture (p.5), suggesting that drugs may have received excessive attention, especially during the late 1990s. As Biehl-Missal (2016) puts: "DJs find that even sober people lose touch with reality through techno music" (p.12). In any case, the centrality that drug consumption may have for the present study is defined by the results of the fieldwork as will be explained in Chapter 6.

1.5 Outro

Section 1.2 offers a review on different works studying clubs as spaces of *distinction* by applying Bourdieu's system of values based on the use, accumulation, transfer, embodiment, and objectification of cultural capital. For the authors in this section: "the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world"

(Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242). In other words, the social structure of the clubs is seen as an *economy of capitals,* where status, access to the club, access to technological know-how and credibility are matters susceptible to *accumulation, negotiation,* or *transaction*.

However, during the description of those mechanisms of transaction, there is little attention to the material dimension of objects and spaces itself. This is partially explainable given the constructivist paradigm in which many sociological studies are based, where reality is *socially* and not *materially* constructed. Here, the aim is not to criticize those works, but to make emphasis between the vision of Sociology, based on symbols and meanings, and the perspective of Design, which deals with reality not only as a *symbol* but also as a *tangible* material arrangement — as it can be seen in the next chapter.

An example of this is the work of Riviera (2010), who describes the clothes used by the attendees to the elite club based on their symbolic value and how this value can be interchanged for access and privileges. Here, the author shows less concerns about the ergonomic fit, quality of manufacturing, materials or even colour of the objects. These *real* elements are part of the design of the clothes, and any fashion designer would pay attention to them as much as to their symbolic value. From a Design perspective, Riviera respondents talk about clothes in symbolic terms but ignoring their materiality as objects. Something similar occurs to his account on the disposition of tables and their *value* as markers of status. Here, there is no account about the shape, materials, or even about the general distribution of the tables inside the club. Again, it is like talking about an object without taking the object into consideration.

In terms of technology, Thornton (1995) describes clubs as spaces where record technologies became rendered as *authentic*, and where DJs embodied subcultural capital given their skills to mix music. Here, again, technology is highly appreciated as a *symbolic recipient* of capital, but largely ignored in its complexity, functions, or ways of manipulation. Technology authentication, we suggest, is far more complex than a symbolic negotiation, it requires the design of gears with specific functions — which could be later used or *misused* as part of an artistic performance. DJing implies a *material* complexity that requires the design and manipulation of technological devices through mixers, faders, knobs (s. chapter 3). In sum, in different sociological studies, objects are relevant as repositories of assigned

symbolic capital — which is understandable given their sociological paradigms of constructivism and social interactionism — but there is less involvement with the materiality and aesthetic complexity of the objects itself.

Regarding the space we call *the club,* the situation is no different. Thornton (1995) assign almost secondary value to the club environment, pointing that clubs are designed to compensate "the weakness of the recorded medium [meaning the lack of performing musicians]. By using new labels, rubrics, interior design and distracting spectacles" (p. 85). Malbon's ethnography (1999) applies Goffman's *dramaturgical metaphor* to explain the dynamics of communication in the club, while presenting the dance floor as a scenario where *social performances* take place. While this metaphor may be highly accurate to the spatial disposition of some clubs,[13] it also reduces the function of the architectural design and light and sound technologies to merely *theatre props* or aids for stage representation. As a consequence, *club*bing is separated from the *club* itself. Almost like if clubbing could occur anywhere, instead of being a site-specific activity (as chapters 2 and 3 suggest).

As it is discussed in the next chapter, clubs have a spatial specificity and should be considered a space typology in their own right. The category *space* is fundamental to understand that clubs are not only containers of social events, but part of the events themselves. In sum, the different positions presented along this chapter treats the environment at the dance floor as *black boxes* (Vitos, 2014), only approachable through *economic* and *dramaturgic metaphors,* relegating its materiality to props and backgrounds. Despite having said this, the present review does not aim to discard the studies or notions presented here, but to understand them; and to contrast them with the Design perspectives presented in the next chapter with the goal to complement our understanding of the dance floor.

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[13] See the case of The Palladium in section 2.3, a club constructed in a former theatre.

Chapter 2. Design Perspectives on Clubbing

2.1 Intro

Tim Lawrence (2004; 2018) describes how, in the early 1960s, discotheques in the USA were seen rather as business than spaces for social, artistic or technology experimentation. Inside those venues — equipped with rudimentary light and sound systems — owners offered dinners and live music as an alternative to DJs, who were also pressed to *work the bar* — alternating their musical selection to produce cycles of dancing and breaks so the dancers could buy drinks. Additionally, restrictive door policies were applied based on race, sexuality, and class, while *couple dancing* encouraged "participants to focus on their immediate partner rather than the DJ or the wider dancing crowd" (Lawrence, 2018 p.90). As *dancing on records* became more popular, discotheques started to add visual elements — lights, images and decoration — in conjunction with recorded music as an attempt to compensate "the weakness of the recorded medium [meaning the lack of performing musicians]. By using new labels, rubrics, interior design, and distracting spectacles" (Thornton, 1995, p. 85).

Since those early discotheques, the constant renovation of the spaces we call clubs have simply not stopped. From the appearance of the iconic mirror disco ball to the high fidelity sound and lighting systems, the nightclub has "developed into a *Gesamtkunstwerk* melting interior and furniture design, graphics and art, light and music, fashion and performance into a unique whole" (Kries, 2018, p.10). Despite this relation between Design and clubs, the specialised literature we were managed to consult has mainly focused on art and graphic design applied to club's posters, flyers, murals, and music album covers: *Fly* (Ackland-Snow, Brett & Williams, 1996); *Design After Dark* (Rose, 1991); *Smiley Faces* (Twemlow, 2018); *Club Culture and Contemporary Art* (Heiser, 2018); and *Clubbed: a visual history of UK club culture* (Banks, Ed., 2018).

On the other side, the relation between clubbing and other Design disciplines — like furniture design, sound and lighting design, and event design — have received far less attention in academic literature. This situation is probably given by the short life of these spaces; the constant renewing of their interior

design in order to keep attracting young clientele (Thornton, 1995); or simply because these spaces are opened just some hours during the weekends night, and want to remain underground.

In this context, the Vitra Design Museum in Germany organised in 2018 the exhibition *Night fever, designing club culture: 1960 – today,* with the aim to "offer the first comprehensive, international overview of club culture and its design history" (Kries, 2018, p.10). The catalogue of this exhibition (Kries, et al., 2018) contains ca. 400 pages, including construction plans, photographs, drawings, posters, flyers, music covers, publicity and interviews covering areas such as architectural design, audio and lighting design, fashion design, makeup, and, of course, graphic design.

Additionally, this catalogue includes twelve essays covering the relation between Design and clubs from a historical and theoretical perspective. Given the pertinence and novelty of the content of those essays, the structure of the present chapter is constructed around their content, which has been divided into three main topics — *allatonceness, discotecture* and *underground —* and enriched and extended with other authors' work, examples and journalistic documentation.

The aim of the present chapter is to explore Design not as the discipline in charge of the construction of objects — furniture, images, fashion, lighting devices — to be *inserted* within the physical space of clubs. Design is here understood as the discipline in charge of the creation of full artificial environments capable of triggering emotions, organising experiences and challenging traditional notions of space. Through Design, the *club* becomes the *event* itself.

In order to achieve this aim, section 2.2 explores the *space* as *narrative,* a story told through the use of media expressed as *allatonceness.* Section 2.3 analyses the use of technology in clubs to challenge traditional notions of space as a stable category. Section 2.4 documents the strategies followed in the creation of *underground* environments which — despite the lack of budget — have shaped the imagery of how a club should be designed. Section 2.5 presents a summary with six *design strategies* in the design of the *space-event* we call club.

2.2 Allatonceness

Located at the former building of the Polish National Home in New York, the Dom restaurant became in 1966 a night-club transformed by Andy Warhol under his artist name Andy Architect™ (Lavin, 2009; Munuera, 2018). As a club, the Dom maintained the spatial distribution of a cabaret, with an elevated stage and a lower area where the spectators could dance or sit. Inside this club, Andy Architect™ held the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable* or *EPI*, a series of *events*[14] in which he used different media and technologies to create a "veritable sensory thunderstorm" (Heiser, 2018, p.184). Every *EPI* included the simultaneous use of three to five film and slide projectors; strobe, spot and pistol lights; mirror balls; loudspeakers blaring different records at once; and concurrent musical and dance performances completed with props (Joseph, 2002, p. 81). The goal of all this technology and media was to build an immersive technology-based *space*, since *EPI* was not conceptualized as *art*, but as "architecture radicalized as medium" (Lavin, 2009. p.100). The architecture of Andy Architect™ was built inside the club without constructing — or even touching — a single wall:

> This architectural design [the EPI] used light and sound performance as a material to squeeze out the empty space of the existing room and refill it with a semi-solid environment. … Indeed, the frame and the architectural apparatus by which it was constituted - the building, its structure, and its space - became irrelevant, a mere prop to the interior as such. (Lavin, 2009, pp. 100-101)

As scholars Lavin (2009) and Joseph (2002) have pointed out, the EPI was used by Marshall McLuhan, back in the 1960s, to coin the term *allatonceness* (all-at-once-ness), which refers to how new electronic media allow a constant *simultaneity* of time and space: "Ours is a brand-new world of allatonceness. 'Time' has ceased, 'space' has vanished. We now live in a global village… a simultaneous happening" (McLuhan, 2001, p.63). *Allatonceness* describes Warhol's strategy to provoke an intense sensory

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[14] A video footage of an EPI event, can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BS0vAkMt8k (last accessed, March 25th, 2019)

stimulation, where multiple media create a *semi-solid environment* where the participants get immersed[15].

In 1967 — after being redesigned by Charles Forberg — the *Dom* became the *Electric Circus*, a club visited in the same year by young Italian architects, like Fabrizio Fiumi. Once back in Italy, Fiumi analysed the Electric Circus as the subject of his thesis in architecture.[16] As an outcome of this academic work, Fiumi — together with other young architects members of the *Gruppo 9999[17]* — designed and administered the *Space Electronic,* open in 1969 in Florence (Lavin, 2009; Munuera, 2018; Rossi, 2018).

> The goal was nothing less than to use the disco as a means of reconfiguring allatonceness from a model of unity into a system of multiplication … adding new media to the surface of architecture; replacing traditional publics with the collective social forms of popular and youth culture; and challenging architecture with the forms of duration and discontinuity developed in performance art, Happenings, and op art. Occasioning a total transformation of both the architectural medium and subject, as one of Savioli's student groups argued, the architecture of disco should be one 'of tactile audio and visual stimuli that implicate the operator in an active … participation. … The spectator will become an actor in a space undergoing continual transformation in which luminous effects create a total disorientation in the universe of Cartesian geometry' (Lavin, 2009, p.102).

The *Space Electronic* opened in an old engine-repair shop and it was furnished with a parachute suspended from the ceiling, washing machine drums and refrigerator casings. More than by its architecture, this space was defined by its audio-visual technologies like slide projectors and CCTV cameras, as well as by its eclectic programme which included recorded and live music, theatre

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[15] This sense of *immersion* reminds what Malbon's (1999) defines as *oceanic experience* (mentioned previously in section 1.4 *Drugs*), described as a sensation of "extraordinary and transitory euphoria, joy and empathy that can be experienced as a result of the intensive sensory stimulation of the dance floor" (p.105).

[16] As Lavin (2009) documents, the thesis was supervised by Professor Leonardo Savioli at the University of Florence, in the academic year 1966-1967.

[17] The *Gruppo 9999* was part of the *Architettura Radicale* movement. Rossi (2018) documents other similar discos created in cities like Milan, Turin and Florence by architects and collectives identified with the radical architecture movement like *Archizoom* and *Superstudio*. Members of the *Gruppo 9999* were Carlo Caldini, Fabrizio Fiumi, Mario Preti and Paolo Galli (Kries et al. 2018, p. 51). Rossi (2018) mentions Mario Bolognesi as an associate in the management of the Space Electronic (p. 27).

performances, an architecture school and even a vegetable garden planted in the dance floor (Kries et al., 2018, p. 51). Inside the *Space Electronic* — as in Warhol's EPI — *allatonceness* was implemented as a strategy to challenge architectural coherence via the superposition of media — especially acoustic and visual media — creating immersive environments by *thickening* the architecture and overlapping what Lavin (2009) calls "layers of mediatized matter" (p.105).

Figure 2.1 The dance floor at the Palladium, with a mural by Keith Haring in the background, flanked by movable and programmable video arrays, 1985. From Munuera (2018, p. 124). Copyright by Timothy Hursley, Garvey / Simon Gallery New York.

Another effect in the application of *allatonceness* is the creation of simultaneous narratives, meaning different stories being *told* at the same time within the same space. This overlapping of narratives still occurs in the contemporary club, where the DJ overlaps different musical tracks creating a single narrative, while cutting edge sound, projection and lighting technologies continue *thickening* the architecture with layers of media (Lavin, 2009) creating *allatonceness* and *abducting* the dancers.

2.3 Discotecture

Discotecture — the architecture of the disco — is the term coined by Munuera (2018) to describe how architecture, media, and electronic technologies were organised or *assembled* in the design of the Palladium in NYC. This venue, originally a movie theatre and concert hall built in 1926, was turned into a club from 1985 until 1997. The interior as a club was designed by renowned architect Arata Isozaki,[18] whose envision of this project is reflected in the following quote:

> [At the Palladium] the objective was to create a disco that enables the audience to have an altered-space experience. Instead of an altered-space experience induced by the effects of marijuana or cocaine, the theme was more literal. With lights flashing simultaneously with the music, the challenge was to test the extent to which the image of the vintage space could be altered with technology and modern media … how to most effectively shower the human five senses with a combination of images, lights and sounds. (Isozaki, as cited in Munuera, 2018, p. 123)

Within the Palladium, Isozaki aimed to *shower* the human senses with technology and media — light, sound, and images — by creating a sort of *technological layer* linking the supra-structure of the architecture and the human body. This *layer* took the shape of a gigantic grid made of squares, installed inside the space of the theatre without affecting the original interior shell of the building. Munuera (2018) describes the grid as a silver cubic framework rising sixty-five feet high (ca. twenty meters), supporting the different new technologies implemented in the Palladium: two twenty-five-screen video

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[18] Previous to his work at the Palladium, Isozaki designed the Museum of Contemporary Art of Los Angeles. Isozaki became in the year 2019 the recipient of The Pritzker Architecture Prize, considered the *Nobel* of Architecture. A resemblance of Isozaki's work can be found here: https://www.pritzkerprize.com/laureates/arata-isozaki (last accessed, January, 6th, 2009).

arrays on which the artist showed video work, and a light system installed inside the grid, capable of illuminating its surface, changing light colour and intensity, and creating a glow effect. These novelties were accompanied by a complete theatre lighting system, lighting control, stage machinery and a professional sound system described as a "unique beast" (p. 126).

Figure 2.2 The dance floor at the Palladium, with a mural by Keith Haring in the background, flanked by movable and programmable video arrays, 1985. From Munuera (2018, p. 124). Copyright by Timothy Hursley, Garvey / Simon Gallery New York.

In terms of design, the grid was the solution Isozaki found in order to create a multidimensional space through technology and with a minimal architectonic intervention, as he puts:

> Making multidimensional spaces from concrete objects necessitates basic lines and compositional units to serve as minimal clues … The device that I ultimately hit on was the use of a grid composed of homogeneous, limitless, square compartments to cover exterior surfaces. (Isozaki, as cited in Munuera, 2018, p. 126)

Figure 2.3 View of the Isozaki's interior structure placed inside the historic theatre building, 1985. From Munuera (2018, p. 120). Copyright by Timothy Hursley, Garvey / Simon Gallery New York.

At the Palladium, the grid merged the frontstage, back-stage and house — where the audience sits in a theatre — in a single *hybrid* performative space, the contemporary dance floor.

> [The Palladium] contained, shaped, and propagated a very specific architecture, one that I call *discotecture*: the architecture of the disco — that is, an understanding of the architecture of these nightclubs that goes deeper than merely appreciating their spatial configurations, which explores it

more as the creation of an event … Discotecture is a continuous performance and a collection of assemblages that render visible the construction of bodies, technologies, media, and environmental ideas. In the interaction between designers and citizens, DJs and dancers, technologies and regulations, architecture plays a fundamental role (Munuera, 2018, p.119).

The strategies implemented at the Palladium by Isozaki, define the dance floor as the space where media and technology — embedded quite literally in the architecture — transform the club from a *simple* container of events, into the event itself. This unveils the phenomenological relation between *space* and *event* in order to build a *discotecture*. Unfortunately, Munuera (2018) does not explore further the relation between these two categories.

Conversely, the category of *space* in the context of clubs is analysed by Pol Esteves in his essay, *Total Space* (2018). Esteves analyses the design of the *Maddox* — a club developed by architect Vincenzo Carmenati between 1965-66 and opened in 1967 in Platja d'Aro, near Barcelona, Spain — ca. twenty years before Isozaki's Palladium. Here, Carmenati created a modern one-storey, multifunctional space, with a plan based on geometric circles and undulant lines with no corners. A space capable of triggering the notion of endlessness by itself. However, the innovation of the Maddox resides in the different electronic technologies attached to it, which was completely new by the time. Esteves (2018) documents how after a remodelling in 1968,[19] the *Maddox* got a centralised electronic lighting system with up to 200 lighting devices, including stroboscopic and UV lights, lasers and special slide projectors. Additionally, a series of custom-made machinery for effects were installed, including devices to create *cloud effects*, *water effects* and a projector capable of simulating the horizon. Beyond the exhaustive documentation[20] about the impressive amount, variety and innovation of the technology applied to the Maddox and its effects on the venue's attendees, a major contribution in Esteves essay is his analysis of the category of *space*. Esteves confronts the case of the *Maddox* with the work of Sigfried Giedion *Architecture and the Phenomena of Transition: The Three Space Conceptions in Architecture* (1971). Esteves (2018) explains how Giedion divides the history of architecture in three phases based in the

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[19] The 1968 refurbishing was in charge of Carmenati, Cesare Fiorese and Oriol Regàs. Fiorese was the main responsible for the technological innovation applied during this refurbishing (Esteves, 2018).
[20] Including blueprints, construction plans, photographs, and documents from private collections.

predominant notion of space corresponding to each historical period: while the exterior space was of predominant importance until the Romans; the following second phase was marked by the relevance of the interior space and its connotations of status; finally, the third phase corresponding to the modern movement was defined by the seek of continuity between the interior and exterior space (p.142).

Esteves (2018) criticizes the notion of space as *a stable* category used by Giedion, since it prioritises *vision* as the only sense capable of perceiving the position, dimension and volume of space — a notion resulting from the pervasive use of the geometrical perspective to think, project and represent architecture. "Space had become a stable category informing the discourse and practice of architecture. [Space] was commonly understood as measurable and Cartesian, two qualities that necessarily prioritised the visual sense" (p. 142).

The *Maddox*, Esteves (2018) suggests, is a pioneering example in the creation of a continuous infinite space, surpassing Gideon's interior-exterior dilemma. In the *Maddox*, *space* becomes *unstable* and *temporal,* rather than *stable* and *perpetual*: "a time-based construct; a temporal dimension" (p.144). The *Maddox* set an "unprecedented phenomenological-spatial apparatus" (p. 132), where the *total space* is defined by a full corporeal time-based experience, and not only by vision. With his analysis, Esteves got closer to the concept of *site-specific performance,* developed by Biehl-Missal (2016) in her study on the techno club *Berghain* in Berlin, which will be reviewed at the end of the next section.

Thus far, the present chapter has reviewed spaces like the *Maddox* at the coast near Barcelona, the *Palladium* in New York, or the *Space Electronic* in Florence. Spaces where experimentation in the fields of arts, architecture, design and media theory occurred thanks to the participation of visionaries like Andy Warhol, Arata Isozaki, Marshall McLuhan among others. Additionally, some of these clubs launched cutting edge audio and lighting technologies thanks to the money of investors. As Munuera (2018) concedes, spaces like the Palladium — and certainly the Maddox — were "far from being radical in the politics or its inhabitants or investors" (p.129).

There are however, other clubs created without the intervention of *high ranked* artists and architects, which were probably not visited by Italians students or media theorists; and yet those clubs became key

places in the development of electronic music — especially the genres house and techno — and DJing. Those are the underground clubs, and their aesthetic elements are the focus of the next section.

2.4 The Aesthetics of the Underground

This section presents an analysis of four venues, *The Loft*, the *Paradise Garage, The Warehouse* and the *Berghain.* The first three venues — all of them in the USA — were selected given their historic role in the development of house music and DJ techniques. The *Berghain* — in Germany — was chosen since this club has been subject of media exposure and the object of study by other researchers. Additionally, it was the centre of a litigation involving the City of Berlin, making it one of the best-documented *still-open* underground clubs. The analysis of these venues is centred in their historical role in the design of an *underground taste,* characterized by austere means like darkness, acoustic reverberation, audiophile sound systems, black concrete walls and even birthday iconography.

The Loft was not a public club but a *private party,* a *semi-clandestine* way of leisure and party emerged in New York City during the decades of the 1970s and 1980s. According to Lawrence (2018) three factors provoked the appearance of these private events: the first factor was the rising social movements of feminism, gay liberation, anti-war protests and LSD culture whose members needed a place to gather; the second factor was the need to avoid NYC's legislation on alcohol sales and opening times applied to public clubs[21]; the third factor was the context of economic crisis and urban decay in the 1970s in NYC, which provoked a drop in rent prices of large spaces — like warehouses, lofts and garages — especially in Lower Manhattan (Munuera, 2018).

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[21]As private parties, these venues did not sell alcohol, therefore they didn't need a licence to operate.

Figure 2.4 The Loft, New York, 1982. From Lawrence (2018, p. 91). Unknown photographer: Courtesy of Louis "Loose" Kee Jr. for Lawrence.

As Lawrence (2018) documents, the first of those *private parties* was hosted on February 14th, 1970 by David Mancuso, who rented a loft and equipped it with a high-efficiency stereo equipment. Mancuso placed the main speakers along the wall facing the turntables, encouraging attendees to dance with one another under minimal light effects, potentiating the sociability of the dance floor as a space where *hearing* was privileged over visual stimuli. Photography and mirrors were forbidden in order to inhibit self-consciousness, while childhood freedom was encouraged by *birthday iconography* — balloons and handmade designs made out of crepe paper. Additionally, counter-cultural *vibes* were evoked by resourceful invention, using *lost and found* objects like cable spools — used as tables — while a giant mirror ball multiplied a myriad of possibilities in this reimagined world.

Figure 2.5 Dance floor at Paradise Garage, New York, 1978, photo by Bill Bernstein. From Kries, M. et al. (2018, p.296). Copyright by Bill Bernstein, represented by David Hill Gallery, London.

Another venue, the *Paradise Garage*, opened officially in 1978 in NYC and became one of the most influential venues in the history of clubbing (Fikentscher, 2000; Lawrence, 2018; Pratginestós, 2002). In this space, the music became central to the club experience thanks to the skills of the legendary DJ Larry Levan[22] and the club's sound system known as the *Levan Horns.*[23] According to Pratginestós (2002), the Paradise Garden was installed in a former parking store and given its large area, the venue promoter Michael Brody, did not get enough money to renew it or decorate it. However, some curtains and images from Keith Haring used to decorate the dark walls, while the same Levan projected some films.

The Warehouse opened in Chicago in 1977, and it is considered no less than the birthplace of house music thanks to the performances of Frankie Knuckles (Lles, 2002). *The Warehouse* was located inside

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[22] Concerned with the creation of the right atmosphere, Levan usually changed the lighting of the space and the positions of the speakers in order to achieve the best sound possible. (Pratginestós, 2002, p.138)

[23] This sound system was designed by Richard Long and it was characterized by accurate and powerful bass (Lawrence, 2018). This system was duplicated at Zanzibar in Newark, New Jersey and later in London's Ministry of Sound. (Fikentscher, 2000, p. 70)

a three-storey building with no signal on the façade and black painted windows producing darkness and evoking *clandestinity*. Arnold (2012) quotes DJ Craig Cannon on some elements of the Warehouse:

> 'That place was three levels,' Cannon remembers. 'You walked up the stairs and paid, and then you walked down the stairs to the party, and then there was a basement below that.' With no air conditioning, The Warehouse relied on fans and open windows in the summer. Cannon recalls the breeze made for a beautiful effect, especially when the open-beam ceiling was draped with crepe paper: 'When you turned the mirror ball, you turned the fan on, and it was decorated, everything seemed like it was moving.' (Craig Cannon, quoted in Arnold, 2012)

As Fikentscher (2000) mentions, the interior *decor* of *The Warehouse* was often sparse, inexistent, or improvised with means such as dark curtains, balloons, film projectors, handmade elements of coloured paper, and predominantly dark in terms of lighting (p. 70). The interior of spaces like *The Loft*, the *Paradise Garage,* and *The Warehouse* have components of what Munuera (2018) describes as the provisional, the unfinished, the recycled and the emerging, recognizable in the exposition of pipes, crumbling plaster and exposed bricks (p. 118). These *unfinished* elements embedded in the architecture can be seen as part of an aesthetic narrative of the *possible,* in concordance with the narratives of utopian *social* and *gender* egalitarianism, embodied by the predominantly LGBT+ population of these underground spaces.[24]

Another example of the aesthetic of the underground is the club *Berghain*. According to Wurnell (2016; 2017), the history of the Berghain began in the 1990s, with club promoters Michael Teufele and Norbert Thormann running a gay cub — *Snax* — in various locations in Berlin. In 1998, they found a larger empty industrial space near the banks of the Spree river, where they opened the *Ostgut*. The large area of this space allowed to host different clubs inside: the *Ostgut* for techno music, the *Panorama Bar* for house music, and the *Lab.oratory* focused on sex and fetish parties attracting a predominantly male clientele. The club was closed, and the building demolished in 2003 for the construction of the *O2*

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[24] For another perspective on architecture and gender, see Aaron Betsky (1997) *Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire.* Betsky's work is not included in the present review since it includes mainly spaces used predominantly by members of the US white gay communities for the seek of romantic and sexual purposes, excluding other populations and other activities like social dancing and music consumption which is the focus of the present review.

Arena. On October 15th 2004, the *Panorama Bar* reopened inside another building, an old power plant Teufele and Thorman had found. Later that year, they opened the *Berghain* — which take its name after the two neighbourhoods flanking the club, the Kreuz*berg* and Friedrichs*hain* — inside the great turbine hall in the same building. In 2005, the *Lab.oratory* re-opened, occupying the space underneath the *Berghain*.

Figure 2.6 The exterior of the Berghain in Berlin, photo by Biehl-Missal. From Biehl-Missal (2016, p.7).

The Berghain became the case for Biehl-Missal (2016) study on the relationship between people's movement — especially dance — and the club's architecture. Using participatory observations, interviews and document analysis, the author suggests that attending at the *Berghain* constitutes a *site-specific performance*.

> … the site influences the movements that people are likely to perform, and people's movements 'perform the space', generating an experience of the space that is perceived through the body. (Biehl-Missal, 2016, p. 29)

For Biehl-Missal (2016), the whole architectural atmosphere at the *Berghain* is embodied through the senses and transformed into dancing, constituting a form of *sensual communication* among the architecture and the participants. This *sensual communication* is complemented by *sonic communication* among the participants and the DJ (s. Chapter 3). At the Berghain, the aesthetic function of the club's space is to provide *hooks* — architectural, sonic or visual — for people to seek and embrace the space. These hooks are embedded in the space's organisation, use of lights, and the site-specific acoustic effects provoked by the potent sound system.

Another aspect of the Berghain is the historical narrative of the building as this club is installed in an older power station, a massive empty building with concrete austere surfaces and high ceilings. The idea of the power station as a place where energy is re-created through industrial, mechanical and repetitive movement of turbines, is now emulated by the high energetic, repetitive and mechanical sounds of techno. This establishes a dialogue between the old and new uses of the space. This dialogue uses *reverberation* as a sort of alphabet, an acoustic effect explained by Snoman:

> We already know that when something produces a sound the resulting changes in air pressure emanate out in all directions, but only a proportion of this reaches our ears directly. The rest rebounds off nearby objects and walls before reaching our ears; thus, it makes common sense that these reflected waves would take longer to reach your ears than the direct sound itself.

> This creates a series of discrete echoes that are all closely compacted together and from this, our brains can decipher a staggering amount of information about the surroundings. This is because each time the sound is reflected from a surface, that surface will absorb some of the sound's energy, therefore reducing the amplitude. However, each surface also has a distinct frequency response and this means that different materials will absorb the sound's energy at different frequencies.

> …

> If you were blindfolded, you would still be able to determine what type of room you're in from the sonic reflections (Snoman, 2004, pp. 109-110).

Biehl-Missal (2016) describes the effect of reverberation in the Berghain in architectonic and design terms as *walls of sound* or *carpets of sound*, perceived corporeally as the lower bass frequencies — imperceptible by the human ears — hit the skin of the dancers: "with the body absorbing vibrations in space and reinforcing them through dance movements" (p. 9). Architectonic reverberation can occur *naturally*, or it can also be provoked or exaggerated by the DJ through equalisation and manipulation of the music's speed (s. Chapter 3). Additionally, the acoustic effect of reverberation can be *embedded* in a musical track during the process of production "to attribute a sound with a sense of physical space" (Gadir, 2014, p.20).

The interior of the Berghain, according to Biehl-Missal (2016), is organised through different transitional spaces, inviting the transit and circulation of individuals, and encouraging the diversification of the interaction among participants. Furthermore, dimensions and distances choreograph the rhythm, speed and quality of the movement inside the club. Poor lighting — or even complete darkness — produces intimacy and a sense of anonymity, supporting tolerant behaviour towards sexual and drug practices. Dancers, just like other "people moving through an organised space like a museum, react consciously and unconsciously to spatial features and the social or organisational context and generate new understandings that are perceived not solely cognitively but aesthetically through the body" (Biehl-Missal, 2016, p. 19).

All the information or *aesthetic knowledge* acquired corporeally during a night at the Berghain, is the combination of sound, architecture, and the movement of human bodies. This creates a re-embodiment of the otherwise disembodied club culture (Biehl-Missal, 2016, p.19). The body became the repository of *what we know* about the club experience. "This knowledge may be (re)created through movement when people dance in a space and 'take home with them' an experience and a new understanding" (Biehl-Missal, 2016, p. 28). For Biehl-Missal, the human body, and not the architectural space, becomes the real container of what we *know* in terms of the club experience, it carries the traces, sensations and knowledge acquired aesthetically during the intense experience at the dance floor. The only way to recreate club culture — an otherwise not written culture — is to bring back bodies, movement, sound, reverberation, darkness and let the DJ assemblage these elements throughout his/hers mixing skills.

After reviewing the four clubs in the present section, the *underground* is not presented exclusively as a *social category,* but as a *sonic-architectonic-corporeal* dialogue. The underground is embodied by assembling human movement, musical rhythm, sound waves, second-hand furniture, birthday iconography, sound and concrete walls and darkness.

To close the present section, the following lines document how some of the aforementioned design elements of the Berghain became part of the legal allegation in 2016 between the tax office of the City of Berlin and the club's promoters located in the German capital.[25] Documented by Rapp (2016) and Klages (2016), the matter of the legal action was taxation. The tax office asked the Berghain to pay 19% of taxes over the entrance fees, just as any other venue of *entertainment.* The club's contra argument was that the corresponding taxation was only 7%, since the club considered itself as a *cultural* venue and as such, it should enjoy a preferential taxation, just as the many museums, theatres and concert halls in the German capital.

In return, the tax office alleged that one night at the Berghain was not comparable with a live concert, since the club did not even have a *stage* for the artists to perform. Also, the continuous musical set of the DJ did not present single musical pieces with a *clear* beginning and end, therefore the public did not clap as in a *normal* concert. Additionally, entrance tickets were not available beforehand and there existed the notion that attending to the *Berghain* was not motivated by the music, but by the desire to maintain sexual encounters and consume drugs. Even more, to enter the Berghain, attendees should go through the scrutiny of the doormen — (in)famous for their unpredictable criteria — which do not occur in a museum (Rapp, 2016; Klages, 2016).

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[25] The Berghain is considered during the first half of the 2010s as the best techno club in the world according to the Rolling Stone Magazine: https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/berghain-the-secretive-sex-fueled-world-of-technos-coolest-club-111396/ (last accessed, March 24th, 2019); and still one of the best clubs in the world in a 2016 article by The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2016/jul/15/berlin-clubs-nightlife-germany-techno (last accessed, March 24th, 2019)

Tobias Rapp[26] was called by the Court to give his opinion in the case. Part of his experience is related in a journalistic article for the magazine *Der Spiegel* (Rapp, 2016), in which he recalls some of the questions aroused by the panel of judges during the trial:

> How do the people at the Berghain behave while they listen to music? … What exactly does a DJ do? … Please, elaborate further about the so-called darkrooms[27] (Rapp, 2016).

The *Berghain* process may appear to be about taxes — and for the tax office it was probably so — but for the *Berghain*, besides money, the cultural status of clubs and techno music was at stake. Is it possible to compare a DJ with a piano soloist? Is the so-called *Cathedral of Techno* at the same cultural level as the *Berliner Philharmonie*, the city's chamber music hall? Can culture just be consumed by passive contemplation and celebrated only with a final applause — and not through continuous dance? What is Culture, and who decides it?

During the trial, Rapp (2016) stressed the arguments that people cheered during a DJ-performance just as by any other concert, and that if a DJ was not placed in a higher stage-like position it was because that was irrelevant for the performance. He underlined that music was the reason for people to attend the Berghain, and, more importantly, that the creativity needed by a DJ to mix music corresponds to that of an orchestra conductor. In addition, Klages (2016) reports another two relevant arguments that played in favour of the club: the well-known quality of its sound system customized to the acoustics of the space; and the curated line-up of renowned DJs and sound artists. At the end, the Court's verdict felt in favour of the club and the Berghain became the first and only club with *Hochkultur* — high culture — status and cheaper entrance fees.[28]

The case of the Berghain became paradigmatic since it represents the legal recognition of different elements involved in the design of the club experience: the music, the DJ performance, a customized

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[26] Tobias Rapp wrote *Lost and Sound: Berlin, Techno und der Easyjetset* [Lost and Sound: Belin, Techno and Easyjet Airlines] (2012) about the relationship between tourism and the techno scene in Berlin.

[27] The original German text is: Wie verhalten sich die Leute beim Zuhören? … Was macht ein DJ genau? … Erzählen Sie doch bitte etwas über die sogenannten Darkrooms (Rapp, 2016).

[28] As Rapp (2016) points out, such status is celebrated by techno fans while criticized by others, since such official recognition may not always be compatible with the *underground* character of the space. Additional critical words can be found in German media like the article written by Eckert (2016) for the German digital magazine *ze.tt* where he accuses the legitimate legal defence of the Berghain to be *marketing*; qualifies the *Berghain* as *just a club;* while calls that *real music artists,* should be offended.

high-quality sound system and attendees who share common tastes and world views. More important, with its verdict, the Court recognized the link between all these social, cultural, artistic and technological elements with a determined space, the club. Techno music is to the *Berghain*, what Wagner's music is to the concert hall.

2.5 Outro

To understand how clubs are designed, it is necessary to see beyond the spatial distribution of the building and the different objects included inside of it. To design a club means to challenge the architectural coherence of the building by creating a *semi-solid* environment, designed, and thickened by the superposition of different layers of media, technology, creating a simultaneity of narratives.

To design a club means to understand the notion of *space* as a category that is no longer a stable Cartesian category — based on two or three dimensions, but *unstable* and *time-based,* since it is intrinsically linked to the events occurring inside. The club is then a "phenomenological-spatial apparatus" (Esteves, 2018 p. 132), which blends *space* and *event,* transforming the club from a *container* of events, into the event itself.

Along the present chapter, the club is presented as a hybrid *event-space* where architecture, media, and electronic technologies got assembled through diverse design strategies. These strategies are:

a) Superposition of media, or *allatonceness,* achieved through the simultaneous use of sound, projection and lighting technologies.

b) Simultaneity of architectural narratives occurred when a club is installed in a previously existing building and overtakes part of its history into the club's identity.

c) Design the *unfinished* to evoke the *possible.* Especially in the underground clubs, the use of *second hand* and *pre-existing* elements evoke narratives of *possibilities* — in concordance with narratives of utopian *social* and *gender* egalitarianism.

d) Design uses *hooks* and *cues* to *suggest* — not to define — different ways to use and embrace the space, i.e. distances choreograph the rhythm of movement in transitional spaces like stairs and corridors: while darkness anonymises behaviours and uninhibited individuals.

e) Design establishes the conditions for the *sonic dialogue* between sound, architecture, and people. By enabling the construction of *walls of sound* within the dance floor produced by the vast range of sound frequencies transmitted by the sound systems, Design underlines the sonic and haptic experience as predominant ways to perceive the space — over the visual.

f) Consider the body not only as *a receptor* but as a *generator* of aesthetic knowledge. If the club is an *event-space* with a physical, visual, sonic, and haptic dimension; the human body becomes the only instrument capable of knowing *it*. The body acquires aesthetic knowledge from the *event-space* we call a club and re-embodied it during its participation in the club experience. The human body, and not the architecture, became the real container of what we *know*. The body carries the traces, experiences and knowledge acquired during the intense aesthetic experience at the dance floor.

Along the first and second chapters, the social and material aspects of the club experience have been reviewed, now it is the turn to review the dance floor from the perspective of the DJ booth, which is the main focus of the next chapter.

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Chapter 3. Perspectives from the DJ's Booth

3.1 Intro

Along with the social and material aspects (s. Chapters 1 and 2), there is a third quintessential aspect to clubbing: the DJ performance. The present chapter offers a description of the basic elements of this kind of performance grouped in three main topics: *tools, music,* and *skills*. Furthermore, this chapter presents an overview of how the use of different technologies and music formats are at the centre of the debate about their *artistry* and *authenticity* of the performance.

The aim of this chapter is to position the DJ's performance as central to club cultures while clarifying technical aspects related to DJ's practices as well as to create a basic vocabulary regarding technological devices and DJing techniques.

Section 3.2 presents the basic tools for DJing — analogue and digital — starting with a description of how records are made and how they are played back. This section also describes the function of the turntable and how it is perceived as *the authentic tool* for DJing. This section continues reviewing the digital music recording formats — CDs and .mp3 formats — and the gear used to playback them: the CDJs and the MIDI controllers in conjunction with a laptop. Here, the functions of automatic music synchronisation and of music visualisation as sound waves offered by the digital technologies receive special attention, since these functions became central to the debate regarding the musicianship of the DJ. Additionally, in this section, the function of the mix table is described with an emphasis on the function of equalisation that can be used to produce acoustic reverberation — an element also described in the previous chapter, s. section 2.4. The mix table is also important because this device is the last interface the DJ can manipulate before the music leaves towards the dance floor during the performance.

Section 3.3 describes the aesthetic, structure, and metric of house music, and how this musical genre is seen as *DJ friendly,* meaning customised for an *easy mix.* Here, the focus is on house music since this genre corresponds to the music played at the Lottus, the club where the fieldwork of this research took place — s. Chapter 5. *Context of Study*.

Section 3.4 describes how the DJ takes advantage of all the different technical nuances of the musical formats, reproduction gears and the structure of the music to create a performance by executing three basic DJ skills: *blending*, *equalising,* and *programming*.

Section 3.5 presents the ongoing debate on the *authenticity* of the DJ performance, which is based on the many different technical aspects described in the previous sections. This debate can be summarized as the confrontation of *analogue vs digital,* or *authentic vs fake*. By exploring this debate, the present chapter seeks to demonstrate the centrality of the DJ performance, positioning it at the core between technological innovation and human creativity. Finally, section 3.6 highlights the most relevant ideas developed along the chapter.

3.2 DJ Tools

Two analogue tools that have been rendered as quintessential to the art of DJing and to the culture of electronic music are the vinyl disc and the turntable (Snoman, 2004; Thornton, 1995). As Montano (2010) explains "it is the turntable that has become the central 'tool' of the DJ and that has achieved a wide degree of cultural recognition, in much the same way as the electric guitar is perceived as being integral to rock music culture" (p. 399).

Given this centrality, it is necessary to briefly explain how these tools operate. The vinyl record — a flat disc — contains sound information encoded in one tiny continuous groove[29] engraved on its surface (Fikentscher, 2000, p. 34). When a vinyl record is played back, the turntable's needle is located inside the groove and as the disc record rotates, the needle navigates through the variations of the groove making the needle vibrate. These vibrations are transformed back into electromagnetic signals, which are fed into electronic amplifiers and sent to the speakers which will reproduce those signals as sound waves[30] spreading them within the dance floor.

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[29] To produce this groove, sound vibrations are transmitted as electric signals, and carved on the lacquered surface of a master record using a stylus. That master record will be used to make a stamper, from which several vinyl copies will be pressed. For a short film documentary about how to make a vinyl, see *How Do You Make a Vinyl Record?* directed by Kajal Patel available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Yy_DHW4SgI (last accessed, March 3rd, 2019)

[30] For a short film documentary about how the turntable works, see *How Does a Turntable Work?* produced by the Science Channel available here:

This relation between the vinyl, the turntable and DJing became more evident in the 1970s when the company Panasonic released the turntable model Technics SL-1200, who got:

> … a reputation for sound quality due to its rotational stability [accuracy] and low noise. Produced for over 40 years with constant improvements made along the way, this model was beloved by club DJs around the world thanks to its strong torque and high durability, which were exclusive to this system. (https://100th.panasonic.com/global/category/2/, n.d., last accessed, October, 13th, 2019)

The Technics SL-1200 (s. Figure 3.1) became a catalyst in the creation of the DJ culture (Farrugia & Swiss, 2005, p. 41) and it can be considered *the standard gear* in every DJ cabin (Snoman, 2004). Furthermore, Bakker and Bakker (2006) pointed the Technics SL-1200 as the gear used to create the basic DJ technic of beatmatching:

> In what constitutes a remarkable romantic attachment to the authenticity of the past, that machine [here the Technics SL-1200] still remains among the most popular club DJ turntables today. It was the simplicity of that tool that gave birth to some of the modern creative turntablist techniques, such as beat-matching, scratching, orbits, rips, flares, and juggling.   (Bakker and Bakker, 2006, p. 75)

The dominance of vinyl records and turntables as the main tools for DJing started to fade in the 1990s with the appearance of new music storage formats such as the compact disc (CD) and afterwards the digital formats (.mp3 .wav). Additionally, a new technology applied to DJing was created by the company *Pioneer* who introduced the *CD mixer* or CDJ.[31] The first CDJ, the model Pioneer CDJ-500, was launched in 1994 (s. Figure 3.2) but it was until the early 2000s — with the introduction of the Pioneer CDJ-1000 — when the use of the CDJ became a standard in clubs around the world (Attias, 2013). As Montano (2010) suggests, the Pioneer CDJ-e1000 became the digital equivalent of the

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=104&v=3cyphJLljAM&feature=emb_logo (last accessed, March 3rd, 2019)

[31] In Year 2014, the company Pioneer launched a three-part film documentary *Pioneer DJ History,* about the development of DJ technology. The three parts can be seen here:
Pioneer DJ History - Part 1: Evolution of the CDJ available in
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgTdAdynUYo&t=16s; *Pioneer DJ History - Part 2: Cut the Mid Range, Drop the Bass* available in https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XO6kXAZdw5Q&list=RDCgTdAdynUYo&index=3;
Pioneer DJ History - Part 3: The Digital Revolution available in:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaboGY6_oM8&list=RDCgTdAdynUYo&index=2 (last, accessed, March 15th, 2019).

Technics-1200 in which can be considered a milestone in the stream of digitalisation that characterised the beginning of the present century.

Figure 3.1 The Technics SL-1200 Record Player. From https://100th.panasonic.com/global/category/2/, n.d. (last accessed, October 13th, 2019).

A CDJ is a reproducer of music in digital formats that incorporates "jog-wheel technology that cleverly emulates the practicalities of mixing with vinyl — you can spin the wheel the same as you would spin the vinyl" (Snoman, 2004, p. 460). Different to the turntables, the CDJs allowed the incorporation of new features such as the *sync* function — short for synchronisation — and the automatic configuration of the cue points customised to the DJ needs. "These decks also feature a plethora of effects and useful real-time functions, such as instant reverse, internal cue/loop memory, real-time seamless looping, anti-

shock and much more" (Snoman, 2004, p. 457). With the help of these new functions, the cognitive process needed to beat match and to blend two tracks[32] is highly facilitated if not completely overtaken by the computer technology present in the CDJs.

A technical gear that is always present in the DJ booth — but rarely mentioned in literature on clubbing — is the mix table or *mixer*. Different to the turntables, CDJs and laptops, the mix table does not reproduce any music. This technical device is responsible for the basic tasks of controlling the volume of each track, and depending on the model, it can be also responsible for sound effects, loops and sequences. Furthermore, one of the most relevant functions of this device is the equalisation,[33] which is basically "a frequency-specific volume tone control that allows you to intensify or attenuate specific frequencies" (Snoman, 2004, p.114). The mix table is then of the utmost importance since this device is the final interface a DJ can manipulate before the sound waves leave towards the speakers and then to the dance floor.

Figure 3.2 Development of different gears by the company Pioneer between 1994 and 2014, including the first CDJ, model CDJ-500 in 1994. The model CDJ-1000 launched in 2001, helped to standardize the use of the CDJs in clubs. Image retrieved from https://www.pioneerdj.com/en/company/company-info/#history (last accessed, March 3rd, 2019).

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[32] The process of mixing two music tracks is described in section 3.5.1 *Blending*.
[33] Equalisation is described in section 3.5.2 Equalisation.

3.3 Music

House music[34] is a genre of contemporary electronic music. The name *house* came from the club *The Warehouse* in Chicago (s. section 2.4) where this genre of music was played in the 1980s (Lles, 2002). Being "essentially a post-1970s, post-disco phenomenon" (Bates, 2005, p.317) and due to its *Afro-American-Latino* origins,[35] early house music from the 1980s contains traces, structures and sensibilities from different musical traditions such as gospel, soul, jazz, funk and salsa (Rietveld, 1998, p. 6). Some pioneers of this musical genre are Frankie Knuckles,[36] Jesse Saunders,[37] Jamie Principle,[38] Adonis, Chip E, and Marshall Jefferson (Lles, 2002). In 1986, Mr Fingers[39] launched the theme *Can You Feel It*[40] epitomizing the spirit and the aesthetic of early house music (Lles, 2002; Snoman, 2004).

Since the beginnings of the 1990s, *house* as a musical genre has been divided in many different sub-genres including tech-house, deep-house, acid-house, UK-house, Chicago-house, progressive-house, NY-house, Euro-house, and Italo-house, just to mention a few. These different terms are sometimes a consequence of the aesthetic differences in the music, other times they simply accentuate the geographical origin of the music (Gadir, 2014). This fragmentation in subgenres made it "near impossible to analyse the genre in any exact musical sense and it is only possible to make some very rough generalizations" (Snoman, 2004, p. 271). To explore the musical aesthetics of all the subgenres would escape the scope of our research, but it is important to state some common characteristics of this genre of electronic music given its influence on the DJs performance, especially regarding its metrics and structure.

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[34] The present section refers to house music since it is the music played at the site where the present research took place (s. Chapter 5 *Context of Study*).

[35] The origins of the *house* scene are reviewed in section 1.1.

[36] Frankie Knuckles is considered the *godfather* of house music (Snoman, 2004, p. 269).

[37] Jesse Saunders 1984's theme *On and On* is arguably the first theme of house music. It can be heard here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUeMFG4wjJw (last accessed March 15th, 2019).

[38] Jamie Principle's real name is Byron Walton. His theme *Your Love* of 1984 is also one of the early examples of house music.

[39] Mr Fingers real name was Larry Heard, for a further revision on his influential work on house music please review the short film documentary How Larry Heard Made House Music Deep produced by Resident Advisor here: https://www.residentadvisor.net/features/3224 (last seen March 15th, 2019).

[40] The theme *Can You Feel It* can be heard here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFuujExs03A (last seen May 18th, 2019).

Regarding the way contemporary electronic music like house and techno are produced, Gadir (2014) describes the process as follows:

> Contemporary dance music is now primarily produced digitally, using computer software which integrates samples from the aforementioned electronic instruments [Roland TR-808 drum machine and the Roland TB-303 bass line] and many other sounds programmed for production. Some producers prefer to use hardware such as drum machines, analogue synthesisers, sequencers and samplers, either exclusively or in combination with computer software. Samples of audio such as the human voice or the piano are often used in order to simulate, reference or even parody some aspects of the live or instrumental music experience. (p.10)

House music invariably uses a 4/4 signature and the tempo can range from 110 to 140 BPM[41](Snoman, 2004, p. 271). This 4/4 signature means that the musical emphasis is given every fourth beat producing the rhythm commonly known as *four-to-the-floor* (Gadir, 2014). This rhythm is different from other musical genres in which a DJ is also involved, such as hip-hop:

> A lot of vocal music, such as hip-hop and R&B, emphasize two of the four beats in a bar, such as the snare drum on beats two and four or the kick drum on one and three. House music, in contrast, has a four/four emphasis, with the kick drum falling on every beat in the bar (i.e., rather than the sound being "boom ka, boom ka," it is "boom, boom, boom, boom"). (Bakker and Bakker, 2006, p. 78)

House music is structured in beats, bars and phrases. A bar is made out of four beats, and a phrase contains usually four or more bars repeating the same sequence of beats (s. Fig. 3.3). A track usually starts and finishes with a longer phrase with no vocals or melody, which are known as *intro* and *outro* respectively. These phrases are meant to assist the DJ during the process of beat matching and blending with another music or *track*. This tradition of making music *DJ friendly* can be traced to the early 1980s when some music songs previously recorded in seven-inch vinyl records were produced again in twelve-inch format adding musical phrases, those were the so-called *extended* versions and were meant to be

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[41] BPM stands for Beats Per Minute.

used in clubs. Those extra five inches in the diameter of the record are the first example of how house music was meant to be played as part of the DJ performance.
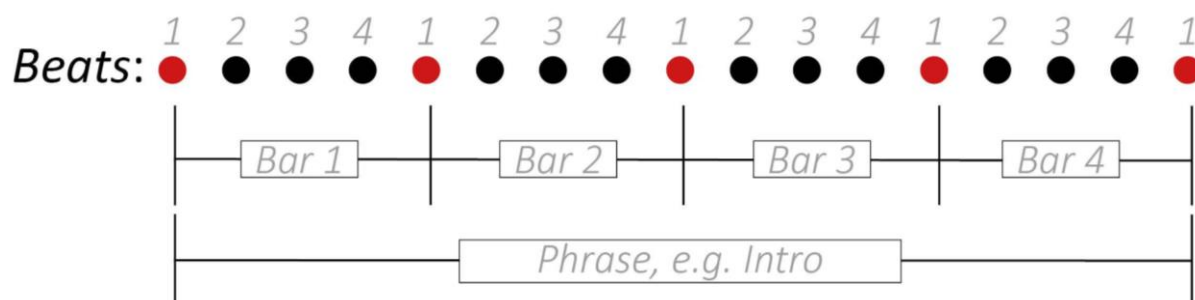
Figure 3.3 Graphic representation of the 4/4 signature of house and techno music. Every four beats build a bar and two or more bars repeating the same beats produce a phrase.

3.4 Skills

DJ performance is not only possible thanks to the emergence of new music recording formats, new musical genres — *customized* in terms of metric and structure — and new technological devices, but also thanks to the development of DJ's skills and *practices* — the latter understood as *the way of doing DJing*. While the past three sections of the present chapter were devoted to describing such musical formats, devices and musical structure, the present section reviews DJ practices resumed in three main DJ skills: *blending*, *equalising,* and *programming*.[42]

DJ skills are usually not learned *formally,* in the way an instrument like piano is mastered. Professional or formal training in DJing is not common[43] and DJ practices are usually self-learned, which underlines the DIY[44] character of this form of musicianship. DJs also develop their skills by forming peer groups, and it is not unusual for a DJ to acquire his/her initial experiences on DJing with a close friend who sometimes takes the role of a mentor. Gathering in groups or couples to practice DJing influences the DJ performance in at least three aspects: firstly, the group shares knowledge regarding technical skills

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[42] DJs can also play some musical instrument — analogue or digital — or even use sequencers, drum machines and even his/her voice as part of their performance. However, this type of performances — called *live acts —* are not reviewed in the present research.

[43] Although nowadays there are plenty of online courses, manuals, and workshops, these cannot be compared to the level of training required to become a soloist pianist, violinist or signer.

[44] DIY stands for Do It Yourself.

and also equipment — which can be expensive and hard to be afforded individually; secondly, members of the group share music, enriching their music collections and musical culture; and finally, and maybe the most important aspect, inside the group, each member is *authenticated*[45] as DJ by their peers.[46]

3.4.1 Blending

Blending is crucial for the DJ to create a musical set that can go continuously for several hours. Blending can be described as the technique used to reproduce a track onto the music of another track that is already being played without creating any undesirable distortion in the sound or in the mood of the dancing crowd. If the DJ uses vinyl records, blending correctly requires many hours of prior training to acquire keen listening and sharp hand movements for manipulating the vinyl records and turntables. Reinecke (2009) describes the blending process of synchronising two records as to follows: "DJs must advance and reverse the record slightly, speed up and slow down the record using the pitch control, mix back and forth with the crossfader, and start and stop the records at the right time." (p. 614).

For the process of blending in the case of vinyl records, the DJ has around three or four minutes, maybe less, depending on the length of the track already being played.[47] If the time passes and the ongoing music ends before the DJ has managed to make *the transition* by blending the songs, the DJ risks losing the energy of the crowd, and consequently ruining the performance. Here, the use of headphones is absolutely necessary considering the DJ will use just one ear to hear the music actually played in the club and the other ear to listen to the new track while making the necessary adjustments before blending both tracks.

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[45] This authentication comes to a peak point when the newbie DJ books his/her first public gig. These early performances are usually facilitated through contacts created within the same initial group. The initial gigs did not happen in clubs, but in smaller gatherings — school balls, private birthday parties and bars. These first experiences are crucial for the DJs to learn what is called reading the public, an aspect that is at the core of the DJ performance and that will be discussed in section 3.4.3 *Programming*.

[46] Under the Bourdieusian perspective reviewed in Chapter 1, these three aspects can be seen as a *transaction of subcultural capital*, objectified in the music and gear and embodied in the knowledge transferred from DJ to DJ.

[47] Here, the DJ must remember the length of the track and somehow calculate the time left since there is no digital aid to assist him/her in these tasks. Given the cognitive load this process represents, many DJs are by moments fully concentrated into their craft and stop observing the people at the dance floor.

As previously mentioned by Reinecke (2009), a DJ needs to let the music start at the right time. This *right time* is usually the beginning of any desired musical phrase.[48] This means that a DJ should match both tracks at the beginning of two phrases (s. Fig. 3.3), playing the new track from the beginning of the desired phrase, starting on the beat *one* of both phrases. This process is called *beatmatching*.
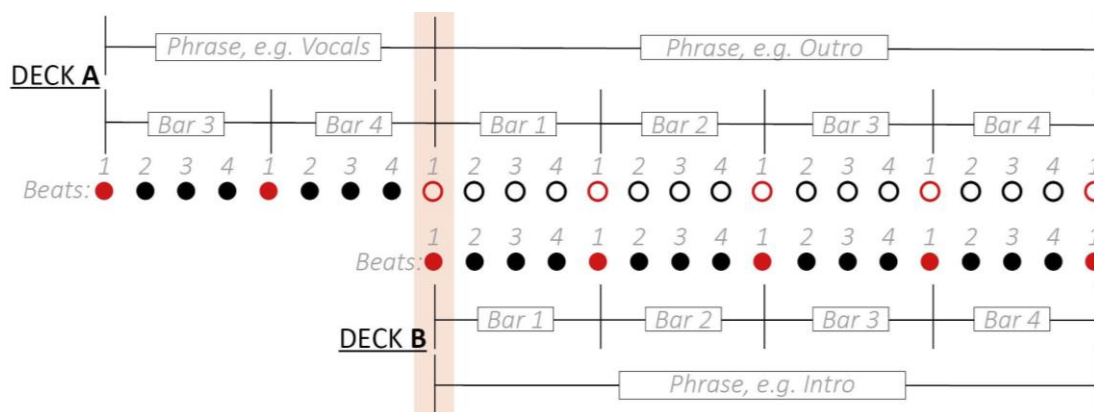
Figure 3.4 Graphic representation of the process of beatmatching. On the image, Deck A (on the top of the image) represents a musical track already playing, while Deck B (on the bottom of the image) represents the new track to be introduced. The red area indicates the area of transition, or the moment in which both tracks are matched on the first beat of two phrases.

3.4.2 Equalisation

Another basic aspect in the craft of mixing house music are the possibilities of equalisation given by the mixing table, mixing console or *mixer*. A mixing table, as the ones that can be typically found in clubs, usually has four channels, each corresponding to a music reproduction gear — turntable or CDJ. For each channel, the mixing table has at least three rotary knobs usually at the centre of the table, the *equalisers*. Each knob corresponds to the higher, medium, and lower tones of each channel.

To better visualise how equalisation works, let's imagine that a track contains bass lines, drums and vocals, which may correspond to lower, medium and higher tones respectively. By using the knobs of the equaliser, a DJ can regulate the gain (volume) of each frequency. The mix table also has faders to control the volume of each track, one fader per channel.[49]

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[48] As mentioned in section 3.4, house music is separated into beats, bars, and phrases. Every four beats build a bar and two or more identical bars constitute a phrase.

[49] Mixers have also the famous *crossfader* which is commonly used in the techniques of *turntablism* and *scratching,* which are more common in the hip-hop culture and less common in DJing house music.

Once the DJ has completed the blending of two tracks — by adjusting the speed and tempo of the two tracks while matching their phrases — he/she can start overlapping one track to the other by adjusting gradually the volume and equalization. The DJ can gradually *take out* frequencies of the previously played track while adding the equivalent frequencies from the new one, creating a seamless *transition*. This usually happens with the lower frequencies, e.g. when a DJ is blending two tracks with prominent bass lines, if the tracks are simply mixed without being properly equalized, the resulting mix will probably overfill the entire space of the club with potent low-frequency waves, creating a very disturbing reverberation and sound saturation effect, which in turn may impact the mood of the crowd in an undesirable way.

3.4.3 Programming

Finally, *programming* refers to the DJ's musical selection during a performance. Fikentscher (2000; 2013) refers to *programming* as more important than other mixing skills. This is understandable since programming requires the DJ to *read* the crowd and adapt his/her musical repertoire to the requirements of the dance floor. Programming requires the DJ to understand "the dynamic interaction between two different energy levels, one sonic, the other kinetic, and understand both as constantly changing entities" (Fikentscher, 2000, p. 41). Programming requires not only to have a wider repertoire of music and music culture, but it also requires experience in *guessing* the taste and mood of the crowd.

During a DJ set on house music, the DJ and the people at the dance floor usually face each other. This spatial disposition tends to accentuate the relation between the DJ and the audience,[50] by facilitating visual communication mainly through body language and facial gestures. "These interactions can communicate a mutual understanding or enjoyment while making the individual audience member feel valued and recognized" (Gates, Subramanian & Gutwin, 2006, p. 74).

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[50] In his work on gay audiences attending *The Circuit,* Weems (2008) notices a difference between the gay and straight audiences when it comes to *face the DJ.* He noticed: "This difference between Straight and Gay is nowhere more apparent than the spatial orientation of bodies on the dance floor. In a Straight house music venue, as mentioned earlier, the crowd faces the DJ for almost the entire performance. Gay men and their allies are different; their communal self only focuses its attention on the DJ and faces the booth when the music peaks, at the moment of collective climax. For the most part, Gay men are too busy focusing on each other" (Weems, 2008, p. 222).

Gates et al. (2006) reported that half of the DJs surveyed in their study reported to pay more attention to certain key individuals like promoters, other DJs, certain dancers "or even knowledgeable mavens of the particular community who often sit on the sidelines (sic.) instead of dancing. To some, these key individuals are influential people whose demonstrated support can influence others to increase their engagement with the DJ's performance" (p. 75).

Besides observing the facial gestures and body movement through the act of dancing, DJs also hear the audience. On the dance floor in a club no one is silent, loud conversations, laughs, screams, whistles, and applauses compete against the high volume of the sound system creating a general hubbub. These general noises produced by the diverse activity at the dance floor are monitored by the DJs who "have trained their ears to be able to selectively shift their awareness to be able to focus on different sounds. Conversations, laughter, yelling, cheering, or even silence can give the DJ plenty of information" (Gates et al., 2006, p. 76).

Euphoric expressions such as yelling, cheering and especially whistling are used especially on two occasions: when the music is having an energizing effect on the crowd, then, such expressions are a form or approval and reward to the DJ; and when the music is not matching the expectations of the dance floor, then, such expressions can be seen as a way of encouragement for the DJ to increase the energy of the music.

In house and techno music performances[51] it is not usual for the DJ to use speech "to encourage the crowd because that would disturb the flow and displace the crowd as the centre of attention" (Weems, 2008, p. 220). This accentuates the notion of house and techno music as *non-textual* music, meaning that it usually lacks verses or lyrics.

Another possible way of communication between DJs and attendees is when somebody from the audience makes a direct musical request, which are rarely satisfied by DJs in underground scenes. In general terms, DJs take musical requests as personal legit wishes that are simply hard to match in the

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[51] This is different to other music scenes like hip-hop, where the DJ is accompanied by a *master of ceremony* or MC who tell rhymes and speak to the crowd.

concept of the musical set they are creating in that moment "when DJs are approached by audience members that wish to make requests, it is not necessarily easy, not always desirable, to satisfy their requests. DJs perform for entire audiences, not just for individuals" (Gates et al., 2006, p. 77). A musical request can also be seen as a challenge to the DJ's skill of *programming* an adequate musical set, undermining their *taste,* musical culture or the *size* of their music collections.

In sum, visual and audible non-verbal information shape the decisions of the DJs during their performance. DJs scan the crowd to obtain clues about the mood and the desires of the *dance floor* with the goal of applying that information into the musical selection in order to maintain the attendees engaged in a collective experience. In other words, DJs and crowds communicate but don't talk much to each other. When a DJ makes musical decisions as the reactions of the crowd occur, instead of having a previously defined playlist, it is known as mixing *freestyle,* or mixing *on the fly*. This process happens spontaneously, *in situ* and *ad momentum.* With this in mind, the DJ performance can be more clearly portrayed as a complex phenomenon where *customized* music, record formats, music reproduction gears, mix tables, software, DJs themselves — with their creativity and skills — and the people on the dance floor take part of.

The multiple technological options that a DJ can incorporate into his/her performance has grown since the early days of disco music in the 1970s. As this text is written, new online music stream services like beatport.com, soundcloud.com and spotify.com have started to offer cloud-based music storage and music stream services for DJs. These internet-based services are now accessible through common DJ software like *Traktor*[52] and *Rekordbox*[53]*,* which can be used in laptops and other mobile devices like smartphones and tablets.[54] Every technological innovation that has arrived at the DJ booth, has brought polemic with it regarding the *authenticity* and *artistry* of the DJ performance. This polemic is reviewed in the upcoming section.

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52 https://www.native-instruments.com/en/catalog/traktor/dj-software/ (last accessed, October 15th, 2019).
53 https://rekordbox.com/en/ (last accessed, October 15th, 2019).
54 The use of internet-based music stream services and mobile devices for DJing is not further explored in the present research since these devices and technologies have not made their way to the DJ booth in clubs, yet.

3.5 Authenticity and Virtuosity

During the early disco and house movement of the 1970s and 1980s, vinyl records and turntable technology were rendered as authentic[55] to club cultures (Thornton, 1995). Yet paradoxically, this same cultural scene who embraced music produced with synthesizers and machines, offered resistance to newer digital technologies like the CDJ and MIDI controllers. This resistance is part of the ongoing debate about the DJ practices and its relationship with formats of recorded music. Bernardo Attias (2013) calls this debate, the *war of the formats*[56] and he summarizes it in two philosophical concerns or anxieties: one is about the authenticity of musical representation; the other is about the virtuosity of the musical performance (p.21). The present section reviews some arguments of this debate, presented in the "small body of literature that addresses DJ culture and new technologies" (Yu, 2013, p. 163).

Starting with the concern on the authenticity of musical representation, the work of Farrugia and Swiss (2005) analyses the content in an online mail list specialized in DJ practices. Their analysis is focused on the *value* given to record technologies such as the twelve-inch vinyl disc. The authors understand value not only as the sum of meanings and feelings attached to this music format, but also adding the "attitudes about the vinyl record as a social phenomenon, medium, and cultural text" (Farrugia & Swiss, 2005, p.30). In their work, these authors suggest two central arguments: the first is that DJs may use technological hierarchies, such as *authentic* and *inauthentic*, as a gatekeeping strategy to protect their status, practices, gear and expensive vinyl collections from obsolescence. The second argument refers to how DJs mixing with vinyl records gain their *authenticity* by showing their DJ skills through the physical manipulation of the discs and turntables during the DJ performance: "analogue turntables leave the record in plain view of spectators, foregrounding the spatiality inherent in the technology of the record [while digital technology] is largely or totally invisible" (p. 39). The *invisible* manipulation of

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[55] For Farrugia and Swiss, the term authentic "functions as a concept that creates a sense of what certain group insiders deem to be 'real' or valuable to their practices" (2005, p. 33).

[56] Bernardo Attias (2013) offers a historical overview on what he calls the *war of the formats* (p.16). Showing a chronological review, Attias points how, since the appearance of the early phonographic recordings at the end of the 19th century, record music technologies were seen as a threat to live music performances. Then, just after the club cultures and the DJs rendered vinyl records *authentic* in the 19980s and 1990s, the CD appeared in the last century in order to be authenticated in the 2000s, when CDs and CDJs became the standard equipment in clubs. Finally, around the year 2010, the MIDI controllers and the laptops appeared in the territory of the DJ booth.

music when mixing with digital technologies — i.e. using a laptop or a controller without jog-wheels — make spectators doubt about the DJ's skills and artistry. Montano (2010) poignantly expresses this doubt in the title of his article: *How do you know he's not playing Pac-Man while he's supposed to be DJing?*[57] In his work, he observes the advancement of digital technologies with a certain optimism underlining the advantages offered by the internet and by .mp3 formats when it comes to search, obtain and share music.

Just as Farrugia and Swiss (2005), Montano (2010) recognises how important it is for a DJ to be visually perceived as capable of *physically* mixing music, but he gives more value to the spontaneous relation created by the DJ in his/her relation with the public. By doing so, he acknowledges the conflictive relation between well-established technologies and newer technologies in club cultures:

> The adoption of CDs, mp3s and Ableton Live [a music production software[58]] lends emphasis to this idea of DJ culture as fluid and evolving, while the continued use of vinyl demonstrates the way technology can be bound up with perceptions of skill, aesthetics and authenticity. (Montano, 2010, p. 415)

In his work, Montano (2010) does not try to resolve this contradictory relation between *old* and *authentic* and *new* and *evolving* technologies — i.e. by accusing vinyl users of gatekeeping strategies. Instead, he predicts that the concept and skills required to DJing will simply evolve and that:

> " as clubbers witness more and more DJs employing technology other than vinyl and turntables … their understandings and perceptions of what it means to be a DJ will change, and this may require a redefinition of the concept of DJing … the days of vinyl-less dance scenes cannot be far away" (p. 415).

Montano's position has been taken one step further by Yu (2013) who argues that DJs legitimize certain practices as authentic based on traditions and standards within their respective scenes, and as these standards and traditions historically change, there are no *natural* practices: "DJ/producers are constantly

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[57] Similar doubts about the *real* skills and musicianship are observed in different scenes of electronic music where laptops are involved, like hip-hop, drum and bass, techno, electro-acoustic experimentation, and sound art.
[58] https://www.ableton.com/en/ (last accessed, October 15th, 2019).

redefining electronic dance musicianship through their practices and authenticating discourses; hence, there are no 'natural' practices that are intrinsically more legitimate than others" (p. 165).

Yu's argument is based on the analysis of seven interviews with DJs and producers from Melbourne Australia, theorising around three controversies: *cheating*, *stealing* and *the kids*. From these controversies, *cheating* encompasses clearly the topic treated along this section, meaning the authentication of DJ practices based on music formats and reproduction gears.[59] Cheating, so Yu, occurs when a necessary skill is bypassed by a DJ with an easier route i.e. when beatmatching by ear is bypassed using the *sync* function or through some kind of automation[60] (p.155). *Automation* becomes a central piece in the conflict between what is authentic and what is not; between what a DJ can achieve though its own capacities — i.e. mixing by ear — and what can be achieved through the capacities of a machine — the sync function.

> "For both the CD and the laptop, the criticisms from established DJs imply that a certain human element involved in DJing has become automated and thus something significant has been lost in the craft. … [The] loss of human agency[61]" (Yu, 2013, p.169).

Another dimension regarding the authenticity of musical representation that has raised a *crisis of identity* in DJ cultures is the sound quality (Attias, 2013; Montano, 2010), since new digital technologies — like the .mp3 format — arguably degrade the fidelity of music. A common argument is that "where a digital format has the advantage in dynamic range, analogue [vinyl records, in this case] has finer resolution" (Attias, 2013, p. 31). The argument used to defend analogue over the digital formats is the supposed superior and *warm* sound quality of the vinyl. Regarding this, Attias (2013) presents a technical argumentation for both .mp3 and vinyl formats, concluding that such sound quality issues — even if existing — are not likely to be noticed by the attendees at the dance floor and that even critical

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[59] The other controversies are: *stealing* which theorize about the notion of originality in music production practices with less focus on DJing; while the other controversy, *the kids,* explores *experience* as a marker used by DJs and producers to differentiate themselves from others individuals less familiar with certain technologies.

[60] Other examples of *cheating* can be the use of features offered by CDJs and DJ software such as the recording of *cue points*, the *quantize* function, and the *BPM counter* which "is a standard feature in most newer models of CDJs and allows for beatmatching through the matching up of numbers rather than purely by ear" (Yu, 2013, p. 154).

[61] Yu introduces the term *agency,* which is understood as the capacity of any element — human or technological — to exercise influence on each other as they get involved in the dance floor experience. The term *agency* is drawn from the Actor-Network Theory which will be described in the next chapter.

listeners would have trouble noticing such differences (p.34). Furthermore, Attias mentions other factors who may have a bigger influence in the sound quality in the dance floor   like the size, quality and placement of the speakers.[62]

The other concern addressed in this chapter is that of musical virtuosity in the DJ performance. Here, we must remember that virtuosity in a DJ's performance is not based on the interpretation of an instrument or in the voice of a singer — as it may occur with live music performances — but on the capacity of the DJ to *creatively* playback records. In this way, DJing — regardless of the gear and music formats used — fundamentally challenges the notion of musical virtuosity attached to *live* events: "Prior to the phonograph, music was experienced through performance, an ephemeral 'live' moment. The act of being able to record the performance and reproduce it meant you no longer need the performer after one performance" (Yu, 2013, p. 69).

In the lack of musical instruments or voice, DJs authenticate their performance through their DJing skills. Along his work, Attias (2013) refers to DJ practices as an *aural* and *tactile* exercise, especially the skill of beatmatching, where the DJ must carefully and constantly count the beats and recognize the phrase of the music he/she should know by memory, while manipulating two or three records adjusting the tempo or BPM without knowing exactly its numerical value.

Attias (2013) explores what happens when newer technologies facilitate or completely bypass the *authentic* skill of beatmatching *by ear* thanks to the *sync* function and to the visual representation of music as *sound waves*.[63] The *sync* function automatically matches and maintains the tempo of the two digital recorded songs. The visual representation of the music as a sound wave on the laptop screen allows the DJ to *visually* find the desired musical phrase by pressing a button, bypassing months of musical training with vinyls (p. 27-28). Contradictory, the eyes seem to have substituted the ears in the manipulation of the *sonic matter.*

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[62] The importance of the acoustic properties of the clubs and the sound systems were explored along the past chapter 2 *The Design Perspective.*
[63] These aspects were explained in section 3.3 *Digital Tools.*

To these concerns, Attias wisely avoids getting stuck in any technological determinism and argues that the focus of the debate should not be on the technical aspects but on the *risk factor* and the energy flow occurred during the performance:

> When a DJ blends songs live for a crowded dance floor, s/he runs the risk of 'trainwrecking' – playing records with clashing tempos and thereby losing the energy of the dancers. That risk of failure gives the performance its palpable edge, and some would argue that whatever musicianship can be said to inhabit the DJ must come from that risk (Attias, 2013, p. 28).

Risk, Attias (2013) continues, functions as a feedback loop transferring the increasing tension in the dance floor while enacting and humanizing the performance. When the DJs — independently of the technology used — take risks during their performance, they maintain the subjectivity of the performance. *Digital* DJs may not risk at *trainwrecking* the blending of two songs, but they risk in other areas such as *misreading* the crowd and choosing the wrong music or overusing sound effects and loops. The debate should therefore not be focused on a single skill or a particular technology but on how the different factors involved work together to design the dance floor experience.

In sum, the different arguments presented in this section show the intrinsic relationship between technology, human skills and the discourses of authenticity and artistry surrounding the DJ performance. This relationship gains relevance for the present research given the centrality of the DJ performance at the core of the dance floor experience. However, if the debate continues by focusing only on certain aspects, i.e. DJ skills, as the *only* source of the musicality and authenticity, this will only perpetuate Attias (2013) *war of the formats,* shifting *agency* back and forth between DJs and equipment.

Instead of this, Yu (2013) proposed a different solution. He asks to analyse the DJ performance not by isolating specific factors but by approaching the phenomena as a network of heterogeneous articulated materials: social, aesthetic, technological, architectural (166). By doing so, the debate would not be a matter of *localized* agency, but a case of *shared* agency. To develop this idea, it will be necessary to address notions involved in the previous chapter 1 and 2, which would exceed the focus of the present

chapter; therefore this debate will be clarified in the next chapter, along with the proposal of a theoretical framework for the analysis of the dance floor experience.

3.6 Outro

The present chapter reviewed different music recording formats and sound reproduction technologies applied to the DJ performance. Additionally, this chapter presented a characterization of house music — it's metric and structure — and the basic skills a DJ needs to master in order to perform in front of a live audience. The last part of the chapter presented the ongoing debate regarding the *authenticity* and *virtuosity* of the DJ performance based on the use of technology. The debate underlines how quintessential is the DJ performance in the dance floor experience; and the polemic caused by the introduction of new digital technologies into the DJ booth. The most important aspects of this chapter can be summarized in the following statements:

a) The use of vinyl records and turntables have been rendered as the *authentic* tools of the DJ. This status quo is constantly challenged by the emergence of newer technologies.

b) Digital technologies have facilitated enormously the art of DJing. DJ software overtook certain skills needed when using analogue equipment through automation. This is the case of the *sync* function, which automatically matches the speed of two tracks. Additionally, the visualisation of music as *sound waves* available when using a laptop enables the DJ to visually find musical phrases. Instead of mixing *by ear,* digital technologies privileged vision as the sense used to mix music.

c) Discussion about authenticity became excessively centred in technical aspects of technology involved in the DJ performance, derived in technocratic discussions about whereas the agency in the performance should be exclusively assigned to certain music formats, reproduction gears, or in the skills required to operate such equipment.

d) The present chapter has explored the need to extend the notion of the DJ performance beyond the DJ skills and reproduction gears, surpassing previous notions of *localized* agency — i.e. either in musical formats or in the DJ skills — moving the debate to a discussion of *shared*

agency between the different materials — social, aesthetic, technological, architectural — involved in the dance floor experience.

e) In order to achieve such analysis, it is necessary a framework capable include those other aspects or *materials* involved in the dance floor experience. The next chapter presents some alternatives and proposals to create such an analysis framework.

Chapter 4. Problematising the Dance Floor

4.1 Intro

The present chapter offers a resume of the most important ideas found in the literature review of the previous three chapters: section 4.2 presents the lessons learned through the review of sociological studies; section 4.3 reviews the ideas and areas of opportunity found in design studies on clubs; while section 4.4 presents the principal notions found in the literature regarding DJ practices.

Subsequently, section 4.5 exposes some theoretical notions suggesting that the dance floor experience can be seen as the result of a process based on *shared agency* among different factors, while exposing the research question and the premises behind it. Having the research question as the starting point, this section formulates the general goals of this research while clarifying the notion of *agency* applied to the present research.

By problematising the dance floor and formulating the research question, goals and basic premises, this chapter closes the Part I of the present research devoted to the literature review and state of the art, leading to the next Part II devoted to the Fieldwork.

4.2 Lessons from Chapter 1

This section presents relevant lessons, critical comments and research opportunities identified along the literature review presented in chapter one: *Socio-cultural Perspectives on Clubbing*. These aspects are presented in Table 4.1 and explained in the subsequent text.

Table 4.1 Main ideas, critic and research opportunities from Chapter 1.

Main ideas	The different sociological perspectives presented in this chapter can help us to effectively understand the social interactions at the dance floor by applying two metaphors: ● Under the economic metaphor, objects, knowledge, practices and technologies are valuable as ways of embodiment and objectification of cultural, subcultural or social capital. ● Under the dramaturgical metaphor, spaces and objects are seen as stages and props for the representation of social roles.

Main critic	● Under the perspectives presented in this chapter, reality is *socially constructed* rather than materially built. Here, the spaces we call clubs are seen as mere containers for social events to happen. It is possible to suggest that there is a lack of analysis about how complex the *materiality* of the club is, and how it influences the experience at the dance floor.
Area of opportunity for the present research	● Acknowledging that clubbing is a site-specific activity, the present study aims to complement the sociological perspectives exposed in this chapter by designing a study which foregrounds the materiality of the club — spaces, objects and applied technologies — and its influence on the dance floor experience.

Along the first chapter, different studies approaching the social experience of clubbing were reviewed. Those works used either an *economic metaphor,* based on the embodiment, objectification and transaction of cultural and social *capital* — the *Bourdieusian* perspective; or a *dramaturgical metaphor*, describing the social interaction inside the club as a play — the *Goffmanian* perspective.

Under the Bourdieusian perspective (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986), social practices like dancing or DJing and the material context of the club — spaces, objects, technologies — are considered either a way of embodiment or a way of objectification of social, cultural or subcultural capital. Once turned into *capital*, it is possible to accumulate them to increase one's prestige or *coolness*; or use them as gatekeeping strategies. This metaphor was helpful to illuminate diverse notions related to clubbing such as door policies (Rivera, 2010); reputation and distinction assigned to club's attendees (Thornton, 1995); as well as gender inequality among DJs (Bloustien, 2016; Farrugia, 2012; Ganavas and Reitsamer, 2013).

Chapter one also reviewed the work of Ben Malbon (1999) who applied Goffman's *dramaturgical metaphor* (1959) to understand and describe the social interactions among clubbers as elements of a *performative* act. This *Goffmanian* perspective has helped us to see the function of the physical space of the club — including its architectural design, objects, and applied technologies — as a sort of *stage* customized for the representation of social roles.

Under the perspectives explored in the first chapter, clubbing is seen as part of a reality *socially* constructed, rather than *materially* built. This is understandable given the *symbolic* approach many

sociological studies have adopted, which tend to value the materiality of the club — objects, spaces and applied technologies — as symbols or repositories of meaning. Many of these studies tend to ignore the complexity and importance of the material arrangements that constitute a club and the technologies involved in the so-called dance floor experience. As Gadir, self-critically, mentions in her ethnography about music triggers for dancing in Glasgow's techno scene:

> I take certain phenomena for granted due to my comfort and familiarity with the settings and associated practices. … The features with which I am already familiar include the setup of physical spaces for dance music events. … To these things I tend not to pay any attention unless something stands out to me as unusual or incongruous. For instance, I am used to the lighting style of many nightclubs, and therefore do not generally observe the effects of lights on clubbers and on music perception (Gadir, 2014, p. 40).

Gadir's words exemplified the tendency to take the material context of the dance floor — the setting — as *granted* or as an inscrutable *black box* (Vitos, 2014) ignoring their role in the act of clubbing. This has created the wrong notion that *club*bing can be separated from the *club* itself, denying how site-specific this activity is. This situation represents a knowledge gap about the role of the material context of the club — spaces, objects and applied technologies — in the act of clubbing. Having said this, the present research has found the need to explore alternative ways to approach the phenomena of clubbing by foregrounding the role of the material context in the creation of the dance floor experience.

4.3 Lessons from Chapter 2

This section presents some relevant lessons, critical comments and research opportunities that have been identified after the literature review presented in Chapter 2: *Design Perspectives on Clubbing*. These aspects are presented in Table 4.2 and explained in the subsequent text.

Table 4.2 Main ideas, critic and research opportunities from Chapter 2.

Main ideas	● Chapter two foregrounds the materiality of the club, suggesting that *space* is not a stable, Cartesian category, but *unstable* and *time-based*. The club is then understood as a "phenomenological-spatial apparatus" (Esteves, 2018 p. 132), capable of blending *space* and

	event, transforming the club from being a *container* for the social event, into the event itself. ● In order to create this *space-event* where the dance floor experience takes place, chapter two explores some Design strategies like, *discotecture, allatonceness* and the concept of *total space.* ● The dance floor experience is presented as a *dialogue* between sound, architecture, technologies and the human body, underlining the importance of haptic and sonic stimuli existing within the dance floor. This emphasizes the intrinsic relation between *club*bing and the club.
Main critic	● Given the historical perspective that most of the studies presented in the chapter have, they present mainly data obtained from secondary sources like photographs, document analysis and historic interviews. Therefore, there is a lack of empirical evidence to contrast how the concepts presented in the chapter work in real settings.
Area of opportunity for the present research	● A way to enrich the notions presented in Chapters 1 and 2, is to contrast notions like *discotecture* with data acquired from first-hand sources in real settings, like the data acquired by ethnographic methods.

The second chapter is focused on the way buildings, objects, and technologies are used to physically create the dance floor experience. Along this chapter, concepts like *allatonceness* (McLuhan, 2001), *discotecture* (Munuera, 2018) or *total space* (Esteves, 2018) are explored as strategies to *thicken* the atmosphere within the dance floor with different layers of media, sound and lighting technologies, creating a *semi-solid* environment (Lavin, 2009). Another characteristic of the dance floor explored in this chapter is the multiplicity of narratives occurred simultaneously at the dance floor. These narratives are non-textual but embedded in the sound, light and media technologies activated during the dance floor experience.

Chapter 2 also exposes how clubs have challenged the traditional notion of *space* as a stable Cartesian category, only definable in two or three dimensions. This chapter suggests that *space* within nightclubs is an *unstable* and *time-based* category. The notion supporting this suggestion is that the materiality of the club — objects, media, and applied technologies — is intrinsically linked to the events that occur inside. The club can be then understood as a "phenomenological-spatial apparatus" (Esteves, 2018 p. 132), capable of blending *space* and *event,* transforming the club from being a *container* for the social event, into part of the event itself.

Another aspect explored throughout Chapter 2 is how the acoustic effect of reverberation establishes a *dialogue* between sound, architecture, and people. The occurrence of this effect depends on the specific architectural features of each dance floor and it is produced by the vast range of sound frequencies transmitted by the sound systems when hitting the walls. It can also be intentionally provoked by the DJ through the equalisation of the sound frequencies during his/her performance. Once occurred, the sonic effects of reverberation are commonly inaudible for the human ears but haptically felt on their bodies. The existence of this effect, and its importance in the dance floor experience underlines the relevance that *haptic* and *sonic* stimuli have over the visual.

The prior example of reverberation can help us to understand how Design, when applied to clubs, aims not only to transform the material space itself, but to trigger a bodily experience through aesthetic means. The body became also part of the *event-space* itself since it re-embodied the aesthetic knowledge acquired during the intense experience at the dance floor (Biehl-Missal, 2016).

Chapter 2 accentuates the intrinsic relation between clubbing and the club by describing how the spatial design of the clubs uses *hooks* and *cues* in order to *suggest* — rather than to define — different ways to use and embrace the space, i.e. distances choreograph the rhythm of movement in transitional spaces like stairs and corridors, while darkness anonymises behaviours and uninhibited individuals. Through their Design, clubs can evoke narratives of *possibilities,* for example by displaying *second-hand* furniture and *pre-existing* architectural elements and narratives brought into the design of the club. In this way, Design can accentuate narratives of exclusivity and elitism or utopian social and gender egalitarianism commonly associated with elite or underground clubs respectively.

Here, a pertinent critic to the different studies reviewed in Chapter 2 is the lack of empiric evidence they present. Except for the work of Biehl-Missal (2016) and Lawrence (2004, 2018), the studies presented along that chapter are based in secondary sources of information, especially document analysis, photographs, architectonic blueprints and interviews mainly with architects, designers and artist who participated in the design and construction of the clubs. However, there is little to no first-hand accounts about the dance floor experience itself.

Having said this, the present research finds pertinent to propose a study based on empirical and primary sources of data, with a focus on the influence of the materiality of the club — spaces, objects, and applied technologies — in the dance floor experience.

4.4 Lessons from Chapter 3

This section presents some relevant lessons, critical comments and research opportunities which have been identified after the literature review presented in Chapter 3: *Perspectives from the DJ booth*. These aspects are presented in Table 4.3 and explained in the subsequent text.

Table 4.3 Main ideas, critic, and research opportunities from Chapter 3.

Main ideas	- The DJ performance has been rendered as quintessential to the dance floor experience, since it is customized to the space, public and moment in which it occurs. - The DJ performance orchestrates different social, aesthetic, and technical elements during the dance floor experience. - The outcome of a DJ performance is not embedded in a single technology, a single music recording format or particular skill; it is the sum of different factors converging to create the dance floor experience. Some of these factors are the acoustic qualities of the space and the sound system; the music formats and reproduction gear chosen by the DJ; and the way people react during the performance. - Chapter 3 suggests that, besides being a social or material space, the dance floor can be seen as a technological space.
Main critic	- Along the debate presented in Chapter 3, different studies are focused on the relevance of certain factors, either human or technological, during the DJ performance, but they rarely focus on how those aspects are integrated. - Another pertinent critic to the body of knowledge about the DJ performance is that "many of the main academic texts on DJ culture have been limited to the USA and UK" (Young, 2015, p. 356). This situation reduces the representation of cultural diversity[64] in studies relating to the DJ performance — a phenomena that is otherwise claimed to be *global phenomena.*
Area of opportunity for the present research	- Rather than proposing to analyse the DJ performance exclusively from a technological perspective, a way to contribute to the debate on the musicianship of the DJ performance would be to study it as a subjective act of integration of aesthetic, social and technical materials. - In order to do so, it is necessary to resort to a framework that integrates the many different elements involved in the dance floor experience. Such a framework should help us explore and understand

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[64] Some exceptions to this tendency are works of Fontanari (2013) and Ferreira (2006) in the Brazilian context; Moore (2001) in the Cuban context; and Simão (2014) in the Portuguese context.

	the complexity of the dance floor experience as a whole, rather than assign sole importance to specific technical or human factors.

Chapter 3 contains probably the most technical descriptions among the literature review. In general, this chapter is devoted to describing the so-called *DJ practices* — meaning the way of doing DJing. In particular, this chapter aims to create a technical vocabulary and a general understanding about the nuances in the art of DJing. Additionally, it seeks to present the DJ performance as quintessential to the dance floor experience.

This chapter describes different digital and analogue tools and skills — *blending*, *equalisation,* and *programming* — required for a DJ in order to perform, as well as some technical aspects about the metric and structure of house music. Additionally, the last part of this chapter explores how the technical advantages brought by digital technologies have triggered a debate about the *authenticity* and music *virtuosity* of the DJ performance (Montano, 2010; Gates et al., 2006; Farrugia and Swiss, 2005; Attias, 2011, 2013). One possible conclusion from this debate is that musical virtuosity and DJ musicianship can hardly be *embedded* into a single technology, a single music recording format or particular skill.

The DJ performance can be seen as the articulation of different social, aesthetic and technological materials. In sum, the dance floor experience has not only social-symbolic and material-aesthetic backgrounds, but a technical one too. Chapter 3 invites us to see the dance floor as a *technological* space — dotted with digital and/or analogue machinery orchestrated through the act of DJing. This underlines how the *social* aspects of clubbing have a *technological* background — software, cables, gear, formats and speakers — regulating the dance floor experience.

4.5 Questions

On his work on the different formats used along the DJ performance, Attias (2013) suggests that the dance floor experience is the result of the union between technology and subjectivity. This is expressed in the centrality granted to the *risk* during the DJ performance. *Risk*, for Attias, functions as a *feedback*

loop transferring the increasing tension in the dance floor created by the *assemblage* of the different human and technological factors (p.28).

These tensions between the human and technological factors are also addressed by Pedro Ferreira (2008) as a matter of *technological mediation* in the *sound-movement* relation. According to this author, the DJ performance "is not a question of *localized agency*, but of the effective mediation between recorded sounds and collective movements, and the performer-machine relation is not a matter of opposition but of association [or integration] and transformation in the technological actualization of the sound-movement relation" (p.18, my emphasis). The work of Ferreira is retaken by Attias himself to make the following reflection:

> [For Ferreira] the DJ is not the source of the experience but one among several nodes in a cluster of sounds, technologies, and bodies moving through space. The creative subjectivity at work comes not from the human agent alone (nor the machines, nor the dancing audience) but from the interactions among them all (Attias, 2013, p. 41).

With this analysis of the DJ performance as a matter of interactions among multiple human and technological factors (Attias: 2013; Ferreira, 2008), it is possible to establish the need to see the dance floor experience not as a phenomenon of *localized agency* but of mediation or *shared agency*. This means that instead of analysing *agency* (the influence each single factor has on the dance floor experience), it is also necessary to pay attention on how and in which degree each factor exercises such influence or agency. In this regard, Ferreira (2008) has already mentioned various elements participating in the experience like sound, speakers, and the dance floor itself:

> it seems evident that the dance floor is a very important part of the media chain through which sound is transduced, the others being vinyl records, electric wires, loudspeakers, etc. In other words, when the sounds coming out of the loudspeakers meet the movements of the dance floor, one becomes a

medium for the transmission of the other, and it is this short-circuiting of machine sound and human movement that seems to constitute the specificity of performance in EDM (Ferreira, 2008, p. 17).
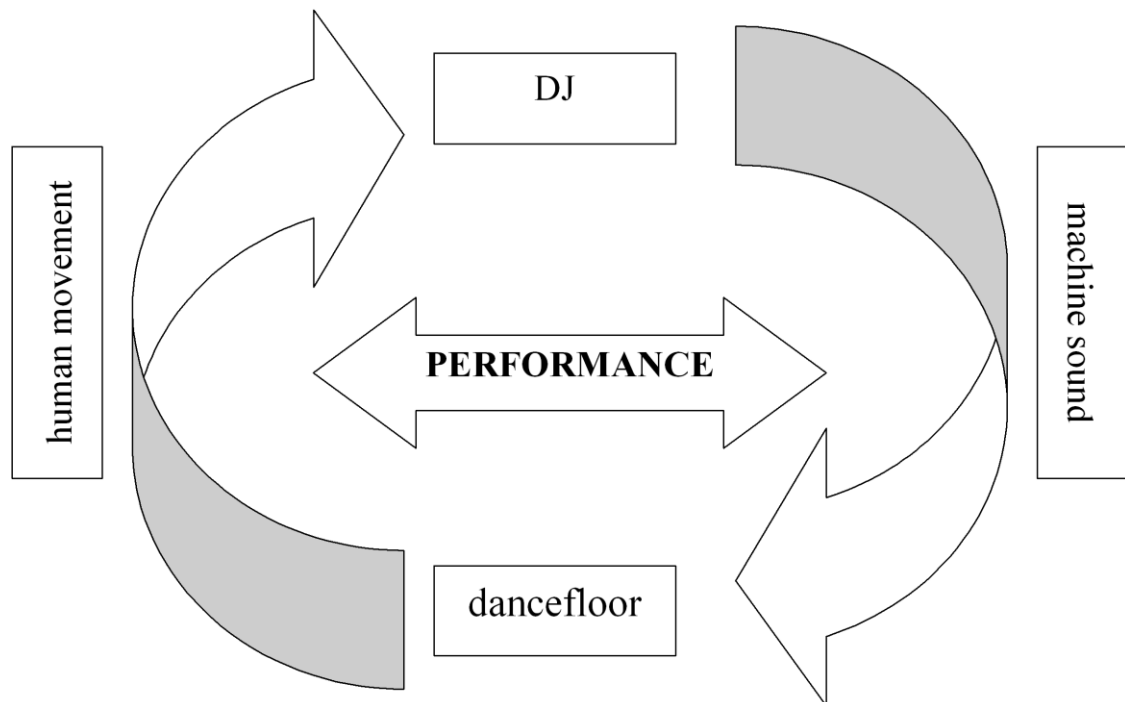
Figure 4.1 Figure presented by Pedro Ferreira under the title: "Performance in electronic dance music corresponds to the actualization, in the DJ-dance floor relation, of the shared reality of human movement and machine sound" (Ferreira 2008, p. 17).

Here, it is important to note that Ferreira (2008) implicates audiences, DJs, cables, speakers, sound and the dance floor not as entities in opposition but as entities in *mutual implication* and interaction along the DJ performance (p.19). Ferreira concludes with two questions:

Does it still make sense to attribute agency to the DJ selecting the sounds or to the audience moving on the dance floor when they are both only mediators, alongside sound-reproducing machines, of the sound-movement relation?

and

What is the meaning of attributing causality to DJs *or* audience, humans *or* machines, sound *or* movement, when they are all different manifestations of one common machinic (sic.) reality of mutual implication? (Ferreira, 2008, p. 19)

Taking Ferreira's question one step further, the present work explores the *dance floor experience* not as a matter of *localized agency* by focusing on a single aspect present in the club — e.g. the DJ or the interior design — but as a matter of *shared agency* and interplay among different material, social and technological aspects. Our research question is:

> *How can we describe the process of shared agency among the material, social and technological aspects involved in the dance floor experience?*

By raising this question, this thesis's primary aim is to describe the way different material, social and technological aspects of the dance floor experience influence each other, creating a network of mutual implication, moved by *shared agency* and constant interactions. Another goal is to expand the notion of design as a disciple capable to mediate among the material, social and technological factors present in club environments, influencing the dance floor experience.

Here, it is necessary to know what is meant with the term *agency.* For the present research, *agency* is the capacity of any element — social, material, or technological — to exercise influence on each other as they come together as part of the same experience (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010 p. 146). This means that for the present research agency is not exclusively human but "objects too, have agency" (Latour, 2005, 63). Human intention expressed in *action* is of course recognised as a *type* of agency. However, here, "it is not a causal agency in the strictest sense that is alluded to under the heading of agency" (Sayes, 2013, p. 8).

Latour (2005) argues that even when no intentional agency can be subscribed to objects, this does not mean that objects do not participate in the social by authorizing it, allowing it, affording it, encouraging it, blocking it, suggesting it, or forbidden it (p. 72). In sum, to avoid human determinism, the present research understands *agency* not as an inherent human capacity, but as a *consequence* resulting from the influence of any factor involved in the dance floor experience.

In this way, and for the present research, *agency* grants to every aspect present in the dance floor the capacity to influence any other social, architectural, aesthetic, and technological element. Echoing

Latour's (2005) notions, the dance floor is here visualised not as a group of unarticulated elements, but as a combination of elements exercising agency among each other as part of a network.

This idea of the network is used here a framework capable of integrating material, technological and aesthetic aspects involved in the dance floor experience, while helping us explore and understand its complexity as a whole, rather than assign sole importance to specific technical or human factors.

Having these premises and the research questions in mind, the present work explores the dance floor experience as a network, aiming to unveil the way in which material and social elements interplay among each other as part of the dance floor experience. The methodological tools selected for this exploration are participatory observation and interviews.

By using full participatory observation and in-deep interviews with key-informants, this thesis aims to contribute to closing this gap in Design studies, facing the lack of empirical data in design studies (as stated in section 4.2), while taking advantage of the versatility of these well-established tools in studies regarding clubbing (s. section 6.1).

This chapter closes the first part of the present work, devoted to the state of the art and the literature review. The second part deals with the different aspects of the *Fieldwork,* starting with the contextualisation of the clubbing scene in the city of Porto (Chapter 5) and the data gathering process (Chapter 6).

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Chapter 5. Context of Study

5.1 Intro

The first goal of the present chapter is to contextualise the reader on how the rave movement and electronic music arrived in Portugal in a post-revolutionary ambient of economic growth and social peace in the late 1980s and 1990s; and how the first clubs started to appear in the country by the end of the 20th century. The second goal is to present the Lottus After-Hours, which is the main site of this study.

The present chapter has four major parts: section 5.2 presents a brief context of Portugal in the decades of 1980s and 1990s, the post-revolutionary period when the rave movement brought the electronic music to the country; section 5.3 presents a snapshot of clubbing in the city of Porto, presenting the most representative geographical areas of the city where the nightlife takes place; section 5.4 is devoted to describing the Lottus After-Hours, its geographical location, the building and the population who attends this place; and section 5.5 consists of a summary to wrap up the main aspects presented along this chapter.

5.2 Rave and Clubbing in Portugal

The decade of the 1970s in Portugal was marked by the end of the dictatorship of António Salazar — who ruled the country for over forty years — and the establishment of democracy as the result of a revolutionary movement. Salazar "was ultra-conservative, in the most literal sense of the term. He steadfastly defended his rejection of democracy, favouring an 'organic' vision of society based on traditional, Catholic foundations" (Pinto, 2011, p. 32). The revolution, initiated on April 25th of 1974, ended Salazar's anti-democratic regime and paved Portugal's transition into a parliamentary democracy towards the full membership of the European Union (EU) in 1986. (Royo, 2018, p. 5)

The decade of the 1980s is described by scholars Monteiro & Pinto (2011, pp. 71-72) as a cycle of economic growth and social change including the migration of many Portuguese from rural to urban areas; an increase of the middle-class; an enhancement of the general educative levels of the population;

and the opening of the Portuguese economy to the rest of the European continent. As a result of this opening of the country to Europe during the 1980s and 1990s, Portugal adopted diverse musical influences, especially from the UK. These influences are manifested in the appearance of the punk movement in Portugal in the late 1970s and during the 1980s (Guerra, Moreira & Silva, 2016) and in the flourishing of the rave movement in the 1990s (Simão, 2014).

The early years of the 21st century brought economic stagnation to Portugal (Monteiro & Pinto, 2011), resulting in the economic crisis of 2008 and the intervention of the *troika*[65] from 2011 to 2014. After those years of crisis, and during the period of the present research (2016-2018), Portugal experienced a phase of economic recovery, partly due to the increase of international massive tourism. In 2018 a total of 22,8 millions of foreign tourists visited the country, doubling the resident population of ca. 10,3 million in the same year.[66] This represents 7,5% more than in 2017.[67] During the year 2019, Portugal became the country with the highest increase in tourism in the EU, reporting a 5.3% annual increase.[68] With the arrival of tourism, came the opportunity of extending the offer in nightly leisure activities, like restaurants, bars and discotheques.

Besides tourism, another factor that may influence positively the appearance and maintenance of discotheques is the worldview of the Portuguese society. In general terms, the profile of the contemporary Portuguese society can be described as open and with progressive ideas. This is patent in the approval and implementation of laws on topics traditionally banned in conservative societies, such as the decriminalization of the consumption of drugs, which was approved in 2000;[69] the law regulating the voluntary termination of pregnancy approved in 2007, and the legalisation approving same-sex

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[65] Troika is a term used in the media to designate the economic commission representing the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank. The aim of the troika was to implement economic adjustment programs to European countries affected by the 2008 crisis in exchange for economic aid.
[66] Source: https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_indicadores&contecto=pi&indOcorrCod=0008273&selTab=tab0 (last accessed, September 24th, 2018)
[67] Source: https://www.gee.gov.pt/pt/indicadores-diarios/ultimos-indicadores/29306-ine-estatisticas-do-turismo-3 (last access: January 19th, 2019).
[68] Source: https://expresso.pt/economia/2019-10-04-Portugal-esta-a-ter-o-maior-crescimento-turistico-da-Europa (last access: January 19th, 2019).
[69] Lei nº30/2000, de 29 de Novembro. Law n.30/2000.

marriage in 2010[70] with the subsequent recognition of the right of same-sex couples to adopt children in 2016.[71] In sum, the present research was developed in a social context of economic recovery through massive tourism, and in a general environment of democracy and individual freedom.

5.2.1 The 1990s in a Paradise called Portugal

A paradise called Portugal is a phrase used to describe the rave movement in Portugal in the 1990s (Sanches, 2017), reflecting the country's heavenly landscapes and the freedom experienced by the ravers in the post-revolutionary period of this country when the rave movement arrived to Portugal in the end of the 1980s as a consequence of the UK phenomena. DJ Rui Vargas (interviewed by Gonçalves, 2018), describes the first raves of this period as less organized events, where DJs played music of all genres in a random way, including rock, house, and the few existing records of techno music. The role of the DJ was no other than to produce a mood on the dance floor through the mixture of completely different musical genres. Vargas also points out that the raves were organized in dark warehouses with no licence and with a high level of improvisation in logistics, technical equipment and organisation.

It was just until the early 1990s — Vargas continues — when the raves started to present a higher level of organisation, and some parties started in Xabregas — a city district by Lisbon — and even in castles in rural areas. At this time, with the appearance of event organisation companies like KAOS, international DJs started to arrive in Portugal bringing their records and, therefore, new music.

It was in this period that Portuguese DJs started to circulate through different events and some of them started to be invited to play abroad. In concordance with the description of DJ Rui Vargas, João Xavier[72] (interviewed by Sanches, 2017) describes the shift experienced from the effervescence and improvisation of the late 1980s illegal events to more professional events in urban spaces and the appearance of clubs in the late 1990s. Xavier describes how in the beginning of the rave movement, it

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[70] Lei nº9/2010, de 31 de Maio. Law n.9/2010.
[71] Lei nº2/2016, de 10 de Fevereiro. Law n. 2/2016.
[72] Since the 1990s, João Xavier founded and worked as chief editor of the only magazine dedicated to the electronic dance music scene in Portugal, the Dance Club. The magazine doesn't exist anymore in print, but it has a web presence under: https://danceclubmag.com/ (last accessed, January 19th, 2019).

wasn't rare to see DJs such as Mário Roque,[73] Luis "XL" García or Carlos Manaça mixing music at the same venue in a familiar atmosphere; a less common scenario during the second half of the 1990s, when many local DJs started to develop their own styles in order to differentiate themselves from each other. He also describes the rise of new stakeholders in the nascent business of the electronic dance music like artist managers, and event organizers. These aspects lead to the professionalisation of the industry by the end of the last century, patent in the organisation of events such as the festival Neptunus in 1997 and the opening of the club Lux-Frágil in Lisbon in 1998 — examples all given by Xavier.

This wave of professionalization and differentiation among DJs and musical styles accompanied the segmentation of the public based on musical taste and sexuality, something that has been widely described in the context of the UK (Thornton, 1995). Antonio Pereira, best known as DJ Vibe[74] and one of the most prominent Portuguese DJs, explains how Lisbon's nightlife became segmented in the pop-rock night, the gay night and the more intellectual night, the last known for being happening in the *Bairro Alto* in Lisbon (Antonio Pereira in an interview by Sanches, 2017).

Despite the parallelism between the movement in Portugal and the UK, there is an important factor that made the rave movement in Portugal different from its British counterpart: the post-revolutionary spirit in the country. While in the UK, the rave movement was seen as anti-establishment, in Portugal it was seen as a continuation of the revolutionary freedom spirit initiated in April 25th 1974, epitomized in the experience of dancing to powerful and futuristic electronic music together by black, white, straight and gay individuals, as well as by people from all religions and political convictions (João Xavier in Sanches, 2017).

The post-revolutionary period was marked by a general increase of urban population, promoting an increment in the leisure activities offered in the cities; this tendency was reported by Mimoso (1998) in the late 1990s and it continues until the present days (Rodrigues, 2016).

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[73] During the second half of the year 2018, DJ Mário Roque got a six-month residency at the Lottus After-Hours; accentuating the relevance that this After-Hours have as a place where DJs of proven quality come to play.
[74] In 2017, DJ Vibe played at the Lottus.

5.3 Clubbing in Oporto

The present research was developed between the years 2016 and 2018 in clubs of the city of Oporto,[75] in the northern area of Portugal. Oporto is a city bordered to the west by the Atlantic Ocean and to the south by the Douro river; the same river separates Porto from the neighbourhood city of Vila Nova de Gaia. Together, both cities had a population slightly over half a million people in 2018.[76]

Regarding Porto's nightlife, Claudia Rodrigues (2016) describes the continuous emergence of clubs, bars and cafes in the city, especially between 2014 and 2016; and in her work, she proposed a geographical division of the city into eight zones or party-districts represented in Figure 5.1 (Rodrigues, 2016, p. 104). In this map,[77] eight zones are identified: *Foz, Passeio Alegre Massarelos, Zona Industrial, Campo Alegre, Boavista, Baixa, Ribeira,* and finally *Miragaia.*

Figure 5.1 Different territorial zones constituting the city nightlife in the City of Oporto, studied by Claudia Rodrigues between the 1980s and the year 2014. From Rodrigues (2016, p. 104). Reproduced with kind permission of the author.

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[75] The English name of the city of Porto is *Oporto*. However, in the present study, I have decided to use the Portuguese name.

[76] According to the database *Base de Dados Portugal Contemporâneo*, Porto had in 2018: 214.935 inhabitants; while Vila Nova de Gaia had 299.936 inhabitants. Source: https://www.pordata.pt/Municipios/Popula%C3%A7%C3%A3o+residente+total+e+por+grandes+grupos+et%C3%A1rios-390 (last access: January 19th, 2019).

[77] Figure 5.1 is reproduced with permission of its author, Claudia Rodrigues (personal communication, November 18th, 2018).

From these eight zones, the more relevant for the present research are those at the waterlines around the city — *Foz*, *Passeio Alegre-Massarelos, Miragaia* and *Ribeira* — which are the direct surroundings of the Lottus After-Hours which is located between *Passeio Alegre-Massarelos* and *Mirgaia*. The four zones will be described in the next two sections.

5.3.1 Magnetic Waterlines: *Ribeira* and *Foz*

Rodrigues (2016, p. 104-105) describes the development of nightlife in Porto starting by the water lines of the city, meaning the Douro River, at the bottom of the map, and the Atlantic coast, at the left of the map — s. Fig. 5.1. These two waterlines have shown — according to Rodrigues — a certain *magnetism* (my emphasis) when it comes to the establishment of venues devoted to leisure activities, especially the areas denominated *Ribeira* and *Foz*.

Ribeira and *Foz* are also the first zones where coffee shops and bars started using forecourts or esplanades in the 1980s. The presence of these forecourts may be representative of how nightlife started to come out from the enclosed interior spaces of the venues to the exterior public spaces; on the other hand, at *Foz*, the discotheque *Industria* opened in the 1980s followed by other bars and night spaces in the 1990s, like *Praia da Luz*, *Praia Nova dos Ingleses* and *Praia Bar* (Rodrigues, 2016, p. 105). Here it is necessary to underline the relevance of the discotheque *Industria* — which is still open by date — in the development of the club scene of electronic music in the city and also the important role of the space called *Aniki Bobó*,[78] installed at *Ribeira.*

As Mimoso (1998) pointed out, by the end of the 1990s, in the *Foz* zone — the area where the wealthy society of Oporto lives — several venues targeted the wealthy population by applying market segmentation techniques, such as higher prices. This situation continues during the time of the present research. Those higher prices contrasted with the reality at the *Ribeira* zone, which was populated by

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[78] Aniki Bobó inspired the documentary Porto Electrónica 1985-2005 (ca. 32') directed by Francisco Abrunhosa and Daniel Reifferscheid and produced in association between TVU and the University of Porto.

the working class in the 1990s and the common leisure venues were coffees shops and *tasquinhas*,[79] with more affordable prices (Rodrigues, 2016). Unlike the *Foz* area — that continues to attract the same wealthy population — the *Ribeira* has suffered the process of gentrification due to the crescent number of tourists coming to the city since the end of the first decade of the present century. Nowadays *Ribeira* is a space less occupied by the working class but the area where international hotels, boutiques, international restaurants, souvenirs shops, and modern coffee shops can be found in the city. In the last five years in this area, the entire interior structure of several buildings have been completely demolished — while conserving only the facade — in order to build hotels and seasonal apartments for tourists who can rent these spaces online for prices unaffordable for the general local population.

The Lottus After-Hours is situated between the zone of *Passeio Alegre Massarelos* and *Miragaia* — s. Fig. 5.2. This is a central position towards the two main areas of the city where night leisure activities happen, *Ribeira* and *Baixa*, and closer to the wealthy *Foz.*

The zone *Passeio Alegre-Massarelos* was germinal for the phenomena of the after-hours in the city thanks to the appearance of different boats-bars over the water lines on the Douro river: the *Maré Alta, Porto Rio* and *Zoo.* These boat-bars were boats and platforms adapted as bars and clubs and fixed to land. These boat-bars functioned from the late 1990s until the first decade of the present century, receiving attendees from *Foz, Baixa, Ribeira*, and from the neighbouring bars at *Massarelos* like the *31, Cerveja Viva, Era Uma Vez no Porto* and *Rádio* (Rodrigues, 2016, p.106).

From these venues on land, only the *Rádio* and *Era Uma Vez no Porto* still exist by the time this text was written (2019), but they have been moved and re-opened at the *Baixa,* in the area commonly known as *Galerias de Paris* after the namesake street located in this area. This is the central party district designated by the city council to host the majority of clubs and discotheques, attracting both local and tourists. Regarding the boat-bars over the river, *Porto Rio* still continues working over the waters of the Douro, hosting monthly and seasonal parties of drum and bass and trance music, especially during the

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[79] *Tasquinhas* are small traditional portuguese restaurants-coffee-bars where it is possible to eat lunch during the midday, while during the afternoon and part of the night it is possible to drink wine, beer and eat *petiscos* — snacks — for low-cost prices.

summer. *Zoo* and *Maré Alta* don't exist anymore. The *Maré Alta* was a famous after-hours until the platform where it was located sank in 2013.[80] The Lottus After-Hours opened in 2006, and after moving between different venues, it was finally established in its current location over the land at the Rua de Monchique, between the zones *Passeio Alegre-Massarelos* and *Miragaia* (s. Figure 5.2).
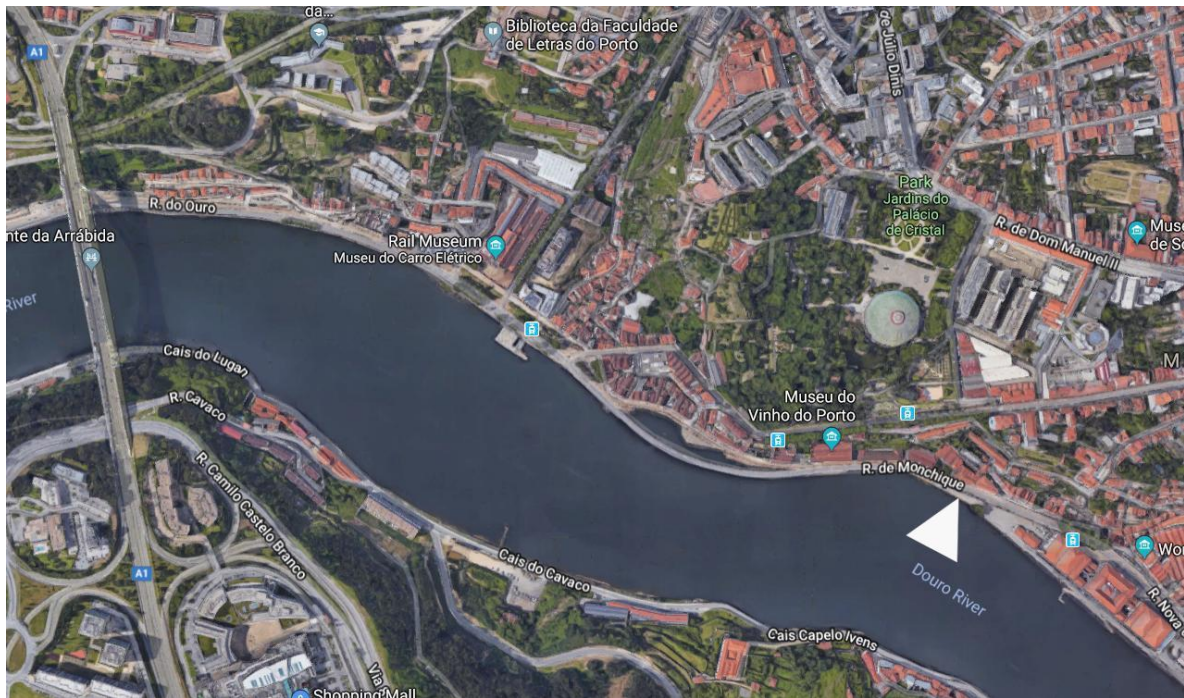
Figure 5.2 Section of the zone denominated Passeio Alegre Massarelos by the Douro River. A white triangle points out the position of the Lottus After-Hours.

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[80] Local media [1] informed that in March 2013, a heavy rain season, along with strong water currents in the Douro River, dragged several objects (such as tree trunks) that weakened the structural foundations of the platforms of Maré Alta and ZOO. ZOO sank overnight, while Maré Alta became unstable, and by September in the same year, the River's Harbour Administration [2] ordered its complete removal. Maré Alta was also an after-hours where people could keep partying even after the rest of the night clubs were closed. The tragic story of the Maré Alta is still rooted in the memory of the many attendees and DJs at the Lottus After-Hours, who talk with nostalgia about the parties enjoyed there.
[1] https://www.jn.pt/local/noticias/porto/porto/plataforma-do-bar-mare-alta-vai-ser-removida-3374216.html (last access: June 10th 2018) & https://tvi24.iol.pt/sociedade/zoo-lounge/porto-bar-flutuante-afundou-se-no-douro (last access: June 10th 2018); [2] Administração dos Portos do Douro e Leixões.

5.4 The Lottus After-Hours

5.4.1 The venue

At 6:00 AM, once all the clubs and bars in the city are closed, the Lottus After-Hours opens its doors to those who want to continue dancing. The Lottus is a place devoted to house music and known for hosting mainly local, but also international DJs.

The Lottus occupies the first two floors of a three-storey building at the Rua de Monchique (s. Fig. 5.3 and 5.4). This street goes along the Douro river where the tram also runs. The façade of the building is south-oriented; therefore, it receives direct sunlight during the whole day. A privileged view over the river can be enjoyed from the windows on the first floor.

Figure 5.3 General view of the building where the Lottus is situated on Rua de Monchique by the Douro river (photograph of the author, 2016).

Figure 5.4 View of the Lottus After-Hours. In this image, the area that is not occupied by the Lottus is digitally darkened (photograph of the author, 2016).

The Lottus After-Hours uses daylight as the main source to illuminate the dance floor, completely avoiding — in a sunny morning — the use of artificial light (s. Fig. 5.5). This is completely different from what usually happens in a nightclub where artificial light is an important element of the experience at the dance floor. Given this situation, many attendees at the Lottus wear sunglasses, which somehow became a fashion accessory distinctive of the attendees to the after-parties.

Figure 5.5 View of an empty dance floor at the Lottus just before closing time with the sun entering directly into the interior space in a winter Sunday in January 2017 (photograph by the author).

Figure 5.6 offers a graphic representation of the layout at the ground floor where the access door, a bar, a room for staff, the bathrooms, a lounge, and transit area are located. The use of the ground floor is more focused on the relaxation, refreshment, and conversation among the attendees. Many attendees spend their time at Lottus on the ground floor, relaxing and chatting after a night of partying and dancing. At the back of the house, a staircase communicates the ground floor with the first floor.

Layout Ground Floor
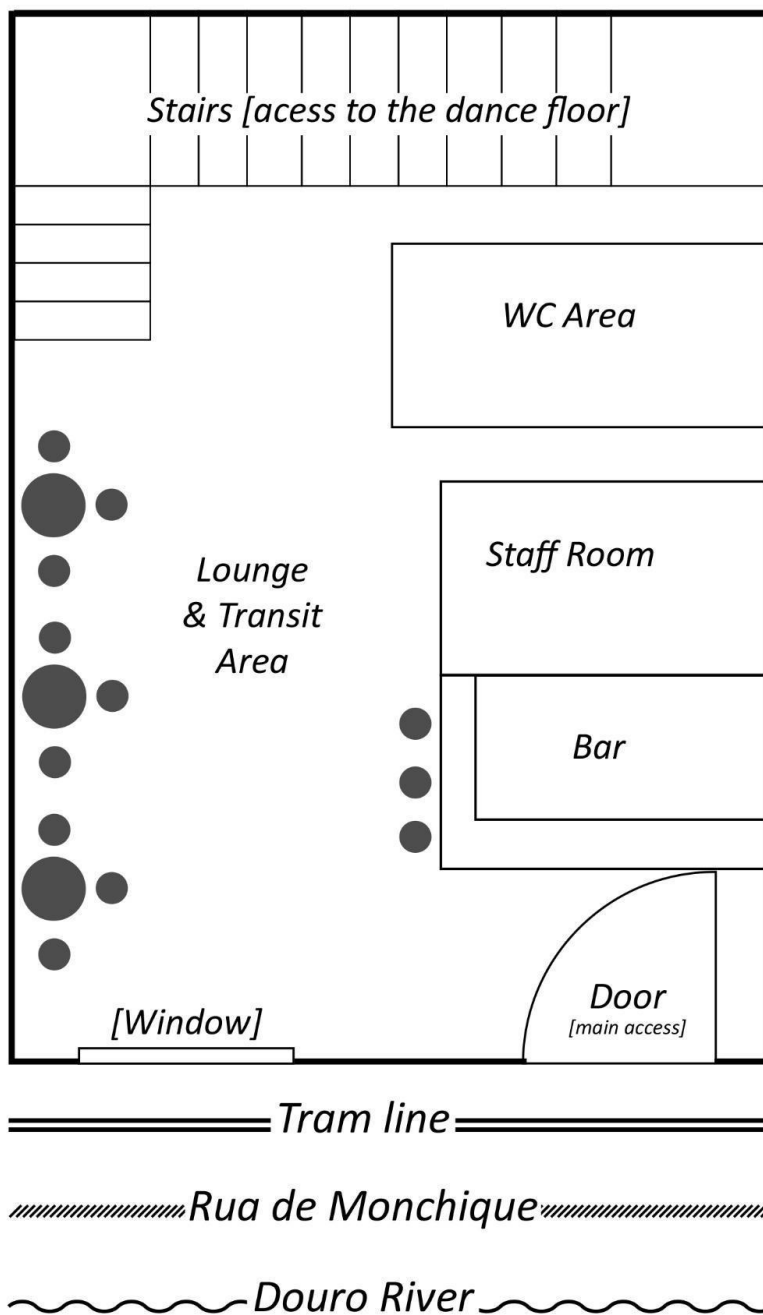
Figure 5.6 Graphic representation of the layout of Lottus's ground floor (image by the author, 2018).

Figure 5.7 shows the layout of the first floor, where the dance floor and a bar are located. The dance floor at the Lottus is the core space of this house. It is devoted to dance, music, and intense interaction among attendees.
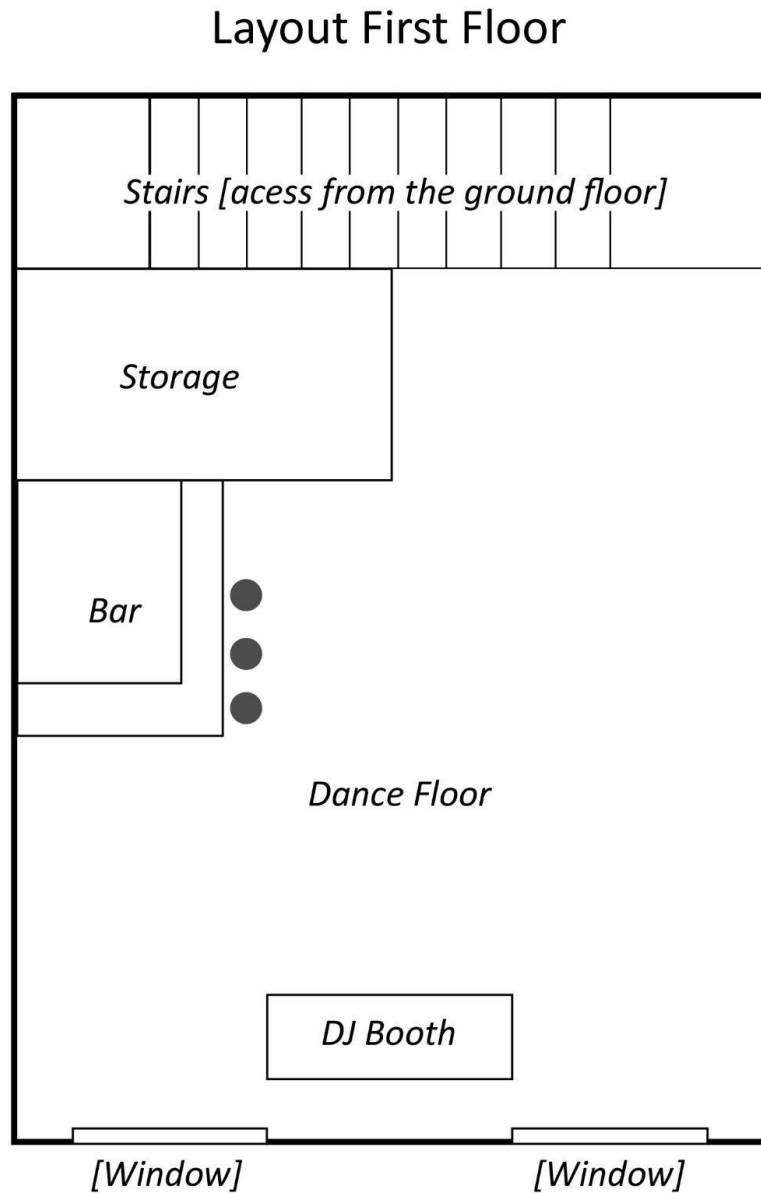
Layout First Floor

Figure 5.7 Graphic representation of the layout of Lottus's first floor (image by the author, 2018).

Another distinctive aspect of the Lottus is the permeability this space offers between the interior and the exterior world, since the attendees at the dance floor can observe — through the open windows — the activity occurred on the street, outside the venue, where a considerable number of tourists, families and runners pass by while enjoying their mornings at any Saturday or Sunday.

The Lottus is not an isolated space that works in the darkness of the night, but a permeable space with an atmosphere composed by natural elements such as sunlight, the visual stimulus of the river, the wind that sometimes blows from the Atlantic Ocean, and even the rain that falls over the glass of the windows during the rainy season. These natural elements — not commonly present in nightclubs — together with the opening times, allow to the attendees to observe the natural changes on the exterior landscape, observable through the windows on the dance floor (s. Fig. 5.8).

Figure 5.8 Nine different views from the windows at the Lottus presenting different daytimes and weather conditions (photograph by the author, 2016/2017). : image a) presents the view in the early morning as the sun appears; on image b) the fog appears over the river surface before it evaporates as the day temperature arise; on image c) it is possible to observe the landscape illuminated by a warm but bright morning light; the image d) presents the view by midday with a radiant sunlight; while image e) presents a landscape in a cloudy day; finally, the image f) shows the view during rainy days, where the artificial illumination of the street add an accents of artificial light to the landscape.

The sun entering through the windows creates a natural dazzling effect, while offering the opportunity for many attendees to interact with the sun. Sometimes they simple face the light as if they were sunbathing or sometimes, they project shadows with their hands emulating animals (s. Fig. 5.9).
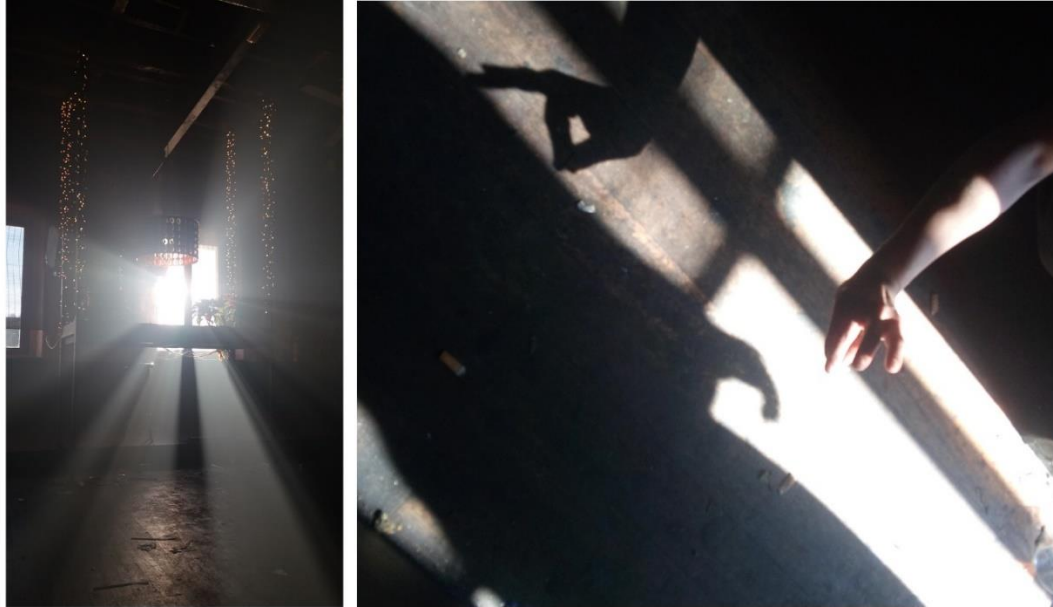
Figure 5.9 Two photographs of the dance floor at the Lottus. On the left side the photograph shows the dazzling effect of the sun coming directly into the dance floor; on the right side, an attendee plays with the sun creating shadows in shape of animals using their hands (photograph by the author, 2017).

As mentioned, a few lines before, the dance floor at the Lottus is in the first floor, and it is supported by a timber wood structure (s. Fig. 5.10). The flexibility of the wood allows the entire floor to bounce when people dance on it, this effect is one of the first noticeable things when entering the venue.
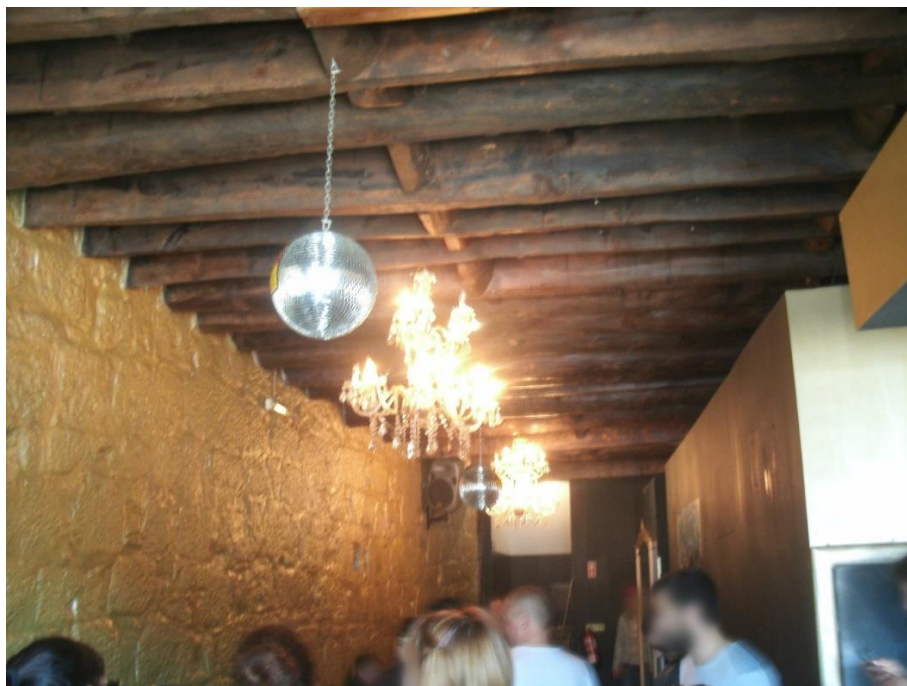
Figure 5.10 View of the timber structure that holds the dance floor (photograph by the author, 2017).

Another characteristic aspects which can illustrate the mood lived during the after parties, are the few elements of improvised decoration; such as artificial flowers (s. Fig. 5.11); *birthday party iconography* (Lawrence, 2018) such confetti and balloons (s. Fig. 5.12) ; Christmas decoration in the winter like fairy lights and flowers (s. Fig. 5.13); and fruits, especially apples, bananas and oranges, which are offered free at the entrance of the venue to all clients who feel in the need to eat something (s. Fig. 5.14).

Figure 5.11 Artificial flowers hanging from the ceiling decorating the dance floor at the Lottus (2016, photo by the author).

Figure 5.12 Confetti on the dance floor at the Lottus. confetti is sometimes used to cheer the party, togther with other birthday iconography such as balloons (2017, photo by the author).
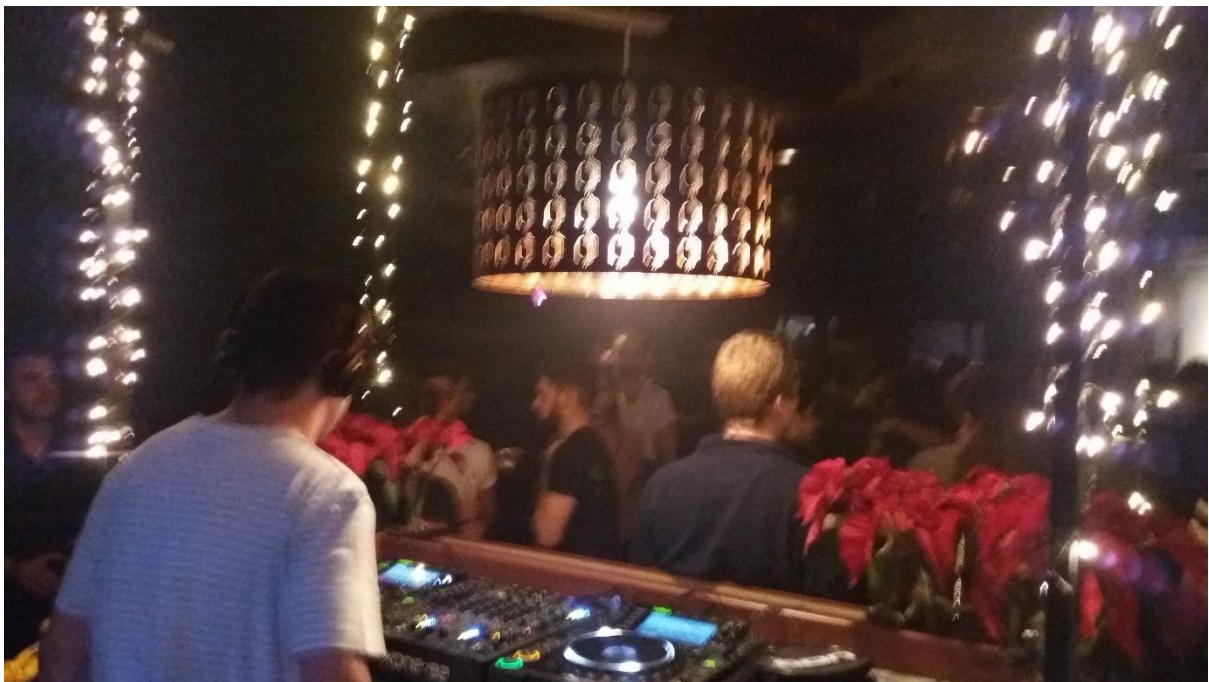
Figure 5.13 Christmas decoration using fairy lights and flowers (2017, photo by the author).

Figure 5.14 Banana and orange peels on a table at the dance floor at the Lottus. Fruit is offered for free at the entrance of the venue to provide something to eat to clients who arrive hungry after the long night dancing (2018, photo by the author).

5.4.2 Attendees

Being practically the only venue in the city that opens at 6:00 am; the Lottus After-Hours receives people from the different venues and nightclubs in the city, resulting in the mixture of different populations at the dance floor. In general terms, the dance floor at the Lottus can be described as predominant male and, at the same time, diverse in terms of sexuality, social distinctions, and musical taste. Despite this, once at the dance floor, people seem to gather to dance close to each other while facing the DJ and the windows flanking the DJ booth (s. Fig. 5.15).

Figure 5.15 The Lotus's dance floor during a crowded morning with the majority of the attendees facing the DJ booth located between the two windows in direction to the river (photograph by the author, 2016).

Not only at the Lottus but, in general terms, nightclubs receive more men than women during electronic music events, and from the number of women who attend those events, just a portion will continue the party in an After-Hours. Field-observations and conversations with some female attendees at the Lottus suggest that this situation is a result of the independence and mobility that male subjects enjoy in club environments versus the restrictions that women face in the same or similar contexts: women commonly attend to nightclubs in couples, accompanied by a male partner or in larger mixed groups, but rarely alone or in only-women groups, meaning, women are always accompanied by at least one man. On the other side, men arrive at clubs in all-male groups, couples and even alone. As expressed by a female participant during a personal communication,[81] women feel the 'need' to be accompanied — if possible by a male friend they trust — in order to move freely in club environments to ensure their physical security and social reputation.

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[81] Personal Communication with Rose (fictional name) May 13th, 2017.

Another aspect that helps explain the larger quantity of men at the Lottus is the presence of *gunas* and gays, since these two groups regularly attend in all-male groups — three to five persons — making the dance floor at the Lottus a predominantly male environment. Furthermore, the presence of these two groups at the dance floor make the population at the Lottus After-Hours certainly unique, given that these two groups usually do not find themselves sharing any other dance floor. *Gunas* can be described as a marginalized urban group characterized by performing a snotty over-masculine[82] attitude (cf. Guna in Brito, 2016, p.77). This display of masculinity differs clearly from the style of other several attendees at the Lottus, whose overall aesthetic choices include a mixture of both masculine and feminine clothes, extravagant hairstyles, and colourful clothes (s. Fig. 5.16).

The dance floor at the Lottus can be described as a melting pot with multiple social layers — students are practically the only absent social group. The geographical position of this venue attracts posh populations — called *betinhos* in Portuguese — who live the near Foz, the neighbourhood upper-class area; trance music fans are attracted from the surrounding venues, such as Porto Rio and the old buildings behind the *Museu do Vinho* where parties are eventually hosted — together with the gays and the *gunas* mentioned before. The Lottus is also a meeting point for staff members from the different clubs and bars, who appear at the Lottus to have a drink after their work shift has ended.

By nationality, the majority of the attendees are Portuguese, followed by the Spanish who usually come to Porto from the northern region of Galicia to spend the night out in the city centre. Additionally, some casual European tourists find their way to the Lottus.

Not all Portuguese clients at Lottus live in Oporto. It is common to find people from closer cities like Viana do Castelo, Famalicão and Santa Maria da Feira. Some Spanish and Portuguese from neighbouring cities come to the Lottus not only to extend their night club experience but also because it represents a 'logistic' advantage, meaning that the time they spend at the after-party allows them to

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[82] Gunas can be members of any ethnic group, with white European being the most represented group at Lottus. Their most remarkable distinction is the way they dress: a generalized use of a cap; visible tattoos, usually covering arms, hands and neck and sometimes even facial tattoos; clean sport sneakers; tight trousers — sometimes sports pants — and in general a clean and neat appearance with carefully maintained short hair.

get sober before driving their cars back home, and it also gives them time to wait until the nocturnal police checkpoints are removed from the avenues and highways around the city.

Figure 5.16 One attendee at the Lottus wearing a ballet skirt. Props and costumes are often brought by the clients to cheer the party and to play with diverse identities during the after-party (2017, photo by the author).

5.5 Outro

The most important aspects of the present chapters can be summarized in the following statements:

a) The rave movement of the late 1980s found in Portugal great conditions to flourish during the 1990s, given the cultural openness of the Portuguese post-revolutionary society towards the rest of Europe, especially the UK.

b) Towards the end of the 1990s, the rave movement experienced a process of specialisation, with the appearance of new stakeholders such as venue managers and event promoters. This process,

along with the phenomena of urbanisation, may have influenced the appearance of leisure established venues in the urban areas, like clubs.

c) Portuguese society has experienced a shift in their worldview in the last half-century, becoming a more progressive and permissive society, with advanced laws such as the decriminalisation in the consumption of recreational drugs.

d) The Lottus After-Hours can be subscribed to a long tradition of After-Hours that legally worked in the city since the 1990s, like the *Maré Alta*; and it continues with a tradition of playing house music.

e) Given the opening times and its geographical location, the Lottus After-hours attracts people — mainly male individuals — from a wide range of social backgrounds, sexualities, and musical tastes. These characteristics make the dance floor at the Lottus a melting pot where straight and gay individuals; techno, hip-hop and trance music fans; and high, medium and lower-class individuals comes to negotiate the use of the space.

Chapter 6. The Five Stages of Data Gathering

6.1 Intro

The present research uses data acquired through participatory observation and, subsequently, in-deep interviews. The integration of these two methods is a common practice in qualitative research (Flick, 2009; Li, 2008), since it gives the researcher the opportunity to initially see and explore the studied phenomena as a personal experience while creating rapport with other participants and shaping the interviews.

Similarly, the use of these methods is not new to studies on clubbing. As Garcia (2013) points, there is a broader pattern among scholars in combining observation and focused interviews in club studies (p. 8). Here, participatory observation is preferred over non-participatory observation since it allows the researcher to learn from a cultural activity not only by taking part of that activity, but by creating social bonds with community members and be taught the unwritten rules while creating an expertise in that activity (p. 9).

The use of observation and interviews as the main source of data in Sociological studies on clubbing can be verified in several works reviewed in Chapter 1. Yet, despite the broad use of these ethnographic tools, there is an absence of detailed records regarding the methodological decisions undertaken during fieldwork in night club contexts. Only few clubbing-related monographs dealing with fieldwork methods in substantial detail were found (Bhardwa, 2013; Calvey, 2008; Gadir, 2014; Malbon 1999; Robinson, 2013; Rosendahl, 2013), while other works address this topic in an indirect way (Butler, 2006; Fikentscher, 2000; St John, 2010; Thornton, 1995). This leaves very few accounts about the "unanticipated methodological, personal and emotional challenges that accompany ethnographic work" (Bhardwa, 2013, p. 40). It has been suggested that this general situation of non-disclosure may be motivated by the researchers' concerns regarding the ethical and legal consequences of their own decisions in the field (Bhardwa, 2013; Calvey, 2008; Measham & Moore, 2006).

This lack of accounts creates the sometimes-illusory idea that ethnography is a *linear process* which always starts with a concrete research question, defined setting, identified population and recruiting

methods. Here, the guidance provided by textbooks on qualitative methods (i.e. Creswell, 2014; Birks & Mills, 2011; Handwerker, 2001) is not always helpful, since they leave the researchers in club contexts with the need to adapt those models to the context of nightlife (Garcia, 2013, p. 4; Bhardwa, 2013, p. 54).

On the other hand, examples of Design studies on clubbing based on first-hand experiences and primarily information obtained through ethnographic tools are scarce. This is verifiable if we analyse the Design studies on clubbing reviewed in Chapter 2. While participant observation and interviews have become important tools for designers during the development and testing of products and services (Martin & Hannington, 2012, p.124), in the case of clubbing, Design studies tend to rely more on secondary data sources like image and document analysis (Ackland-Snow et. al, 1996; Esteves, 2018; Rose, 1991; Twemlow, 2018; Heiser, 2018; Banks, 2018); with few studies in Design presenting a limited use of historic interviews (Munuera, 2018) and/or first-hand accounts (Biehl-Missal, 2016). In other words, Design studies have been more focused in documenting what is *physically evident* within the clubs and less concerned about the construction of the dance floor experience, which includes the interactions, perceptions and motivations occurred within the club. By using full participatory observation and in-deep interviews with key informants, the present research aims to contribute to close this gap in Design studies.

Another goal of the present chapter is to make as transparent as possible the ethical challenges found while conducting ethnography in the context of dance clubs, which sometimes required specific and/or unconventional solutions which mirror the volatile and sometimes anarchic environment within clubs (Garcia, 2013).

This chapter is divided into five major sections (s. Table 6.1) mirroring the stages of the fieldwork which took place between June 2016 and December 2018. During this time, I participated in the club scene of the City of Oporto by performing diverse roles: section 6.2 reports on my first incursion and exploration in the city club's scene while I was looking for venues to conduct my research; section 6.3 describes my role as a doorman at the Gare, a techno club, including the methodological and ethical challenges that came with this role and the strategies of *image management* I used to overcome such

challenges; section 6.4 offers a detailed account of my participation in the dance floor experience at the Lottus After-Hours including important reflections about my behaviour and the way I managed personal relationships in the field ; section 6.5 reports on the path of learning and becoming a DJ myself while creating rapport with my DJ informants, who became my interviewees during the last stage of my research, described in section 6.6.

A final section, 6.7, offers a pertinent reflection about the fieldwork not as a process of *data mining*, but as a process of *data negotiation*, in which the researcher has to find possible ways to negotiate access into the scene by fostering personality traits, learning new abilities and even acquire its own subcultural capital.

Here, it is necessary to say that not all the roles I performed in the field went as I initially expected, but I fostered equally important notions, data and insights from all of them. An important note should be made regarding the language of the present chapter, which is written in first person in order to situate the researcher as an integral part of the process while underlining how personal the accounts presented here are.

Table 6.1 The five stages of the data collection.

Stage	General goal during the stage	Space	Role Performed
1	Recognising the Club Scene	Diverse night clubs	Attendee (non-participant observer)
2	Becoming a Member	Gare club's door	Doorman (participant observer)
3	Becoming a Full Participant	Dance floor at the Lottus After-Hours	Dancer (participant observer)
4	Becoming a DJ	Diverse venues, and the DJ booth at the Lottus After-Hours	DJ (participant observer)
5	Conducting the interviews	Diverse spaces, other than the club.	Interviewer

Note. Table 6.1 presents the five phases of the research according to the aim of each phase and the role I performed at each phase.

6.2 Stage One: Recognising the Club Scene

The first step in the present research was to locate the specific settings where to conduct the fieldwork. Therefore, I undertook preliminary participatory and non-participatory observations in eleven venues in the city centre of the city of Oporto[83] and two venues in the near areas.[84]

As an outcome of these initial observations I got special interest in two venues, the Gare Club and the Lottus After-Hours,[85] the first known for its techno nights, while the second offers house music. In both venues, the dance floor was placed as the most relevant architectural space where to spend time, while dancing was observed as the central social activity. Given their geographical proximity,[86] many attendees at the Gare continued their nightly party at the Lottus during the morning after, creating a narrative of partying from night into the day which caught my attention.

During this preliminary period, I went on Friday and Saturday night to the Gare followed by some Saturday and Sunday morning to the Lottus, spending several hours at the dance floor and getting to know other attendees. A key-aspect in order to get in touch with both attendees and staff members was my way of dancing which granted me positive attention and compliments.[87] I always used this opportunity of proximity and interest as a gateway to sustain short conversations and *controlled gossip* (Handwerker, 2001, p. 105), exchanging information about musical events, DJs, and other venues while always maintaining some control over the subjects of conversation and observation.[88]

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[83] Those clubs in Oporto were: 1) *Gare Club*; 2) Hard Club; 3) *Lusitano*; 4) *Conceição 35*; 5) *Radio AM/FM*; 6) *Industria Club*; 7) *Porto Rio*; 8) *Plano B*; 9) *Zoom*; 10) *Breyner 85*; and 11) *Lottus After-Hours*.

[84] The two clubs outside Porto were the *Club 118* in Barcelos and the *Pacha Ofir* in Esposende.

[85] While the Gare is a nightclub well known for techno music hosting international DJs, the Lottus After-Hours is the only established After-Hour in the city, devoted to house music, also hosting international but mainly local DJs.

[86] Both venues are located within a radius of ca. 1.7 kilometres, ca. 20 minutes walking.

[87] I would often receive compliments and people would ask for permission to video record my movements with their smartphones.

[88] Many of these conversations lead to sharing contact information through Facebook. My participation in this social media platform started at this early exploratory stage when I opened a personal account in order to get acquainted with the musical scene in Oporto. Facebook is one of the most common ways of promotion for dance events in the city, similar to the study of Gadir (2014) conducted in Edinburg (p. 37).

As a result of my persistent and somehow notorious presence at the Gare, I was eventually introduced to one of the club's owners, who I soon arranged an informal conversation with.[89] I used this opportunity to uncover my identity as a researcher while informing him about my interest in conducting research at the Gare. Being the financial cost of assisting periodically to music events a common issue in the development of ethnographic work in clubs (Garcia, 2013), one of my goals during the meeting was to gain free access to the club, but in an unexpected turn, the club's owner got curious about the possible outcome of my work and offered me the opportunity of working as doorman during the summer as a way of supporting my research.

I accepted the offer without hesitation. My initial thoughts were that being a doorman would offer me the opportunity to gain privileged insight about the club scene. Door personnel are seen as experts in assigning social distinction based in economic, social, and subcultural capital, resulting in judgements of inclusion and exclusion and in the construction of a cohesive environment inside the club (Calvey, 2008; Rivera, 2010; Thornton, 1995). I took this role with great curiosity and engagement, in the hope that my past working experiences in clubs[90] and bars would help me to navigate through this new experience, but without greater previous first-hand fieldwork experience and therefore unprepared for the ethical, emotional and ethical challenges I was up to face, as it will be described in the next section.

6.3 Stage Two: Becoming a Member

I worked as a doorman at the Gare door from June 23rd until October 31st, 2016 from midnight until 7:30 a.m. I oversaw the access to the venue in 38 events over 19 weekends, spending ca. 300 hours at the front door of this space (). I took notes about the number of attendees, counting more than 8,000 assistants in that period.[91] This position was a privilege in terms of gaining contact with DJs, attendees and staff members, but it was also highly problematic in methodological ways.

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[89] The meeting took place Tuesday, June 21st at 11:00 AM in the facilities of the space and at a time the club was not open.

[90] During different periods of my life I have worked as a waiter and bartender in clubs and bars to partially or fully sustain my studies in Mexico and Germany.

[91] The result of these counting can be seen in Appendix A.

Figure 6.1 Night view of the Rua da Madeira street, as if coming from the city centre. The Gare club is the first building on the left of the image, where the phrase QUEM ES PORTO? is written in black ceramic tiles – azulejos – over the façade (2017, photo by the author).

During the first weeks working at the club's door, I have found it difficult to make decisions about *when*, *who* and *how many* people to let in. Additionally, I found it extremely difficult to verbally deny the entrance to certain individuals, an action that was always followed by a contra argumentation for which I was usually unprepared. Having noticed my struggles, the club's bouncers[92] took me initially under their wing, teaching me how to recognise those attendees who were *amigos da casa* — friends of the house — as well as teaching me how to physically stand at the door in order to *transmit authority*. During the first month, I developed a routine at home previous to my fieldwork, consisting in dressing in dark clothes and practising authority bodily postures while repeating phrases using a deep voice in front of the mirror. This ritual of *embodied ethnography* (Calvey, 2008) helped me to interchange between my everyday identity as researcher and my nocturnal role door as doorman.

Having successfully embodied this role during the first two months, I started noticing how some clients approached me with fear, a situation I deeply disliked and certainly did not help in order to gain new contacts. Furthermore, the long and tedious hours standing at the door embodying a personality different

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[92] Generally, two or three bouncers were present each night, these individuals were hired by an external security company. As one of the bouncers always should remain with me at the door, I rarely found myself alone.

to mine became psychologically exhaustive. Paraphrasing Calvey (2008), the world of bouncers, and by extension the space around the club's door, can be a toxic space saturated with discrimination, diverse forms of violence, toxic masculinity and cultural capital, generally built upon exaggerated *war stories* told among the bouncers (pp. 910-911).

With all these in mind, I decided to change my approach to the role. Instead of following the strategy of *mimetism* with the bouncers, I started to foster traits of my own personality in order to negotiate in a friendly way with the clubber as they approached the door. I started to wear bright colour clothes in order to differentiate myself from the security personnel, and to receive clients in a friendly and open way while engaging in short conversations at every chance possible. With this new tactic, I discovered that attendees were curious about my Mexican origins — noticeable in my accent. They were also surprised by my ability to speak in Spanish, English and German to tourists who approached the door, and in general terms they were glad to be received in a friendly way. All these personality traits, biographical details, cultural skills and position as doorman, became part of an invaluable personal *skill set* (Robinson, 2013), which can be translated as the accumulation of my own *street cred* and subcultural capital.

Despite having mastered the tasks as a doorman,[93] I decided against continuing my research at the Gare since: *a)* several potential informants were perceiving me as a gatekeeper with the power of impact on their social status — and access — in the club scene,[94] which compromise the neutrality of their responses in case of an interview; *b)* this role forced me to remain constantly at the door while missing completely the events happened inside the club, making impossible for me to fully participate at the

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[93] In the practice, my tasks as doorman included to take care that the number of people inside the venue wouldn't exceed the capacity allowed by local authorities; to ensure that every person accepted in the club went through the revision performed by the bouncers who looked after metal objects and bottles with alcohol which sometimes attendees try to smuggle inside the club. Additionally, I should be sure that any intoxicated or underage individuals were accepted. I was also in charge of the three bouncers who watched after the good behaviour of the attendees at the dance floor and in the men's restrooms. In case some individual was expelled, I needed to be notified at the door in order to not let that person back inside the club again.

[94] One example of how this perception was manifested are the bribery attempts I experienced. Especially in the times when I went to the restrooms during any club night, I was sometimes approached by male individuals offering me a piece of an ecstasy pill as a gesture of 'friendship'; also beverages offered to me by male clients when I approached the bar inside the club. Being aware that drug consumption is strictly forbidden and discouraged by the club managers and acknowledging that accepting those gifts would only put at risk my position of impartiality as researcher and as doorman I always kindly declined such offers.

dancefloor experience; and *c)* over time, my approach as *god cop* at the door got me into frequent power conflicts with the bouncers, who play much the role of a maligned private police force (Calvey, 2008) and were often not pleased with my clients' selection and friendly manners.

Figure 6.2 *The door at the Gare Club (photograph by the author, 2016).*

Having invested almost one year in the first two previous stages, the experience and subcultural capital gained so far helped me to recognise the advantages of further conducting my research in the Lottus After-Hours. These advantages were: *a)* at the outset of the research, I had a moderate familiarity (Gadir, 2014, p. 35) with the setting, which could be translated in accessing and gaining an understanding of the dance floor experience with relative ease and in less time (Malbon, 1999, p.32); *b)* the natural lighting used at the Lottus dance floor could facilitate immensely to conduct observations; *c)* the location of the DJ booth, situated at the same level of the dancefloor, made easy to observe how the DJs manipulate the different equipment without disturbing them during their work; and *d)* the Lottus early opening times would allow me to conduct my observations after waking up early, with energy, sharp focus and fresh memory — three elements I have learned to be invaluable when conducting ethnography in club environments.

6.4 Stage Three: Dancing Nights into Days

With the precedent experiences as doorman in the Gare, and knowing how time-intensive fieldwork can be, I started my participatory observations at the Lottus focusing my attention exclusively on the dance floor. During a period of 5 months in the first half of 2017, I attended 15 mornings for periods up to 5 hours to the After-hours.

One of the first aspects observed was the diversity of the attendees who came from many different night clubs with diverse musical backgrounds.[95] Another relevant aspect was the architectural preponderance of the dance floor, located in a second-floor, with view over the Douro river. The dance floor is at the core of the club cultures, as the space where technology authentication and enculturation occur (Thornton, 1995). The dance floor has been seen as the frame where the human-technology relationship is determined into cultural subjective domains, especially through the act of dancing (Rietveld, 2003, p.150). Here, I observed the different ways interactions among participants took place while trying to trace if such interactions were site-specific (Biehl-Missal, 2016) meaning, conditioned by the music, the space — physical dimensions, spatial disposition of objects and speakers — or any other circumstance that can be subscribed to the environment or atmosphere[96] of the dance floor.

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[95] One of the most remarkable aspects at Lottus dance floor is its mixed composition, including members of different musical scenes. Due to my previous experience as doorman, I was able to identify at least four different groups, recognized by their distinctive way of dressing, use of slang and ways of dancing: gays, *gunas*, techno fans and a small number of individuals from the trance music scene. The principle of self-selection in the conformation of club's crowds mentioned by Thornton (1995) suggests that club attendees are self-selected based on their musical and sartorial taste, as well as in their age, ethnicity and sexual preferences. Since the crowd at the Lottus represents a mixture of many different groups, I asked myself how the process of selection worked in the case of after parties or after hours. However, there is little to no mention about after-parties. Thornton (1995) did not mention any after-party in her study. Gadir (2014) mentions after-parties as "the inevitable next stage of the night" (p. 145), describing them as gatherings of private nature. Reynolds (1999) report after parties several times, describing how these semi-private illegal after-parties were targeted by authorities in Chicago in the late 1980s (p. 34), and how some DJs and event promoters had organized illegal after-parties in clubs and warehouses in the UK (pp. 58, 62, 72), and California in the early 1990s (p. 156). Those accounts contrasted with the reality of the Lottus, a venue of semi-public nature where all the public could get in by paying the entrance fee and matching the door policies just as in any average night club. The Lottus is also not an illegal venue and it does not *hide* its existence, by the contrary, the loud house music played inside is perceptible from the outside of the building located in a central street, calling the attention of the local pedestrians, tourist, car drivers and runners that pass by this area during the weekends mornings. On the other side, the work of Claudia Rodrigues (2016) does mention the after-parties in the city of Oporto. In her work, the author presents the after as a space-interface between the night and the day (p.176), but Rodrigues does not mention further this phenomenon presumably because it is outside the scope of her research.

[96] Regarding what constitutes the *atmosphere*, I paid special attention to the distribution of the speakers on the dance floor and how they spread the sound. Another aspect noticed was the changes of natural lighting and temperature in the room. Here, an important aspect was the relation between the dance floor and the outside of the building, facilitated by the windows, which are probably the most recognisable architectonic element from the Lottus. Other elements adding

Similar to Gadir (2014, p. 42) and Calvey (2008, p. 910), rather than using a pre-decided theoretical framework to guide my fieldwork, my process of observation aimed to create a *catalogue of interactions* and to recognize patterns of behaviours while directly engaging myself in the dance floor experience. While doing so, my observations shifted among three general themes: interactions, dance floor's atmosphere and music, identifying the DJ — and its performance — as the mediator among these aspects. These general themes were accompanied with specific topics like DJ's musical choices, technical skills and capacities of improvisation. Another important topic to be observed was the way attendees incorporate the DJ decisions into a flux of interactions (Vitos, 2017, p. 134) like dancing, cheering or even leaving the dance floor.

The previous status, experience and privileges acquired as a doorman (Calvey, 2008) came to help in order to gain the trust of the owner of the Lottus and to uncover myself as a researcher during an informal talk.[97] However, new spaces bring up new apprehensions (Bhardwa, 2013, p.43) and new roles bring new ethical challenges and this new venue and new role were not the exception.

One of my first concerns was to conduct observations without interrupting the events observed. I generally approached this issue by developing what Garcia (2013) calls *memory work*, meaning during the mornings at the Lottus I focused on being there by fully participating and interacting with people, music, and the space. Meanwhile, I paid attention to certain aspects of my interest and made notations of certain events by writing down these events later at home. This form of participatory research offers difficulties associated with the challenges of consciously observing others while participating myself and transcribing my notes later (Gadir, 2014, p. 37).

Despite all these efforts, there were aspects that I could hardly recall once at home, like specific music tracks, lighting situations, and sometimes simply ideas who came to me during my participation. To solve this problem in the field, I took a rest from dancing to stay aside the dance floor in order to take a note, a photograph or even to record a video using my smartphone. Even if "photos, audio recordings

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to the creation of the atmosphere were the use of props and fashion accessories brought by attendees such as sunglasses, costumes and even confetti guns used to *cheer up* the vibe in the dance floor.
[97] The informal conversation took place on Sunday, March 19th, at the Lottus.

and videos all have important talismanic value to the discipline as proof that what we are doing is 'serious' and 'scientific' fieldwork" (Garcia, 2013, p.6), to take photographs or videos of people probably drunk, having fun or just hanging out in front of a club brings concerns about their consent.[98]

Therefore, and echoing Garcia's (2013) descriptions, I have used my camera only after I had seen other participants taking pictures while paying attention to the general response, in case of a general disapproval, I avoid taking pictures. Similarly, I had preferred to take wide shots trying to capture as much environmental details as possible but without framing anyone (p.10). Later during the same week, I came back to this archive of ethnographic data (P.9) constituted mainly by notes and photographs — plus a few video and audio records of music and even some objects I had collected — to use them as memory-aids during the writing of field diary entries. In general terms, all the collected material was meant for research purposes and not for public display. However, a sample of those photos are used along with the present work. The majority of these images does not frame any person, and if they do, these images are digitally blurred to keep any person's identity anonymous. Additionally, some of these records were used during the interviews to trigger DJs *retrospective inspection* (Flick, 2009, p. 151), as it will be discussed in the next section.

The next concerns emerged during this stage were related to my behaviour and interaction with other participants at the dance floor. Here, the first thing to consider is that like any other club, the Lottus provides a security space where their visitors can explore identities other than their everyday roles while interacting and establishing relationships of diverse nature (Rosendhal, 2013). Additionally, the Lottus has a predominantly male clientele built upon the presence of different male groups with diverse socio-cultural, sexual, and musical backgrounds.

Conducting fieldwork in such a male-dominated setting resulted in heightened awareness of other unconsidered facets of my identity such as gender and sexual identity, which became visible as they came to shape the data gathering process (Bhardwa, 2013, p. 40). At the beginning of my participation,

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[98] Another ethical concern associated with the use of smartphones as a tool during the fieldwork is my membership in the social media platform Facebook. After long having quit my account on this social platform, I had decided to re-open it at the beginning of the fieldwork. However, my use of this platform was limited to gain information about events and I avoid the use of photographs posted in this platform since I have no specific consent for it.

my homosexuality got unexpected attention from other male attendees on three different occasions. While the first occasion was a verbal aggression, the subsequent two were sexual advances. In all three cases, I immediately flew from the situation saying no word, and continued dancing on the other side of the dance floor. These isolated episodes made me aware that my sexual identity may play a role in my attempts to participate in the dance floor experience while approaching people — here I must underline that in general terms I attended the Lottus alone. However, and while acknowledging that I cannot become *genderless* or *asexual*, I mitigated this possible obstacle by creating a context-specific identity consisting on dancing on my own and letting people get closer to me instead of me trying to dance specifically with anyone, male or female. This was a way to conceal my gendered identity (Bhardwa, 2013, p. 47) with my role as a researcher, navigating through the fieldwork showing my genuine joy of being at the dancefloor but without approaching no one in particular. This is an example of how I was able to establish trust with different interlocutors by managing my context-specific identity (Garcia, 2013, p. 12).

With the time, my strategies of image management and dance moves allowed me to establish friendships with other participants. As Calvey (2008) notes that "ethnography requires engagement with those studied" (p.910) and Bhardwa (2013) suggests that "making friends is an integral part of the experience in the context of clubbing" (p.52). Hence, it is not strange for researchers to establish personal relationships with the participants who become friends (Gadir, 2014, p. 36). This is the extreme case of Robinson (2013) and Calvey (2008) whose friends from the field turned into informants in "an approach often utilised by insider researchers to study the social world they are already a part of" (Bhardwa, 2013, p. 48). According to Garcia, this can bring the advantage of "developing a richly-detailed account of an interrelated group of people; on the other hand, it limits the truth-claims that one can make about the larger world of nightlife" (Garcia, 2013, p. 11).

Having this into consideration, it is important to describe that, similarly to Bhardwa (2013, p. 52), I established three broad types of field relationships with three different groups of participants in the clubs: *club-goers*, *staff members* and *DJs*. About the first group, and since collectively dancing is one of the main social activities at the dance floor, the companionship of several club-goers allowed me to

fully participate in the dance floor experience by dancing together with me. Furthermore, I got involved in several conversations *in situ* about their opinions about the club experience or the music on a certain morning. With the time, as my presence at the after got normalised, I started to talk openly about my role as researcher, awakening sometimes the curiosity of other clubgoers while opening the opportunity for casual conversations on the dance floor about my research topic. Some fragments and insights produced during these conversations were later recalled and recorded in my field diary and have certainly influenced my own view and understanding about the collective experience at the dance floor. However, I did not interview members of this group, since my interest became gradually more focused on the DJ and the centrality of their performance in the clubbing experience. Another way in which other clubgoers got involved in my research was their support during the process of becoming a DJ myself, as it will be described in the next section.

The staff members became gatekeepers and *accomplices* who were in the know of my role as researcher and therefore not surprised if I arrived too early, alone, freshly showered and sober to the venue. Staff members also secured my access to the space even if the venue was full.[99] In many aspects, thanks to their kindness and trust, I navigated freely and safely in this space. In return, I tried to keep good behaviour, a friendly attitude towards other attendees, and a good disposition to dance and enjoy without holding any judgmental positions towards any individual or towards any witnessed attitude or behaviour.

Another concern emerged from doing research in club environments is the *centrality* of drugs (Malbon, 1999, p. 33). In some works, drug consumption is central to the research topic (Mabon, 1999; Measham and Moore 2006). For other researchers, drug consumption by the researcher is acknowledged either succinctly, almost in a shy fashion (Thornton, 1995) or in a more extended way, reflecting the consequences of drug consumption in their research (Gadir, 2014). As a third option, some researchers decided not to address the topic (Butler, 2006), or to address it by making clear their decision of not taking any drugs through their research (Bhardwa, 2013).

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[99] This privilege is usually granted to staff members of other bars and nightclubs of the city who usually appeared in the Lottus to have drinks after their nightly shifts ended.

Either way, it seems that the question of taking drugs during the fieldwork in club situates the researcher between two anxieties: either to take drugs and accept the possible legal consequences (Gadir, 2014; Calvey, 2008), and academic stigma associated by mixing the academic rigour with illegal practices (Measham and Moore, 2006, p. 22); or not to take drugs and *fail* in becoming a full participant in the clubbing experience.

This dilemma can be partially solved if we analyse the assumption that drug consumption *must* be part of the clubbing experience, something that is not verified through the ethnographic path described here. During the first stage as a doorman, I certainly denied access to people who approached the door clearly intoxicated, and by the end of the night I saw other attendees leaving the venue with signs of intoxication. However, I equally witnessed several people who simply weren't intoxicated before, during, or after the night: *Were those individuals not part of the dance floor experience?*

In addition, I never witnessed any of the DJs chosen for an interview to perform while intoxicated: *Are the DJs not part of the dancefloor experience?* The contrary seems to be the case, the present research suggests that these DJs and their performance are at the very core of the dance floor experience. Having these questions in mind and acknowledging that drug consumption is not central to the research question of this project, I decided to align the present research with a more traditional idea of not intaking drugs as part of my research. This decision is less motivated by any possible legal consequence — drugs are decriminalised in Portugal — or academic stigma associated with drugs, and more coherent with my strategies of *image management* in the field, helping me to maintain my status of *amigo da casa* — friend of the house — ensuring me access to privileged informants and events. Another factor influencing this decision was possibly my age and previous experiences with party drugs at the moment of the research; being thirty-five years old at the beginning of my research, and having my years of drug exploration in electronic music festivals way back in my early twenties, I did not feel the need nor the social pressure to take drugs during clubbing. However, it is important to note that those previous personal experiences with drugs may have certainly helped me to avoid any judgmental stance against other party goers who consumed them as part of their dance floor experience.

Different from staff members and club-goers, the relationship I established with the DJs was clearly limited by my role as researcher and DJ-novice. As described in the next section, I was able to create rapport with them on the basis of my persistent presence during their gigs at the Lottus and given my genuine research interest in their craft as DJ.

6.5 Stage Four: Becoming a DJ

The Lottus is, above all, a secure space for people to mingle and embody identities which may differ from their identities during the weekend and even during the night out before *the after*. Therefore, to observe the multiple interactions during the DJ performance, I had to develop trust with the DJs by creating what Garcia (2013) calls a *trust network* by not only observing but participating in the dance floor experience. This includes having fun at the dance floor and being honest about my interest and my relationship with the local music scene, consolidating my role as both researcher and fan (p. 11).

I focused my observations in the way the DJs executed their performances. Initially, I noticed how some played music without vocals, while others used them profusely – the same occurred with the use of sound effects. This helped me become aware of some differences in their *style*. I also paid attention to how the perceived quality of the music was a common subject in attendees' conversations at the dance floor. Finally, during this period, and inspired by the work of Gates et al. (2006), I started to pay attention to the different strategies used by each DJ to interact and engage with the audience.

During these early observations, I recognized that I lacked the technical language or *know how* to communicate with the DJs. It became clear to me that, to a DJ, I was pretty much a complete outsider. Facing this situation, I decided to take a DJing course[100] to help me to acquire basic technical

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[100] The course — called DJ 101 — was offered by the shop *Danceplanet*, a specialized supplier of sound systems, sound-related equipment and lighting. It is located at Rua de Sá da Bandeira 96, in Oporto. Alongside their activities as a shop, *Danceplanet* works as a private academy offering multiple courses in DJing, music production and sound mixing. The content of these courses are usually designed and certified by the companies that produce the equipment and software used during the course. In the case of the course I undertook, the digital equipment and software used were all from the company *Pioneer*. Their courses cost between 300 to 500 euros. The course DJ 101 was lectured by DJ Hugo Oliveira and it included 70 hours of theory and practice in their professional studios.

knowledge[101] and vocabulary to communicate with them and to prepare my interviews. I combined the DJ lessons — between June and December 2017— with further observations at the Lottus with a focus on specific DJs.

Besides the technical skills obtained through the DJ course, in order to understand the craft of DJing, it was necessary to play in real situations, which means to get gigs. For DJ newbies this process is granted through their gradual integration in the social DJs structures[102] which can take several months or years. Since that would exceed the time I had planned for the present research, I decided to search for my own opportunities to perform in various spaces as a way of experimenting how the interaction DJ-audience works. During the last trimester of 2017 and the first of 2018, I played at coffee-shops, clothes shops, private parties, student parties, bars and cultural centres.[103] I secured these gigs through the same network of friends I had developed at the dance floor of the Lottus.

These early experiences helped me gather *street credibility* (Bloustien, 2016, p. 231) and visibility as DJ, granting my first opportunities to play at the Lottus on two occasions as a trainee in May and June 2018. Finally, on August 25th of that year, I performed officially as DJ, with my appearance being announced publicly as part of the monthly programme of the Lottus (s. Fig. 6.3 and 6.4).

After August 25th and until the end of October 2018, for around six weeks, my relationship with the Lottus grew into other roles such as barman and as event organiser, the latter being a role that many DJs have to perform (Gadir, 2014). Aware that to be primarily part of the staff and secondarily a researcher would jeopardize the validation of my research (Gadir, 2014, p. 35), I decided to close my fieldwork by kindly letting know the management of the Lottus that I needed to concentrate in my duties

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[101] The course also helped me understand the basic technique of *blending*, consisting in overlapping two different music tracks which is the basic task of a DJ. The course offered me my very first experience mixing analogue – vinyl records –, and digital formats of music – usually .wav and .mp3 formats. I also got familiar with the possibilities offered to the DJ by the different mix tables such as sound effects, filters and equalization. I did also recur to technical manuals (Langford, 2011; Snoman, 2006) to clarify concepts of sound theory, such as sound saturation and reverberation, which are linked to the experience I lived on the dance floor at the Lottus.

[102] These structures are predominantly masculine and are conformed by DJ friends, mentors and role figures (Bloustein, 2016). Once you are inside that structure, the knowledge of DJing is shared and the first opportunities of performing in public gradually appear through recommendations.

[103] In many cases I had to bring my own recently acquired equipment consisting of a DJ controller, model DDJ-RB connected to a laptop running the software Rekordbox. Both the controller and the software are produced by *Pioneer.*

as student and, therefore, I would not be able to help them anymore. Rather than invalidating my research, being part of the staff during this short period of time helped me to recognize the boundaries between full participant and researcher, and it helped me decide when to stop the fieldwork. During this short period, I used each opportunity possible to verbally invite the DJs to participate in my research, as it will be described in the next section.

Figure 6.3 The researcher playing at the Lottus on August, 2018 (Photo Courtesy of L.B.).

Figure 6.4 Figure 6.3 The researcher playing at the Lottus on August, 2018 (Photo Courtesy of L.B.).

6.6 Stage Five: The Interviews

By August 2018 and for about 12 months since, I had observed the performance of eleven DJs who played at the Lottus at least once a month.[104] I paid special attention to the way they interacted with people, the equipment, and to their musical taste. I also engaged with them in small conversations, short enough so my presence and interest in their work was noticed, but not long enough to distract them from their work. This period of creating rapport with the DJs was the most time-consuming phase, considering that I was able to see each DJ playing for two or three hours only once a month. Even if the conversations were usually short, the DJs seemed to appreciate my presence and genuine interest in their performance.

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[104] In general terms, two DJs perform at the Lottus every Saturday and Sunday morning, making an average of 16 different DJs per month. Observing the different events calendars of the during this time, I listed eleven DJs who play regularly – at least once a month, every month – at this venue.

As it was described before, during the last six weeks of the fieldwork I worked as barman at the Lottus, this implied that I had similar working schedules as the DJs, arriving at the venue before the opening time and leaving after all the clients left. This situation gave me the opportunities to talk personally and calmly with the DJs about my role as researcher and expressing my interest in interviewing them.

The style, place and moment for interviews in research regarding clubbing differs among various authors. Malbon (1999) interviewed eighteen clubbers over a period of a year, once before and once after having experienced clubbing together, with both interviews being more conversational in style (p. 33). Gadir (2014) reported thirty-seven in-depth unstructured interviews conducted within two years with clubbers, DJs and producers in multiple venues, spaces and occasions — including private after-parties (p.38). Finally, Gates et al. (2006) presented the result of eleven interviews with DJs from different Canadian cities but with little mentions about the context in which the interviews took place, the music genre played by the DJs, their recruiting criteria or if any of the authors have actually observed any of the DJs during their performances.

Acknowledging that the style, number, place and situation in which these authors made their interviews was dictated by the different contexts and circumstances of their research, I decided to go on my own road by selecting eleven DJs who regularly played at the Lottus and to observe their performances in their original context. From these eleven DJs, only one declined my invitation by alleging lack of time, shortlisting my interviewees to ten. These ten DJs were also the ones I was able to build the most rapport during the whole period of observation which led me to suspect that subconscious personal sympathy and similar musical taste played a significant role in both my selection of DJs and in their decision to accept.

No interviews were made during or directly after the DJ performance in order to not disturb their work and because the DJs usually reported to be too tired after their work. The interviews took place in their DJ and recording studios, their homes or at the facilities at the university, depending on the DJs availability (s. Table 6.2). When the interviews took place in the DJ's private home or music studio, those settings gave me additional information about their socio-economic status and musical practices outside the club, i.e. in the case of the interviews held inside music studios, those spaces allowed the

DJ to show me their technical equipment – such as controllers and synthesizers – and in several occasions they showed me private videos of their gigs saved in their personal computers. They also played certain tracks they wanted to mention during their interview; or showed me the way they organise their musical collections whether they are digital or analogues. On some occasions, I also showed them some images or videos about their performances in order to encourage retrospective inspection, recalling memories about specific events (Flick, 2009, p.151).

Table 6.2 General data of the DJ interviewed

Code	Age	Years playing	Number, place and length of the interview(s)
DJ1	20+	11	DJ1 gave two interviews via Skype. The first was 58' long and the second was less than 20' long.
DJ2	30+	9	DJ2 offered a first interview at a coffee shop for approx. 90' – this interview was recorded only in written format.
DJ3	30+	10	With DJ3, the first interview was very informal, it lasted over 90' and it occurred on a bench in a park where we met. After that first interview, a short meeting of 30' followed at DJ3's home.
DJ4	20+	8	Along the whole research process, DJ4 is one of the DJs I have spoken more with. His interview took only 45' and it occurred in DJ4's studio. Despite how short this interview was, the previous informal talks with DJ4 greatly helped me understand some DJ's skills.
DJ5	20+	14	DJ5 gave me a single interview for 67', and it occurred at DJ5's recording studio.
DJ6	40+	24	DJ6 and I meet at the recording studio of the *Danceplanet* in the City centre. It was a two hours long interview, and just as with DJ4, the interview was just the last of many conversations we had before.
DJ7	30+	8	DJ7 gave me a first interview at his private home for 90'; he decided to have the interview there because he wanted to show me his collection of vinyl's and his DJ equipment. A second interview occurred at their University's facility for 30'.
DJ8	30+	11	DJ8 and DJ9 gave me one interview together. They both decided to invite me to their music studio. The interview took 130' and during the interview, I was able to see their DJ equipment and music collections.
DJ9	20+	3	*(s. comments above)*

DJ10	20+	8	I played music with DJ10 on three occasions in front of an audience. Through these opportunities, I got to observe and learn from him different aspects of the DJ practices at first hand. The interview with him took only 43' and it took place in the facilities of the University.

Note: table 6.2. presents the range of ages among the DJs interviewed; how many years of experience they have; the place where the interviews occurred and if the DJs plays some instrument or have reported any formal musical training.

For the interviews, all DJs agreed to participate voluntarily and to audio record the interview under the condition of anonymity.[105] Therefore, their names were changed for a code. These measurements were undertaken to guarantee participant's confidentiality making "impossible for other persons to identify the participants or for any institution to use it against the interest of the participant" (Flick, 2009, p. 40).

A protocol of open-ended questions were prepared for the interviews, which can be found in Appendix C. The main focus of the interview was the way the DJ performance is organised and suited to the spatial configuration of the club and the public in order to link the different material and human elements involving the dancefloor experience. During the interviews, I always carried this protocol but rarely formulated any question exactly as it was written. This protocol was used more as a memory-aid or *checklist* of topics. Furthermore, in many cases, the order of the questions did not follow the protocol in order to not restrict the fluidity of the interview.

6.7 Final Considerations

Along this chapter, I described my path from outsider to insider in the club scene in Oporto, especially at the Lottus After-Hours, and the way I negotiated my access to this setting by fostering traits of my personality, biography and the subcultural capital I accumulated through the embodiment of different roles.

The five stages described in the previous sections are chronologically ordered and describe the different physical spaces where I conducted my research, starting by the door, crossing through the dance floor, and ending with me occupying the DJ booth. Along this process, my own experience as a clubber became crucial to establish credentials of genuine interest in the dance floor experience (Malbon, 1999,

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[105] All DJs were presented with a consent form. An example of which can be seen in Appendix B.

p. 32) and it helped me empathise with other clubgoers. This dual position — researcher and clubber — certainly offered valuable insider insights about the phenomena (Gadir, 2014, p. 35), but it did not solve all the methodological and ethical challenges occurred along this data gathering process.

Acknowledging that ethnographic research in clubs "is a situated business and not open to rationalistic planning" (Calvey, 2008, p. 908), I tried to solve such dilemmas as they appeared while creating a *tool kit* consisting in image management, good behaviour, and accumulation of cultural capital and street credibility. I also built a *trust network* with several dance floor participants and staff members in the venues where I conducted my research. Additionally, it was necessary to acquire several skills required for the embodiment of the role as the doorman and especially as DJ — which consisted of long hours of training.

Paraphrasing Calvey (2008), during the process I experienced different ethical dilemmas around drug-taking and witnessed discrimination, aggression, and being surrounded with expressions of toxic masculinity. However, I saw these situations as part of the setting and therefore I accepted them as a member of the setting and not as an "academic zookeeper or moral guardian" (p. 913).

Additionally, as a novice researcher I dealt with anxieties regarding academic outputs, display and validation of academic competences and the urgency to gather as much data as possible (Bhardwa, 2013; Garcia, 2013). Eventually, these initial worries translated into an exploration of a variety of unforeseen experiences and roles constituting into a unique research experience. As Calvey (2008) puts: "Another researcher with a different intellectual diet and gaze might arrive at a different and even opposing set of conclusions and reflections" (p. 914). Here, it is necessary to mention that my background as Designer helped me navigate in a particular way through the field, by paying attention to certain technical, material and aesthetic aspects conforming the dance floor experience at the Lottus such as: the distribution of the speakers and other objects within the dance floor; the change in natural lighting due weather conditions; the orientation of architectonic elements like the windows; and the spatial disposition of the DJ booth in relation with the dance floor.

Likewise, it is necessary to mention aspects I paid less attention to. At the Lottus, I spent practically all the time on the dance floor, failing to observe other interactions occurring in other architectural spaces inside the venue, like the door, the bar or their surrounding areas. Another aspect I did not give special attention to was the presence of certain specific populations like the *gunas*, this decision is certainly a by-product of my subconscious social preferences as classed stereotypes (Bhardwa, 2013, p. 54). Female and gay population is another aspect I have paid less attention to, despite the female and gay friends I made through my research. In general terms, the present study has explored the micro-dynamics of engagement and interaction at the dance floor, with a focus between the DJ performance and *the public* as a *unique dancing body* (s, Chapter 7), with less attention to the specific identities that constitute it.

Echoing the concerns of Bhardwa (2013) the premise of the present chapter goes beyond acknowledging the different challenges, identities and subjectivities emerged along the fieldwork with the aim of eradicating their effects over the data gathered (p.41). The goal here is to offer a reflection on the significance and importance of such nuances in order to better appreciate the nature of the data before advancing to the next chapter where this data will be analysed.

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Chapter 7. Reassembling the Dance Floor

7.1 Intro

Disentangling, Reassembling and Operationalising are the leitmotifs of this chapter, presenting the data analysis, discussion, and results of the present research. Section 7.2 offers a description of the process of *thematic analysis* (TA) applied to the data while exposing some methodological considerations regarding the application of this method having the research question in mind.

Section 7.3 presents the initial results of the TA, represented graphically as *thematic maps.* These maps cover different aspects of the dance floor experience such as *music, venue, audience, abilities, enthusiasm, stances* and *journey.* These seven dimensions represent the result of the *disentanglement* of the dance floor experience. Each *thematic map* is accompanied with a detailed description of the relation between the themes and subthemes depicted in each map, while interweaving extracts of the interviews.

In section 7.4, the notions obtained from the thematic maps are synthesised, analysed, and *reassembled* in four theoretical models: *the material assemblage, the social assemblage, the performative assemblage,* and *the experiential assemblage.* These four assemblages are the result of our effort to create a model to explore the process of mutual implication or *shared agency* among the different, social, material and technological elements involved in the creation of the dance floor experience, contributing to answer our initial research question.

Section 7.5 presents a proposal to *operationalise the knowledge* achieved through the entire data analysis and discussion. The proposal is a *Dance Floor Model Canvas* (DFMC) inspired in the Business Model Canvas as an instrument for visualisation and cross-analysis of the different factors involved in the design of dance floor experience

7.2 Thematic Analysis

The first step to conduct our analysis was to organise the data gathered along the fieldwork. Using the vocabulary proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), the totality of the data collected for this project is

known as the *data corpus.* The *corpus* is then constituted by diverse *data sets,* conformed by different *items* of the same nature (p.79). In this way, for the present analysis, the available data sets are:

1. A set of photographs taken during the fieldwork documenting details of the dance floor experience, such as lighting situations, spatial disposition of objects and building's construction materials. These pictures were taken during the participatory observations at the Gare club and the Lottus After-hours, and were used to record details about those venues and the events lived there and as memory aids while writing entries on the field diary.[106] Chapters 5 and 6 present a selection of those photographs.

2. A set of collected objects, like flyers promoting events and event's write bands, used as memory aids to recall DJs names date of events (s. Fig. 7.1).

3. Fieldnotes written by hand to recall the experiences lived after the fieldwork.

4. A set of recorded interviews with DJs107. These interviews were later coded using thematic analysis (s. Table 7.1).

From these, the set of interviews was the first to be analysed through the methodology of *thematic analysis* (TA). The results of the TA were then contrasted with the items from the other sets in order to expand, complement, or even challenge its outcomes. In other words, all data sets were taken into consideration, but the analysis started by applying TA to the information obtained through the interviews with the DJs, resulting in the creation of thematic maps providing the topics, structure and initial content for discussion. Only after the TA was finished, the remaining data was brought into consideration in order to find possible discrepancies, contradictions and similarities, enriching and adding depth to the analysis and final discussion.

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106 Chapter 6 offers a justification and description of the moments in which photographic material was recorded through the fieldwork.
107 The codes can be found in the Appendixes D, E, F, G, H, I and J at the end of the thesis.

Figure 7.1 *Objects collected during the fieldwork, used as memory aids during the writing of field notes (2019, photo by the author).*

TA was applied to the set of interviews following the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2006) who explained the advantages this form of analysis of qualitative data can offer. Not only it doesn't require much theoretical and technological knowledge in order for it to be successfully applied, but it is also compatible with projects framed within the paradigm of constructionism — as the present research is — since TA helps to "examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society" (p. 81).

Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a method for TA based in six phases, represented in Table 1 in their work (p.87). Based on that table, a process of data analysis in seven phases was designed for the present research. The addition of a seventh phase corresponds to the process of contrasting the results of the TA of the interviews with the content of the remaining data sets. The seven phases of data analysis for the present research can be then seen in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Phases of data analysis for the present research.

Phase	Description of the process
1. Organising and getting familiar with the data	Organising digital folders containing all the items of each data set in one folder. Listening to the interviews and transcribing them. Re-read the transcriptions and listen again to the interviews for accuracy. Noticing down the initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Printing the transcriptions. Reviewing each answer in the interview while underlining segments — *extracts* — of interest while assigning a *code* or *codes* for each extract. Once all the transcripts were coded by hand, each extract was transcribed along with their code in a digital document. This final document was again printed allowing each extract and its corresponding codes to be cut, creating a collection of paper stripes.
3. Searching for themes	During the previous two phases of constantly reading the transcriptions, five general themes were identified: 1) *music,* 2) *venue,* 3) *audience,* 4) *enthusiasm* and 5) *abilities.* These themes were written on the exterior of five envelopes. Later, the codes were read, and each stripe was put inside the envelope according to the correspondence between the codes and the themes. If some code did not match with the general themes, the stripe was left aside. Once all stripes were assigned to the envelopes, two new envelopes were created to take the remaining stripes who were left aside in the first round. Those envelopes got the themes: 6) *stances* and 7) *journey.*
4. Reviewing the themes	The extracts in each of the seven envelopes, corresponding to seven themes, were reviewed one by one and grouped in sub-themes. During this procedure, it was possible to review how often each sub-theme emerged in the data, as well as to reflect on the depth and relevance of each sub-theme in relation to the general research question. During this review, the terms and hierarchy of the general themes and sub-themes were constantly challenged and modified. These changes were expressed in the creation of different *thematic maps* using *post-it* notes.
5. Defining and naming themes	During this process, every post-it corresponding to the themes and sub-themes were placed in a white sheet of paper, displaying a visual hierarchy among the subthemes. In the same sheet, a definition of each theme and different ideas about the relation or relevance of each subtheme were noticed. Based on the definition and hierarchy of the themes, an initial layout for the final report was created.
6. Producing a draft of the report	Based on the sheets of papers containing the themes, subthemes and hand notations, a draft of the report was created in a digital word processing document. During this process, each sub-theme was analysed in relation to the research question and the results were presented as a narrative, alternated with the presentation of extracts of the interviews.
7. Contrasting the remaining data sets and producing the	During this process, the field notes were reviewed in order to contrast, challenge or reinforce the results of the TA of the interviews. The aim

final report.	of this final review was not to *code* all the data, or to make a TA of everything but to add contrast, depth and enriching the analysis and final discussion.

To complement the information and descriptions contained in Table 7.1, and according to the guidelines mentioned by Braun and Clarke (2006), it is necessary to mention some considerations regarding thematic analysis. During the second phase, the whole data set was coded, however, phase 3 starts with five specific themes or envelopes in which the extracts were assigned to. These five themes correspond to *latent themes* of interest in relation to the research question. This means that the initial code was made having the research question in mind while following an inductive approach (p.83). Under this approach, the themes and sub-themes were strongly linked to the data itself but also to the research question. Because of this, the importance given to each theme was less given based on the number of times a theme appears in the data nor in the extension or interest a DJ gives to a certain theme. In other words, the *weight* of each theme is determined by its potential of exploring the research question and less by their prevalence, occurrence, or how effusively a DJ talks about them.

Coding with this inductive approach implies first, to acknowledge the data analysis as an *active* process of interpretation undertaken by the researcher, and less a passive process where the themes *emerge* from the data. Secondly, in this approach, the analysis of the data went beyond its purely semantic content, meaning, the development of the themes includes interpretative work beyond the act of describing or paraphrasing pieces of texts. The act of selecting, discarding, grouping, naming and assigning hierarchies to the diverse themes obtained from the interviews — given by the DJs — constitute not only an act of analysis but already an act of reflection and the creation of initial theories. The resulting thematic maps — s. next section — are not only the *results* of the analysis but they are also the first bricks of the theory, since those initial maps try to underpin the assumptions, structures and meanings articulated in the data in relation with the research question (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.84-85).

Of course, it is possible to assign a linear relation between words, motivations, experience, and meaning in each of the extracts creating an almost infinite array of themes and sub-themes; but the interest of the present research resides not in the themes *per se,* but in the way those themes are interconnected to

build the dance floor experience. Having said this, the next section presents the thematic maps produced during phases 4 and 5, accompanied by a description underlining the relevance of each theme in order to explore the research question and interwoven with some selected interview excerpts.

7.3 Disentangling the Dance Floor

7.3.1 Music

The centrality of music as a fundamental part of the dance floor experience is verifiable along all interviews where music is reported to be carefully selected, acquired, labelled, archived, played back, memorized, blended, and danced to. The ubiquity of music is patent along all thematic maps, even if it is only as part of a sub-theme. Yet, in this first map (s. Fig. 7.2), and by observing how music is labelled and catalogued using different systems, the potential of music for *triggering* and *matching scenarios* at the dance floor is unveiled.
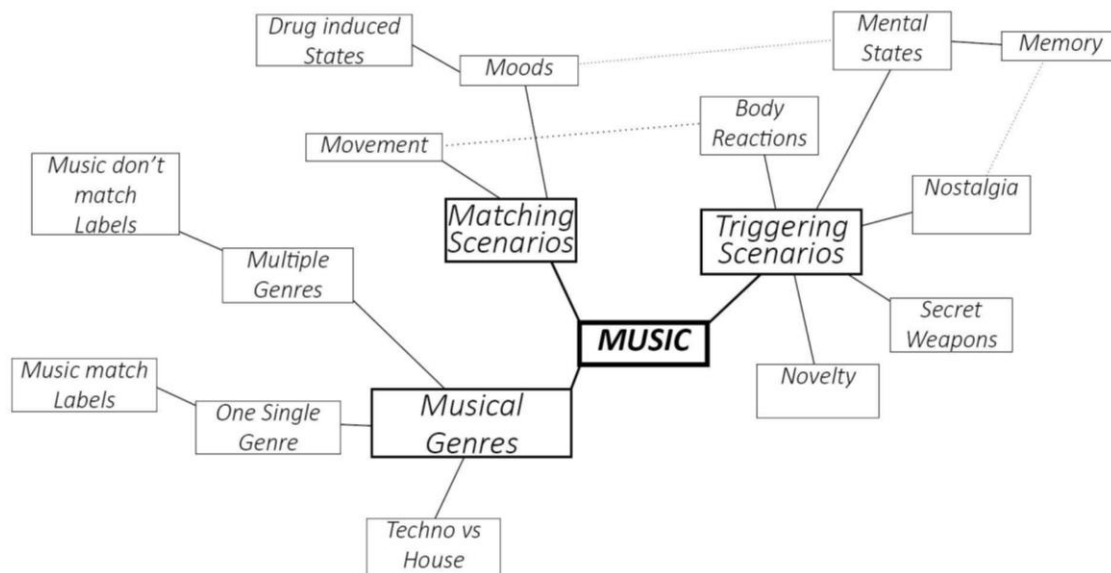
Figure 7.2 Thematic Map: Music.

Matching Scenarios

One simple way to catalogue music digital collections used by the DJs follows a chronological order, where each music file is named after the month or year in which a musical track was acquired, as DJ9 does: "I catalogue it chronologically, by the date I got each piece… it is easier to remember the year in which that happened…"(DJ9). Another system is based in the way DJs visualize certain scenarios that may occur at the dance floor, while naming music folders after those scenarios.

> DJ3: That is very easy! I create folders and folders and folders in Rekordbox [a DJ and music management software]. I give them the silliest names after the vibes that I think music may create in the dance floor… I have a folder called *zombiness* (sic.) … that is when the dance floor is almost dying but people are still dancing, and they would keep dancing even if there would be an ape in the middle of the dance floor playing a tambourine.
>
> Another folder is called *continuous groove*, that is when the dance floor is always moving, they are in the groove not so excited, not so down.
>
> I have of course the *enders* file for the music at the end of the set … when you just play something either classic or completely disruptive to send people home … another [folder] is called *everybody is dead* and another called *strange noises* [laughs]... so they are all called after things only me can relate to. They are called after vibes I describe for myself.
>
> DJ1: … and of course I have music, to begin with, the folder is called *micro house* [DJ1 makes a short pause while scrolling through the different folders in his computer] … last time I played at the Lottus I ended playing some versions of *dubstep* from the 2000s … ah … and I have a folder called *weird beats bar MDMA* [weirdbeats_MDMA] when people are completely out-spaced… I have all that.

Along these quotes, themes like *beginning, end, dead, zombies, continuity* as well as *drug-induced states*, reveal as much about the energy contained in the music as about the different scenarios that can occur at the dance floor. Here, the influence that music can have on the dance floor experience is that of a background supporting and contextualizing the moods, emotions, movements, physical and emotional states of the audience. If the attendees are tired, *out-spaced,* dance fiercely or continuously

with no fluctuations on their energy, music offers the sonic context, supporting and, most importantly, framing those states. Without music, without its background, those scenarios, dance movements and people's energy can't be channelled into a collective dance floor experience.

Triggering Scenarios

Another notion surrounding music is its capacity for *triggering scenarios*. DJs visualise the potential of each music track to trigger emotions, body reactions and moods in the audience. This musical potential can be used to disrupt a negative scenario — i.e. when the audience is getting tired — or simply to create moments of energy and joy. DJ9 reported to bring as many music tracks to the gigs as possible, so he can have as many *secret weapons* to his disposition in order to trigger the audience.

> DJ9: … so I always brought to the Lottus only those tracks that I know they work … and I also like to have as much [music] as possible because … it is like a phrase I heard from Carl Cox, 'a DJ with a lot of musical background will always have a secret weapon'.

Another example of the potential that music has to trigger scenarios is the use of *nostalgia* and *novelty*. *Nostalgia* is evoked when playing a recognisable theme: "That happens to me often when I play *Forever More,*[108] I always feel the reciprocity from the public with those classics, like *I've got The Power*[109]" (DJ2). *Novelty,* on the other hand, resides in the fact that a track is new or at least unknown for the audience, and capable of triggering the curiosity and enthusiasm of the dance floor. DJ1 reports bringing new music in a folder called "*tunes* which contains tracks that are unknown and not easy to include in a set" (DJ1). *Novelty* and *nostalgia* represent two music energies based on opposite aspects of *old* and *new,* and their use is meant to create fluctuations of energy at the dance floor while offering moments to *remember* but also to be *intrigued* and *amazed*. The aesthetic accents the *secret weapons* bring to the dance floor, save the experience from failing into the monotony and excessive repetition.

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[108] A musical theme released in 2003 by Moloko.
[109] The correct name of this theme is *The Power,* and it was released in 1990 by Snap!

Musical Genres

As mentioned, folders containing digital music are named after specific moments of the set — i.e. *intro* or *enders* — and music can also be organised following its musical key or by using colour sequences — from the blue for the calm music until orange and red for the more energetic tracks. However, the common way to navigate through the diversity of musical styles and vast DJs music collections is by using musical genres. Techno, house, minimal-house, deep-house or acid-house are common labels used in the DJs argon — as well as among the attendees — to name and catalogue music: "I label my music after the genre, then I make a folder for a sub-genre, where I put another sub-genre, it is very, very complicated and difficult to explain…" (DJ8).

Yet, when asking the DJs how they recognise each genre, the nuances of those labels became difficult to explain. These difficulties can be partially explained since there is not an established consent about the characteristics of each genre and one can only make generalisations (Snoman, 2004; Gadir, 2014). As DJ9 points: "Because I think that everyone identifies music with a different genre, the genre that everyone thinks suits best to that music. What for me can be a genre, for other people can be something different, even if it is the same music".

Along the different interviews, music genres have been a useful label to talk about the energy, rhythm and subjective aesthetic associated with certain music. Despite of this, when it comes to the influence that each genre or subgenre has on the dance floor experience, the most noticeable effect seems to occur at a macro level, where the nightly dance floors and events are reserved to the more aggressive and energetics branches of techno, while the diurnal events on beach bars as well as at the After-party, are places reserved for house.

Conclusions

Along Chapter 1 in this thesis, music or more specifically musical taste has been explored as the symbolic representation of cultural or subcultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984; Thornton 1995). In contrast, the present section explored a different dimension of music as aesthetic means used by DJs to *match* or to *trigger scenarios* and reactions during the dance floor experience. By naming their music collections after situations, moods, and moments occurred at the dance floor, the capacity of music to create a sonic

context for the dance floor experience is unveiled. Furthermore, music not only contextualizes and channels the dance floor experience but triggers it by becoming its most important input. Different from a concert of classical music, where music and it's execution is the central point of the performance, at the dance floor, the centrality of the music is in a constant flow between the background — as part of the context — and the foreground — as reactions trigger. During this constant interplay, some spaces and moments get open for the audience to take the central role of the performance.

7.3.2 Venue

The theme *venue* refers to the material context in which the dance floor experience occurs. This thematic map (s. Fig. 7.3) focuses on the way the different material and social arrangements influence the dance floor experience. By exploring this theme, two sub-themes were created: *materiality*, and the *event's narrative*.
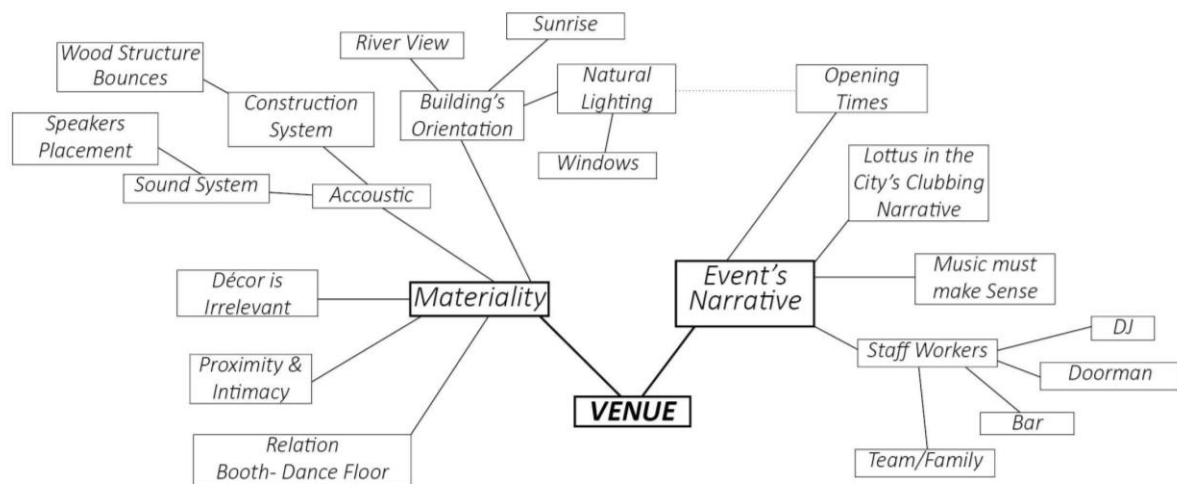

Figure 7.3 Thematic Map: Venue

Materiality

One of the most important aspects of the materiality of the dance floor is the relation between the DJ booth and the area devoted to dance, which influences the degree of empathy between the DJ and the audience during the performance. The physical proximity between these two elements allows the DJ to

become *one* with the audience by sharing the same experience while reducing the stress and effort required to read and interpret their reactions.

> DJ7: I like more the kind of booth at the Lottus, where the DJ is placed at the same level of the dance floor, because then you get that proximity to the people. In this way I can understand better what people want… it is better than being apart from them. It is less stressful… and more importantly, it makes me feel part of the public and if they are enjoying, then I do enjoy too, and time simply flies.

> DJ4: before, the cabin was more inside the dance floor, it was completely and directly surrounded by the dance floor… you could almost touch the DJ, you know … that was dangerous for the equipment … but it was as if the DJ and the dance floor were once and the same… you were not apart as in other discotheques. That heats the ambient you know … everybody is dancing, and you are surrounded by them, that makes the Lottus one of my favourites.

Here, an important aspect present in the aforementioned quotations is how DJs often say *dance floor* referring to the dancers and the physical space where they dance; by doing so, *dance floor* refers to the dancers, to the action of dancing, and to the material context. Hence, the *dance floor* is conceptualized as the momentaneous sum of these three aspects — people, actions and architectural space — as a single assemblage, and not as their separate elements. The other assemblage present here is that of the *DJ booth,* where the DJ and the DJ equipment get merged through the act of DJing.

> DJ2: …the conditions in the booth make all the difference, the security of the equipment and some good turntables, the good sound system, that makes the spectacle better… and you [as DJ] feel that you get a different enthusiasm.

Both assemblages, the *dance floor* and the *DJ booth,* have human components, material and technological components and a component of action — *DJing* and *dancing*. In this way, it is possible to suggest that the relation between the two assemblages can be regulated through the relation between their components, specifically by the physical proximity and distance between the assemblages and

through the interplay between the act of DJing and the act of dancing, which is mediated through the sound system — cables and speakers — spreading sound within the space.

Another material aspect present in clubs is their interior decoration. As discussed in chapter 2 — s. section 2.4 — underground clubs are characterized by austere decoration, darkness, audiophile sound systems, and in general terms by giving more attention to the audible experience at the dance floor, considering the visual experience to be more superfluous. These notions are partially verifiable at the Lottus, where the sonic experience is facilitated by a potent and accurate sound system while the walls are left free of decoration.

> DJ7: I like the Lottus a lot, the space is really good, the acoustic too, the wooden floor too. As a DJ the most important thing is the acoustic, I don't care if the space is nice or ugly, the important thing is the acoustic.

Acoustic reverberation is another way in which the materiality of the club influences the dance floor experience by allowing a connection between the architecture, the music and the audience mediated by air vibrations produced by the sound waves (Biehl-Missal, 2006). This can be experienced in the case of the Lottus where the sound waves — equalised by the DJ — spread in the space creating an effect of reverberation making vibrate the structure and the atmosphere of the space, creating a *carpet of sound*. Yet, an additional effect occurs at the Lottus: the physical vibration of the dance floor produced by the movement of the dancers. As mentioned in Chapter 5, the dance floor at the Lottus is supported by a wood structure and situated on the building's first floor. This structure and material create an unexpected effect of *bouncing* following the movement of the dancers. This bouncing effect may not be always noticed by the audience, but it is certainly registered by the DJs who are more sensitive to this vibration since they stand more still during their performance and don't dance or move with the same intensity as the dancers.

> DJ4: … the space is very beautiful and above all it has a great sound system… for me the Lottus has one of the best sound systems among the places where I have played. I think it is the vibration, the whole space vibrates with the music, the floor vibrates with the music you know … and with the people, when they dance, it bounces [laughs] the whole floor bounces!

DJ5: … people dancing may not perceive it, but as a DJ you always feel the vibration, the rebound through your feet … I think if the floor were made of concrete, hard... people... well, without having that bouncing floor I think people won't be able to dance as long as they do. They would probably be tired after one hour or so.

Together with reverberation produced by the sound waves, the vibrations provoked by the dancers and facilitated by the material and mechanical structure of the dance floor at the Lottus should be added to the catalogue of ways in which the material dimensions of a club influences the dance floor experience by creating new channels of communication, not from the DJ to the audience but in the other way around.

Yet, it has been said that visual decoration is practically not present at the Lottus. However, this venue has a strong visual element in the natural landscape observable through the windows on the dance floor. This landscape is a consequence of natural elements, weather conditions and the buildings position and orientation towards the Douro river. As DJ3 and DJ5 notice, the windows flanking the DJ booth help to dilute the massiveness of the stonewall of the historic building while letting the natural light into the space — and offering a view of the river for the dancers.

DJ3: Ahhhh and sun, there should be sun getting through those windows! That is very important.

DJ5: The first time I came to the after I thought: what is going on here, who is organising this? Who put these speakers on the first floor of a building … with a view over the river… watching the sunrise after a night partying … pff … it is simply amazing.

I mean I asked myself, that first time, when does this place close? The windows are wide open, so when does the police show up to shut the party down … and why is it midday and I am still here? [laughs].

The sunlight and the river view are the most prominent visual elements at the dance floor at the Lottus. The sky, the beauty of the river and sometimes the boats navigating through its waters are often the focus where the dancers fix their eyes. These natural elements are always changing and evolving as the

day passes by, offering a visual *exterior* narrative that gets melted with the interior's event's narrative. As DJ5 said in the last quote, sometimes attendees are simply amazed about the time, and this occurs because the presence of the sun offers a natural time *cue* framing the dance floor experience in the diurnal part of the day. The windows, or the open architectural gap they represent, are an example of how the materiality of the venue supports the event's narrative, which will be explored in the next lines.

Event's Narrative

In clubs, there are certain elements that characterize the narrative of the events that occurred inside. These elements answer to more general questions such as *when* it's the event occurring, *who* is attending, and *what* kind of music will be played. In the case of the Lottus, the answer to those questions in combination with the club's materiality influences the dance floor experience, by modulating the mood, activities, and the music at the dance floor.

The first aspect of the narrative at the Lottus is its opening times. By opening at 6 a.m., the DJ set and the whole experience develops while following the movement of the sun which provokes gradual changes of light and temperature inside the dance floor. This not only offers a referent for the time in the day in which the events occur, but it attracts the visual focus of the attendees. The light and heat produced by the sun also motivates attendees to be more relaxed and communicative among them and with the DJ. This openness and communication can be at least partially explained by the lack of anonymity that darkness provides within nightclubs.

The opening times also ensure the Lottus an especial place in the wider narrative of clubbing in the city. While the *real* party is supposed to happen *before* in one of the many night clubs in the city, the Lottus is reserved to the end, to the *after*, with the aim to finish the party. This characterisation is reflected in the selection of house music over techno music.

> DJ9: because, here in Porto, house music is not embedded in the people. Here, people like more techno, and the Lottus is the only house here in Porto playing house … house.

> DJ10: So when somebody plays techno or some client asks for that techno track that everybody wants you to play… it never makes sense because it does not belong there.

As mentioned in the previous section (s. 7.3.1 *Music*), music genres are a useful way to differentiate the night events from the day events. But this differentiation goes beyond the opening times, behind each of the genres, there is an intention shaping the event's narrative's

> DJ5: … what you look [with an after-hours] is that people get home relaxed, not more nervous… that is the function of the after-hours, they should leave the party and go home feeling fucking good.

> DJ2: The after is [...] a place where you can have fun a little bit longer .. a place to relax… to finish your night … and there are a lot of people who want to have a more agitated experience, even more agitated than during the night.

The narrative of the Lottus is not that of a nightclub, it does look to relax the audience by offering closure to the party experience rather than no ignite it; but make no mistake, attendees are expected to dance and to actively interact with each other, and the aesthetics and energy contained in house music match this scenario.

A less noticed element of the clubbing experience in literature, is the role of the staff members as DJ6 points: "… and here I am talking about something that is important, everything inside a house, a discotheque, is important. From the doorman until the cleaning staff, all are important because they are all a team" (DJ6). Furthermore, the staff members at the Lottus — including the DJs — consider themselves as family: "[the Lottus] … it is more like family… like if you are among your family, like if you were playing for them" (DJ5). This sense of cohesion among the staff, is in many times translated into a more familiar experience. DJs and several attendees at the Lottus feel at home, which reduces the DJ's constraints and work-related stress, which is traduced into a more fluid performance.

Conclusions

In general terms, the material arrangements at the Lottus works as a medium through which different energies at the dance floor can flow. The sonic energy produced by the music is transmitted by the sound system and echoed by the building's acoustic making music audible; tangible on the skin of the audience; and transmittable through the vibration of the floor. Visual input is given by river view and the sunlight — which also influence the temperature inside the dance floor — framing the experience

in a determined place and time, while offering a link to the everyday narrative of the City. These elements are taken into consideration by the DJs for their performance:

> DJ9: So you have a great symbiosis among all senses, all senses are getting together in that place and are getting bombed, even the sense of touch is for us very important.

> DJ7: … because 75 % of the information is visual and those all things you see are really important. Because if you love music it is not because you love music that you are going to stay there for hours … of course, the interaction among people is very important and the mood in general is very important.

The presence of these visual, audible and haptic elements constitute an array of aesthetic layers superposed during the dance floor experience, echoing the strategy of *allatonceness* (s. section 2.2 *Allatonceness)* understood as the multiplicity of simultaneous sensorial narratives present in the club creating a *semi-solid environment* reducing the relevance of the decoration and the structure of the building Lavin, 2009, pp. 100-101). This underlines the *site-specific* nature of the morning club experience (Biehl-Missal, 2016) at the Lottus, conditioned by the space, the distribution of the speakers, the natural lighting and the relation between the dance floor, the DJ booth and the Douro river.

7.3.3 Audience

Just as *music* and *venue*, the presence of an *audience* — also referred as *attendees* — on the dance floor is fundamental for the DJ performance. The role of the *audience* is first to become a *collective dancing body,* by being the receptors and critics of the actions executed by the DJ and translating those decisions into the act of dancing; another fundamental role of the audience is to *give feedback* to the DJ, orienting and even commanding the performance. The present section explores both roles which are also represented in the thematic map *Audience* (s. Fig. 7.4).
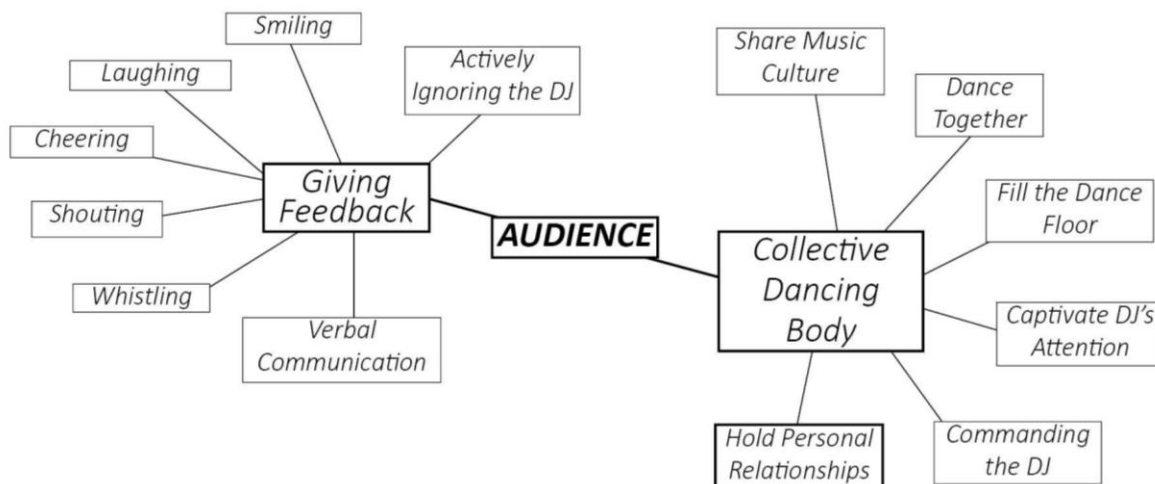
Figure 7.4 Thematic Map: Audience

Collective Dancing Body

The analysis presented in the previous section (7.3.2 *Venue*) conceptualised the *DJ booth* and the *dance floor* as two assemblages with human components, material and technological components and components of action — *DJing* and *dancing*. The present section explores the relation between the two assemblages through the act of *dancing*.

One aim of the act of *DJing* is to trigger the individuals present at the *dance floor* into *dancing*, not individually or in couples, but *dancing* collectively. In order to achieve this, DJs visualize their audience as a single *collective dancing body* during the dance floor experience, a notion noticeable in the way DJ1 visualises the audience at the dance floor not by paying attention to single individuals but as a whole, as a single entity.

> DJ1: I try not to see much after specific persons on the dance floor, I try to observe the dance floor as a global image as if it were de-focused … as a blurred image, I try to see the global view.

To trigger the individuals in the audience to assemble a *collective dancing body* represents a special challenge in a venue like the Lottus, where part of the event's narrative is to receive people coming from different night venues with diverse musical tastes and social backgrounds (s. section 5.4.2

Attendees). This represents a challenge for the DJs who must bring a diverse audience to dance the same music.

> DJ8: This is part of the challenge of communicating with the public, I mean for example at the Lottus, people come accelerated and agitated from the night before... whereas you don't know what have they been hearing you don't know if they have been hearing techno, hip-hop, house, tech-house, reggae, et cetera, et cetera.

One aspect reported in literature is the presence of *key* individuals influencing the general mood and even promoting dancing at the dance floor. Gates et al. (2006) reported that half of the DJs surveyed in their study pay special attention to certain key individuals like promoters, other DJs, certain dancers "or even knowledgeable mavens of the particular community who often sit on the sidelines (sic.) instead of dancing. To some, these key individuals are influential people whose demonstrated support can influence others to increase their engagement with the DJ's performance" (p. 75). The role and even the presence of such *knowledgeable mavens* is however not verified along the observations and the interviews presented here. On the other side, it is possible to report the presence of *key* dancers who, even if noticed, are a less influential factor by the DJs who are more interested in the general mood.

> DJ9: [about key-dancers at the dance floor] Those people manifest themselves, maybe because they place themselves every time at the front [in the area in front of the DJ], or because they talk with me, meaning they make comments to me about the music…

> DJ2: Yeah, I see them [the key-dancers], and I use them [as markers] to see if things are ok, but the general mood is more important. If I have feedback, that is important for me, any feedback.

Key-dancers are not completely ignored, but as DJ2 says, the general mood is more important. Collectivity and cohesion among the audience through the act of dancing is a social achievement by the DJs, but it is also important since it means music and the performance is received successfully by the dance floor as a social assemblage sharing the same collective mood or vibe. Another benefit found in

having achieved a *collective dancing body* is the coherence in the feedback the DJ receives from the dance floor, which is the next subject.

Giving Feedback

The second role of the dance floor is to give feedback to the DJ: "If I have feedback, that is important for me, any feedback." (DJ2). Feedback given to the DJ is not only in how the audience moves and dances but also in how they express verbally and with facial and hand gestures.

> DJ10: The major interaction happens through the music, but I also talk with them and I see them if they are laughing, if they are dancing or just standing. I like to talk with them, and I also like when they come to me to talk too. So, I can get what they are feeling…. Especially there at the Lottus which is one of my favourite places to play.

As DJ1 and DJ10 notice, the feedback can be directly channelled to the DJ in the form of euphoric expression such as yelling, whistling, cheering and of course clapping; but DJs also *read* the public by observing the energy in which the audience interact among them, as DJ1 puts:

> DJ1: Sometimes the public is the most amusing part... sometimes they are more vocal, they scream… sometimes they are more about watching, or they simply move… [pause] I interpret the way they… well if I see they are talking too much among them, then the music is too boring. If I see them dancing a lot but not chatting, if they are just dancing, then I think… it's good… it is a little like that… and when I see that everybody is dancing and chatting but happy and joyful, then everything is perfect! Then the equilibrium is reached, the volume is right, the public is dancing…

Reading or interpreting the audience's feedback requires that both the DJ and the audience understand and agree in the dynamic between the sonic energy contained in the music and the kinetic energy contained in the act of collective dancing (Fikentscher, 2000, p. 41). If the audience gives diverse or contradictory feedback, the DJ can get disoriented and may fail to create a cohesive vibe at the *dance floor*. On the contrary, if the DJ and the audience *understand* each other, "then everything is perfect! Then the equilibrium is reached" (DJ1).

Conclusions

This section has explored the dance floor as a *collective dancing body*, capable of incorporating the sonic energy of the DJs music selection into the collective act of dancing; and capable of reacting to the material organisation of the dance floor, generating its own *aesthetic understanding* (Biehl-Missal, 2016, p. 19) of the dance floor experience. This *aesthetic understanding* is later objectified or translated into dancing, hand gestures, whistles, verbal expressions, and floor vibrations, incorporating mood, sound and architecture in their feedback.

The role of the DJ is then to read the feedback and translate it's subjectivity into concrete musical decisions and strategies of improvisation, as it will be explored in the upcoming section *Abilities*.

7.3.4 Abilities

Abilities explores how the DJ's *sensorial and cognitive capacities* are combined with the *technical features* offered by the DJing equipment, creating some *strategies of improvisation* and to *find music* during the performance (s. Fig. 7.5).
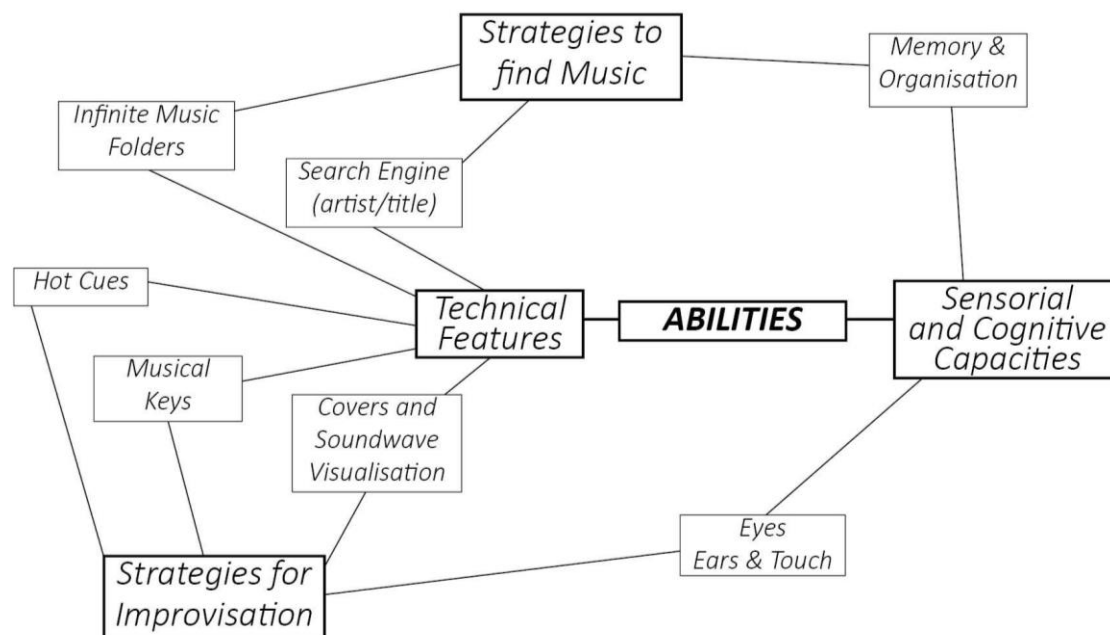

Figure 7.5 Thematic Map: Abilities

Sensorial and Cognitive Capacities

The DJ's abilities to memorise and catalogue music *prior* to the performance were explored in Section 7.3.1. However, the present section explores those abilities *during* the performance, when DJs have to shift their attention towards at least four aspects: the music being played; the music expected to be played next; the interaction with the audience; and the information coming from the DJ equipment.

In order to be able to share their attention among these sources of information, DJs usually focus on listening to the music while manipulating the equipment without observing it, which requires some degree of spatial memory. At the same time, DJs may be observing the audience without holding any focal point, only as a strategy for maintaining their engagement during the performance and making a *mental resume* of the general mood at the dance floor.

> DJ3: ...mmm I would say, from then minutes [of playing] I watch six minutes to the public and four minutes to the equipment. As I started DJing I was nervous and I was always looking at the equipment, but I forced myself and learned to watch more at the dance floor … I am mixing and dealing with the equipment but always looking, facing the public … I don't focus on anyone … I have no focal point, but I force myself to not to stare at the equipment. I don't want to communicate the idea that I was always looking at the equipment, the visual communication with the public is very important. […] you can lose the relationship, the lecture of the public, the connection with the public, its engagement. As part of the audience I do enjoy it too when the DJ makes visual contact, it's nice.

The four minutes mentioned by DJ3 in which he observes only the equipment may correspond to the time he needs to prepare the blending or *transition*, but once this is achieved, the music plays without the need of further attention, opening a time window. This time can be effectively used by the DJ to calculate the reaction of the audience to the last track and to decide which track is coming next. The degree in which DJs master to shift their attention to the different aspects occurred on the dance floor, while listening to the music and manipulating the equipment, can be translated into a performance with seamless musical transitions and fewer errors and delays in the manipulation of the equipment.

Technical Features

Here, some technical features found in digital technologies, especially the search functions, are explored in their capacity to create strategies to quickly select and find music. The first strategy combines the possibilities offered by the DJ software *Rekordbox*[110] (s. section 3.4.3 *Programming*). During the performance, this software helps DJs to organise and find tracks by looking after different customized labels — like music genre — or characteristics — like musical keys. Its use is reported as a strategy to break mental blockades, when improvising in front of an audience.

> DJ1: I use the keynote given by *Rekordbox* and I guide myself around that note. For example, if I find myself lost and can't decide which will be the next track, then I check those possible tracks in the same key and search any track that can call my attention. That helps to unblock!

Another possibility is the use of the visual covers of the music albums, which are presented as a small icon on the laptop screen or CDJ. This visual aid appears to be of great value when trying to navigate through extensive music collections during the few minutes the DJs have to find a track. As an alternative, a DJ can of course remember the songs by title or author and give this information to the search engine. Usually, just one word or a single name is enough to reduce the search to a few tracks, which are easier to handle in such short of time:

> DJ10: But once you know the music and you have been playing the same music around, it is really easy to identify the music. I also use the covers to identify the tracks, some *Pioneer* software allows you to see the associated cover on the screen of the CDJs and I use it if I can... in order to recognize the music. But that does not happen often, I usually know the name of the track.

Another possibility offered by the technology is the use of hot cues to digitally flag specific parts of the music. Hot cues can be used strategically to quickly identify parts of the music containing the energy required by the DJ at a certain moment.

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[110] This software produced by *Pioneer* is installed in many CDJs, as well as in many DJs laptops. The software helps them to organise music libraries into folders and it can be used during the performance to mix music since it can be connected to a MIDI controller.

DJ1: Ah, and I use hot cues to analyse the music, I put hot cues marking loops of sixteen beats [four bars]. For example, I place the hot cue *A* sixteen beats before the plates or the vocals start … and hot cue *B* is always sixteen beats before the first break … so if I see that the dance floor needs some more movement then I don't start in the hot cue *A* but in the hot cue *B* … [which will lead to a more energetic part of the track] or I do the same using a cue *C* before a phrase that includes voice or something like that.

So, if I see that the dance floor is dying, then I may start by the point C instead of or the B for example, it depends on the track. If the dancefloor is more *zombie* then I may start from the B... more or less.

DJ1 uses the digital technology of hot cues to *dissect* the musical phrases in a track in order to separate them after their music energy. This helps him to make more accurate musical choices matching or triggering reactions from the public. Here, it must be underlined that, thanks to technology, a DJ does not need to playback the entire track but can simply manipulate it and use only the parts suitable for the moment. Technology facilitates the manipulation of music, and in combination with the human ingenuity and practice, some improvisation strategies for the DJ performance can be created, which are the basis of the dance floor experience.

Conclusions

The present section explores the conjunction between technological innovation and human creativity involved in the creation of strategies for musical localization and improvisation. The aim here is to analyse technology not only as a symbolic recipient of capital (Thornton, 1995), but to take into consideration some of its complexity, functions and ways of manipulation. By doing so, the present section presented technology in its capacity to work in combination with the DJ's skills not to create perfect automated DJ performances but to facilitate a DJ performance based on human improvisation. Echoing the notions of Yu (2013), improvisation assisted by technology does not represent the loss of the human agency in the DJ performance but its complementation.

7.3.5 Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm encompasses the particular motivations and interest the DJs expressed regarding their artistic, creative and social role in the performance. These motivations are separated into the sub-themes: *personal history* and *culture transfer* (s. Figure 7.6).
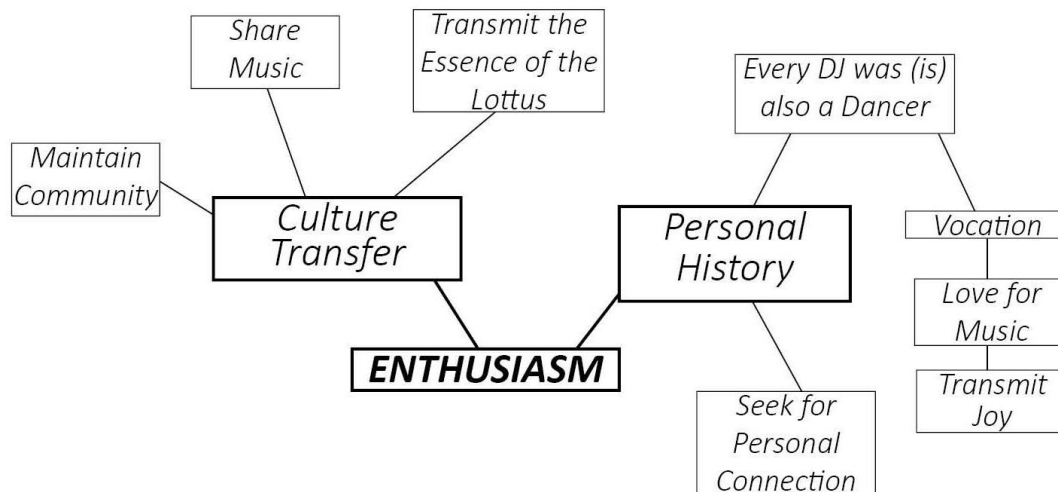
Figure 7.6 Thematic Map: Enthusiasm

Personal History

An important aspect of the enthusiasm that DJs are required to bring to the dance floor is a certain attitude of respect and dedication towards their craft. In other words, DJs take their work seriously and they are aware of adding value to their performances through new music and by mastering new devices and techniques. When asked about where that dedication comes from, the answers related to moments in the DJs' personal biographies, especially those related to the way they discovered their passion for electronic music, which are memories usually linked to family members and peers.

> DJ2: First, I started with a mix table and two turntables, and in that time my brother used to work in a record shop, which of course was an advantage [laughs]. I mean, he got access to all novelties, and I got access to all the new music that was arriving. And *the bug* grew up from there until I started to play in some birthday parties, some school parties. Things started to happen.

DJ7: I had always liked music and by influence from my father… I can remember when I was already 10 years old being in the car with him driving and hearing house music… that was pretty much my first memory of house music… of course is not the same house music we hear now, it was more relaxed… but that informed my background and opened me the door for this world.

Similarly, DJ6, DJ8 and DJ9 were able to link their passion for music with personal moments and familiar role models to their path as DJs. DJing is seen as a vocation and as a sort of second nature, echoing the notions of embodied cultural and subcultural capital (Bordieu, 1984; Thornton, 1995) acquired and embodied through the action of DJing: "it is something you need to live to understand it, to develop it… it's your style, you work on it" (DJ8). In the same way, DJs played in the past the other role as dancers and part of the audience:

DJ3: because being there was like being in my natural habitat, always … in those [past] years it was common for me to wake up and go straight to the Lottus, meaning it was not because I went out during the night that I went there, it was really the event.

DJ10: before, I was always there [on the dance floor] having fun…

DJ5: The first time I arrived at the Lottus was as a client, and the first thing I liked was the good vibe among everyone. It awoke my curiosity about the space … then I started to go every weekend … Yeah, the good vibe among everyone is something that catches you. I even started to come alone, by myself.

These previous experiences as dancers certainly help the DJs to create the much-needed empathy with the audience, by giving them a layout on which they start to build their personality as DJ based on their own path as clubbers. This comes to help to improve the way they read or interpret what the *dance floor* needs and wishes in terms of musical choices.

Along the interviews, DJs also made emphasis on the *passion* they have found in the activity of DJing and performing in front of an audience: "I do this because I love it, I love the music, the scene, the friends, and if it weren't because of my love of it, I would not do it anymore" (DJ2). The *joy* and *love* DJ2 reported to have for the music is also one of the most noticeable energies or moods they want to transmit to the public through their performance: "I want to transmit happiness, joy, happiness … and dance" (DJ4).

Similarly, DJ8 emphasizes the power that passion and joy has to create empathy and connection on the dance floor: "I think this happens in all areas… When you have passion for what you are doing, and the other person also has the same passion and empathy, then you can connect" (DJ8). This sense of connection and empathy in shared joy, happiness and even hedonism, become an important leitmotif during DJ performance, influencing its general narrative and the dance floor experience.

Culture Transfer

Among the DJs, there is also the sense of maintaining and transmitting their culture. Since the experience of clubbing is not textual or can be recorded otherwise (Biel-Misahl, 2006), the only way DJs can maintain its cultural scene is through the act of DJing: "There is something... how can I explain it, there is some sort of teaching ... of education. I try to pass some musical culture when I am at the Lottus" (DJ2). This sense of teaching is also shared by DJ8, who also reported a sense of responsibility in preserving the culture of DJing:

> DJ8: You have in front of you people that like music, so we show them what we have discovered through the search of music… here we talk about responsibility and notion about what you are protecting and defending.

The idea of preserving the essence of DJing is also born from the inspiration produced by older or more experienced peers. This is the case of DJ Serguinho, who is mentioned in three interviews in respect to his ethics, experience and style, together with other experienced DJs who play at the Lottus.

> DJ9: I always had tried to see, to observe… I think the most important thing about the Lottus is to know the essence of the Lottus, I have always observed that... I have always observed Serguinho,

Ze Salvador and Tomas… I had always observed them while playing and they always had transmitted to me the essence of the place through the music… the house music, house! house! house!

The essence of the Lottus, as DJ9 named it, can be shared by hearing and observing it, by experiencing it. This may sound as a diffuse or difficult to grasp concept, however, it encompasses the subculture, experiences and sonic memories that characterize the Lottus and that every DJ performance seeks to re-enact.

Conclusion

Through their motivations, knowledge and pride, DJs became an important repository of the *ethos* of the club experience, recreated through their performance. DJing goes beyond the act of orchestrating the dance floor experience and became a form of cultural maintenance and re-creation of an otherwise non-written culture: *the essence of the Lottus.* Additionally, the act of DJing incorporates personality traits and personal motivations embedded in the DJs biographies, influencing, and informing their performances.

7.3.6 Stances

Stances refers to the viewpoints used by the DJ to describe their own role in the dance floor experience, resumed in two general sub-themes: *seek negotiation* and mediation between the DJ and the whole audience; and the need to *embrace the risk*, which encircles some of the necessary *attitudes* the DJs reported to be involved in their performance (s. Figure 7.7).
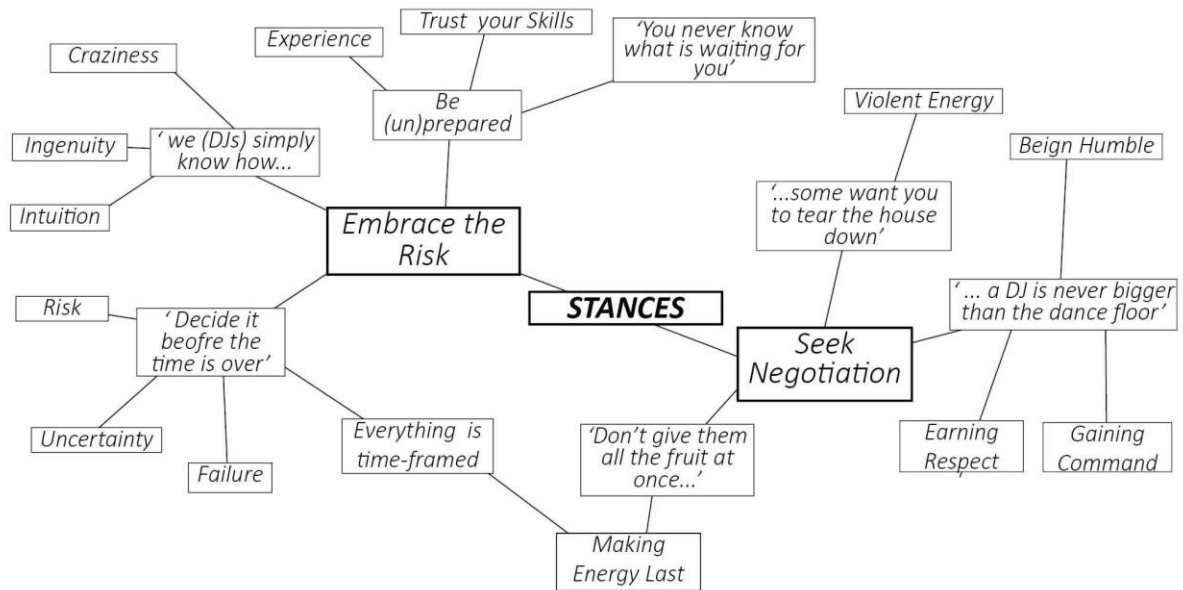
Figure 7.7 Thematic Map: Stances

Seek Negotiation

The dance floor experience is based on the highly subjective process of negotiation between the DJ and the audience at the dance floor. The DJ makes a proposal in the form of musical energy to which the audience responds with feedback. On the side of the DJs, this negotiation starts with a sense of respect for the audience, acknowledging the dance floor as the *commanding* entity, at least at the beginning of the performance.

> DJ1: Me as DJ, my function is to make people dance. Before I used to think that the DJ has an image to look after, so the DJ should make this and that… It was an egoist way to think, but with time I understood that the DJ will never be bigger than the club … and never is the DJ bigger than the dance floor. The dance floor commands the DJ, not the other way around.
>
> It is not the DJ who makes things happen […] the dance floor commands, it is always the dance floor who allows you to do things. And I think, now that I am saying it, I think that if the DJ respects the dance floor, the dance floor will then pay respect to the DJ to take control over the dance floor.

In a similar way, DJ4 underlines how humble DJ Serguinho appeared him to be, and the importance of being perceived as respectful but self-assured by the audience. These traits are important ways in which DJs embody their role as performers and somehow service providers, whose clients are the audience.

> DJ4: I can recall watching Serguinho once and I thought: wow, that is how you do this. He really shows us how the mood at the Lottus is. When he plays, he is so *humble,* so tranquil… very respectful, very secure of what he is doing … [pause for thinking] but beyond the security he is enjoying what he is doing

DJs also negotiate with the disruptive energy brought by certain individuals, who want the music to be more upbeat: "They are there expecting me to tear the house down and pum, pum, pum!" DJ2. In these cases, DJs tend not to follow individual expectations but to pay attention to the wishes of the whole audience.

> DJ3: We used to say, I mean all of us as DJs, that you cannot play at the Lottus and give them all the fruit at once or squeeze the whole orange at once! Because if you give all the music at the beginning, the crowd will dance too much, they will do all they want to do and by 10 a.m. they will be completely broken, tired, exhausted ...

As DJ3 expresses, the energy of the audience needs to be managed to last for a long time, something that can be achieved through the intensity in which a track is played — something that is also subject of negotiation. The intensity of the music can be expressed in the speed in which a track is being played, represented by the BPM numeric rate given by the CDJs and DJing software. DJs at the after-party play music at a speed between 124 and 128 BPMs, which corresponds to a very danceable house music yet more slowly than other genres such as techno and drum and bass — s. Section 3.3 for a detailed characterisation of house music. The speed of the music, and it's 4/4 metric provide the rhythm in which the whole performance occurs while orchestrating the movements and the experience at the dance floor.

Embrace the Risk

In general terms, DJs arrive at the gig with their music organised according to the system they have chosen; knowing that the Lottus is characterized by the house music played there; and prepared with their experience, notions, and technical know-how. They also arrive unprepared for the specific situations and risks that may be presented along the performance:

DJ3: I never know what I am going to play next, 98% of what I do, of that that you see me doing, is improvisation. And from the rest, one per cent is technical skills, the other one per cent is to know [the track] what is coming next.

DJ7: One of the reasons why I do play with my laptop is the fact that I wouldn't feel comfortable if I don't have all my music with me, available for me to be played in the moment when I read the crowd and decide what I am going to play.

I never achieve predefined sets, not even a playlist and then get here and play them, that never works quite well because you never know what people want, if they want it faster, slower, more mental… you never know what is waiting for you. And as soon as you understand this, then you will get more comfortable with the audience, it helps you to get the ability to drive people … you cannot achieve this if you have premade sets.

Contrary to strict planning, improvisation requires one to embrace the possibility of failure. In order to face this risk, DJs also bring some attitudes like "a good portion of uncertainty, ingenuity, craziness…" (DJ6). These traits in the DJs personality allow them to explore newer possibilities of triggering reactions from the audience, through the acquisition of new music or through creative ways of manipulating the equipment; always enriching the dance floor experience.

Conclusion

The dance floor experience is the result of a negotiation between the audience at the dance floor and the DJ. The present section has explored some attitudes the DJs have reported that come to help for the negotiation, such as being respectful to the wishes of the audience. Also, DJs need to embrace any risk of failure inherent to the act of music improvisation, which is at the basis of the DJ performance. These stances may help improve the *aural* character of the DJ performance (Attias, 2013), facilitating the communication between the DJ and its public, but also giving the impulse to the DJs to be adventurous in their musical experimentation.

7.3.7 Journey

Journey is a term frequently used by both DJs and audience to describe the *gestalt* of the experience produced during the DJ performance. *Journey* embraces not only the musical decision and execution by the DJ, but also the aesthetic output generated during the performance. The *Journey* is explored in the thematic map through the analysis of two aspects: *improvisation* and *battle* (s. fig. 7.8).
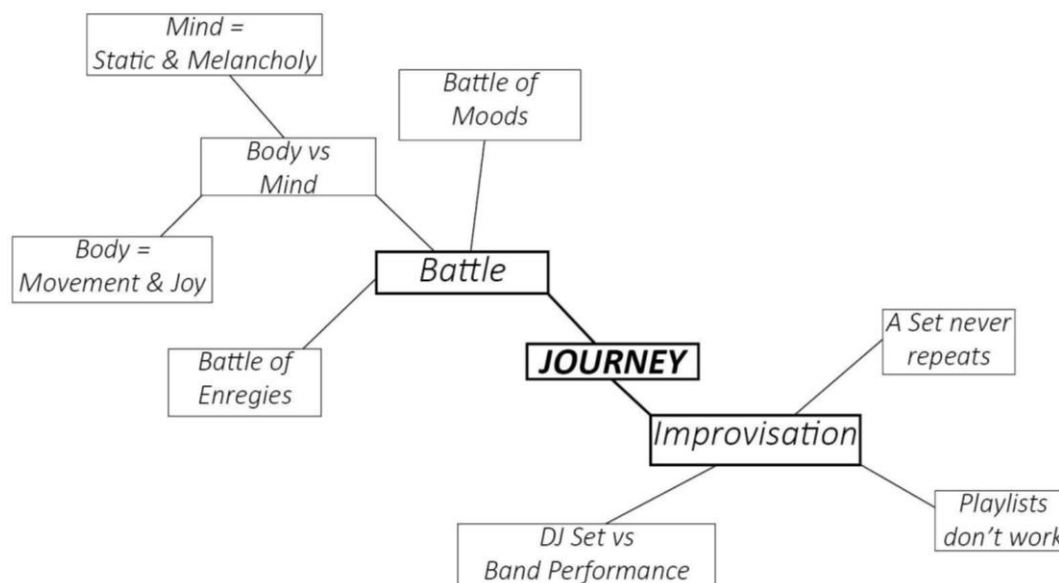
Figure 7.8 Thematic Map: Journey

Improvisation

DJs confirm the unique character of each performance based on their improvised nature, which requires them to constantly select among different musical choices sequenced in different order combined with the equipment's technical features. This array of technical possibilities and sonic combinations reaffirm the original character of the dance floor experience since even if all DJs are doing the same job, they're *doing it in different ways*.

> DJ3: This is one of the things I think makes DJing harder and beautiful, there are thousands of ways for you to do things; and everyone, all DJs are doing the 'same job' but in very different ways.

By being able to use, sequence and modify all the sonic material in their disposition, improvisation differentiates immensely the DJ set from the more traditional band performance, where the band has a more limited repertoire of themes.

DJ10: For me, that was the huge difference between the bands and the DJ, with bands you always going to have the breaks and those moments between the songs and also breaks between the bands, and you have a program, a set of songs you are going to hear. A DJ can alter a lot of things you can get a lot of new ideas on the fly and to be creative and that is for me very important.

Improvisation provides the dance floor experience with a character of musical originality, it also opens the possibility for the DJ to choose any of the tracks of its disposition, without any constraints regarding the number of tracks, or the need to respect a repertoire of music genre. Additionally, the *risk* of failure that an improvised performance implies, humanize the performance by providing an edge of tension and expectation from the audience towards what will be the next track. These aspects help to maintain the audience curious and engaged in the dance floor experience.

Battle

The DJ performance — also called DJ set — can be characterized as a battle of energies or moods, which offers a fluctuating narrative between dark and light, body and mind, novelty and nostalgia:

DJ1: I try to create a narrative [through the musical set], that is something I always try to create, and if I don't create the narrative, I feel the set becomes empty. For example, the first time I played at the Lottus I managed to create a narrative through the response of the audience, but that is always difficult, sometimes you don't get it … but that is the fight … as I told you I try to create a battle of energies and maybe create some drama and then an explosion of energy … a contrast … it is a battle of spirits, a battle of moods.

DJ3: A good set for me should have variety, a mix of forces, fragility, joy and even melancholy… It should have moments for everything and above all the set should absorb people until they forget about what they are doing … and it should be natural, organic. Things should not be forced; they should occur naturally.

Battle encircles the interplay between contradictory notions regarding mainly to music and its effects on the dance floor experience. Drama, energy, contrast, fragility, joy and melancholy are all part of a

sonic narrative created by both the DJ and the audience. The contradiction, or battle, among these moods or vibes, do not affect negatively the dance floor experience but enrich it. Here, the enemies are monotony and boredom.

Conclusion

As a conclusion for this theme, one last depiction on how the dance floor experience is seen by the DJs is the *journey,* which implies the displacement of the individuals on the dance floor to a different location while embarked on the sonic journey, and as DJ8 put it, embarked on an aeroplane.

> DJ8: So I used to say that this is an aeroplane, it takes its time for the aeroplane to completely take off, then during the flight, the plane will face some turbulence, and when it comes to the time it will reduce its speed and high and eventually it will land. And all that should be good though by we as DJ so the trip, that experience takes as long as possible.

Seeing as a battle or as a Journey, the DJ performance is here not meant to be as the simple succession of musical themes based on the reactions of an audience. The set is here the design of a full artificial experience capable of triggering emotions, organising experiences, and challenging traditional notions of space and displacement. A journey means to change location, to move, as if the club were an aircraft commanded by the DJ, visiting other places, offering moments, collective emotions and changing constantly of altitude, speed, and intensity.

7.4 Reassembling the Dance Floor

Different from the previous analysis (s. section 7.3), where different aspects of the dance floor experience were *disentangled*, *unveiled,* and presented. In this section, the aim is to *step back —* metaphorically speaking — to contemplate the dance floor not by looking to its separate aspects, but as a *gestalt,* or the *sum of the parts.* To achieve this, the following text will *reassemble* the continuous interplay between the *material*, *social*, *performative* and *experiential* aspects present in the club (s. Fig. 7.9). This interplay occurs through the influence between certain actors: *sound, proximity, visual cues* and *reverberation* assemble the *material* aspects; *interaction cues* and the *social energy* are fundamental for the *social* assemblage at the dance floor; while the *sonic cues* and a *cultural ethos* mediate the

performative aspects of the experience; finally the *experiential assemblage*, understood as the *gestalt* or the sum of the previous aspects, challenges notions of *space* and *event,* presenting the dance floor experience as the sum of *aesthetic knowledge*

.
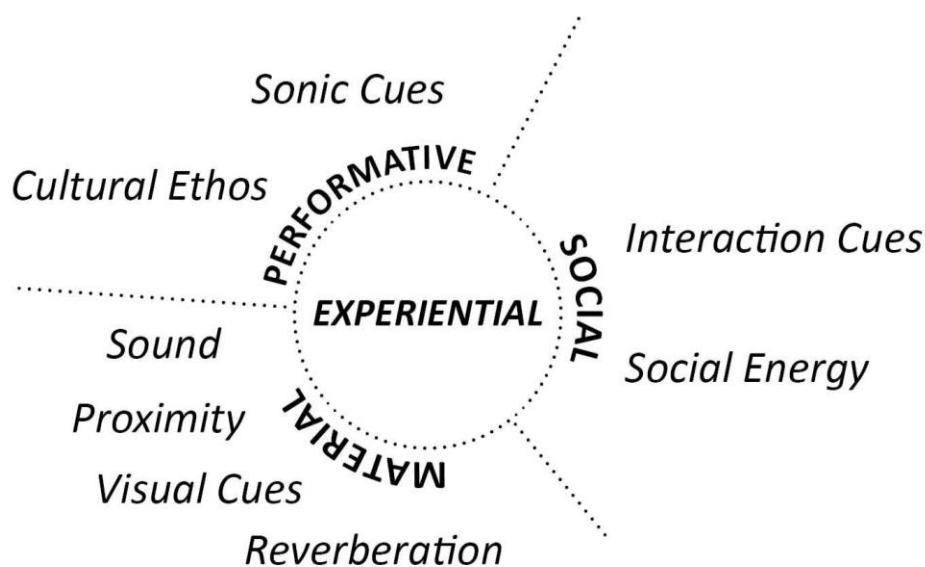
Figure 7.9 Characterisation of the dance floor experience created by the continuous interplay between the material, social and performative aspects present in the club.

7.4.1 The Material Assemblage

The material context of the club (s. section 7.3.2 *Venue*) includes aspects such as the sound system, acoustic characteristics, lighting, visual inputs and the spatial relation between the DJ booth and the dance floor. This materiality is assembled and mediated through *sound*, *proximity*, visual *hooks,* and *reverberation*.

Sound is probably the most evident element capable of mediation at the dance floor. It is encoded as a *continuous groove* in vinyl records and as *zeros* and *ones* in digital formats. Once the DJ, through its abilities to manipulate the technical features of the DJ equipment, releases the sound in an organised fashion through the sound system until the speakers, the sound will spread through the atmosphere of the dance floor, impacting both individuals and architecture. This impact is organised following the 4/4 signature of the house music, synchronising people's movement, interaction and building's reverberation. One of the best ways to bring this synchronisation in text form, is the use of the

onomatopoeic expression *pum, pum, pum, pum,* to indicate the pace in which sound coordinates the movement of bodies and material at the dance floor. Whistling, shouting, and clapping are also forms of interaction that are commonly synchronised to the pace of sound.

Proximity is another actor capable of influencing the way the dance floor experience is materially assembled. Here, the proximity between the DJ booth and the dance floor influences the communication between the dancers and the DJ while promoting visual contact and empathy among them, something fundamental in the creation of a collective and cohesive dance floor experience.

Visual cues, such as dark painted walls free from decoration and exposed construction materials — rock on the walls and wood on the floor — correspond to what Munuera (2018) describes as markers for the provisional, the unfinished and the emerging (p. 118). These elements embedded in the architecture, are capable to evoke aesthetic narratives of *the possible,* in concordance with the narratives of utopian *social* egalitarianism, represented by the mixed audience that attend this venue.

Visual cues in underground clubs don't *tell* the audience what to do or where to go in the way signage does in a hospital or stadium. Here, we suggest that the lack of decoration aims to bring back the focus of the audience to the audible and haptic experience, as well as to their interaction with the DJ.

Reverberation was already shortlisted as the product of the mediation between *sound* and *architecture* (s. Chapter 2). Here we describe reverberation as a *sensorial hook* assembled by sonic energy and architecture, which can be not only embodied by the audience, but re-transmitted back to the architecture and to the DJ as in the floor's *bouncing* effect due the collective act of dancing. When the audience hears the music, they embody the sound; when they feel the reverberation, they embody the materiality of the venue; and when they make the floor vibrate through the collective act of dancing, they render their experience as *bouncing*, transmitting it back to the building and the DJ.

7.4.2 The Social Assemblage

In section 7.3.3 *Audience,* the analysis of the social components of the dance floor experience was focused in two aspects: the *audience* visualised as a *collective dancing body* by the DJs, and the role of

the audience in giving the necessary feedback for the DJ to be included in the performance. Here, we analyse how those social aspects are assembled and mediated through *interaction cues* and *social energy*.

Interaction cues are the body manifestation of the dance floor experience. Here, collective dancing appears to be one of the most notorious ways in which the audience objectifies their sonic experience into body language, movement, and facial expressions. Collective dancing is also the main form in which the audience communicates both enjoyment and mutual understanding to the DJ (Gates, et al., 2006, p. 74). Here, the level of the sonic energy provided by the DJ through the sound system and amplified by the acoustics of the space is regulated by the audience through different *interaction cues,* expressed as approval and disapproval. *Interaction cues* such as smiles, sharing or inviting drinks, conversations, laughter, cheering, or even silence are the way individuals at the dance floor embody the experience and give feedback to others in order to start, finish, continue or modify the dance floor experience.

Social Energy is here characterised as the subjective and collective aesthetic and emotional perceptions of the dancers. As observed in the interviews, in order to assemble the many individuals in the audience into a *collective dancing body*, DJs foster collective sensations such as joy, euphoria, empathy, looseness and sometimes *nostalgia* using their *abilities* to manipulate sonic means. *Social energy* can be similar to concepts such as *mood* and *vibe*, which search to resume the emotional load of the dance floor experience in one word.

7.4.3 The Performative Assemblage

Along the present work, the DJ performance has been characterized by the execution of certain skills such as *beatmatching, blending* and *equalising* (s. Chapter 3); and the creation of strategies of improvisation and music selection (s. section 7.3.4), while embracing the *risks* of failure inherent to perform in front of an audience (s. section 7.3.6). In the present section, the focus is on how *sonic cues* and the *cultural ethos* of the performance are capable of blending those elements providing the DJ

performance with its subjective edge, customizing the sonic energy according to the needs of the audience.

Sonic cues here meant two things. First, as the *hot cues* used in digital DJ devices to dissect the structure of the music, dividing the tracks into several parts depending on the energy and the effect they can provoke in the audience. Here, DJs assemble characteristics from the *DJ friendly* metric and structure of the music, the capacities given by digital technologies and their human emotional subjectivity and perception. By selecting and using hot cues, DJs contextualize moods, emotions, movements, and physical and emotional states of the audience, which is the essence of their performance.

Sonic cues are also constituted by sound signals — melodies, patterns, rhythms, breaks — once they have left the speakers, and start circulating around the dance floor. These sonic cues are then deciphered by the audience into emotions, memories, movements, and moments of the events — signalising scenarios like moments climax, breaks, and the beginnings or endings of the performance.

Cultural ethos refers to the cultural narrative encompassing the enthusiasm of the DJs and the audience into maintaining and preserving the essence of the dance floor experience. Remembering that the dance floor experience can't be fully recorded in written form — despite the efforts made here — the only way DJs could maintain their cultural scene is through the act of DJing. The *cultural ethos* of the experience goes beyond the act of dancing to house music until late in the afternoon; it assemblages the dancer's body with the musical tradition of the house music, and its social utopian ideas of egalitarianism and looseness, in other words, *the essence of the Lottus.*

7.4.4 The Experiential Assemblage

This section is devoted to the *experiential assemblage*, understood as the *gestalt* or the sum of the elements of the experience at the dance floor. This assemblage challenges the notion that the material, social and performative aspects of the dance floor experience are separate entities, characterising the dance floor experience as a single *experiential assemblage.*

Experiential assemblage is the gestalt of the experience at the dance floor; it ensembles different moments, interactions, memories, emotions and *places* occurred through the dance floor experience,

while framing them in a single musical and time-based experience. This *assemblage* echoes also the concept of *discotecture* coined by Munuera: "Discotecture is a continuous performance and a collection of assemblages that render visible the construction of bodies, technologies, media, and environmental ideas" (Munuera, 2018, p.119).

Experiential assemblage describes different sources of experiences and emotions, encompassing music, architecture, the act of dancing, the lighting and the interactions lived through the dance floor experience. Echoing the notions of Ferreira (2008) it is through the *experiential* nature of this assemblage that each of those aspects get involved and interconnected, and each of them become a medium for the transmission of the other (p.17). The architecture contains and disperses the sound waves which are in their own journey through the sound system. The audience dances and makes the floor vibrate, while transmitting feedback to the DJ for him to start a *battle of moods* and energies. While the visual landscape and sunlight offers visual and weather conditions in constant change. The *experiential assemblage* implies the mediation among all different factors associated during the dance floor experience, shared not only by the DJ and the audience through the music, but by the dance floor in its materiality and technology.

Another characteristic of this *experiential assemblage* is the coexistence of multiple narratives. Architectural narratives, material-technological narratives, social narratives, musical narratives and the narratives created by movement of the audience overlap one over the other creating a *semi-solid environment* (Lavin, 2009) at the Lottus. This environment mirrors McLuhan's notion of *allatonceness* (2001, p.63) understood here as a strategy to challenge architectural, musical and social coherence via the superposition of acoustic and visual media. This *semi-solid* environment abducts both DJ and audience into an experiential assemblage, the dance floor experience.

The analysis on how sonic reverberation, windows and natural lighting affects the dance floor experience, give us a new understanding on how clubs are designed not in order to simply organise the spatial distribution of objects and technologies inside of them, but by challenging the notion of *space* as an exclusively bi-dimensional category, only perceptible through the eyes and always *stable* meaning unchangeable. At the Lottus, the category *space* renders the multiple technology, material and natural

elements into a sensorial — sonic, visual, haptic — experiences. Esteves (2018) noticed this phenomena, pointing the club as a *phenomenological-spatial apparatus* capable of assembling the material and technological aspects of the *space* with the social and performative components of the *event* creating a *total space,* while transforming the club from a *container* of events into the event itself (p.132).

A last aspect of the *experiential assemblage* is that it can be hardly recorded in any form — text or audio-visual media. The sonic and sensorial elements of this assemblage are only present as *aesthetic knowledge* leaving only traces of the collective dancing body who becomes the repository of the dance floor experience— and not the music or the architecture — carrying the sensations acquired aesthetically during the intense experience at the dance floor.

7.5 Operationalising the Knowledge: The Dance Floor Model Canvas

In section 7.3, we disentangled the elements of the DJ performance, while section 7.4 suggests a catalogue of *assemblages* or ways in which those elements interplay with each other, building the dance floor experience. The analysis in both sections was made with our research question in mind: *How can we describe the process of shared agency among the material, social and technological aspects involved in the dance floor experience?* Here the four *assemblages* contribute to answer that question since they explore the relation between the *material* and the *social* in combination with the *performative* — which includes technology — and *experiential* aspects of the dance floor experience.

Literature review in chapter 2 suggests that the club can be understood as a "phenomenological-spatial apparatus" (Esteves, 2018 p. 132), capable of blending *space* and *event, transforming the club from being a container for the social event, into part of the event itself.* Chapter 2 also suggests that Design has already coined concepts linking *space* and *event* expressed in *allatonceness* (McLuhan, 2001), *discotecture* (Munuera, 2018) or *total space* (Esteves, 2018), as strategies to *thicken* the atmosphere within the dance floor with different simultaneous narratives, embedding the *event* — the narrative element — in the material element — the physical space, the sound, light and media technologies. Here, the four *assemblages* from section 7.4, offer a description about how the *space* — meaning

material and *technologies* — is linked to the *event*, meaning to the *social*, the *performative* and the *experiential* aspects explored through our analysis.

Having said this, it seems clear that the four *assemblages* constitute our theoretical contribution to understand the dance floor experience as the *gestalt* of the material and nonmaterial aspects. However, through this analysis, it became clear that designers could benefit not only from a theoretical contribution but also from a tool able to apply the theoretical knowledge gained through the present research into practice, incorporating the notions of the four *assemblages* into possible strategies for the designing dance floor experiences.

Here, what we are looking for is a tool that can help designers not only to identify the *material, social, performative* and *experiential* aspects in a dance floor experience, but also the tool to help designers envision how those aspects can be *assembled* during the experience. Here, we look for the creation of a model which could be applied in the design of similar dance floor experiences to those lived at the Lottus After-Hours. The aim is first to *understand* dance floor experiences, and from that understanding, create strategies to *design* such experiences. With this premise in mind, and based on the Business Model Canvas, we developed the *Dance Floor Model Canvas* (DFMC).

DANCE FLOOR MODEL CANVAS

| Designed by: | Designed for: | Date: Version: |

Material Aspects

❶ Sound + Reverberation

How does the sound system distribute the sound within the dance floor?

Describe the reverberation within the space?

❷ Proximity + Visual Cues

What are the visual cues present at the dance floor, i.e. decoration, lighting, projections or any natural element?

What do these elements evoke?

How is the spatial relation between the DJ booth and the dance floor?

Social Aspects

❸ Interaction Cues

What are the main social interactions intended during the dance floor experience?

❹ Social Energy

What kind of energy prevails through the dance floor experience, i.e. joy, nostalgia, fun?

Performative Aspects

❺ Sonic Cues

What sort of moods, emotions or memories should be triggered by the sound and the music?

❻ Cultural Ethos

What is the cultural character of the event?

Can the event be inserted into any specific scene or wider cultural narrative or tradition?

Experiential Aspects

❼ Emotions + Narratives

Describe the dance floor experience in emotions or feelings?

How the elements mentioned before, in fields 1-6 relate to those emotions and feelings?

What is the most memorable moment of the experience?

Figure 7.10 The Dance Floor Model Canvas

The DFMC is divided in four *fields* or columns*,* each representing one of the four *assemblages* developed in section 7.4. In each column, a series of questions about the *material*, *social*, *performative,* or *experiential* aspects of the dance floor experience are placed; the first goal of the questions is to help the designer to *understand* the experience by dissecting it into smaller elements — which are the answers to those questions — and placing them separately.

The DFMC facilitates reflections about the correlation between the elements as it puts all elements visible in the same page at once. On the general perspective, the DFMC can show how the sum of all elements support — or fail to support — the overall narrative of the event — the narrative is the topic of the last column. Based on these reflections, the designer can not only identify problems, i.e. when an element of the experience doesn't support or even disturb the general narrative, but he/she can visualise strategies for changing the elements or their configuration, creating strategies to modify the experience,

or even *designing* a new one. How the creation of such strategies can occur, is the subject of the next section.

7.5.1 How to Fill in the Dance Floor Model Canvas

This subsection describes in more detail the structure of the DFMC and explains the questions presented in each column while offering a reflection about the type of information the canvas may gather and how to fill it in.

The goal of the canvas is to present questions and to register the answers on it – it is expected to write, draw, or stick *post-its* on it, for example. The structure of the DFMC (s. Fig. 7.10) is based on four columns containing questions and blank spaces for writing the answers. Having all the columns present on the same board is aimed to better visualise the different answers and the existing relationship among them.

Material Aspects

The first column places questions exploring the relevant *material* aspects of the dance floor. It is divided into two sections:

- Section 1: *Sound + Reverberation* explores the relation between *sound* and architectural *space* by asking:

  How does the sound system distribute the sound within the dance floor?

  Describe the reverberation within the space?

- Section 2: *Proximity + Visual Cues* explores the possible *visual* inputs existent at the dance floor by asking:

  What are the visual cues present at the dance floor, i.e. decoration, lighting, projections or any natural element?

  What do these elements evoke?

  How is the spatial relation between the DJ booth and the dance floor?

The answers to these questions should seek to record important aspects regarding the physical setting of the dance floor and the relation between the acoustic characteristics of the space with the visual inputs in the creation of the dance floor experience. The questions in section two also underlines the need to establish visual contact between the DJ and the audience to improve the communication between them.

Social Aspects

The second column places questions exploring the relevant *social* aspects of the dance floor. It is focused in the activities of the audience and divided into two sections:

- Section 3 explores the *interaction cues* at the dance floor by asking:

  What are the main social interactions intended?

- Section 4 explores the *social energy* by asking:

  What kind of energy prevails through the dance floor experience, i.e. joy, nostalgia, fun?

By placing these questions in this column, the model explores the subjective aspects of the social interaction as part of the dance floor experience. This column not only examines the activities that the audience are expected to do like dancing, drinking or chatting, but also creates a correlation with the mood or vibe the dance floor experience may foster.

Performative aspects

The third column places questions exploring the relevant *performative* aspects as part of the dance floor experience. It is focused on the DJ performance and it is divided into two sections:

- Section 5 explores the *sonic cues* as part of the performance by asking:

  What sort of moods, emotions or memories should be triggered by the sound and the music?

- Section 6 explores the event's *cultural ethos* by asking:

  What is the cultural character of the event?

  Can the event be inserted into any specific scene or wider cultural narrative or tradition?

The question of section 5 aims to explore possible correlations between the moods that music can trigger or on the audience and the moods and social activities expected from the audience, which were explored in the previous sections 3 and 4. Section 6 investigates the general cultural narrative or *ethos* of the experience by inquiring if the dance floor experience is aiming to preserve any important cultural or political aspects that can be attached to the music, to the venue or to the subculture the dance floor experience is part of — e.g. the culture of house music.

Experiential Aspects

The last column explores the *experiential* aspects of the dance floor experience. It features one section:

- Section 7 explores the *Emotions + Narratives* of the event by asking*:*

  Describe the dance floor experience in emotions or feelings?

  How the elements mentioned before, in fields 1-6 relate to those emotions and feelings?

  What is the most memorable moment of the experience?

This last column has the role of extracting and integrating information from the other columns into a single narrative. This narrative can be expressed through the description of moments, feelings or general moods. Here, it is however not expected to *list* those moments of feelings but to describe their relationship with the *material, social* and *performative aspects* explored in the previous columns.

7.5.2 How to Read the Dance Floor Model Canvas

Once all answers on the canvas are placed on the four columns, the DFMC can be used as an open map, meaning the user can choose any path to read and work through the 7 sections. Here, the following three ways to read the canvas are suggested as a way to illustrate our proposal: *a) from left to right; b) from right to left*; and *c) transversal.*

a) From left to right

The last column of the DFMC — to the right — is meant to integrate the aspects of the other columns on the left. This could offer two horizontal reading directions in which the canvas can be read from left to right (s. Fig 7.11).

Figure 7.11 An example of how to read the DFMC, following a path from left to right.

Read in this way, *Reading Direction 1* (arrow at the top of Fig. 7.11) links the acoustic and spatial characteristics of the dance floor — section 1 — with the social interactions expected to occur in that physical space, i.e. dancing in specific areas of the dance floor — section 3; and the *sonic cues* — section 5. This path would then explore the ways in which sound and music could support the specific interactions occurred in the space — in this example, moving and dancing around the space.

The *Reading Direction 2* (arrow at the bottom of Fig, 7.11) links the visual inputs — or the absence of them — present on the dance floor (section 2) with the social energy or general mood on the dance floor — i.e. joy or permissiveness (section 4) and the cultural ethos of the event (section 6). For example, the darkness of the dance floor (section 2) can be related with the social energy of

permissiveness and sexual indulgence (section 4) possibly associated with a determined subculture (section 6). Read in this way, the two *Reading Directions* will end up building a narrative translated into the moments and emotions the dance floor experience triggers, which correspond to section 7.

b) From right to left

An alternative way to read the canvas is to go in the opposite direction — from right to left. Starting with the overall *experiential* narrative of emotions and events expected or reported from a dance floor experience, and then *dissecting* that experience into the elements conforming the *performative, social* and *material* aspects (s. Fig, 7.12).

Figure 7.12 An example of how to read the DFMC, following a path from right to the left.

Reading, and even answering to the questions on the canvas from right to left, could possibly trigger different answers in all columns, since it starts with the *experiential aspects,* and not with the *material aspects,* this could trigger more emotional answers and associations when reading or interpreting the canvas.

c) Transversal

Of course, the DFMC can be read in different directions, finding different ways to assemble the elements of the dance floor experience. Including a more transversal direction (s. Fig.7.13). This direction could start in section 1, asking after the impact that sound and reverberation can have in the social energy (section 4), linking this relation with the music style (section 5) — s. *Reading Direction 1* arrow in Fig. 7.13. A possible example illustrating this could be a space with acoustic characteristics that make it easy to provoke the effect of reverberation (section 1), which could be used to provoke states of euphoria among the audience (section 4), and which may correspond to the more energetic and aggressive genres of electronic music such as industrial techno (section 5).

Following the same example, but starting with section 2 (s. *Reading Direction 2* arrow in Fig. 7.13), another reading direction can start by determining the proximity of the audience and the DJ (section 2), linking this aspect with the social interaction on the dance floor (section 3), and the cultural ethos (section 6). An example of this could be if the DJ booth is placed at the centre of the dance floor, surrounded by the audience, triggering the audience to interact more with the DJ and less among themselves. This spatial constellation can be supportive of some notions of the urban subcultures like techno — where the music is meant to be at the centre of the dance floor experience, rather than the other members of the audience.

DANCE FLOOR MODEL CANVAS

Designed by:

Designed for:

Date:

Version:

Material Aspects

1 Sound + Reverberation

How does the sound system distribute the sound within the dance floor?

Describe the reverberation within the space?

Reading Direction 1

2 Proximity + Visual Cues

What are the visual cues present at the dance floor, i.e. decoration, lighting, projections or any natural element?

What do these elements evoke?

How is the spatial relation between the DJ booth and the dance floor?

Reading Direction 2

Social Aspects

3 Interaction Cues

What are the main social interactions intended during the dance floor experience?

4 Social Energy

What kind of energy prevails through the dance floor experience, i.e. joy, nostalgia, fun?

Performative Aspects

5 Sonic Cues

What sort of moods, emotions or memories should be triggered by the sound and the music?

6 Cultural Ethos

What is the cultural character of the event?

Can the event be inserted into any specific scene or wider cultural narrative or tradition?

Experiential Aspects

7 Emotions + Narratives

Describe the dance floor experience in emotions or feelings?

How the elements mentioned before, in fields 1-6 relate to those emotions and feelings?

What is the most memorable moment of the experience?

The Dance Floor Model Canvas is based on the Business Model Canvas, which was created under a common use licence, and is available here: https://www.strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas

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Figure 7.13 An example of how to read the DFMC, following a transversal path.

These three ways of reading the canvas are suggestions to interpret their content, helping designers *understand* the different relations among the elements present in the club with a wider *experiential* narrative of the dance floor. With this understanding at hand, an array of relations and readings can be explored and performed, from which designers can create strategies to design or modify previously conceived dance floor experiences in clubs or similar environments. After having explained our idea about *what* the DFMC is and *how* it can be used and read, section 8.3 *Future Work* in the next chapter, will illustrate some scenarios where the canvas could be used.

Chapter 8. Conclusions

8.1 Summary

At the beginning of the present research, the dance floor experience was approached through the lens of diverse sociological studies exploring the symbolic social interactions occurred in clubs; additionally, and from a design perspective, the material elements of relevant historic clubs and the strategies for their arrangement were described and analysed; and finally, the technical aspects of the craft to DJing and the ongoing debate in terms of the *artistry* and *authenticity* of this performance were discussed. As a result of this initial approach to clubbing, it became clear that academic attention has been granted to the social, material and technical factors of clubbing as separate components of the same experience, and that there was a lack of studies exploring the dance floor experience as a matter of mutual implication among these factors. Another notion that resulted from that analysis was the persistent scope present in design studies to approach clubs by analysing only what is *physically evident,* leaving unexplored how the design arrangements inside the club influence the social aspects of dance floor experience.

Grounded on these premises, the present research proposed an ethnographic exploration of the dance floor experience, focused on the different material, social and technological elements of clubbing. As reported in Chapter 6, the ethnographic method brought us to explore different venues and social roles inside the techno and house music scenes in the city of Oporto. This ethnographic path shed light on the degree of implications among different factors involved in the dance floor experience; and on the role of the DJ performance as the activity capable of orchestrating the experience, since this performance involves technological, material, and social interactions.

Echoing Ferreira's (2008) suggestion that DJs, members of the audience, material and technological arrangements cannot be considered individually the as the only source of *agency* in the dance floor experience, but actors and mediators in a network of mutual implication, the present research was focused on exploring the DJ performance as the activity capable to integrate and organise the other factors. With this in mind, a series of participatory observations and interviews were conducted with

DJs, together with the execution of performances in order to explore the way and level of implication of those actors in the construction of the dance floor experience.

The obtained information was analysed and organised in seven thematic maps reflecting on seven topics: *music, venue, audience, enthusiasm, abilities, stances,* and *journey.* The purpose of these maps was to *disentangle* the complex interactions and interplay among the factors present during the dance floor experience, favouring the DJs perspective, it must be said. These seven aspects were then *reassembled* in the four bigger themes exploring the interplay among them forming *material, social, performative* and *experiential assemblages.*

- The *material assemblage* explores the how the materiality of the dance floor — sound system, acoustic characteristics, lighting, visual inputs and the spatial relation between the DJ booth and the dance floor — is assembled and mediated through *sound*, *proximity*, visual *hooks,* and *reverberation*.

- The *social assemblage* emphasized the role that the audience on the dance floor — characterized as a *collective dancing body* — plays in the dancefloor experience by giving the necessary feedback for the DJ to be included in their performances. Here, we analyse how these social aspects are assembled and mediated through *interaction cues* and *social energy.*

- The *performative assemblage* focuses on the subjective relation between the human capacities of the DJ associated with the technical features found in the DJ equipment to create improvisation strategies during the performance, underlining the role of *sonic cues* and *cultural ethos* in this relation.

- The *experiential assemblage* outlines the interconnection between different sources of experiences and *aesthetic knowledge* during the dance floor experience, encircling music, architecture, lighting and the interactions lived through the dance floor experience. This assemblage underlines the ephemeral nature of the dance floor experience, since it only leaves traces on the members of the *collective dancing body,* who becomes the repository of the sensations acquired aesthetically during the intense experience at the dance floor.

These four assemblages are the result of our effort to create a theoretical model exploring the process of mutual implication or *shared agency* among the different, social, material and technological elements involved in the creation of the dance floor experience, contributing to answer our initial research question.

Finally, the present research proposes a *Dance Floor Model Canvas* (DFMC) inspired in the Business Model Canvas as an instrument for visualisation and cross analysis of the different factors involved in the dance floor experience. The DFMC is focused on experiences associated with consumption of electronic music, typically involving the performance of a DJ, and it encompasses *material*, *social*, *performative* and *experiential* aspects.

8.2 Limitations

The present work is the result of an ethnographic endeavour with the aim of exploring, unveiling and describing different interactions at the dance floor experience, mainly in a single venue, the Lottus After-Hours in the city of Oporto. This effort represented certain difficulties, resulting in theoretical limitations of the work and its possible applications, which will be discussed in this section.

The first limitation is found in the scale of the work since the main part of the research is based in a single club, where exclusively diurnal *after-parties* were studied. This scale imitates the application of the different claims done through this research to other events, cases or settings. Even if some general similarities can be found between night parties and after-parties — if involving the performance of a DJ mixing house and techno — hosted in clubs, the present research paid attention to the specific material, social and technical arrangements of the Lottus After-hours; hence, any attempt to apply the notions and results of this work requires the contextualisation of the claims made in this work.

Another important limitation of this work is related to the ephemeral nature of the phenomena studied, and the difficulties associated to *translate* experience into *text*. As described in the previous section (s. section 8.1) the events occurring at the dance floor have a strong *experiential* component, making every

experience unique since every DJ customize their performance for a specific audience, which reacts always in a specific way to the music and to other material and architectural elements on the dance floor. Echoing Biehl-Missal (2016) notions that is the human body the real *container* of what we *know* in terms of the club experience (p.28), and that only the body of the clubgoers maintain the *traces* of such experience, it is necessary to acknowledge that the present *text* cannot claim to be an exact representation of such experience. The present text offers clues, insights, descriptions based on textual evidence obtained through interviews, images and even a methodological tool — the *Dance Floor Model Canvas* — to further explore the dance floor experience. However, none of this can retain, reproduce or evoke the dance floor experience in its totality.

Another limitation of this work is produced by the asymmetric attention given to the DJs over members of the audience, who were not contemplated as interview partners. We focus on the DJs perspective given their role as mediators between music, interaction and technology during the experience, however, the audience is also a mediator and their perspectives are here unexplored. Hence, it is necessary to acknowledge that the notions presented in this work are limited and partial; and that further studies focused on the perspective of the audience can only complement and benefit this work.

Further limitations of this study are a product of its explorative nature. Facing the little attention that clubs and clubbing have received as a research subject from the discipline of design, in contrast with the more extensive body of knowledge existent in sociology, the present research is only a first attempt to *scout* the dance floor from a design perspective. The present study is only an initial effort to establish some notions about the role of design in the construction of the dance floor experience using ethnographic acquired data. As a result of this exploration, the dance floor experience has been *disentangled* in seven factors: music*, venue, audience, enthusiasm, abilities, stances* and *journey*; and *reassembled* in four theoretical models. However, there is still space for the analysis of the specific articulation among those factors and models. Here, the present research should be seen only as a starting point.

A last important limitation should be made about the *Dance Floor Model Canvas,* which is a model that hasn't been tested, since it appeared only at the end of our research, as an output that could only be

generated after the completion of analysis of the dance floor experience. Therefore, the areas of implementation of this model still need to be explored, which will lead to the evaluation of the model and to its improvement — opening possibilities for future work.

8.3 Future Work

Given the explorative nature of the present study and the few academic resources dealing with the relationship of design and the dance floor experience in the context of clubbing and performances focused on electronic music, there are various efforts that can be made to improve and further develop this research. At a theoretical level, the present research has explored the interplay between seven factors — *venue, audience, enthusiasm, abilities, stances,* and *journey* — by gathering them into four *assemblages: material, social, performative and experiential.* Here, however, a further exploration of the interplay between the *assemblages* still needs to be carried out. This should include their analysis, evaluation and possibly their implementation as single themes to be explored in other similar contexts, with different DJ participants, and even contrasting them with the perspective of the audience.

The *material assemblage* can serve as the beginning of architecture studies in clubs and other similarly organised spaces where artistic performance takes place, such as galleries and museums. The description of this *assemblage* can also serve as a starting point for DJ and other artistic performances incorporating the material context in which they occur as part of their narrative.

The *performative assemblage* contains probably the most discussed aspects along the Chapter 7, however, it still is not an exhausted topic. The relationship between technology and DJ practices still needs to be further analysed. One possibility to do so could be to increase the specificity of this topic by selecting one single family of DJing equipment, i.e. CDJs or MIDI controllers. Another promising area for further research, is the incursion of new devices and technologies into the DJ booth, like smartphones and online music stream services. Here, the characteristics of those devices and services can be explored and contrasted using the *performative assemblage* — based on sonic cues and *cultural*

ethos — to gain depth in the understanding of the human-music-machine relationship occurred during DJing

Regarding the *social* and *experiential assemblage,* these aspects still need to be contrasted the views of the participants on the dance floor experience. Here, the present research presented the *Dance Floor Model Canvas* (DFMC)*,* which can be used to survey the experience of the audience, with the aim of increasing, contrasting, and challenging the results and interpretations presented along this work.[111]Some possible scenarios for using the model in the future are explained in the next final lines.

Scenarios for using the Dance Floor Canvas

The *Dance Floor Model Canvas* has the potential to be used as a qualitative tool to *understand, modify,* and *design* after-parties and similar clubs and events involving the consumption of electronic music or the DJ performance. The application of this canvas has not been tested yet; however, we foresee three possible scenarios for the application of the model. The different applications proposed here are based on anticipated scenarios created from our own research and professional experience, especially our participation in design workshops.

Scenario 1: Using a single DFMC as a tool during workshops

During design workshops, the use of tools and techniques for analysing a particular problem or situation while gathering ideas about how to solve problems is a common practice. One example of this is the use of the *brainstorming* technique, in which a concept or idea is written at the centre of a blank page and a single person or the members of a working group start to write all the different concepts and associations they could possibly think in relation to that central concept. The aim of the brainstorming is then to explore all the different associations lined to that concept, business idea, problem, or product.

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[111] Another application for the DFMC, can be during workshops with event designers, lighting designers, interior architects, stage designers and other stakeholders in the design and organisation of multimedia environments and experiences occurred in museums, galleries, and music festivals. These stakeholders can benefit from the advantages of visualisation and synthesis the DFMC can offer, while helping to improve it. In this regard a suitable partner can be the *Aporfest – Associação Portuguesa de Festivais de Música* (Portuguese Association of Music Festivals), an association we are already part of and that congregates different stakeholders like event and backstage managers and lighting technicians — to mention a few — in their annual convention. This, however, requires further analysis since the DFMC was created with the specific scope in after-parties, and any application in other contexts escapes the focus of this research.

The DFMC can be applied in design workshops to trigger discussion about how to design an after-party, a similar event, or how to refurbish the interior of clubs and venues. The DFMC gives a visual communal discussion point, triggering the debate and identification of key points, especially as part of interdisciplinary workgroups. Here, a single DFMC can be used as a mood and planning board for the event, where the team gathers round to provide ideas on the different aspects the DFMC mentions, while a designated writer underlines the key points to include together.

The difference between a normal brainstorming and the DFMC is the specificity of the latter. While the brainstorming fosters all different and possible associations with a central topic. The DFMC aims to literally *ask* about the relations between specific elements forming the four *assemblages* resulting from our research. If applied as part of a workshop with students in the area of design, architecture and even performative arts, the DFMC could be used to trigger new thoughts about the role of design as a discipline not constrained exclusively to the design of objects and graphic material, but as a discipline capable to assemble the different material and social aspects present in the dance floor experience or other similar events.

Scenario 2: Using multiple DFMC

This scenario is a variation from scenario 1 on the part of the users. Facing the possibility that not all the members of a working group can gather in the space at the same time, or when the attendees to a workshop prefer to work separately, the DFMC can be applied individually and not as a common working board. In this scenario, each person could fill one canvas individually, and later cut out each column or single sections. The separated columns could be reassembled into a bigger canvas by a moderator, who would look at commonalities, discrepancies and developing debates. This form of individual application may be useful to provide a final mood board containing a common set of phrases, images, and ideas to assess.

In this scenario, the analysis of the canvas by a moderator can foster useful discussions and debate inside working groups. the moderator could achieve this by delivering questions such as:

- *How does the interaction between performer and audience change if the event's material setting doesn't allow them to see each other?*

- *What situations or interactions are to be avoided?*

- *How the material aspects could enhance the interaction, the social energy or reaffirm the cultural ethos of the journey — i.e. by choosing a historical, cultural, or natural relevant setting?*

- *In which way the performance includes or excludes the audience?*

- *How could the audience engage and give feedback during the performance?*

To apply the DFMC through a moderator is necessary in scenario 2; and it could be desirable in scenario 1. What is always desirable is to question the data gathered by the DFMC, either by making the questions mentioned above, or by practicing different lectures.

Scenario 3: The DFMC as a survey tool for audiences

Here the application of the Canvas does not change in the methodology — it could be in groups, as individuals, face-to-face, or not — what it changes, is the participating group, which instead of being students could be the club goers themselves.

Here, the DFMC could be applied to survey members of this group to conduct focus groups and lead workshops. Members of the audience in different venues and clubs are one group of stakeholders involved in the dance floor experience capable of providing rich and useful information about the different aspects the DFMC explores. In this regard, the DFMC could foster the audience's perspectives about their subjective experiences in a club. The information gathered can be applied into the club's marketing strategy, design of spaces, planning of events and in the development of further research.

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Appendix A. Amount of people attending music events at the Gare Club between June and October 2016.

Table A.1
Amount of People attending Music Events at the Gare Club between June and October 2016

Month	Date	Nr. of Attendees per Night	Nr. of Attendees per Month
June	Fr. 23rd	-	
	Fr. 24th	124	124
July	Fr. 1st	-	
	Sat. 2nd	-	
	Fr. 8th	108	
	Sat. 9th	257	
	Fr. 15th	339	
	Sat. 16th	490	
	Fr. 22nd	153	
	Sat. 23rd	536	
	Th. 28th	-	
	Fr. 29th	187	
	Sat. 30th	465	2535
Aug	Fr. 5th	304	
	Sat. 6th	330	
	Fr. 12th	178	
	Sat. 13th	404	
	Sun. 14th	216	
	Wed. 17th	276	
	Fr. 19th	218	
	Sat. 20th	251	
	Fr. 26th	465	
	Sat. 27th	297	2939
Sept	Fr. 2nd	323	
	Sat. 3rd	121	
	Fr. 9th	-	
	Sat. 10th	-	
	Fr. 16th	-	
	Sat. 17th	-	
	Fr. 23rd	218	
	Sat. 24th	-	
	Fr. 30th	101	763
Oct	Sat. 1st	223	
	Tue. 4th	329	
	Fr. 7th	147	
	Sat. 8th	490	
	Fr. 14th	-	
	Sa. 15th	272	
	Fr. 21st	-	
	Sa. 22nd	-	
	Fr. 28th	391	1852
Total	41 Dates Worked	29 Dates Counted	8213 People Counted in the Whole Period

Note: some nights I was not able to collect accurate data because I was called by the manager inside the club for short meetings – leaving the bouncers in charge of controlling the access -- or because the amount of people in a certain period of time was so overwhelming that it was impossible make an accurate counting. Those nights are marked with a '-' and are not counted in the total results.

Table A.2
Demography at the Door during Techno Nights

Month	Counted Techno Events	Nr. Attendees Counted	Nr. Attendees M/F	Gender Ratio M/F
June	1	124	69 / 55	1.25 / 1
July	5	2087	1337 / 750	1.78 / 1
Aug	7	2020	1309 / 711	1.84 / 1
Sept	2	339	213 / 126	1.69 / 1
Oct	5	1705	1161 / 544	2.13 / 1
Total	20	6275	4089/ 2186	1.87 / 1

Table A.3
Demography at the Door during Drum and Bass Nights

Month	Counted Techno Events	Nr. Attendees Counted	Nr. Attendees M/F	Gender Ratio M/F
June	-	-	-	-
July	3	448	278 / 170	1.63 / 1
Aug	2	454	317 / 137	2.31 / 1
Sept	2	424	284 / 140	2.02 / 1
Oct	1	147	97 / 50	1.94 / 1
Total	8	1473	976 / 497	1.96 / 1

Table .4
Demography at the Door during Queer Nights

Month	Counted Techno Events	Nr. Attendees Counted	Nr. Attendees M/F	Gender Ratio M/F
June	-	-	-	-
July	-	-	-	-
Aug	1	465	238 / 227	1.04 / 1
Sept	-	-	-	-
Oct	-	-	-	-
Total	1	465	465	1.04 / 1

Appendix B. Audio Recording Consent for Interview

Project: A Whistle in the Crowd: Mechanisms of Negotiation between Personal and Collective Identity within Spaces of Consumption of Electronic Dance Music in the City of Porto in Year 2016-2017.
Institutional frame: Doctoral Program in Design, Faculty of Fine Arts University of Porto (FBAUP).
Author: César Lugo-Elías[112] **E-mail:** c.lugoelias@gmail.com
Supervisors: Prof. Dra. Cristina Santos[113] and Prof. Dr. Pedro Cardoso[114]

Please sign if you agree with the following statements:

1. I have been informed that the general goal of the research project is to study the spaces devoted to leisure activities called *clubs* or *discotheques* in the City of Porto, Portugal. For which three main thematic axes are investigated: the music played in discotheques; the interior design of clubs; and the social interaction within the clubs.

2. I agree with the use of the information obtained within this interview to be fully or partially published in the final doctoral dissertation that will be presented by the current author to the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto.

3. I understand that the dissertation, as mentioned above, is to be of public access, in both print and digital formats.

4. I have been informed that my identity — name and age — will not be revealed and that my declarations will be anonymised.

Name of the INTERVIEWEE:

_____Location: _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Name of the RESEARCHER:

_____Location: _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

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[112] The scholarships recipient, granted by the Foundation for Science and Technology FCT, Portugal.
[113] *Centro de Estudios Sociais CES* / University of Coimbra
[114] *Faculdade das Belas Artes* University of Porto FBAUP

Appendix C. Interview's Protocol

0. Greeting and giving thanks

1.   Background

[Opening/Warm-Up Questions]

How long have you been working as DJ?

How did you come to this activity?

When did you play at the Lottus for the first time?

What other kinds of clubs/bars/venues do you work as DJ?

Do you play or had played any classic instrument, or got any formal music training?

[Music genres]

Which musical genres do you like to play? / How would you define the music you play?

Do you play always those genres you like or do you adapt the genre to the occasion/venue/public?

Do you play the same kind of music at the After Hours? Or it is different, if so, how it is different?

[Gear]

Which gear do you used to start DJing? Turntables, CDJs, laptop-controller.

Are you still playing with that gear?

Besides DJing, do you produce music yourself? If so, which software (i. e. Ableton) and/or hardware (synthesizer) do you use?

Have you use those devices/software for live acts?

2.   Music selection

[Music Collection and Pre-selection]

How much music do you have? Tracks, vinyl, MP3 archives?

Do you make a pre-selection before going to the gig, how big is that selection?

Have you developed a system to organize those tracks you bring to your gigs, so you can find them easily?

How many tracks do you plan in advance while playing?

[The Job]

Once you are on the booth, how would you describe your responsibilities or functions as DJ?

Can you describe in your own words, what is a good set for you?

** 3.   Music selection**

[Interaction]

Do you seek interaction with the crowd or do you prefer to interact as less as possible?

Would you say you are approachable while you are DJing?

Do you demonstrate your enthusiasm to the crowd too? By dancing, waving your hands, cheering whistling, clapping.

How do you know that the crowd is enjoying or disliking your music?

Is you music selection influenced by the behaviour of the crowd?

Do you recognize key-dancers or key individuals within the dance floor who could give you some clues about the musical selection?

Have you ever experienced unpleasant attitudes towards you during the gig? Which attitudes and how have you managed them?

Have you ever experienced pleasant attitudes toward you? Which attitudes and how have you managed them?

How do you react when somebody makes a musical request during your gig?

[Relevance of the Setting]

How do you like the physical position of the booth relation with dance floor? (Higher than the dance-floor / at the same level / or completely separated)

How do you find the setting at the Lottus After-Hours?

How do you think the Lottus is different to other venues? Do you think those differences influenced your performance and the general vibe of the dance floor?

In your experience, is it different to play in a setting with natural light (like the Lottus) than in a setting with artificial light (like a night club)?

[Final]

Can you close with some ideas about the importance of playing at the Lottus for your career as DJ?

[Finally, thanks again to the DJ for its collaboration and ask if he has any question about the project]

Appendix D. Interviews extracts and initial codes under the theme *Music*

Table D.1 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Music Matches Scenarios*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Cod ed for
DJ3: That is very easy! I create folders and folders and folders in Rekorbox [a DJ and music management software]. I give them the silliest names after the vibes that I think that music may create in the dance floor … I have a folder called zombiness (sic.)… that is when the dance floor is almost dying but people are still dancing, and they would keep dancing even if there would be an ape in the middle of the dance floor playing a tambourine. … another folder is called continuous groove, that is when the dance floor is always moving, they are in the groove not so excited, not so down. I have of course the 'enders' file for the music for the end of the set… when you just play something either classic or completely disruptive to send people home. … another [folder] is called 'everybody is dead' and another called 'strange noises' [laughs]... so they are all called after things only me can relate to. They are called after vibes I describe for myself.	
DJ1:… and I have of course music to begin with, the folder is called *micro house* [DJ1 makes a short pause while scrolling through the different folders in his computer] … the *enders,* is a folder containing those tracks to close and finish the set, there is a lot of *Italo-disco* I use when the dance floor is dying, when everyone is dying … last time I played at the Lottus I ended playing some versions of *dubstep* from the 2000s.	Music labels moments in the performance.
DJ1: ... ah … and I have a folder called *weird beats bar MDMA* [weirdbeats_MDMA] when people are completely out-spaced… I have all that. That's it, I have divided the music in the vibes they would produce at the dance floor!	Music match drug-induced states / music match vibes at the dance floor
DJ9: I catalogue it chronologically, by the date I got each piece… it is easier to remember the year in which that happened so you go to that file and search for the music. Because I think that everyone identifies music with a different genre, the genre that everyone thinks it suits bets to that music. What for me can be a genre, for other people can be something different, even if it is the same music.	Catalogue chronologically / There is no consensus about genres

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ7: I order my music by month… Well by the year and month I bought the track … to label the music by genre doesn't make sense because I always use the same genre.	Loyalty to the music
DJ8: I label my music after the genre, then I make a folder for a sub-genre, where I put another sub-genre, it is very, very complicated...	Use of genres and multiple sub-genres / Complicated
DJ10: I organize music by month. Researcher: the month you got the track or is it the month you are gonna play that track? DJ10: yeah, the month I got that track But the technology helps you a lot with this too, for example, you can use the search machine on the CDJ and it will look for you the tracks, I just search by artist and I just put the first letter of the name and automatically the name will appear.	Catalogue chronologically/ He relies also on searching software / Memorize title or author
DJ1: ... a DJ could not play one single genre... […] I don't like when a DJ set is focused in one line, it becomes monotonous. I like a set when I go through house, through techno … passing by some minimalistic sounds, presenting opportunities for dancing and having also spaces for more mental music also … somewhere around there, especially to not be boring, for me a DJ could not be boring." DJ1	Play multiple genres / Music present opportunities / for mental music / A DJ can not be boring.
DJ9: No, I have no code at all… you just learn the month and in case you don't know it then you must learn or remember the name of the author or track	Use of Memory

Table D.2 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Music Triggers Scenarios*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ2: Sometimes I see people sitting by the windows [at lottus] and then I try to call them, with the music, back to the dance floor.	Music use to call out people / the windows at Lottus as rest place

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ8: Of course, you imagine how you are going to use your music while you buy it.	Creation of musical scenarios
DJ9: I think the interaction starts when you get the music, from that very moment I start thinking… mmm well this track will be good for an opportunity during the night, this will be more for a trip, more mental or maybe because it contains a voice, because a voice is an easily recognizable element. Sometimes just because you play a vocal people get more triggered by the music.	Interaction start by buying music / DJ creates a scenario / or matches the music with possible scenarios /reactions from public
DJ9: For example, I can't buy a track if the track has some part that does not make sense... I don't buy music that way, for me, the track must make sense from the beginning to the end, and all elements of a track should make sense … Of course many of those tracks I had used the first time I went to play to Lottus, I don't use them anymore because I had to find new ones that I know they are going to awake new things to the people	Music must make sense / Music dissection / Music should 'awake things'
DJ6: … The rest is to hear and to understand the structure of music, to hear and to identify how a record [a music track suppose] was built. In that way, you should know when to start and where to end ... where to blend a music.	DJ should understand musical structure.

Table D.3 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Musical Genres*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ6: In the years 2000 the changes happened through the separation, the techno music got its own spaces, the techno parties started to be more aggressive and the house took its own place. Hardly you will mix both scenes, and here you can't not find those roads together, the roads are clearly separate.	Techno and house are two separated branches / Segmentation of venues depending on music
DJ4: Yeah, in other places we don't play that kind of music [as at the lottus] maybe if we are among friends, playing music for us, but in other gigs, paid gigs, we don't play that … There we play techno or maybe minimal house, which is another kind of music but it is not the same house [as in the Lottus]. Lottus has something special, the music, the environment that is created, everything…	Different musical genres at the after

DJ6: Then towards the end of the 90s the music turned more artificial, so we found refuge in the underground again, for example in the afters, the afters were a thing to get out of the mood not to get in... I mean you heard the best music, the best records so people could just get relaxed… today the afters are harder.	Music at the after is different / more relaxed / after offers opportunity to hear less violet music / after is to get out, no to get in the mood of party

Table D.4 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Musical Weapons*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ2: The Lottus is unique because of it, because it allows you to experiment with different things, people go there to hear different music … there you can think 'ok I am going to play this and this, and let's try this and this'. Many times, I was able to try new things there.	Lottus allows music experimentation
DJ9: so I always brought to the Lottus only those tracks that I know they may work and I also like to have as much [music] as possible because.. it is like a phrase I heard from Carl Cox, a DJ with a lot of musical background will always have a secret weapon.	
DJ1: There is always a selection of classics, the ones I may think about in that week and then, new music that I receive [through email newsletters]or find during that week and strange music… strange music is weird music, and I do love weird music… and if I can manage to transform weird music into music that people like at the dance floor then I am happy.	Classic tracks/ Novelties / Weird sounds
DJ9: I like to have new music, fresh music in order to have music to show it to the people, so they get to know new music.	Music novelty / didactic function
DJ2: Do you remember this? [pause to hear a mix of *Back to Life* by Soul II Soul] this was one of the tracks that surprised me the most. And I thought at that moment... wow people got excited; it was unexpected. And there are sometimes when you play something with the expectation that people will react... and people simply like it… but that's it is not the reaction I was expecting.	Classic are played with a certain expectation / a certain reaction is expected
DJ1: then I have folders called simply *house*, which contains that pure house … or *tunes* which contains tracks that are not easy to include in a set, but if I make them, they will stay in the memory	Music should stay in the memory

DJ2: That happens to me often when I play *Forever More* [by band Moloko], I always feel the reciprocity from the public with certain classics.	People DO recognise certain classics / Classic creates reciprocity
DJ8: you have in front of you people that like music, so we show them that we know what we have discovered through the search of music… DJ9: [adding] I like the idea that I will play something that the people in front of us never thought they like …. or they never thought they are going to hear that. DJ8: For me, that moment is a peak, a higher moment in the set.	Transfer of own discoveries Surprising elements / Unicity of music / Secret weapons
DJ2: Now today if you play a classic, only half of the dance floor will understand, these kids are no more interested in music.	Music obsolescence / the classics / the kids / age gap
DJ2: [then DJ2 plays a video of him performing at the Lottus and explain it to me] … here, for example, I am playing a fucking great track and the half of the people are simply not getting it! There you can see it, only twenty or thirty persons are with you [the video continues running and I notice that how DJ2 uses profusely the echo effect, as if he were calling people's attention]	DJs frustration / uses music to 'call out' people / profuse use of effect with less response / Abuse of effects is not effective
DJ8: and I think that independently of using that music or having it simply because I like it… why not keep it? It is important to me, and technology allows us to have such a big collection… it is just like a picture that you get by now and you may want to see it in many years from now. The music and the picture are not degradable, they stay the same... that is the magic of digital. DJ8: it is like in the area of literature, now we have books about topics that will be irrelevant in the future but not because of it you will get rid of them. Those tracks are part of my history, those tracks helped me to become the DJ I am now. That is how I learned, by hearing music, always searching for new artists. They are like the books of my library; they are in the bookshelf like any other object people liked to collect. It does not matter the format; they are something I can collect and recall in the future whenever I want to remember it.	Music is like an image / a memory / a format to record feelings

Appendix E. Interviews extracts and initial codes under the theme: *The Venue*

Table E.1 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Event's Narrative*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ5: … what you look [with an after-hours] is that people get home relaxed, not more nervous… that is the function of the after-hours, they should leave the party and go home feeling fucking good.	After aims to be the end of the Party
DJ7: The after is a place where you want to extend your night, a place where you can prolong your night isn't? a place where you can have fun a little bit longer .. a place to relax… to finish your night … and there is a lot of who want to have a more agitated experience, even more agitated that during the night.	The notion of the after has changes / Originally to relax / Nowadays more agitated /
There are people who do not go out during the night, but they just wake up and go to the after, I know many cases like that. And there are others who have conditions to go out and to continue … but there are people for whom the night starts in the after, let's say... people who went the night before for a dinner, then for some drinks, and ended up in the club, and they have the feeling that the party, has only started once they go to the after…	People wakes up only to go to the after / People skip the night-out experience After as the Before? /
[DJ7 hesitates as if he has forgotten what he wanted to say]	People start at the After /
Oh sorry, sometimes I explain too much …Well, I was saying that nowadays people go to the after to start the party, to consume drugs … and there you can not always play what you want … if I were able to play at the After what I want, you don't know what it would be … everyone would stare at me … if you want to play what you want, everyone stay in front of you shouting ' come on, let's go!' … so my idea of an after-hours is not this. However I try to correspond to that what people are asking me, I go there and I try to have fun too, to make people have fun too.	People goes there to consume drugs / DJ suppress his aesthetic decisions / Public ask for more upbeat and higher energy / DJ attend to public wishes / DJ2 is frustrated
DJ8: there is a different level of responsibility between when you play in your studio and when you play in a club, a club is a business, they need to make money and your performance has to be flawless and no mistake can happen.	Club is a business / DJ as worker
DJ6: there is nothing more unpleasant than to get into a place with the idea of having fun, then got to the bar ask for a drink and to find someone texting messages, and somehow ignoring you, that is kind of disrespect.	Service is part of the experienced staff.
DJ6: … and here I am talking about something that is important, everything inside a house, a discotheque, is important. From the doorman until the cleaning staff, all important because they are all a team, so if there is no respect, if there is no cohesion you don't have a team.	Staff and DJ are equally important /they are part of the

	same team / Staff as a cohesive environment
DJ5: [the Lottus] … it is more like family… like if you are among your family, like if you were playing for them.	Familiar mood among attendees and staff members.
DJ2: For example, if you go to the Gare, you know it will be techno, one or other night it could be something softer, like minimal, but you know it will be always in the direction of techno. So, when you go to a house or to another, you know what you are going to hear. For example, you go to the Baixa Clubbing, it is only house and only house music.	Venues profiling
DJ10: So when somebody plays techno or some client ask for that techno track that everybody want you to ask… it never makes sense because it does not belong there. […]of course it will be never the same but you can get some bit an pieces from each one and try to do the best out that what you have.	Not for techno / Build with beats and pieces
DJ9: because here in Porto, house music is not embedded in the people. Here people like more techno, and the Lottus is the only house here in Porto playing house … house.	Music characterisation of the Lottus
DJ9: to maintain during 11 years long the same musical line is not only hard in Portugal is hard everywhere.	Venue's reputation.

Table E.2 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Social Energy*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ1: I play techno, I play house … from her in a week I will play at the Gare, and a week after I am going to play in another House that is more commercial mainstream music .. and there I will play chill house and, in that way, I try to maintain the public. I like that, I like variety… like Laurent Garnier, never play just one genre for one scene... he is always going from one site to the next, musically speaking. Researcher: Do you adapt the music to the venue, the public, the event? DJ1: Everything! I take all that into consideration, I adapt the music to all of it… but as I said before, there should be a battle of energies, there should be a flow… and what I love at the Lottus is the energy I get there … there I can get an energy of looseness. People get loose there, and the energy simply flows. I am not remarkable joyful or smiling while I play but at the Lottus I get into be joyful myself.	DJ profiles venues, events and match it with music. Lottus has an energy of looseness.

DJ1: I try not to see much after specific persons on the dance floor, I try to observe the dance floor as a global image as if it were de-focused … as a blurred image, I try to see the global view	Battle / Flow of energies.
DJ2: [Here DJ2 started to show me videos on his laptop. The videos are about the dance floor at the Mare Alta. n the video, he plays *I got the power* for me, a song he knows I like, and this triggered a conversation about musical style, I asked if he like the nostalgic feeling of that music] I don't play nostalgic music, I play classics! But I don't play the original, I play a mix. Some producer, somewhere took the voice if that song and made a remix and let's say … I have found the mix and I saved it… and at some moment at the dance floor I will play it. That's it.	Nostalgia for the Mare Alta Not nostalgic but classic.

Table E.3 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Materiality*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ3: A good morning at Lottus is when I do not have to think too much about what I am going to play… the music is simply flowing, and when I am there playing… surrounded by people who are enjoying and they are dancing around me. That is great. Ahhhh and sun, there should be sun getting through those windows! That is very important.	Morning / Dj is surrounded - embraced- / Sun / Windows.
DJ9: I do prefer when the DJ and the public are closer. I mean, for me it is easier to get what people are feeling, if they are having more distance it is harder to get that good interaction.	Architectural placement.
DJ7: I like more the kind of booth at the Lottus, where the DJ is placed at the same level of the dance floor, because then you got that proximity to the people. In this way I can understand better what people want… is better than being apart from them. I less stressful… and more importantly, it makes me feel part of the public and if they are enjoying, then I do enjoy it too, and time simply flies.	Architecture allows proximity / DJ becomes part of the public
DJ4: before, the cabin was more inside the dance floor, it was completely and directly surrounded by the dance floor… you could almost touch the DJ, you know … that was dangerous for the equipment … but it was as if the DJ and the dance floor were once and the same… you were not apart as in other discotheques. That heats the ambient you know … everybody is dancing, and you are surrounded by them, that makes the Lottus one of my favourites.	Spatial disposition allows intimacy
DJ8: there are specific spaces for it, and it is not the Lottus. There are other sites for techno. I like more ... for example open-air spaces, the space where you are influences a lot the musical choice. The space will somehow inform the musical choice, it inspire you.	The experience is frame in a physical / Natural frame

DJ9: For me is important too [the sunlight], to be at the after... an after that is not dark but where can see the weather the sunlight, because is an after (laughs)	Sunlight as a marker of the event.
DJ8: the idea was to bring or to back the spirit of the Mare Alta. The idea of see the sunrise by the River. That was a scene that everybody remembers from the Mare Alta, it was remarkably the most valued memory of the Mare Alta.	River / Sunshine / Ending the night / Sunrise as the natural ending of the night.
DJ5: The first time I came to the after I thought: what is going on here, who is organising this? who put this speakers in the second floor of a building … with a view over the river … watching the sunrise after a night partying … pff … It is simply amazing. I mean I asked myself, that first time, when does this place close? The windows are wide open, so when does the police is going to show up to shut the party down … and why is it midday and I am still here? [laughs].	Watching the sunrise over the river / Windows are wide open / Loud sound is perceptible from outside
DJ7: I like the Lottus a lot, the space is really good, the acoustic too, the wooden floor too. As DJ the most important thing is the acoustic, I don't care if the space is nice or ugly, the important thing is the acoustic.	Wooden floor / acoustic / Decoration is less important
DJ5: … yeah people dancing may not perceive it, but as DJ you always feel the vibration, the bouncing, through your feet … I think if the floor were made of concrete, hard... people... well, without having that bouncing floor I think people won't be able to dance as long as the they do. They would be probably tired after one hour or so.	Bouncing floor communicates mood to the DJ / Bouncing floor allows people to dance
DJ4: … the space is very beautiful and above all it has a great sound system… for me the Lottus has one of the best sound systems among the places where I have played. I think it is the vibration, it vibrates with the music, the floor goes with the music you know … and with the people, when they dance, it bounces [laughs] the whole floor bounces!	Sound system/ floor vibrates / Reverberation / acoustic / Floor bounces
DJ2: …the conditions in the booth make all the difference, the security of the equipment and some good turntables, the good sound system, that makes the spectacle better, and you finally feel that, a different enthusiasm.	Booth / Working conditions
DJ7: … because 75 % of the information is visual and those all things you see are really important. Because if you love music it is not because you love music that you are going to stay there for hours as it happens there. Of course, the interaction among people is very important and the mood in general is very important.	The visuality of the experience / Music is not enough
DJ9: So you have a great symbiosis among all senses, all senses are getting together in that place and are getting bombed even the touch is for us very important, touch is a sense we should have really in alert when playing.. but for the people even the fact that they may have consumed something they are really bombarded in all senses.	Assault on all senses / Bombarding / Drugs.
DJ1: I firstly think, is the gig during the day or during the night, then I look what other events had happened in that venue before me, what kind of style of music they have. After that, I	Time of the day / Previous

think about what the promoter or booker expects from me, what does he expect me to play without asking … who plays before and who plays after is important too.	research / Other DJs playing at the same event

Appendix F. Interviews extracts and initial codes under the theme: *The Audience*

Table F.1 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Becoming a Collective Body*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ2: We know that at the Lottus you will find people from Guimaraes, Viana do Castelo, Lisbon and I had found French, German, Belgian… I already saw a lot of nationalities at the Lottus.	Diversity among the public at Lottus
DJ8: This is part of the challenge of communicating with the public, I mean for example at the Lottus, people come accelerated and agitated from the night before... whereas you don't know what have they been hearing you don't know if they have been hear techno, hip-hop, house, tech-house, reggae, etcetera, etcetera.	Previous musical experience / Taste unknown / Public may be agitated by previous experience
DJ6: at 5 am they played a couple of slow songs... and from 5 am to 10 am was the after … we knew that time was meant as the after… the music was different… it was mainstream house, it was meant for people from the pop, rock, soul hip/hip scene, they played rock in the middle of the after, ac-dc, Bob Marley, dance music… It was dance music, people did not want to know about techno or house, it was just dance music.	After-hours historically attracts people from diverse backgrounds.
DJ5: I can tell you if the mood is going to be different, I can see a huge difference when people go to a party because of the music, or when they just want to make party, get drunk and end up in some bar until next day … but when people are there for the music, you feel something in common with those people, the music … because they hear it and then, it changes everything … there we talk… I talk about music with people there, with you right now... we don't have these conversations in other places.	DJ finds common taste for music / DJ appreciates public's musical knowledge
DJ5: For me it is one of the best places to play, because you know people are there to hear you, they going to hear you. In other spaces like bars people may hear you or may not you don't know … maybe there are there [in the bar] just for the booze, you simply don't know. Researcher: OK! DJ5: Here [at Lottus] you know that people will be watching you, they will be looking what are you going to be playing next. Here you really think what to put next.	Public watch carefully over the DJ / public is interested in music
DJ9: [about key dancers at the dance floor] Those people manifest themselves, maybe because they place themselves every time in front, or because they talk with me, meaning they make comments to me about the music… they tell things like "hey you are giving it all!" just as an example about how do they manifest and that is a way to know how do they feel.	Key dancers make themselves obvious for the DJ / Key dancers captivate DJs attention / Strategic placement / Key dancers protagonist
DJ2: Yeah, I see them [key dancers], and I use them as markers to see if things are ok, but the general mood is more important. If I have feedback, that is important for me, any feedback. I had also empty dance floors, where there is no feedback … but when it is there and I can maintain it, then is ok.	Key dancers are less important / General mood is key / Any

	feedback matters / Empty dance floor is the worst feedback

Table F.2 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Giving Feedback*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ5: … it is the people there… almost everyone is there because of the music … and for the space. The space is pretty nice.	Public is determinant as well as the space
DJ1: The people at lotus is a reactive public, it is a public that comes closer to you they talk to you and tell you what is going on, they come to you talks to you and I like that.	Lottus people is very reactive.
DJ8: [about publics complains on music] … but that is good, they worry about it, they are at least not indifferent. It is like movies, not everybody worries about how each scene is made. How they make that special effect? The fact that people know more about the music, produces that people get more interest about what they are hearing.	Even if negative, reactions fuel DJs reaction and imagination
DJ7: at the Lottus is very, very easy to know if a morning was good because there, people express themselves a lot. The clients of lottus are very expressive, the people there are really different there than in other places, at the end they are always coming to tell you if they like it or not.	Public at Lottus is very expressive / Public is diverse
DJ2: Here you can be playing anything, and they are all over you, whistling and shouting *he yeah, yes!* People get excited with you, and when something goes wrong, people then ask, *hey what's wrong?*	People show excitement / People cares about the mistakes
DJ10: The major interaction happened through the music, but I also talk with them and I see them if they are laughing, if they are dancing or just standing. I like to talk with them, and I also like when they come to me to talk too. So, I can get what are they felling…. Especially there at the Lottus which is one of my favourite places to play. Researcher: What about the body, do you use your body movements to interact with them? DJ109: no, I don't think that is very important finally we are DJs and not dancers (laughs). But it happens sometimes.	Interaction / laughs / simply standing/ verbal communication Not dancing People are reactive at Lottus
DJ9: let's see... there are not a set of rules to decide when or how to change the music… the people and their reactions helps a lot but finally that is something we DJs know... we know how to do it.	No set of rules / public reactions help / the DJs simply knows / DJing as second nature
Researcher: from all possible reactions from the public, laughing shouting, screaming, … which calls your attention a most? DJ9: their smile (laughs)	Facial expression / Smile
DJ9: For me this is very important that people perceive me as accessible, it makes me feel really good that people can get closer; and in that way, I can get better how do they feel, the	Interaction through music /

fact that the public can talk with you is very important for the interaction among the DJ and the crow.	Trough talk / create empathy / understand what 'they' feel
DJ1: Sometimes I ask someone near if they think I am not getting lost. Before, it happened more often, now it happens less, but it can happen that someone comes to tell me: 'hey you are drifting too much' then I try to catch the energy of the public again and to correct. I like melancholic music, but melancholy does not always work isn't.	DJ ask verbally / people correct verbally / DJ suppress his desire.
DJ1: I do communicate [not verbally] with gestures, trough dancing … I like to interact with them [the public], it is usually with the people closest to the DJ booth. I like to interact with them. [to complains I react] always with a smile on my face, always considering where are we … then I continue doing what I was doing. […] And if a person complains and tells me that music is not good or the set is not going well… then I tell them 'ok, let it be, maybe is not going well for you, ok, just let it be! Try to have a good time.	DJ communicate nonverbally / DJ interact Complains are individual opinions
DJ4: Everybody tells you if something is going wrong, if they are not liking it … there is something special there.	People react when performance isn't going well
DJ1: Sometimes the public is the most amusing part ... sometimes they are more vocal, they scream … sometimes they are more about watching, or they simply move … [pause] I interpret the way they… well if I see they are talking too much among them, then the music is too boring. If I see them dancing a lot but not chatting, if they are just dancing, then I think…. It's good…. It is a little like that … and when I see that everybody is dancing and chatting but happy and joyful, then everything is perfect! Then the equilibrium is reached, the volume is right, the public is dancing...	Verbal -non-articulated communication / DJ is always watched / Dj interprets activities as response to music / Reach equilibrium

Appendix G. Interviews extracts and initial codes under the theme *Enthusiasm*

Table G.1 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *'because it's fun'*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ4: I want to transmit happiness, joy, happiness, and dance.	To transmit positive moods / Joy
DJ9: [My function as DJ is] to play good music so the people get fun!	Fun / Function of the DJ
DJ7: But the main thing is to get there to have fun and to make other people enjoy the moment too.	DJ should have fun too / DJ is part of the party
DJ3: Yes, absolutely. A DJ is there to have fun and to make people have fun, nobody is imposing anything to anyone.	Fun / DJ's motivation / not imposing
DJ8: I think this happened in all areas… when you have passion for that what you are doing, and the other person has also the same passion and empathy, then you can connect.	Mutual Requisites for connection / passion / Empathy
DJ2: … I do this because I love it, I love the music, the scene, the friends, and if it weren't because of my love of it, I would not do it anymore.	DJs motivation

Table G.2 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *'it's my natural habitat'*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ3: because being there was like being in my natural habitat, always … in those years it was common for me to wake up and go straight to the Lottus, meaning it was not because I went out during the night that I went there, it was really the event.	Club is the natural space for the DJ / going to the Lottus without going out before
DJ10: before, I was always was there [on the dance floor] having fun...	DJ have previous experience as dancers at the Lottus. / previous experience inform their DJing
DJ5: The first time I arrived at the Lottus was a client, and the first thing I liked was the good vibe among everyone. It awoke my curiosity about the space … then I started to go every weekend … yeah, the good vibe among everyone is something that chat you. I even started to come alone, by myself.	Good vibe among the public

DJ9: …. Things that you can learn in a classroom and in our area there are the most basic things that you can actually cannot learn there... We always must have an equilibrium…	Equilibrium among technical knowledge and street credibility / Capitals should be equilibrated
DJ9: I have been always playing house, I had never played order genres because is this what I do like, I like House music. […] because the music I play the music I like, and therefore the clubs I will go.	DJ is loyal to a musical genre Music determines his workplaces

Table G.3 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Self-discovery*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ9: I play always the same genre, I have my characteristic style, the people will know what they will get if they see me in a club.	DJ develops own characteristic style
DJ10: …. Things that you can learn in a classroom and in our area there are the most basic things that you can actually cannot learn there... We always must have an equilibrium…	Equilibrium among technical knowledge and street credibility / Diverse capitals should be equilibrated
DJ2: First, I started with a mix table and two turntables, and in that time my brother used to work in a record shop, which of course was an advantage [laughs]. I mean, he got access to all novelties, and I got to access to all the new music that was arriving. And *the bug* grew up from there until I started to play in some birthday parties, some school parties. Things started to happen.	The *bug* (describing a particular obsession or enthusiasm which doesn't go away)
DJ7: Inmy case, it was not only about playing music, but about playing music, mixing blending adding effect discovering together. For us, it was a discovery.	DJing as personal experimentation/ discovery or journey
DJ2: … I do this because I love it, I love the music, the scene, the friends, and if it weren't because of my love of it, I would not do it anymore.	DJs motivation
DJ9: … then you have the chance to bring people there where you want them to be. People get in and stay if they like the music is played there.	DJ as guide
DJ8: it is something you need to live to understand it, to develop it…it's your style, you work on it.	Experience as DJ

Table G.3 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *It is paid, it's not a hobby*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ2: But I had experienced everything, I have lived everything, gigs who weren't paid, lack of proper working conditions. What else … anyway a little bit of everything.	Precarious working conditions [DJ2 can't live from DJing and he struggles to maintain this work]
DJ1: Once I receive a booking I communicate to a friend, a kind o bad cope.. since I am the good cop, deals with all the matters of money, otherwise it is hard to deal with all those things.	Money / Difficulties to get paid / Need of intermediaries / Negociation
DJ8: It happened many years ago, but I would like to count this to be my profession… this profession started the very moment I got a monetary retribution for doing this, that would be my starting point… from the very first moment I got paid for this. [says DJ8 and his sense of pride is evident]	Monetary Retribution

Table G.4 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Keep Culture Alive*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ9: I always had tried to see, to observe… I think the most important thing about the Lottus is to know the essence of the Lottus, I had always observed that... I had always observed Serginho, Ze Salvador, Tomas… I had always observed them while playing and they always had transmitted me the essence of the place through the music… the house music, house! House! House!	Other DJs transmit the essence of the performance / Essence of the venue / DJ have dance floor experience
Researcher: How do you describe your function as DJ? DJ9: I think is to offer a good moment to those people there. DJ8: and to transmit a little of your culture in the area. DJ9: [adding] yeah I think that we grab all our knowledge and we transmit it through an equipment… DJ8: you have in front of you people that like music, so we show them that we know, what we had discovered through the search of music… DJ9: [adding] I like the idea that I will play something that the people in front of us never thought they like …. or they never thought they are going to hear that. DJ8: For me that moments are a peak, a higher moment in the set.	Cultural transfer / Knowledge transfer / Transfer of own discoveries Surprising elements / Unicity of music / Secret weapons
DJ2: There is something... how can I explain it, there is some sort of teaching ... of education I try to pass some musical culture when I am at the Lottus.	Teaching / Music culture / Lottus as cultural space
DJ8: we talk about responsibility and notion about that what you are protecting and defending…	DJ as cultural heritage protector

DJ3: But yeah these guys [DJ mentors] started to activate my taste for the music and also started to transmit knowledge to me... they were my base; they informed my background.	DJ peers inform others
DJ10: in that time I started looking to him and to them as people who were already playing, already producing, as people that were in the position to transmit information to me then they saw my interest and they started to support me and I started to play music, I started to learn the basics of mixing and that was the way it happened…	Common transfer of information / Experience as DJ is information
DJ7: I had always liked music and by influence from my father… I can remember when I was already 10 years old being in the car with him driving and hearing house music… that was pretty much my first memory of house music… of course is not the same House Music we hear now, it was much relaxed.. but that informed my background and opened me the door for this world.	Musical taste is informed my father and brother
DJ9: I always had tried to see, to observe… I think the most important thing about the Lottus is to know the essence of the Lottus, I had always observed that... I had always observed Serginho, Ze Salvador, Tomas… I had always observed them at playing and they always had transmitted me the essence of the place through the music… the house music, house! House! House!	Other DJs transmit the essence of the performance / Essence of the venue / DJ have dance floor experience

Appendix H. Interviews extracts and initial codes under the theme *Abilities*

Table H.1 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Human Capacities*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ7: … the way you play, how you play is only one point, which needs to be together with other points or capacities, and those capacities together are making a DJ. It is not the instruments you play; you have more things, like musical culture, the ability to see the dance floor and to know what the public is needing in that moment. It is a conjunction of everything, so for me to see a DJ and to state that he is not a DJ just because he uses digital equipment...	DJing is a conjunction of capacities / not only the equipment.
DJ10: You must have it all really tidy organized in order to find that what are you looking for in the moment you are looking for it.	Tidy organisation of music / DJ needs to find music in key moments
DJ1: That is easy! I create folders and folders and folders in Rekorbox, I give them the most stupid names after the vibes that I think that music may create in the dance floor. For example, for the Lottus … I have a folder called zombie … zombiness (sic.) [or zombie-like] … that is when the dance floor is almost dying but people still dancing … and they would be kept dancing even if there would be an ape in the middle of the dance floor playing a tambourine … in that moment people would keep moving anyway. Then I have another called *continuous groove*, that's for the moment when the dance floor at the Lottus is in a continuous regular movement, without much of excitement but not dying neither, it is just to maintain the movement.	Rekordbox facilitates creation of folders / Music equals scenarios at the dance floor / zombie-like /naming music / *continuous groove*
DJ3: ...mmm I would say, within 10 minutes, I watch six minutes to the public and four minutes to the equipment. As I stared DJing I was nervous and I was always looking at the equipment, but I forced myself and learned to watch more at the dance floor … I am mixing and dealing with the equipment but always looking, facing the public … I don't focus on anyone … I have no focal point, but I force myself to not to stare at the equipment. I don't want to communicate the idea that I was always looking at the equipment, the visual communication with the public is very important. […] you can lost the relationship, the lecture of the public, the connection with the public, its engagement… as part of the public I do enjoy too when the DJ is making visual, it's nice.	Visual communication / 'I have no focal point'

Table H.2 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Technical Features*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ3: Ah! And all the folders are organised by key, from A to E, all they are organised by keys. Researcher: Do you use Rekordbox to find the musical Keys? DJ3: Yes, Rekordbox, I use Rekordbox …	Use of keys / Software enables to search for musical keys

DJ7: …. Things that you can learn in a classroom and in our area there are the most basic things that you can actually cannot learn there... We always must have an equilibrium…	Equilibrium among technical knowledge and street credibility
DJ6: you learned how to hear the records […] So instead of staring at the screen. And the other thing is that we used to grab the records, the sensorial experience of grabbing a record is completely different, you can't hold an MP3 for example.	Hearing over Seeing / sensorial experience of touching the records
DJ10: But once you know the music and you have been playing the same music around, it is really easy to identify the music. I also use if I can the covers to identify the tracks, some pioneer software allows you to see the associated cover in the screen of the CDJs and I use it if I can in order to recognize the music. But that happened not often, I usually know the name of the track.	Visual recognition of covers / Software allows visual recognition of music covers / DJ memorize the names
DJ1: I use the keynote given by Rekordbox and I guide myself around that note. For example, if I found myself lost and can't decide which will be the next track, then I check those possible tracks in the same key and search any track that can call my attention. That helps to unblock!	Strategies to unblock / Software facilitates search during the performance
DJ1: Ah and I use hot cues to analyse the music, I put hot cues marking loops of sixteen beats [four bars]. For example, I place the hot cue *A* sixteen beats before the plates or the vocals start … and hot cue *B* is always sixteen beats before the first break … so if I see that the dance floor needs some more movement then I don't start in the hot cue *A* but in the hot cue *B* … [which will lead to a more energetic part of the track] or I do the same using a cue *C* before a phrase that includes voice or something like that. So, if I see that the dance floor is dying, then I may start by the point C instead of or the B for example, it depends on the track. If the dancefloor is more zombie then I may start from the B... more or less.	Use of hot cues / Music dissection / Customization for the possible situation during the performance / Maintaining the flow

Appendix I. Interviews extracts and initial codes under the theme *Stances*

Table I.1 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Negotiating*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ1: Me as DJ, my function is to make people dance. Before I used to think that the DJ has an image to look after, so the DJ should make this and that… It was an egoist way to think, but with time I understood that the DJ will never be bigger than the club … and never is the DJ bigger than the dance floor. The dance floor commands the DJ, not the other way around. It is not the DJ who makes things happen […] the dance floor commands, it is always the dance floor who allows you to do things. And I think, now that I am saying it, I think that if the DJ respects the dance floor, the dance floor will then pay respect to the DJ in order to take control over the dance floor.	DJ makes people dance / DJ is subordinate to the dance floor / the dance floor commands / DJ must earn respect from dance floor / Negotiation of control
DJ4: I can recall watching DJ6 once and I thought: wow, that is how you do this. He really shows us how it is the mood at the Lottus. When he plays, he is so *humble,* so tranquil… very respectful, very secure of what he is doing … [pause for thinking] but beyond the security he is enjoying what he is doing … he transmits that feeling of: 'I do this because it is what I do enjoy! It the beginning I thought the music was slow but then I started to like it	DJ can have an attitude of humility, tranquillity and respect / They enjoy do this
DJ2: Sometimes I play things I have since three or four months, sometimes I play music that are 15 years old or more… for example, I think... I play this and then I see how people react… to see if this is what they need … then I see until which degree that music was right, and then I think Ok we stay there, or maybe I play something more groove, or more deep house… normally I like to play more deep house. Then if I see people stop dancing or start going to the bar or going downstairs [to the ground floor a the Lottus] then I play something more upbeat, to see how they react. Even if I wasn't expecting to play what I am playing, I ended up playing it because it is what they are expecting. If they are there expecting me to tear the house down and *bum, bum, bum!* I cannot play something more downbeat; do you understand?	Novelty of music is disregard / The people reaction is important and needed / music should match ppl needs / try and error strategy / People's reaction as clues for him to react DJ's expectation vs public expectation.
DJ2: It is not the music … you see, the space itself and the context … how can I explain it … the Lottus is close, and I think there is a lack of open air. The conditions are different … there is a need of better conditions. But going back, the after is now in the wrong direction, people want more violent music, some of them are under drug effects … the Mare Alta by the end started to be like that. But of course, people are not there just because of the drugs, there are people who go there without taking anything.	DJ2 is frustrated / People wants violent music / DJ2 complains of drug intaking but acknowledge that is not a general rule
DJ4: Techno is always *pum, pum, pum!* Always up! [at the Lottus] I search for those repetitive rhythms … that constant continuous repetition that brings you to close the party.	*pum, pum, pum!* / Constant continuous rhythms in music.
DJ2: My scene is to arrive with my music, and then… from that on ... of course you cannot arrive a 6 am and play the strongest music… ah the last time I played at the lottus I did an intro… normally when I take the decks from another DJ the music doesn't stop, but the last time I did it… I started smooth and then I took it from there.	Musical energy must be administrated / upbeat music is not a start Music

	/ Flow from previous DJ can or not be maintained
DJ2: Ok, that is, if you go to Plano B the next weekend, when I will play … even if the tracks are the same, it won't be the same because the order in which the tracks will be played won't never, never be the same... the sequence will always change!	Musical sequence is key / Despite being the same music
DJ 5: You know that you can't play something very minimal in the beginning, it can't be s slow because people lose the interest, you have to give them some pump um … you must get some rhythm that push the people when is needed.	DJ push people with rhythm / they administrate people's energy
DJ3: We used to say, I mean all of us as DJs, that you cannot get into the lottus and give them all the fruit at once, or squeeze the whole orange at once! Because of you give all the music at the beginning, the crowd will dance too much, they will do all they wanted to do and by 10 am they will be completely broken, tired, exhausted because they haven't been taking with ease. And then, maybe the after will close earlier.	Administrate the public's energy / creating pace and rhythm so the experience takes longer
DJ1: I bring ten to twelve folders to each gig, with tracks the most, the majority have twenty or ten tracks, the bigger would be around fifty tracks in a folder, but then it is only one big folder, the rest are around twenty tracks.	Music pre-selection reduces nr. of possibilities

Table I.2 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Mixing 'on the fly'*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ10: let's see... there are not a set of rules to decide when or how to change the music… the people and their reactions helps a lot but finally that is something we DJs know... we know how to do it.	No set of rules / public reactions help / the DJs simply knows / DJing as second nature
DJ9: … then you have the chance to bring people to where you want them to be. People get in and stay if they like the music is played there.	DJ as guide
DJ7: You can have a public crowd more tended to this side, more to the other side... and through all the tracks you have, you will find the track that suits better to that public in that moment.	Try and error / Intuition / Navigate through music until you find a match
DJ2: Even if you don't know what you are going to play next, you see [the situation] and decide … mmm I am going to play this and *pam!* … you play it, it could be right or wrong but that is part of the game so to say. And then you see the result and from that, then decide where to go and *pam!* You know?	Try and error strategy / Performance as a game
DJ7: … then I got the tracks… I choose what I like, I take it and when I arrive at the lottus I ask myself… *what I am going to play?* This… *pam*! I start! [DJ7 mentions he takes two or three playlists of around 50-80tracks with him, and his library]	*pam!* / lack of previous planning / He

	relies on capacities and selection
DJ3: I never know what I am going to play next, 98% of what I do, of that that you see me doing, is improvisation. And from the rest, one percent is technical skills, the other one percent is to know [the track] what is coming next.	Improvisation / Technical skills / Knowing the music
DJ8: you will get trapped into what you have planned before, that what you have practiced at home, the sequences you know already… and that never works! That never works!	DJ can get trapped into the 'known' / Instead he should improvise / Playlist never works
DJ8: There are things that just should flow from you out naturally, they need to come out of yourself… otherwise if you do something that you had learned they you are not performing, you are acting, you are just repeating that somebody else has done before, you are just reproducing.. you need to get the way your identity emerges... so everybody can see it… so when people go there to see you they will know they are hearing something different, they are hearing something unique.	DJ's identity / improvisation humanise performance / perform vs acting / not repeating, performing
DJ7: the next track always comes to my head once at the time, it is just once that I had played a track that I got the idea of the next track... it happened just once at the time.	One track at the time
DJ3: I just think once track in advance…until I the end, until the time is over [laughs] I think that if you are preparing a trip [musical trip] and you are not that worry about how much time you have left … then it makes sense just to be one track after the other.	One track after the other
DJ6: somehow you need to bring a good portion of uncertainty, ingenuity, craziness...	Elements in the art of DJing
DJ8: There are things that just should fluid from you out naturally, they need come out of yourself… otherwise if you do something that you had learned they you are not performing, you are acting, you are just repeating that somebody else has done before, you are just reproducing.. you need to get the way your identity to emerge so everybody can see it… so when people go there to see you they will know they are hearing something different, they are hearing something unique.	DJ's identity / Improvisation humanise performance / Perform vs acting / Not repeating, performing
DJ7: One of the reasons why I do play with my laptop is the fact that I wouldn't feel comfortable if I don't have all my music with me, available for me to be played in the moment when I read the crowd and decide what I am going to play. I never achieve to pre-define sets, not even a playlist and then got here and play them, that never works quite well because you never know what people want, if they want it faster, slower, more mental… you never know what is waiting for you. And as soon as you understand this, then you will get more comfortable with the public, it helps you get the ability to drive people … you cannot achieve this if you have premade sets. The fact of having all the music with me allows me to react to the public and bring the set wherever we agree, me and the public. It is a challenge.	Music should be available / DJ is confronted with a newer scenario Common agreement is necessary
DJ2: You can be doing a very good job in terms of music selection and technic but it can happen that people do not understand what are you doing at all … or they can simply ignore you... you can be playing *Fado* [traditional Portuguese music] and they will remain the same. That has happened to me too!	Public 'fail' to understand the DJs intentions / If people ignore

	the DJ, the DJ lack of cues to work
DJ3: But hey, I know that it is a classic, but many times I play classic house music and I think people don't even notice it [here he wants to play a particular track on his laptop and he searches for it making a pause] … [he finds a video with him playing at the Mare Alta, while a mix of *Get Get Down* from Paul Johnson, is playing. I recognize the song] This song, in that moment [when originally released] was one of those who people asked for, again and again [he smiles]. This [the music] is the modern remix of a classic, but the half of the dance floor didn't understand it. And this happened a lot of times.	Public lack of music knowledge / DJs intention is not understood or appreciated / DJ is frustrated [We analyse the videos together] Music obsolescence / DJ complains

Appendix J. Interviews extracts and initial codes under the theme *Journey*

Table J.1 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Battle*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ1: I try to create a narrative [through the musical set], that is something I always try to create, and if I don't create the narrative, I feel the set became empty. For example, during a set in the morning, you don't know at what time are you going to finish, so you start there and you just keep going and going and the story develops without me having the certainty about where things are going … and during the night I plan more because then I know exactly how much time I have, so I plan more how things will flow.	Narrative vs emptiness (lack of content) Narrative framed within the duration of the set.
For example, the first time I played at the Lottus I managed to create a narrative through the response of the public, but that is always difficult, sometimes you don't get it … but that is the fight … as I told you I try to create a battle of energies and maybe create some drama and then an explosion of energy … a contrast … it is a battle of spirits, a battle of moods.	Public response needed / Battle of energies / battle of moods (musical and people's moods)
DJ3: A good set for me should have variety, a mix of forces, fragility, joy and even melancholy… It should have moments for everything and above all the set should absorb people until they forget about what they are doing … and it should be natural, organic. Things should not be forced, they should occur naturally.	Strength / it should be organic / Not forced / set contain [not music but] moments
DJ7: And for me the basics of music is always the fact that you can transmit… let's say if you play guitar or keyboard you have musical chords that bring you to joyful moods and there are others which bring you sadness. I can be playing some music that brings you joy and maybe the next track brings you more into your own head, maybe less joyful… [pause for reflection] … and I think that is the secret of music, it manages to bring joy and let's say sadness... that's why it works well for us because we are not there playing let's say three hours to play only joyful music. [correcting the use of the word sadness] …. it is a mixture among melancholy and excitement, not among joy and sadness, because … It is in our musical genre, I can believe that other musical genres, with lyrics for example, I can imagine that they have sadness as the main mood, but in our case I will say it is more melancholy and other moods more on excitement and euphoria.	Body = joy and dance / Mind= head, mental, static, spiritual states As music chords bring moods, so music. You don't maintain the same mood all time. Sadness is something for lyrics, house can be melancholy Melancholy = mental

	Excitement and euphoria = body

Table J.2 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Journey*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for
DJ8: So I used to say that this is an airplane, it takes its time for the airplane to completely take off, then during the flight, the plane will face some turbulence, and when it comes to the time it will reduce its speed and high and eventually it will land. And all that should be really good though by we as DJ so the trip, that experience takes as long as possible.	Set as an airplane trip/ dance floor as a plane / experience as a trip, a displacement within the same space.
DJ10: There you may find a compromise and to get the people to get into your vibe, without corrupting that experience they have been having before, I mean you should offer a continuity of their experience.	Offering a continuity for their experiences / get them into your vibe (despite of previous experiences)
DJ3: mmmm difficult... for me a good set is when I had achieved to play the music I wanted and when the people got a musical journey. Researcher: how would you describe this musical journey? DJ3: mmm... I like to create the journey with highs and downs… alternate among different moments. Researcher: Does this have an effect on people? DJ3: yeah, of course, it affects people. The journey is the strategy... everyone has to go to the trip, the journey.	Musical journey Alternation among moments (notice he say moments not music) Journey as strategy

Table J.3 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Improvisation*

DJ and Data Extract	Theme / Coded for

DJ8: you will get trapped into what you have planned before, that what you have practised at home, the sequences you know already… and that never works! That never works!	DJ can get trapped into the 'known' / Instead he should improvise / Playlist never works
DJ3: This is one of the things I think makes DJing harder and beautiful, there are thousands of ways for you to do things; and everyone, all DJs are doing the 'same job' but in very different ways.	'same job' but in very different ways.
DJ5: DJ6 knows how to do that, he knows perfectly how to drive the dance floor. He works his transitions; he is always really concentrated in doing that with the vinyl records.	Transitions are the core of the DJ manipulation of equipment
DJ10: For me, that was the huge difference between the bands and the Dj, with bands you always going to have the breaks and those moments between the songs and also breaks between the bands, and you have a program, a set of songs you are going to hear. A DJ can alter a lot of things you can get a lot of new ideas on the fly and to be creative and that is for me very important. And that is a different way to do things so you can't have the same approach towards the genre…	Improvisation vs repertoire / DJ vs Live performance / Band performance as static and predictable / DJ as uncertain and improvised

Table J.4 Interview's extracts and corresponding codes under the sub-theme: *Flow*

DJ and Data Extract	**Theme /** **Coded for**
DJ3: Once I've decided it, I start to take things one degree up, then I take the intensity down for a while and so … it is always up and down, up and down!	Modulating music intensity / upbeat vs downbeat
DJ8: I think I can explain that almost in percentages, 75% of the information you are receiving come from what is going on around you ... and then you have the other 25% comes from the questions like What time it is in the morning? Your musical selection, the music you want to present to the people.	Set is framed in time / 75 %info comes from around the DJ and 25% from equipment and collection
DJ9: You can create a playlist for the Lottus and you will play 50 percent.. a pre-programed playlist will never work…. If you are a DJ you must like to read people. I play what I want…. Maybe the order is suited to the public but I play all what I want.	Music preselection is a DJ decision / music sequence is depending of

The work is made before, by hearing music, preparing them, knowing them the reading of the people is just a last filter.	the public / reading people is the last filter
DJ1: The music I play at lottus is different because… I don't identify myself as someone who is always playing music for the body, I like to play a lot of mental music	Mental vs body
DJ4: Within the set, there should be variation from positive to negative, from dark to light… Every time you see me playing I don't know if you have seen it but I always try to make an energy flow and that is the most important thing. So, for me, the genre does not matter, for me the important thing is the flow of each music.	Battle of energies/ Positive vs negative / Dark vs light / Genre does not matter / energy flow matter
DJ1: mmm OK! I visualize the set through the time. I always have a pulse watch on my wrist… and I take the time into consideration. Yet, I don't watch it [the watch] all the time … let's say, I receive the dance floor from another DJ and I try to follow that previous flow... and only after the first hour or so, I do pay attention to the time, and then I start asking myself.. could this be the time to change the music, or can I continue like this? Then I start to take things to my own flow.	Flow framed in time
DJ5: [the set must be] … … it is always up and down, up and down!	Up and Down

Appendix K. The Dance Floor Model Canvas

DANCE FLOOR MODEL CANVAS

Designed by:

Designed for:

Date:

Version:

Material Aspects

1 Sound + Reverberation

How does the sound system distribute the sound within the dance floor?

Describe the reverberation within the space?

2 Proximity + Visual Cues

What are the visual cues present at the dance floor, i.e. decoration, lighting, projections or any natural element?

What do these elements evoke?

How is the spatial relation between the DJ booth and the dance floor?

Social Aspects

3 Interaction Cues

What are the main social interactions intended during the dance floor experience?

4 Social Energy

What kind of energy prevails through the dance floor experience, i.e. joy, nostalgia, fun?

Performative Aspects

5 Sonic Cues

What sort of moods, emotions or memories should be triggered by the sound and the music?

6 Cultural Ethos

What is the cultural character of the event?

Can the event be inserted into any specific scene or wider cultural narrative or tradition?

Experiential Aspects

7 Emotions + Narratives

Describe the dance floor experience in emotions or feelings?

How the elements mentioned before, in fields 1-6 relate to those emotions and feelings?

What is the most memorable moment of the experience?