



Research Article

FOOD & BEVERAGE BUSINESSES AS A PLATFORM FOR ART DISSEMINATION IN THE AGE OF NEOLOCALISM: EXPLORING THE ARTIST PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Neolocalism, or a renewed interest in and deliberate connection to all things local, centers largely on the hospitality industry which strives to create distinct customer experiences and cultivate a sense of place by integrating local art and artistic traditions into their operations. The trend could offer a route to a triple bottom line of sustaining community vibrancy wherein economic, environmental, and social resources are utilized in such a way that their future viability is ensured. Achieving a sustainable sense of place relies upon reflecting a diverse and inclusive place narrative. However, little is known about how local artisans (e.g. musicians, painters, chefs, woodworkers, etc.) and food and beverage business owners connect, nor the process of art selection and dissemination through such outlets. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of artists who utilize local hospitality businesses as a platform for disseminating their works in order to identify barriers to participation that may limit the diversity of place narratives represented in such settings. A phenomenological research approach was employed, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight artists in one small U.S. city in early 2020. Findings suggest challenges including both community taste as well as gaps in local artist education may undermine the quest for inclusion neolocalism might facilitate. Data further revealed these constraints may be overcome by building strong artist networks and encouraging artists to advocate for themselves, persevere, and work on building credibility amongst their peers and local hospitality business owners. This research offers insight into the processes behind the neolocal movement and highlights the need for future studies that focus on neolocalism, place narratives, and the inclusion of art in the hospitality industry as a route to community sustainability.

Keywords: Artist, Art Dissemination, Neolocalism, Place Making, Place Narrative

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