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Levitt Shell Audience Development Research

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Free Music

AND PUBLIC SPACE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN CONCERTS AT LEVITT SHELL AND MEMPHIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

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INTRODUCTION

The Levitt Shell annually provides over 50 free concerts at an outdoor bandshell in the heart of Memphis, Tennessee. In partnership with the Memphis Public Libraries, The Levitt Shell additionally sponsors the “5 Fridays of Free Jazz” concert series, bringing in over 300 attendees each event. Although the two events are both free and open to the public, these events took place in different public spaces and attract contrasting audiences. This research compares the geographies, motivations, marketing methods, and experience of the attendees of the 5 Fridays of Free Jazz and Levitt Shell free concert series.

MOTIVE BEHIND ATTENDANCE

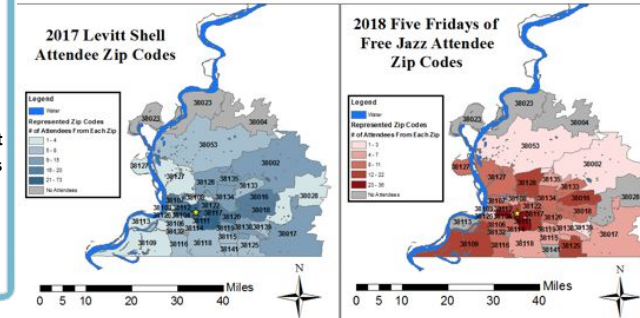


METHODS

- Random sampling, GIS analysis, comparative study.
- 379 surveys taken at 5 Friday's Jazz concerts (2018)
- 602 surveys taken from Levitt Shell Summer Series concerts (2017)
- Surveys: Demographic information such as race, income, zip code, and education

WHERE ARE THE AUDIENCES FROM?

These maps represent the amount of free concert series attendees from each zip code in Shelby County. Both the Levitt Shell and the 5 Fridays of Free Jazz mainly attract audience members from the Midtown area. Additionally, both concert series have a lack of representation from zip codes in North and South Memphis. The Levitt Shell concerts seem to be well represented in both Downtown and East Memphis, unlike the concerts held at the Memphis Public Library.



CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

- The geography, marketing strategy, programming, prior experience, and use of the public space are all crucial factors for attendance at free concert events.
- The Levitt Shell might be perceived more as a single use event space and experience, rather than a space utilized in everyday life like a library.
- Audiences at both public spaces share motivations for attending events, so there is opportunity for audience crossover.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

Race/Ethnicity of Library Concert Attendees

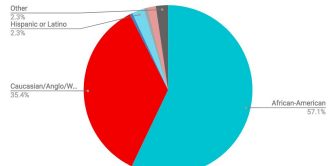


Figure 1

Race/Ethnicity of Levitt Shell Attendees

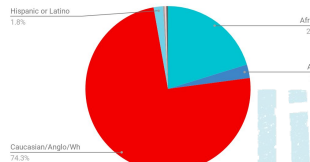


Figure 2

As shown in Figures 1 & 2 above, there is a striking difference in audience makeup when it comes to race. The majority of the Levitt Shell Attendees identify as Caucasian/Anglo/White, making up 74.3% of audience members. Contrastingly, the majority of Library Concert Attendees is African-American, making up 57.1% of the crowd. With almost 75% of its audience being of one category, the Levitt Shell Concerts have a less diverse crowd than the Library Concerts.



