

Rapid urbanization in Africa has visited myriad challenges upon the inhabitants. This has led to the perception of African urban spaces as largely dysfunctional. However, this essay illustrates the existence of an intricate culture of resilience among contemporary urbanites. In Kenyan cities, this survival attitude is evident in the "hustler" mentality popularized through contemporary urban music. Musicians have creatively appropriated the otherwise negative hustler identity and redefined it for coping within a challenging urban context. This has consequently radically altered the way urban space functions and is perceived. The essay explores the dynamics of the social and spatial aspects of urban identity and how the city residents engage their geo-social landscape in an attempt to make the city work for them. To achieve an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon, eight "information-rich" songs by Kenyan urban musicians were purposively selected, and texts interpreted against the backdrop of theoretical discourses on the notions of space and identity. The findings lend credence to the assertions that in an urban environment, music exhibits socio-spatial implications and space influences identity formation among the dwellers.