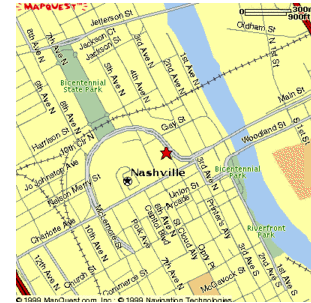




Music and the Creative Class: Why Place Matters to Music and Music Matters to Place
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(Part 3) In previous installments of [Music & The Creative Class](#), I explored the importance that musicians and the business that follow them play in the growing Creative Class that is [reshaping America](#) and much of the developed world. Not only does [music](#) add flavor to a neighborhood or city, as they have in Nashville, Memphis or New Orleans; but musicians are also often ["fruit fly indicators"](#) or harbingers of future growth as they have been from Austin, Texas and Brooklyn [Heights](#), New York.



But if musicians matter to place, how much does place matter to musicians. In an era of net based social networking and online collaboration combined with fast and easy travel, it is tempting to say that where musicians live matters far less than it once did. But in [Who's Your City?](#), the follow up to Richard Florida's groundbreaking [The Rise of the Creative Class](#), the author argues that for most "creatives", where to live is the most important decision of their lives.

Music is most often a collaborative art form and it would be easy to answer...

the question of how much place matters to music with that fact alone. Musicians need to be near other musicians, but for them to thrive, they also need affordable housing, places to perform and fans to see them. And along with each of these comes businesses, managers and support staff. Over time, a community grows that then attracts more of the same.

In "Who's Your City", Florida recounts the tale of Jack White of the [White Stripes](#)

moving his band from the grit of Detroit which shaped his sound to the polish and twang of Nashville. Despite the seeming incongruity, White is thriving because he finds the Music City more professional, less confrontational and less melodramatic. "Like Silicon Valley, it is a place where the best and brightest in their fields can collaborate with other top talent", Florida writes, as well as be supported by a shared infrastructure.

Does every musician need to pack up their instruments and flock to the nearest music mecca to make it? Florida argues that "super star cities" attract and support many creatives. But musicians and artists, who are so fed by individualized muses may be a bit different than computer programming creatives tethered to their own brand of keyboards. Overtime, for example, Nashville may change the music that Jake White makes just as Detroit helped form it.

But wherever White or others makes music, they will need people to perform with and fans to come see them. Look to your left and to your right the next time that

you walk down the street. Are you surrounded by other creatives and the people that support them? Is this your tribe? If not, can you build one?