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BELGRADE, 2023

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Editor in Chief

Full Professor of Social Sciences and
Full Professor of Arts, Nenad Perić, PhD

CONTENT

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EXPLORING CULTURAL TABOOS IN CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTS: A PLAYFUL JOURNEY THROUGH ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND THE FORBIDDEN

Abstract

Cultural taboos are unwritten rules or norms that govern what is considered acceptable or unacceptable within a society. These taboos have evolved over time and continue to play a significant role in shaping human behavior and societal norms. With rapid globalization, technological advances, and the changing social dynamics of the 21st century, it has been necessary to reevaluate cultural taboos. This paper explores the dynamic interaction between cultural taboos and the visual arts in the contemporary era. Through case studies, historical context, and analysis of contemporary visual artworks, this paper investigates how artists navigate the boundaries of acceptability, cultural relativity, and freedom of expression in a globalized world. The paper

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also examines how cultural taboos are represented and challenged in visual art, and the impact of this on artists and audiences alike. This paper takes an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on insights from cultural anthropology, sociology, psychology, and art history to gain a deeper understanding of cultural taboos and their representation in the visual arts. In this paper, we will discuss how cultural taboos are represented and challenged in artworks, the techniques used by artists, and the implications of such representation and challenges. By examining the relationship between cultural taboos and the visual arts, this paper contributes to the ongoing conversation about cultural norms and their impact on contemporary society.

Keywords

Artistic Expression, Art Censorship, Globalization, Cultural Sensitivity, Art History, Contemporary Art, Cultural Taboos

Introduction to Cultural Taboos

Cultural taboos are restrictions and prohibitions regarding certain norms based on cultural or religious beliefs. These taboos are present in all societies and cultures around the world, and recent debates about political correctness and dogma illustrate their continuing influence (Horlacher 2010). Their understanding and interpretation play a significant role in shaping the artistic expression in contemporary visual arts. Taboos can lead to censorship and controversy, as seen in the cases of Lady Chatterley's Lover and the Satanic Verses (Horlacher 2010). The article provides a list of some of these taboos and reasons to avoid them, which can help agencies and individuals explore taboos effectively (Onuorah and Ayo 2003). Although absolute

freedom from cultural taboos is not thoughtful, it is important to understand that these taboos exist (Horlacher 2010).

The Significance of Cultural Taboos in Shaping Artistic Expression and Changing Social Dynamics

With the advancement of globalization, technology, and social dynamics, cultural taboos have become increasingly relevant topics in the modern world. In academia, language classrooms also serve as a platform to introduce cultural taboos into language and behavior (Man-ping 2009). For example, taboos on marine tenure and fishing are designed to protect a society's resources (Foale 2011). Furthermore, introducing the cultural aspect into language classrooms is an effective way to show cultures to students from different perspectives (Boubekeur 2021). Furthermore, a cultural struggle between taboos has been ongoing (Horlacher 2010), with Masculinity and Femininity being one of the empirical dimensions of national cultures (Hofstede 1998). Finally, the introduction of the Internet and social media platforms has dramatically changed the way we perceive cultural taboos (Bwire 2010). However, even with the many possibilities these platforms offer, it is important to remember that absolute freedom from cultural taboos and breaking important cultural taboos can have serious repercussions.

Impact of Cultural Taboos in 21st Century Visual Arts

The presence of cultural taboos in the visual arts has long been a source of controversy in art circles. Taboos are cultural norms that are generally considered so important that deviation from them is strictly prohibited (Sidali, Perez et al. 2019). For this reason, researchers have conducted a study to investigate the acceptance of certain taboos within various cultural contexts. Controversies over cultural taboos are just the tip of the iceberg, as this constant struggle can be seen in various aspects of life (Horlacher 2010). Masculinity or femininity is one of the five empirically derived dimensions of cultural identity. Furthermore, its release in October 2007 coincided with the breaking of important cultural taboos in the art world (Bwire 2010). Thus, cultural taboos have a profound impact on the visual art, as they dictate the limits of artistic expression.

Case Studies on Cultural Taboos in the Visual Arts

Examples of contemporary visual arts that explore cultural taboos

Contemporary visual art provides a platform to explore topics that are often considered cultural taboos. One such example is Guerrilla Girls, a group of feminist activists who use their artwork to raise awareness about racial and gender inequality in the art industry (Guo 2020). Her artworks combine facts, figures, and humorous visuals to challenge stereotypes and expose the prevalence of sexism and racism in the art world.

Similarly, artist Shirin Neshat explores gender and cultural identity through her photography and video installations (Guo 2020). Her work often represents the clash between oppressive patriarchal structures and the human desire for freedom. Ai Weiwei, a Chinese artist, is another artist who uses her work to challenge censorship and other human rights violations (Guo 2020). His artwork often combines traditional Chinese media with Western art forms to create powerful works that critique oppressive political forces. Lastly, artist Kara Walker creates provocative pieces that challenge traditional narratives of race and power (Guo 2020). Her work often depicts historical themes related to racism, sexism and colonialism, while she uses unexpected materials and techniques to create a powerful visual impact. In conclusion, there are many contemporary visual artists who use their work to explore cultural taboos and challenge oppressive social structures.

Challenging Cultural Taboos and Social Norms Through Visual Arts Representation

Cultural taboos, although ubiquitous, vary greatly by region, class, and temporal context. For example, examining cultural differences between men's and women is one aspect of differences. Although tastes in the visual arts change from one social class to another, society still tends to privilege certain forms of art (Eijck 2001). Furthermore, certain works of art challenge the status quo, often breaking social taboos (Mundy and White 2012). Case studies ranging from the visual cortex to British and American culture (Poppel and Yan 2018) have

shown how certain works of art challenge the status quo and push boundaries (Mundy and White 2012). The "gaze" is a powerful tool used to witness art's ability to challenge cultural taboos (Carson and Pajaczkowska 2004). Additionally, visual artists have used their art to create culture, as the visual arts are one of the most effective forms of expression (McNiff and Barlow 2009). For instance, cultural differences between China and the West have also led to great influence and variability in artistic expression (Guo 2020). Therefore, the visual arts can be a powerful tool for understanding social and cultural differences and for pushing the boundaries of social norms.

Finally, women have used art to challenge cultural taboos, as seen in the case studies of eight women (Elliott 1994). Together, these studies demonstrate how various forms of art challenge cultural taboos and how art has the potential to create a culture that rejects those taboos.

Contemporary Visual Arts Impact on Artists and Audiences

The visual arts have long been valued for their creative, cultural, and social importance (Sullivan 2009). Men's arts are traditionally more prized for their durability and craftsmanship, while women's arts are considered more ephemeral (Aronson 1991). Studies suggest that taste in the visual arts is determined by social class and that cultural taboos also affect how people perceive the visual arts (Eijck 2001). Differences in pictorial representations between cultures can be explained by the early

visual pathway from the retina to the visual cortex (Poppel and Yan 2018). Several studies have revealed that active exclusion is still prevalent in the visual arts (Carson and Pajaczkowska 2004), and that language and the visual arts are the two expressive modes that most reflect cultural differences (McNiff and Barlow 2009). Art has the power to confront and challenge standards of taste and cultural taboos (Mundy and White 2012), which may explain why some works of art have sparked heated debates among audiences and critics.

Interdisciplinary Approach to Cultural Taboos: How does an interdisciplinary approach to cultural taboos shed light on their representation and challenges in the visual arts?

An interdisciplinary approach to cultural taboos helps us understand their representation and challenges in the visual arts. This approach combines elements from various disciplines, such as anthropology, linguistics, and sociology, to explore the complex nature of taboos (Mauri, et al. 2015). Through this approach, we can investigate how these taboos have evolved in different societies over time (Horlacher 2010). Taboos are not just limited to language; they are also found in the non-cultural aspects of an individual's life (Sotvoldievna and qizi 2022). In the Androy people, for example, there is a taboo against the consumption of certain types of animals (Dickman and Hazzah 2016). These taboos are so deeply rooted in their culture that violating them carries serious consequences (Dickman and Hazzah 2016). The

interdisciplinary approach also helps us understand how taboos are manifested in literature, art and popular culture (Boyle 1988). For example, incest taboos are mentioned in many works of literature and art, (Boyle 1988). Furthermore, the approach helps us understand the complex dynamics of cultural taboos, such as death taboos (Jacobsen and Teodorescu 2019). Finally, this approach can help us understand the sociocultural values and belief systems behind certain taboos (Schaaf and Cathy 2006). Therefore, an interdisciplinary approach to taboos can help us further comprehend their representation and challenges in modern-day visual arts (Poyatos 1988).

Insights From Cultural Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, and Art History

Cultural anthropology, sociology, psychology, and art history can provide insightful perspectives on the prevalence of taboos in our world. For example, research has identified emotional and behavioral responses to taboos, such as fear and shame (Mauri, et al. 2015). This research has also highlighted the need for an interdisciplinary approach when examining various taboos (Horlacher 2010). The non-cultural basis of taboos is also evident in the lingua-cultural aspects of taboo and euphemism (Sotvoldievna and Qizi? 2022), which are signifiers of language and culture. Thus, an interdisciplinary approach to the study of taboos can also be observed in the examination of conscious and unconscious taboos (Brodersen 2019). By using a typology of signs and cultural analysis, a systematic approach to culture can be developed (Poyatos 1988). Taboos can also be seen in

modern art and popular culture, where incest taboos are explored (Boyle 1988). Furthermore, an interdisciplinary approach can be employed to discuss social, cultural, and economic issues related to taboos (Jacobsen and Teodorescu 2019). Finally, sociocultural values and belief systems were also investigated to better understand the taboos related to sacred groves (Schaaf and Cathy 2006). In conclusion, taboos are ingrained in our culture and can be studied from multiple perspectives to better understand their purpose.

How does this knowledge help us better understand cultural taboos and their representation in the visual arts?

Cultural taboos are not only social rules but also represent a moral code that is reflected in the visual arts. Cultural taboos can be seen as a form of cultural control that influences the way we think and behave (Mauri, et al. 2015). Taboos are an ongoing cultural struggle between opposing forces, and an interdisciplinary approach is necessary to understand the complexities of this phenomenon (Horlacher 2010). This approach examines taboo as a sign of language and culture and analyzes the non-cultural trace of taboo (Sotvoldievna and qizi 2022). The example of the Androy people of Madagascar demonstrates how taboos have the power to shape our worldview and behavior in relation to culture and the visual arts. Furthermore, modern works of art and popular culture often reflect taboos (Boyle 1988). By taking an interdisciplinary approach and examining the anthropological, sociological, and psychological aspects of taboos, researchers

can better understand this phenomenon (Brodersen 2019). Additionally, a typology of signs and cultural analysis can be used to examine taboos in a narrative context (Poyatos 1988). The project employed an interdisciplinary approach to assess socio-cultural values and belief systems, as well as to investigate the implications of taboos related to sacred groves (Schaaf and Cathy 2006). Furthermore, modern media plays a significant role in shaping our views on taboos (Jacobsen and Teodorescu 2019). Therefore, understanding cultural taboos and their representation in the visual arts requires an interdisciplinary approach.

Representation of Cultural Taboos in the Work of Art

In Japan, the female sexual organ is still considered a taboo subject, as evidenced by the arrest of artist Megumi Igarashi, also known as Rokudenashiko, for using the vulva as part of her artwork (McLell 2018). This indicates that the issue of cultural taboos in works of art remains a sensitive topic in Japan. A single female organ is generally considered inappropriate in Japanese artwork, while the level of realism with which the organ is depicted is another factor in determining its acceptability (McLell 2018). Furthermore, the response of the Japanese press to Rokudenashiko's arrest and trial was largely neutral, without any public outrage (McLell 2018). This further suggests that Japanese society is still in the process of accepting the representation of the female sexual organ in works of art. Furthermore, Rokudenashiko's arrest on suspicion of distributing obscene material is a clear sign that the use of the

sexual organ in works of art is still considered taboo (McLell 2018).

Technique's Artists Use to Represent Cultural Taboos in Contemporary Visual Arts

The visual arts have been used as a tool to represent cultural taboos in order to challenge them. For example, artists have explored the cultural taboo imposed on the mother as a theme in contemporary art (Liss 2009). Although other socially taboo bodily experiences are now openly represented in the fine arts, the maternal experience has rarely been explored. Through the act of subverting the interpretations of their representations and by promoting them as art, contemporary visual artists can transgress the taboo of violence against women (Gurrieri, Brace-Govan and Cherrier 2016). Furthermore, submissive straight men are a huge subculture. However, their existence defies many taboos and is not recognized by society (THOMAS and Kauffman 1999). Adorno suggested that art has the task of being on the side of those social phenomena treated as taboo in society (Bachmetjevas 2007). By using art to represent these taboos, such as dioramas, the audience is allowed to see an often invisible culture of shame and silencing (McLell 2018). Furthermore, the cultural taboos highlighted in the artistic creations of Jean-Michel Basquiat and Kara Walker demonstrate the importance of self-representation and cultural belonging (Fedorchak 2017). Cultural anthropologists Thomas Buckley and Alma Gottlieb stated that there is no universal menstrual taboo (Hughes and Røstvik 2020). Lastly, comics have been used to show cultural

taboos; even in non-explicit panels, the artistic decisions made allow the viewer to see an often invisible culture of shame and silencing (Tolmie 2013). All this further demonstrates that absolute freedom from cultural taboos is not humane.

Implications of Representing Cultural Taboos in Contemporary Visual Arts

Representing cultural taboos in the visual arts has far-reaching implications. For example, the taboo of the maternal as a subject in contemporary art can often be rethought through women's material practices and experiences (Liss 2009). Furthermore, while other socially taboo bodily experiences are generally explored in fine arts, the representation of birth has not been widely explored (Tyler and Baraitser 2013). This suggests that there is still a strong taboo on this topic, despite the development of the art market and the pricing mechanism of contemporary art (Velthuis 2003). Subverting interpretations of taboo depictions by promoting them as art can also help clients justify transgressing the violence against women taboo (Gurrieri, Brace-Govan and Cherrier 2016). Similarly, submissive heterosexual men, who constitute a major subculture, are not recognized due to the number of taboos that contravene their existence (Thomas & Kauffman 1999).

Challenges to Cultural Taboos in Art

Taboo art, art that goes against cultural conventions, is a powerful tool for challenging social taboos (Adams 2012). This type of art forces viewers to confront the uncomfortable and often hidden aspects of society. Artist Zanele Muholi has used taboo art in her work to confront and challenge cultural taboos. In Ella Quinso's piece, The Sails, Durban (2019), Muholi uses silver afro combs as a symbol to challenge the cultural taboo of African cultural pride and the African diaspora (Muholi 2019). In her piece Nolwazi II, Nuoro, Italy (2015), Muholi challenges the cultural taboo of the "pencil test" by filling her hair with pens (Muholi 2019). This test was used in apartheid South Africa to determine if someone was of mixed race. Finally, Zamile, KwaThema (2016) uses a striped prison blanket as a symbol to challenge the cultural taboo of apartheid (Muholi 2019). The line between what is appropriate and inappropriate in taboo art is often dificult to determine (Adams 2012). And, as with any art, the emotional effect of taboo art is subjective (Adams 2012). However, taboo art offers a unique way to challenge cultural taboos and spark conversations, debates, and dialogues about dificult topics.

Controversial Artistic Techniques

Artists have long used the visual arts and their various forms to challenge cultural taboos. For example, some choose to confront traditional representations of pregnancy and childbirth using humor and satire (Tyler and Baraitser 2013). This can be

seen in the works of artists such as Sarah Lucas and Judy Chicago, who use humor to draw attention to the cultural taboos that exist around childbirth. Other artists take a more direct approach by using explicit images in their works (Tyler and Baraitser 2013). This includes images of women breastfeeding, giving birth, and even giving birth in alternative ways such as home birth and water birth (Tyler and Baraitser 2013). These works serve to challenge the cultural taboos surrounding childbirth while celebrating the alternative ways in which childbirth can be experienced. While these works may be shocking to some, they serve to break down the barriers of traditional cultural taboos and open a dialogue about the power of art to challenge long-held beliefs.

Pushing Boundaries and Provoking Thought

For arts educators, it is often necessary to confront topics that may be uncomfortable, or even taboo, such as sex, which has always been surrounded by a certain level of stigma (Paglia 1990). It is particularly challenging to incorporate these topics into our classrooms, as they may go against the wishes of the school board or even the culture of the student (Knight 2006). Despite the controversy these topics may cause, it is important to understand the implications of challenging cultural taboos in the visual arts (Winn 2012). Contemporary art has become a powerful tool for social commentary and can be used to challenge society's most cherished values and assumptions (THOMAS and Kauffman 1999). This is exemplified in the works of Miriam Schapiro, who used her art to challenge the cultural taboo imposed on the maternal as a subject (Liss 2009). It is also seen

in the art of Hannah Hesse, who pushed down to oppose the dominant culture's preoccupation with the division between the beautiful and the profane (Gutiérrez-Albilla 2008). Furthermore, the UK's unique art collection, featuring visual representations of birth, highlights the opportunities and challenges of this new visual culture (Tyler and Baraitser 2013). Other taboos, such as the cultural stigma surrounding sexual health education in Iran (Latifnejad Roudsari, et al. 2013), remain a challenge to address. It is important for art teachers to be aware of the implications of challenging cultural taboos in the visual arts, as it can provide unique opportunities for dialogue and social commentary (Rey 2016).

Conclusion

The exploration of cultural taboos in contemporary visual arts is a complex and multifaceted topic that requires an interdisciplinary approach. The research work highlights the relevance and importance of cultural taboos in modern society, as well as their impact on artistic expression. Although cultural taboos can be restrictive and prohibitive, they are an integral part of cultural identity and heritage. The article emphasizes the need to understand and respect cultural taboos and, at the same time, challenge oppressive social structures through artistic expression. The representation of cultural taboos in the visual arts has far-reaching implications, as it can dictate the limits of artistic expression and contribute to ongoing debates about political correctness and dogma. Additionally, the discussion section of the research article identifies potential limitations and

gaps in the study and suggests future directions for research. Highlights the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to understanding cultural taboos, and recognizes the potential biases and weaknesses inherent in research on this topic. Overall, the research work contributes to the continued advancement of knowledge in the fields of cultural studies and visual arts, and highlights the complex and nuanced nature of cultural taboos in modern society.

Further Research Opportunities

Some potential areas for further research on cultural taboos in contemporary visual arts include the impact of technology on the portrayal of taboos, the role of censorship in shaping artists choices, and the exploration of taboo subjects in different cultural contexts.

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BEING FEMALE ARTIST: UNDERSTANDING GENDER INEQUALITY IN ARTISTIC PROFESSIONS

Abstract

The article examines gender discrimination faced by women artists in the cultural and creative sectors, focusing particularly on their expectations and the

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dynamic relationship between entrepreneurship and their artistic endeavours. While certain disadvantages, such as lower wages, underrepresentation, work-family conflict, and symbolic devaluation, are prevalent in various industries, there are additional challenges specific to the creative sector. This study assesses the current situation for female artists by analyzing data from the last two years, focusing particularly on the post-COVID era. Based on research on gender studies in the art world, the ideal artist is often expected to frequently imitate male role models. First, men are perceived as creative geniuses. Secondly, social prejudices have always favoured men over women when it comes to aesthetic and art matters. Finally, the nature of artistic careers requires behaviours that are more socially acceptable for men, such as entrepreneurial skills and self-promotion. This article aims to provide a comprehensive and clear overview of the current state of the art world and the art market, with a focus on the position of female artists.

Introduction

Across the spectrum of *gender, race, class*, and *sexuality*, gendered artistic production has always been a battleground, revealing an uneven topography of contested categories and hierarchies. For instance, the terms *women* or *female* are frequently shortened to *gender,* thus doubly marginalising, since the labels "artist" or "female art" produce stereotyped restrictions that stifle the recognition of individuality and innovation outside the established gender norms. Strategically, considering the unequal conditions within contemporary art and the role of female artists (even in wider society at the global level), looking

at art and artists without focusing on race, gender, or sexuality is what it means to apply the term *post-identity*[1], a concept that is beginning to emerge in art theory and the art world. To claim that we reside in an era characterized by post-identity is to dismiss the undeniable reality of a diverse and ever-evolving global landscape. Such a stance reflects a perilous adherence to the fallacy that equality can be attained without recognizing the inherited struggles or privileges individuals may possess. Moreover, it is even more perilous to analyze the position of women artists within the context of this term.

Within culture and art, there exists a clear disparity in the treatment of women when compared to men. To ensure fairness for all, we must draw upon the past and continue to shape a historical narrative that accurately represents women in the arts. Rather than embracing a concept like post-identity, which only serves to emphasize the inequality that requires rectification, we should focus on effecting the necessary changes.

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1   Within this term, we must question how identity functions: will it be used as a tool of the oppressor to subjugate the "other", or as a tool of the oppressed to band together, create community and ultimately overcome? For the majority of the 20th century, movement after movement has erred towards the latter in an attempt to topple this power structure and advocate instead for the equality of all people. From Civil Rights to Women's Liberation, people banded together around these identities as a way to gain access and equality for the subjugated masses. This ownership of identity seeped into every corner of Western culture - from TV to advertising and art, so much so that by the 80s and 90s, the United Colors of Benetton began using multi-culturalism to sell clothing. Artists were also openly exploring the social and political issues that were present in their lives, such as racial injustices, gender inequality, and the overall visibility of historically marginalized peoples. During the convergence of all these movements, we saw the creation of the umbrella term "identity politics," which encompassed new "politically-correct" identifiers, as well as a general push towards inclusivity in politics, in society, in culture, and in power.

Contemporary art, as a product of its own time, is the result of the context in which it exists (Stanković 2015). Today, the term context becomes its constitutive element, so that we can speak of contemporary artistic practices as fluid contexts. The traditional and formalist notion of context as a supporting component of artistic work changed its meaning and function at the turn of the millennium[2]. Some authors suggested that gender relations in artistic careers advocate that the ideal-typical artist builds on a masculine model in at least three ways. First, collective understandings of creative genius centre on a masculine subject. Second, bias in aesthetic evaluations systematically favours men over women. Third, the structure of artistic careers, particularly the need for entrepreneurial labour and self-promotion, requires artists to engage in behaviours that are more socially acceptable in men than in women (Miller 2016).

In light of this, it is evident that the time has come for a significant shift in the way we view female artists and the roles that men have dominated for generations. A new generation of female artists and art historians breaks down the boundaries and tries to correct this imbalance, overcoming the obstacle of male dominance to reshape the representation of the female role in art.

Being a female artist today

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[2]   The term "contextual practices" is now used to describe contemporary artistic endeavors, as the concept of context has undergone a significant change. Previously, context was considered an external element, encompassing a given set of circumstances and objective conditions within which the artwork was created. However, it has now become an indispensable component of artistic thinking, no longer limited to a particular artistic procedure, medium, or mode of expression.

Following a worldwide feminist movement in the late 20th century, women became a renewed topic for art and art history, giving rise to gender analysis of both artistic production and art historical discourse. A renewed and theoretically developed feminist consciousness, as well as activist feminist consciousness, initially mandated the historical recovery of the contribution of women as artists to art's international histories to counter the effective erasure of the history of women as artists by the modern discipline of art history. Gender analysis raises the repressed question of gender in relation both to creativity itself and to the writing of art's necessarily pluralized histories. Gender refers to the asymmetrical hierarchy between those distinguished both sociologically and symbolically based on perceived, but not determining differences. Although projected as natural difference between given sexes, the active and productive processes of social and ideological differentiation produce its effects of gendered difference that is claimed, ideologically, as "natural." As an axis of power relations, gender can be shown to shape the social existence of men and women and determine artistic representations (Pollock 2020).

In addition to its biological connotations, gender is also understood as a symbolic aspect that shapes hierarchical divisions in various forms of artistic expressions and discussions about art. The construction of gender is an ongoing process influenced by artistic endeavours and written discourse surrounding the realm of art. Female artists, who have been marginalised by the gendered discourses prevalent in modern art history, have had to be reclaimed from oblivion. At the same time, the concept of women as artists needs to be reinstated in the face of an ideology that relegates femininity to a secondary position. Contemporary

art theory has to examine the interaction between multiple dimensions of distinction and their symbolic representations without presuming how each artwork or artist may navigate and reshape prevailing gender discourses and other social influences (Pollock 2020). The postcolonial critique of Western hegemony and the search for non-Western-centered models of inclusivity that respect diversity without generating normative relativism are driving the tendency of gender studies in art history towards a not yet realized inclusivity with regard to the position of women artists. The goals of critical art historical practices must focus on a specific initiative focused on women artists in order to correct a distorted and gender-selective archive and expand the scope of art historical research to include social, economic and symbolic aspects beyond the conventional approach and thus overcome existing disparities.

Performing a simple Google search dealing with today's women's issues, the following questions came up: What is feminism? What makes a woman a woman? What role does a woman play in life? What makes a girl attractive? Then another very interesting question: How can you be a woman in life? The question of the role of women alone shows that we have a serious problem: women are the key to sustainable development and quality of life in the family. The different roles that women assume in the family are that of a wife, a leader, a manager, a manager of the family income and last but not least that of a mother. Or translated for all these search results, women are still perceived merely as persons assigned to and with responsibilities connected to family and child care; they should be concerned about how to be attractive; they do not know how to be women; and they need instruction on how to be one. Someone might say

it's just Google, an internet search engine. We must understand that Google is the top search engine in the world, a position that has drawn criticism and concern about the power it has to influence the flow of information. We can imagine its influence on younger generations.

As UN Women said, "At the current rate of progress, it may take another 286 years before women have the same rights and protections as men," and this is rather an optimistic view! Then there's something serious. It is mentioned that it's about having rights only on paper. The situation arises when and where there are laws protecting equal rights, but the application of the laws is not overlooked or monitored.

In the article *Visualizing Women's Economic Rights around the World* by Bruno Venditti (Venditti 2021) we can find figures on the economic rights of women around the world. These figures show us that only ten countries, all in the northern part of the hemisphere, offer women full legal protection (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal and Sweden). In the ranking countries, the institution takes into account indicators such as equal pay, legal rights and mobility. A value of 100 means that women are legally equal to men in all measured areas. This research shows that Serbia is in a high 6th place with 93.8 points[3].

Particularly regarding the status and role of women in society, the adoption of political, economic and social reforms is essential to creating a society that truly values equality. In the

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3   Serbian laws state that women have equal inheritance rights, but in real life in Serbia, women own only 6.25% of all houses and apartments. According to oficial reports women account for 51,3% and men 48,7% of Serbia-s population…

creative and the cultural sector, this need is even more urgent, as the activism of many artists is motivated by the desire to make women more present and visible in art and culture. The main goal of this activism is to change the current circumstances of contemporary women artists, but also to correct negative experiences. Therefore, how we approach gender equality is crucial, because a wrong attitude can lead to misinterpretations. A comprehensive understanding of the social significance and symbolic function of women's contributions in creative and cultural sector is essential to fully understand both the historical progress of artistic creation and art history.

The position of women artists in society is a prominent problem that they are grappling with today. The progress and growth of culture, medicine, and technology are widely recognized as crucial factors in social progress. It can be deduced from this that artists, including female artists, occupy a central position as cultural workers.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights-UDHR (1948) states that there are five fundamental human rights: the right to life and liberty; freedom from slavery and torture; freedom of opinion and expression; and the right to work and education.

These violations of rights have severe consequences for female artists. The economic right to equal pay and equal work is often marginalised, with women artists being paid less than their male counterparts for similar work. This not only affects their financial stability but also perpetuates the gender pay gap in the art industry. The social right to recognition and acknowledgement of their achievements is also compromised, as female artists are often overlooked and their contributions undervalued in

comparison to male artists. This lack of recognition not only affects their professional growth but also hinders the overall progress and diversity of the art world. Furthermore, the fundamental human right to education is violated when women are discouraged from pursuing artistic careers and are instead pushed towards traditional gender roles. This limits their access to artistic training and opportunities, further perpetuating the gender disparity in the art field. Lastly, the fundamental human right to procreation is compromised when female artists are pressured to prioritize their roles as mothers and wives over their artistic career. This expectation forces them to make dificult choices that often result in sacrificing their artistic ambitions and potential. These violations of rights not only hinder the artistic growth and development of female artists but also perpetuate gender inequalities within society as a whole.

According to oficial statistics, the proportion of artwork created by male artists in galleries and museums is approximately 87%, with roughly 85% being attributed to artists from white backgrounds. This disparity highlights a significant underrepresentation of women artists and artists from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds within the art world. These statistics bring attention to the need for increased representation and inclusivity within the art community to promote a more equitable and diverse cultural landscape. Also, according to the publication by artsy.net, in the auction sales, the total auction market share in 2022 was 88, 24% for male art and 9, 39% for female art. The same platform in new alalyses state that "the year 2023 has been characterized by one word: correction. After a slew of blockbuster sales and record-breaking spending in 2022, many believed that 2023, with its persistent economic

uncertainty, would be the year of relative retrenchment. And given the volatility of the market since the pandemic, many wondered if this year would represent a "new normal" for the art industry".

In the annual Survey of global collecting 2023 Clare McAndrew states that "collectors spent less on works by female artists in 2022 and 2023 (with a ratio by value of 39% female to 61% male), and the share of works by women in collections decreased by 3% year-on year to 39% in 2023, reverting to the 2020 level. However, collectors spending over $10 million per annum tended to have a higher share of female artists' works in their collections (54%), and their proportion of spending also increased from 46% in 2021 to 55% in 2023. This could indicate that, although undertaken by a minority of collectors, some of the spending at the very highest levels was on female artists."(McAndrew, 2023).

Male artists are also more likely to acquire commercial and institutional gallery representation, with only 34% of artists exhibited in state-run museums being women. This statistic becomes even more alarming once artists hit mid-career, where the number of identified practising female artists declines sharply. Female artists can also have dificulty obtaining paid work, and sometimes experience overt discrimination and harassment. Gender inequality extends to financial remuneration.

In their article *Gender and Artistic Creativity: The Perspectives and Experiences of Eminent Female Visual Artists* (Ginis, Elizabeth Stewart, Kronborg 2023) three woman authors emhasize that the creative contributions of women are often devalued. Only two artworks by women have ever broken into

the top 100 auction sales for paintings, despite women being the subject matter for approximately half of the top 25. Research conducted by Gørrill (2020) on gender and value in the art world has demonstrated that, although few aesthetic differences have been found between the works of male and female painters, men's art is valued up to 80% more highly. She found that when men signed their work it went up in value, yet when women did so, the value decreased. The same objects, texts, résumés, paintings, and online courses are also appraised more favorably on average when attributed to men. Many female artists throughout history have adopted male or gender-neutral pseudonyms to avoid having their work devalued or ignored, and biographies of female artists reveal personal and emotional costs of struggling to succeed in male-dominated artistic fields.

Gender-specific double standards also influence the perception of other female artists and thus their self-image. Women who are withdrawn and ignore the needs of others to focus on artistic creation are often viewed as self-centred and unstable, while men who behave appropriately are viewed as geniuses devoted to their calling. Women are also routinely judged for thinking too highly of themselves and behaving in ways that are considered "attention-seeking," making it more dificult for them to engage in the active self-promotion that is crucial in creative professions meaning is. The lack of external positive reinforcement at multiple levels, including commercial, institutional and peer levels, can hinder the development of creative identities among female artists. Women may also have dificulty establishing their identities as artists, regardless of gender issues. Prejudices, whether conscious or unconscious,

often lead to artists being pigeonholed and categorized as "female artists" rather than valued for their creative expression.

Given that gender inequality appears to be both pervasive and harmful to female artists, further research is needed to better understand how it manifests itself in their professional and personal lives and how it impacts their creativity and development.

Concluding considerations

From painters to sculptors, from photographers to performers, women artists have demonstrated their undeniable talent and left a lasting impact on the art world. They have brought their unique perspectives and stories to the forefront, challenged conventional norms and pushed boundaries. However, it is also important to recognize that we still have a long way to go. Despite the remarkable progress that women artists have made, there are still systemic challenges that need to be addressed. Gender bias, limited opportunities and unequal representation persist in the arts. As a society, it is our responsibility to not only recognize and celebrate the contributions of women artists, but also to create an inclusive and supportive environment in which they can thrive. To address these issues, it is important to first conduct a thorough analysis of the challenges women generally face today. By identifying the root causes of gender inequality, we can then work to find effective solutions. This includes implementing laws and regulations that promote gender equality, closely monitoring their implementation and taking immediate action if they are not enforced. Additionally, it is important

to emphasize positive reinforcement in the representation of women artists in galleries and museums. Finally, building an international network of individuals dedicated to supporting women artists could prove to be a powerful tool for promoting their rights and opportunities.

We can achieve all this by actively seeking and promoting different examples of good practice and broadening perspectives in the creative and cultural sectors. This means ensuring that women artists have equal opportunities for exposure, recognition and professional development, recognizing and addressing systemic biases and inequalities that exist in the art world, such as the gender pay gap and underrepresentation in leadership positions. Also, challenging traditional notions of what is considered "valuable" or "important" art and considering a wider range of artistic expressions and styles. In this way, we can create an environment where all artists feel supported and empowered to express themselves authentically. Together, we can foster a more inclusive and just art community that not only reflects the diversity of our world but inspires and uplifts us all.

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MODERN STATUS OF WOMEN ARTISTS IN THE WORLD IMPROVEMENT OF PR STRATEGGY IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PR-STRATEGY

Abstract

The research is dedicated to addressing complex aims, both educational (enhancing the self-confidence of artist painters) and socio-economic (optimizing access to knowledge to improve promotion strategies and increase artists' income levels) through the refinement of algorithms, theory, and practice of PR strategy. The main purpose was to identify „the integration challenges between promotion skills and practical skills" of art occupations „given the complexity" of professional coaching for artists. This article contains a description of the elements of international law facts and basis for PR strategy for artists. Using the example of integrated assessment

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of the historical position of women artists have shown the role of artists' convidence and competence in making optimal decisions that affect their status. The article emphasized that in a new world full of consulting services and different technologies the idea of the right choice for each artist painter is directly linked to their own uniqueness.

The first huge steps of women artists in the period XVI-XIX c.c.

During the Renaissance, women faced significant barriers to pursuing a career in the arts. However, some exceptional female painters managed to overcome these obstacles and showcase their talent. One such artist was Artemisia Gentileschi, who emerged as one of the most skilled painters of her time. Despite facing discrimination and being denied access to prestigious art academies, Gentileschi's talent and determination propelled her to compete with her male counterparts. Her works, often depicting powerful and expressive scenes, showcased her mastery of technique and composition. Another notable painter was Sofonisba Anguissola, who not only achieved recognition but also became a court painter for the Spanish royal family. These women, along with many others, defied societal norms by working secretly and using male pseudonyms to have their art acknowledged. Unfortunately, due to these circumstances, much of their work went unrecognized and their legacy was lost over time. Nonetheless, their contributions to the art world cannot be

Marie Bracquemo[n]

Berthe Marie Pauline Morisot

first female impressionists

Angelika Kaufman Maria Moser

became two female founders of the Royal Academy in London

Rachel Ruyzch she was the first female member of the artist's society, Confrerie Pictura

Lavinia Fontana – first in Western Europe became a professional artist for whom painting was the main source of income.

Marietta Robusti – Tintoretto's daughter and worked asigning her paintings mostly as her father's name.

Sofonisba Anguissola one of the first women artist who did career as a court artist

XVI
Impossible to get professional education

XVII
Started work as an artists for income but still assign paintings as male names

XVIII
Created Royal London Academy of Art

XIX
Significant presence of women artists throughout the history of the Paris Salon

Picture 1. Some women artists in XVI-XIX c.c. whose are known by their successes (Source: Author)

understated, as they paved the way for future generations of female artists and demonstrated the immense progress that could be made despite the challenges they faced.

Women artists' status in the modern period

Some law facts about women's rights in the world

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is often referred to as the International Charter of Women's Rights. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and opened to member states for signature and ratification. By 1981, a total of 189 states had ratified the convention, making it one of the most ratified human rights treaties in history. CEDAW aims to ensure that women enjoy equal rights and opportunities in political, economic, social, cultural, and civil areas. It calls on states to take measures to eliminate discrimination against women and promote gender equality in all areas of life. The convention covers a wide range of issues, including education, employment, health care, marriage and family relations, and violence against women. Through its provisions, CEDAW has been instrumental in advancing women's rights and holding governments accountable for gender equality. (Picture 2).[1]

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1   United Nations Treaty Collection (2015), United Nations. Archived from the original on 6 September 2015.
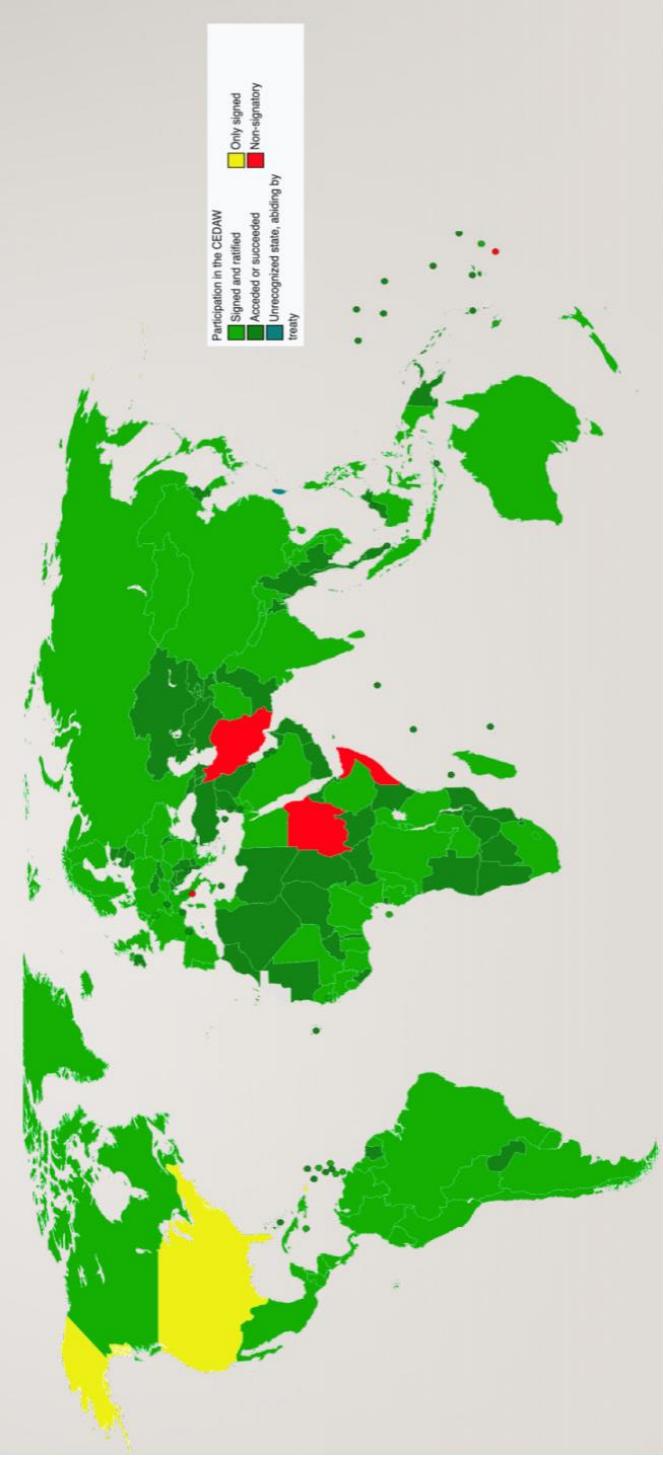
Picture 2. Participants for the CEDOW (Source: Chart of signatures and ratifications of Treaty 210, Council of Europe)

The Istanbul Convention is a groundbreaking international treaty that aims to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and female genital mutilation (Council of Europe 2011). It sets comprehensive standards for the prevention of violence, protection of victims, and the prosecution of perpetrators. The Convention also recognizes the importance of addressing the root causes of violence and promoting gender equality. Its provisions include the establishment of specialized support services for victims, the training of professionals, and the implementation of preventive measures. The fact that 45 countries and the European Union have signed the Istanbul Convention demonstrates a global commitment to end violence against women and ensure their rights are protected (Picture 3).[2]

2   Council of Europe (2011). Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.
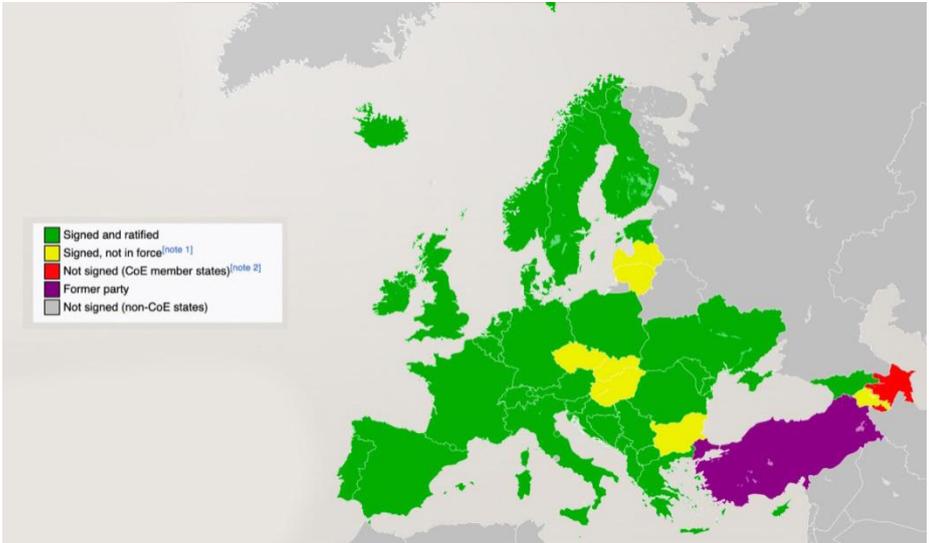
Picture 3. Participants for the Istanbul Convention (Source: Chart of signatures and ratifications of Treaty 210, Council of Europe)

Although the modern status of women's rights has a positive dynamics, according to Nobel laureate in economics Claudia Goldin, "During the twentieth century, women's education levels continuously increased, and in most high-income countries they are now substantially higher than for men", but "women are vastly underrepresented in the global labour market and, when they work, they earn less than men" (Goldin 2023).

Women artists and art sales in a period of 2018-2019

According to the report of the international art fair Art Basel for 2018-2019, of the 3,050 galleries in the Artsy database, 10% represent not a single woman artist, while only 8% represent more women than men. Almost half represent 25% or fewer women. Just 24% of the 27,000 artists shown at art fairs in 2018 were women (Art Basel 2019). The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA, the USA) found that as women artists age, they earn progressively less than their male artist counterparts. Women artists aged 55–64 earn only 66¢ for each 1 USD earned by men (The National Endowment for the Arts-NEA). There is a 47.6% discount for women's art at auction (Adams, Kräussl, Navone, Verwijmeren, 2017). Statistics for the earlier period are still not available.

It is important to emphasise that in modern times, we can see a lot of female artists at international fairs in Istanbul, London, and Miami. The art market indeed becomes more open for female artists, yet the fact remains that there are still differences between male and female artists.

Meanwhile, the level of sales does not depend on how much the applied fee or gallery commission was. Furthermore, a lot of women artists open their corners at fairs and try to sell by themselves.

Improving PR strategy for women artists

Omit being personal for the sake of streamlined language and enhanced clarity .... rephrase: Being an artist is a missi-

on. Artists should always think about what to show their contemporaries and what they will bring to future generations. However, being an artist is an occupation. Broadly speaking, I agree with the opinion that modern technologies and social media influence promotion in all sectors, so I think that there's a need to include such skills in artists' professional education. A well-prepared promotion strategy will certainly influence the sales level, organising future success and risks, creating decisions on the rights opportunities for artists, and influencing the status of the artist as a whole. It needs to be shown to artists (and also to women artists) what PR strategy consists of. (Picture 4).

Conclusion

This article **is opened by noting** the progress of women artists in their fight for rights, starting in the XV century and continuing until modern times. Women artists have faced challengeswith self-realization in their occupations and are still vastly underrepresented in the global labour market. It's felt that this study enhances academic understanding of the factors influencing the promotion of artists. Thus, it is necessary to include lessons such as modern PR, brand management, PR strategy, law in art, etc. in professional continuing education for artists. It is also crucial to teach artists to communicate with gallerists, collations, and other stakeholders in the art market as buyers, viewers, and art lovers. Additionally, artists should harness modern technologies like social media, personal websites, and digital communication for their promotion efforts.
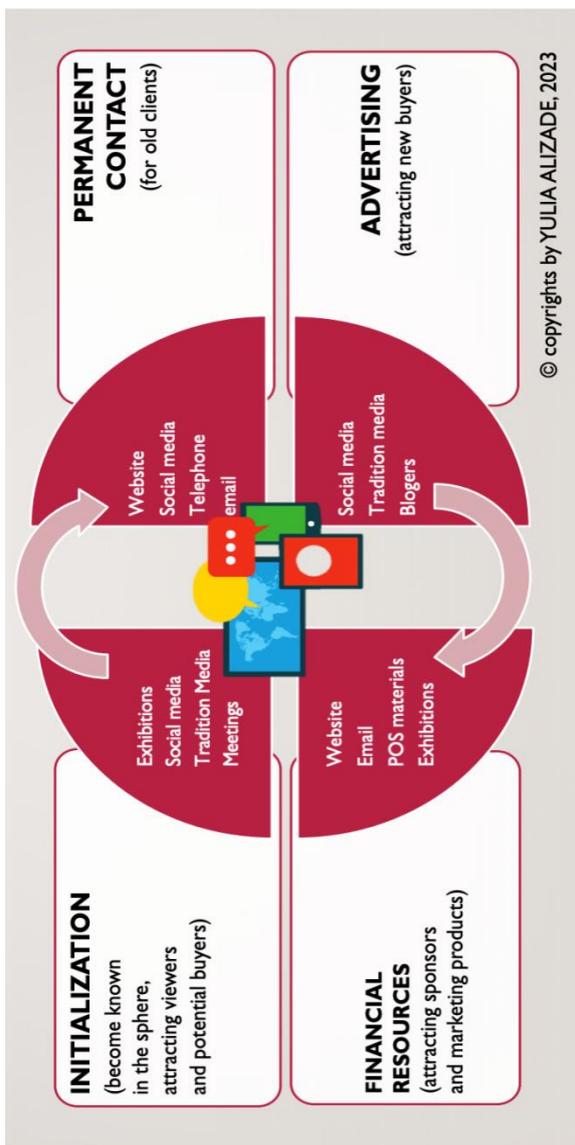
Picture 4. Structure for PR strategy for artists[3] (Source: Author)

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3 Special course PR strategy for artists, Yulia Alizade, 2022.

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HOW NETWORKING AND ENTERING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES CAN AFFECT THE FEMALE ARTISTS OF TOMORROW?

Abstract

In the dynamic and competitive European art sector, women artists vie for a world of opportunities and challenges. This exploration delves into the central role of networking and European funding in shaping the careers and development of women artists. Networking, the cornerstone of career development, facilitates connections, breaks down barriers, and amplifies their voices. At the same time, EU funding serves as a catalyst for economic

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empowerment, innovation, and community impact. This analysis reveals the profound impact of strategic partnerships and financial support, which help women artists not only to be seen but also to influence the art sector in Europe.

Keywords

Networking, Funding Opportunities, Collaboration, EU Projects, Gender Equality

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of the European art sector, female artists find themselves navigating a complex ensemble of opportunities and challenges. As they strive for recognition, the role of networking and funding becomes important. On one hand, understanding the pivotal role of networking in the professional lives of female artists is essential for implementing targeted initiatives and support systems that empower them to thrive and succeed in the dynamic and competitive European art landscape. Networking provides numerous advantages, including community support, visibility, recognition, access to resources, and partnership opportunities, which are essential in advocating for a more inclusive and supportive future for the art scene.

On the other hand, funding, especially through EU programs, acts as a catalyst for empowerment, innovation, and community impact. Their participation in European projects can be a lever for visibility and promotion of their artworks, being a catalyst for their faster development.

The analysis of these two issues that follows will provide information about the importance of networking and funding, their impact on female artists, and the potential and challenges

that they will face. The European art sector, which accounts for 3.8% of total employment, according to Eurostat, pulsates with dynamism and competitiveness, creating a broader problem that needs to be solved regarding the role of networking and funding. These elements can play a significant role in shaping the careers of female artists. As we delve into this, it becomes evident that strategic connections and financial support are not just essential; they are imperative for female artists seeking not only recognition but also a voice in a landscape that demands resilience and innovation.

The Importance of Networking for Female Artists in Europe

Networking is a crucial cornerstone in the career development of female artists. It enables them to establish meaningful connections within the art industry and foster collaborations and partnerships that contribute to their professional growth (Smith 2022). By engaging in networking activities, female artists gain access to opportunities and valuable resources, which are instrumental in expanding their artistic horizons and enhancing their visibility and recognition within the European art community (Evans 2021, Olsen 2018).

Moreover, networking helps female artists navigate institutional barriers and break gender-based stereotypes that often limit their visibility and recognition in art (Miller 2021). By fostering connections with influential stakeholders and decision-makers, female artists can advocate for their creative

vision and contribute to the broader discourse on gender equality and representation within the European art sphere.

The Impact of Networking on Artistic Career Advancement

Effective networking has significantly contributed to the career development of female artists in Europe. Studies indicate that strategic connections and collaborations enable them to access better and more exhibition opportunities and participation in art projects (Sauer 2019). Moreover, networking facilitates knowledge exchange and skill development, empowering female artists to navigate the complexities of the contemporary art world.

Participating in workshops, speeches, art exhibitions, residencies, and other networking events provides female artists with platforms to showcase their work, interact, and receive feedback from peers and industry experts (Brown 2020). Through these interactions, they can refine their creative methodologies, gain insights, and engage with diverse perspectives that may lead to further advancement (Smith 2022). They also enable female artists to establish meaningful relationships with fellow artists, curators, gallery owners, art collectors, or enthusiasts, building a robust support system and setting the foundation for collaborations and partnerships that often increase artistic recognition (Brown 2020). Furthermore, networking fosters the sharing of insights and effective methods, empowering female artists to remain up-to-date regarding different prospects and obstacles within the European art sphere (Jones 2019).

Art Community Support and Promotion of Their Members

Communities within the European art ecosystem have been instrumental in promoting the professional advancement of their members. By fostering an inclusive environment and providing platforms for collaboration and skill-sharing, these communities create opportunities for female artists to showcase their work, share their vision, and expand their networks (Baker 2020, Bergman 2021). Moreover, by comprising art organizations, collectives, and other collaborative networks, art communities increase their members' visibility, particularly emphasizing female artists' contributions (Adams 2018).

Through community support, female artists are encouraged to find and benefit from guidance in navigating the complexities of the art market and industry (Clark 2019). Communities often provide mentorship programs, educational initiatives, and advocacy campaigns that aim to address the unique challenges faced by female artists, thereby fostering an inclusive and empowering environment for their professional development (Evans 2021). Additionally, community support initiatives facilitate the wider dissemination of opportunities, including European calls for funding, grants, awards, and residencies tailored to female artists' specific needs and interests (Fisher 2017).

In addition, community networks actively promote the achievements and contributions of their members through various promotional strategies, such as social media and other digital channels, online and offline publications, and events (Garcia 2019). By highlighting the works and narratives of female artists,

these communities contribute to the broader discourse on gender representation and equity within the European art community, fostering a more inclusive and diverse cultural landscape (Hill 2020).

Challenges in Accessing Networking Platforms

Female artists in Europe often encounter challenges in accessing networking platforms related to their profession, limiting their exposure to influential individuals and organizations within the art community. This restriction is linked to systemic barriers that hinder their participation in key events and exhibitions (van der Zwaan 2020).

Limited access to networking platforms often results in a lack of visibility, recognition, and restricted opportunities for artists to showcase their work and build connections (Adams 2022). Similarly, disparities in access can perpetuate existing inequalities, making it dificult for aspiring artists, especially females, to establish fruitful relationships with industry professionals, thus decreasing their potential for career advancement (Baker 2020).

Moreover, geographical constraints and financial limitations further exacerbate the challenges faced by female artists in accessing networking opportunities, particularly for those residing in remote or underrepresented regions within Europe (Clark 2020). The unequal distribution of resources and support structures often marginalizes artists from these areas, impeding their ability to engage with the broader art community

and secure access to opportunities and resources necessary for professional development. Navigating these challenges requires the implementation of targeted initiatives that promote inclusivity and equitable access to networking platforms for female artists across diverse backgrounds and European regions.

Funding Opportunities and Current Landscape

In the wake of the unprecedented challenges triggered by the global COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, artists found themselves uniquely impacted, grappling with profound financial dificulties and navigating a landscape of limited opportunities to showcase their work. The adverse effects of the pandemic extended to reduced access to essential resources and support, posing a significant threat to the vibrancy of the artistic community (Gouvea, Padovani, & Gutierrez 2023).

After these years and after the pandemic, the creative industry can strategically position itself for success. Embracing digital transformation is a foundational strategy, involving investments in digital technologies, online platforms, and virtual experiences to reach a wider audience and generate revenue. Diversifying revenue streams, such as e-commerce, subscription models, licensing, and partnerships, becomes crucial for long-term sustainability.

Addressing the growing emphasis on sustainability and social responsibility, creative industries should incorporate eco-friendly practices, ethical sourcing, and social impact initiatives into their operations. This not only attracts environmentally

and socially conscious consumers but also aligns businesses with evolving societal values. In this way, investment in talent development and innovation becomes imperative for staying competitive. Upskilling and reskilling employees are essential, and creative industries should invest in training programs, mentorship, and innovation initiatives to foster creativity, adaptability, and resilience within their workforce (Gouvea, Padovani, Gutierrez 2023).

All this agility is crucial for long-term success. The post-pandemic world is likely to bring new challenges and opportunities, and creative industries should remain vigilant about market trends, consumer behavior, and government regulations, positioning themselves for sustained success. Even when agility is needed and all the above approaches will provide a new perspective, the main question is where to find the right funding opportunities in order to proceed with all these initiatives. Recognizing the profound challenges faced by artists and cultural organizations, in 2021, the European Union, through the CulturEU Funding Guide, took proactive measures to provide financial assistance for them to sustain their creative activities, foster the development of new projects, and ensure their ability to connect with broader audiences (European Commission, 2021).

The impact of Funding on Female Artists

Female artists have historically faced challenges in accessing funding opportunities, but there has been a growing recognition of the need for gender equality in the art world.

Various organizations, grants, and initiatives specifically aim to support female artists in their artistic endeavors. Funding stands as an essential catalyst in shaping the trajectory and influence of female artists within the nuanced landscape of the artistic domain. This examination navigates the complex layers of impact that funding, with its subtle yet profound touch, gives to women artists, orchestrating a seamless interaction between financial empowerment and creative expression (Lee, Fraser, Fillis 2018).

In the sphere of financial empowerment, funding assumes the role of a strategic liberator, unlocking critical resources such as materials, studio space, and tools. Serving as a steadfast ally, it mitigates economic barriers that often encumber female artists, affording them the freedom to immerse themselves in their craft without the weight of financial constraints. Transitioning to the realm of project development and innovation, funding emerges as a transformative catalyst, empowering female artists to embark on novel and groundbreaking projects. Functioning as the lifeblood of creativity, it injects capital that facilitates experimentation with diverse mediums, techniques, and themes. Simultaneously, funding fosters collaborative endeavors, forging connections between artists, organizations, and communities, thus cultivating a dynamic and diverse creative ecosystem.

As the focus shifts to exposure and visibility, funding becomes one of the main elements that provides female artists with the means to showcase their work in high-profile exhibitions, art fairs, and cultural events. This exposure not only elevates the visibility of individual artists but also contributes substantively to the representation of diverse voices within the

art world. Concurrently, funding creates invaluable networking opportunities, connecting female artists with peers, curators, and industry professionals, thereby broadening their reach and fostering potential collaborations (Lee, Fraser, Fillis 2018).

Professional development takes center stage as funding assumes the role of a discerning patron, supporting educational opportunities, workshops, and training programs. In this role, it becomes crucial to strengthen the artistic skills and resilience of female artists, ensuring their continued success in the ever-changing art world.

Within the realm of community impact, funded projects serve as a channel for positive change by bringing art to public spaces, fostering community engagement, and addressing social issues through artistic expression. Female artists, strengthened by funding, are emerging as architects of cultural wealth, making significant contributions to the essence of society. In addressing gender disparities, funding initiatives tailored for female artists play a pivotal role in dismantling entrenched gender norms within the art world. Functioning as a megaphone, these initiatives amplify advocacy efforts for gender equality in the arts, underscoring the significance of diverse voices and narratives.

The Participation of Female Artists in EU Funds

With more than 10 active programs to participate in, the female artists have a range of funding opportunities that they have to check constantly. Even with all the information at hand,

the important question about how to participate is one of many points that female artists must overcome. The importance of help and guidance at the early stage of the EU Funding Journey is high, and the right tools can always help with this. For this reason, in 2020, the European Commission created the Creatives Unite, with the collaboration of the European Creative Hubs Network and the Goethe-Institute, with the participation of the Creative FLIP project and consortium, an interactive guide where artists can be informed about the new call for proposals, news about other artists and their artwork, job opportunities, etc. A one-stop-shop that aims to bridge the gap between artists and a wider ecosystem, providing the stage to voice their strangles, their success, and their achievements.

The recognition that the culture and creative sectors are important led the European Union to expand its funding resources. From the Creative Europe program, which is one of the main programs that fosters cultural and creative collaborations, to Horizon Europe supporting innovation in the arts, the funding landscape is multifaceted, and the EU wants to encourage engagement from artists, including female creatives, through frameworks that align with their projects, pushing the boundaries of artistic expression. Thus, the impact of EU funds on female artists becomes a focal point of exploration on many levels. Financial empowerment emerges as a transformative force, providing female artists with more than monetary support. Reducing economic barriers, allowing them to immerse themselves in their craft without the constraints of financial limitations. Having access to funding enables these artists to focus on the creation of their artwork, develop and collaborate with people share their vision.

The exposure and visibility facilitated by grants through European-funded projects enable female artists to showcase their work on international platforms, contributing not only to their individual visibility but also enriching the broader art landscape. The networking opportunities that arise along with EU projects create interconnected webs, allowing artists to expand their reach and embark on cross-disciplinary collaborations.

In terms of professional development, EU funds can support educational initiatives and skill-development projects. This not only enhances the technical skills of female artists but also fosters resilience, enabling them to navigate challenges that arise in the art world. The impact of funded projects is outward, as they engage diverse audiences, foster community involvement, and address societal issues through artistic expression.

Moreover, one of the main goals of the European Union is to break gender barriers at all levels (European Commission, 2020). Programs designed to specifically target and uplift female artists, promote inclusivity, and advocate for gender equality in the arts. Through EU funds, female artists are able to play an important role in contributing and reshaping the culture and creative sector. Female artists supported by EU funds stand as beacons of success in their careers and visibility. From programs like the Women TechEU the European Prize for Women Innovators, to Third Parties Funding, these women are an example to follow and an incentive for other female artists to try and get involved in EU projects.

Conclusion

Through this analysis of the impact of networking and funding opportunities on female artists in the European art scene, it becomes evident that these elements can directly affect their careers and the cultural and creative sectors. The power of strategic partnerships, collaborative endeavours, and financial support offered through networking and funding initiatives amplifies the voices of female artists, making them able to be heard and develop at the professional and personal levels. The nexus of networking and EU funding, helps female artists not only visibility but also ensures positions of influence and representation, contributing substantively to a more inclusive and diverse artistic future.

The combination of these two elements (networking and funding) presents both challenges and opportunities for female artists. Navigating these challenges and opportunities that were presented, the conclusion emerges not as an endpoint but as a to action. As the journey for female artists in Europe continues, the nexus of networking and EU funding become not just a conduit to visibility but a gateway to a more inclusive and diverse artistic future. With the right guidance, tools, and community support, female artists can wield significant influence, reshaping the European art sector into a vibrant tapestry of creativity and diversity.

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ARTS, AR, AND GAMIFICATION TO DEMOCRATIZE CULTURE AND ENHANCE PSYCHOPHYSICAL SKILLS: TWO CASE STUDIES

Abstract

In the present paper, we aim to analyse the use of augmented reality (AR) for music and theatre, in two proposals that intend to merge and facilitate

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the collaboration between the digital and the analog, primarily involving computer vision, music, and figurative art: a deck of cards (MusicARte) and stage design (fAiRy detector), both hand-illustrated. The objective is to comprehend how a similar approach to Aufheben, in the Hegelian synthesis sense (central to which is both the preservation of the best aspects of craftsmanship and programming, as well as the transcendence of the cold aspects of technology and the interactive nature of traditional objects), can enhance the democratisation and attentive listening of classical and contemporary music, all within a framework of gamification: the challenge creates a flow, both educational and concert-based, capable of attracting age groups not yet accustomed to such content.

Keywords

Arts, Aesthetic Object, Augmented Reality, Robotics, Enactivism

Introduction

Art cannot be done without technology; *technè* is the knowledge of the rules of any trade and artistic skill, just as genius, for which one is not credited, cannot do without talent, which is the capacity. Philosopher Schopenhauer once said, "Talent hits a target no one else can hit; genius hits a target no one else can see." Talent and genius, technique and magic, though antithetical, support each other, and thus, art finds its meaning. Art and technology also benefit from redefining the relationship between objects, authors, and spectators, between the concepts of beauty, genius, truth, fiction, and utility. Art has always been a paradoxical question, between necessity and "full belly," between requirement and Darwinian excess. However, it cannot be ignored that since humans have existed, they have

dealt with aesthetic objects and religious concepts; they must represent some evolutionary utility, even if not immediately apparent.

According to Alva Noë, art is always a simulation of some basic human activity. It is a "strange object," he says, only seemingly useless (Noë 2015). By simulating our activities, art is the "thing" that allows us to think about them and reorganise them more effectively. In short, it allows us to structure our strategies in the environment, making us more eficient organisms. Our lives need to be structured into organised activities capable of handling the complexity of information (these could be strategies of "Simplexity," a term coined by Alain Berthoz. Choreography is not spontaneous dance, and figurative art is not a scribble, yet in both cases, they simulate that primordial activity and reorganise it, making it less chaotic. In other words, art, choreography, the Tea ceremony, and philosophy itself make manifest what is hidden in the spontaneity of action; they are methods of research, and practices aimed at making us more effective. So, even video game simulations and automata can help individuals think, rethink, and improve self-awareness, and the sense of self-eficacy, as well as relationships with others and with technology.

Often, it is thought to be an impoverishment of art when it mixes with technology. In reality, it is a sign that it is not a dead object but is evolving in the same way that language accepts neologisms or foreign words when practices, innovations, and significant acts come into contact with the communicative needs of the community of speakers. Furthermore, art has always used technology as a means to express itself and expand its audience.

Thanks to studies in physics, masks and changes in architecture have been made to improve the performance and enjoyability of the show; both served to amplify the voice. This allowed the Greek community to strengthen itself, a sign that art and the sharing of the concept of beauty have to do with the group and with stronger bonds. In this regard, Alexander Nehamas, a contemporary philosopher, considers beauty a social dimension capable of generating particularly intense communicative bonds (Nehamas 2007). The purpose of expressing oneself about beauty is mainly to create relationships. In short, aesthetic judgement is something we want to share. It serves to connect observers and objects in "communities of appreciation". Therefore, introducing robots and other technologies into artistic practices could also increase trust in the machines themselves, encouraging relationships with other individuals involved in sharing aesthetic taste.

In this paper, we will see some examples of artistic expressions in which new structures and participatory practices of the audience are involved, typical of gaming experiences and Web 2.0, where audiences are no longer passive but are part of authorship and the ongoing redefinition of culture. Computer vision, machine learning, deep learning, and robotics come together with theatre, poetry, painting, illustration, classical music, and song. The result is a transformation, both of the digital and the analog, taking the best of both, like a face that, when reflected, gives a face to the glass and, at the same time, finds the best of itself with hairstyles, makeup, and poses: self-awareness.

Democratisation of art and technology: MusicARte and fAiRy detector

Walter Benjamin's The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction is one of the most influential and cited texts in the field of art and cultural theory (Benjamin 1936). In this essay, Benjamin examines the impact of mechanical reproducibility, particularly through photography and cinema, on the nature and perception of the aesthetic object. He emphasised the loss of aura, which digitalization has further diminished in artworks: the reproducibility of photography, digital art, and cinema eliminates the exclusivity of the work. There is no longer just one original, and the audience experiencing cinema is not a unique witness to the performance as in the case of theatre. With the loss of aura, the author and the sense of magic that it carries with it disappear, while idolatry towards Hollywood actors, propagandistic politicisation of cinema, and today's web influencers emerge.

Another aspect that Benjamin discusses, which we believe is significant, is the democratisation of art. Everyone can be part of the audience, and costs are reduced. With recent innovations and the participatory nature of Web 2.0, not only has consumption been democratised, but so have production and publication. Some argue that openness goes hand in hand with a decrease in quality. However, if it is true that art has effects on bonds and on improving the mind-body of those who create and experience it, then the democratisation of art can only be seen as an elevation of the population, not a depletion.

We have proposed two products to preserve the subjective experience, the exclusive testimony of one-time consumption, and the physical, beautiful, artisanal object, as an inevitable trigger for what technology enables: an expansion of the audience, engagement, and co-participation in the artistic narrative, all of which give the artwork a constantly changing "here and now": the aura. It should be noted that synthesising innovations and artistic expression is another form of democracy. Keeping technology confined to the laboratory or exclusively for STEM applications means limiting the scope of technology and hindering the understanding and engagement of a large portion of the audience. In short, art and technology, if united in a Hegelian aufheben of positive synthesis, democratise both art and technology, with all the implications for innovation, orientation, trust, and the self-organisation of spontaneous activities of the extended mind.

The MusicARte project (Figures 1, 2), conceived and developed by Vibrisse Studio Savona and Lorenza Saettone in partnership with Scuola di Robotica, represents an innovative fusion of technology, musical tradition, and playful learning. Essentially, it consists of a deck of 52 cards, enhanced through augmented reality, and composed of two sections: the first dedicated to the great musicians of history, and the second containing a series of animal cards responsive to AR. When these cards are scanned with the corresponding application, they activate a segment of a musical piece that must be recognized and attributed to a composer by scanning them in turn with the device's camera. The deck includes 2 wild cards with instructions, 20 portraits of the most important classical musicians (such as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and others), easily recognizable with

their names, and 30 animal cards, each different from the other, all with artisanal illustrations, contributing to the game's appeal and value. Each time a correct match is made, the app scores points and provides additional information about the artwork or the musician, making the experience even more engaging. Along the way, there will also be tips to improve one's deficiencies, thanks to an internal statistical system within the device that shows progress and identifies deficient composers, offering AR-based suggestions. Furthermore, it will be possible to further customise the challenge by choosing the modes of play (and study), and the rules; you can even upload additional pieces, creating new animal-author combinations each time.

Figures 1 and 2: the cards and application

This combination of art and technology offers an intriguing philosophical perspective on the human mind and education, as we can explore how augmented reality (AR) and gamification can influence learning, the perception of music, the connection with art, and interaction with others. Augmented reality (AR) is a technology that overlays digital elements onto the perception of the real world. In MusicARte, AR provides users with the opportunity to create new connections between composers and musical works, thanks to the immediacy of the game and the hand gestures involved, such as grasping the card, framing it, and choosing, all done with the hand, much like any game where tradition has already established manual dexterity. As it is known, the hand is essential for knowledge and memory. Here,

AR, by not concealing but rediscovering its essential trigger in physical reality to add digital elements, combines the actions of analog with the augmentative aspects of computer vision and AI engaged in image recognition. The player is also engaged in the same recognition, distinguishing sound, animals, and authors, and in the sequence that involves turns in the game and different phases of grabbing, framing, and matching. This serves as a stimulus to consolidate the functions of the mind, including multisensory perception, problem-solving, decision-making, and motor coordination, in a blend that truly consolidates knowledge, as mentioned in the introduction.

When combined with gamification, AR stimulates users' creativity, encouraging them to think innovatively and not to perceive listening as a chore or errors as failures but as a process for improvement. An interesting aspect is the ability for users to personalise their learning experience by adding musical pieces and extra information beyond those provided by default in the app. This raises questions about individual freedom and autonomy in knowledge formation, as well as aspects of activism. Users are free to define their learning path, choosing the content they want to explore in a playful context, where additional information and engagement with classical music are not experienced as burdensome and anxiety-inducing but are indirectly absorbed, almost as a virtuous side-effect of the game. Proof of this is the promotional video recorded to promote this product. It also served as a field experiment: the recording was a "first take" of a group of very young children who had not yet been exposed to the subject of music history, which is typically taught in lower secondary school (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxYo3QFUaog). However, intuitive gestures and

engagement through AR and gamification prompted users to engage in recognition, naming, and proactive studying, even unconsciously.

Another example of gamification, AR (and robotics, in this case) applied to music and figurative art (and theatre) is the performance proposed within the framework of the 2023 Festival della Scienza, called "fAiRy detector." At first glance, it is a concert. Max Manfredi, one of the most renowned singer-songwriters on the Italian and international music scene, performs alongside highly talented musicians: Maestros Fabrizio Ugas, Nicola Bruno, Alice Nappi, Laura Merione (including the generative Artificial Intelligence that requests the musicians to play on the spot). In reality, it is a participatory theatre in which the true protagonist is the audience, which, for once, can, or rather, must, use digital devices because various fairies are trapped in the stage set (paintings) and must be freed using a special camera that has been appropriately programmed. The stage set has been torn into pieces (in a previous attempt to free the sylphs; that's the story) and must be reassembled like a puzzle. Only by carefully listening to the songs and the presentations of the actors, including the robot Nao, will it be possible to unravel the problem. Once the scene is reconstructed, if done correctly, when framed with the device, an AR fairy re-emerges, finally liberated from the constraints of matter. In addition to the fairies, the pieces of their transportation device, now destroyed, will also be recovered. If assembled correctly, the fairies will regain the means to travel back and forth between the two realms, whenever and however they please, as they have for millennia. This represents the first case in the history of hybrid graphic

adventure in which the avatars are us in the flesh and in which the arts, with the use of AR and Nao are central elements.

Conclusion

The combination of technology and art not only democratises access to art but also offers new perspectives for improving psychophysical skills, including coordination, memory, and recognition. Art and technology, when harmoniously united, as discussed in the paper, can become a vehicle for innovation, guidance, and personal enrichment, representing a form of democratic participation in culture. In the audience of "fAiRy detector," the fate of the story is determined, just as in "MusicARte," students are active in their learning. Thanks to technology, listening is encouraged, which is increasingly challenging due to the distractions caused by notifications and, as one can understand, not all technology is the same.

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VIDEO GAMES AS AN AVANT-GARDE ART FORM

Abstract

The paper deals with the research of the video game medium through the framework of experimental art forms, techniques, and practices. The analyzed video games are far from the usual comprehension of video games and their basic principles, such as dramaturgy, mechanics, art, and sound art direction. Titles such as Pathologic and Disco Elysium are the starting point of this work because the games are most similar to the avant-garde art forms of other media. The ideas and concepts of theatre greats such as Berthold Breht and Antonin Artaud have a major influence on these two games, which is generally a rarity in the video game industry, as often their dramaturgy tends more towards movies and spelling?, where the narrative becomes linear. Other art forms, such as literature and painting, are also important to this

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notion, mostly experimental movements such as Expressionism, Surrealism, Absurdism, and others of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The conclusion of the paper is that video games can represent the terrain for artistic experimentation, as films once represented.

Keywords

Video games, avant-garde, experimental art, narration

Introduction – the Concept of Video Games as an Art Form and Their Evolution

Video games are still a relatively young medium, even younger, as a form of art media. As computer technology started becoming more advanced, the narrative, and generally the whole conception of games, began taking many shapes and gaining influences from various other media. Even though the production of video games with complex narratives is expansive, in the 21st century, the availability of tools for creating games is quite greater. Thus, a smaller team of creative individuals can gain the possibility of making a plausible product without major financial limitations sponsorships in the form of other materialistic investments.[1]

The same as with film, the largest amount of video games is usually primarily of an entertainment nature, whose art values are questionable in general. As for smaller productions, video games with expressed artistic sensibilities are more common. In that sense, video games might have the possibility of being the most complete art medium, given that they include the whole

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[1] The video game Minecraft is the best example in this context, because it was created by an individual, and today it is one of the most popular games in the world.

spectrum of audiovisual art, together with interactive elements, as well as dramaturgy and literary narratives. With the help of the advancement of graphical and audio technologies, authors have gained the possibility to create worlds in video games with sophisticated artistic direction in a virtual three-dimensional space, whether in a realistic or completely stylized conception.

Smaller productions, often led by something greater than the commercial value of their product, have shown boldness in incorporating various influences from other art media into their games. These influences are known to be frequently quite avant-garde and hermetic towards wider masses. That is why a risk is included that those games can be ignored or canceled by the gaming audiences, as is usual in many cases. Henceforth, their art value through this act is never jeopardized, and time, some games with this profile started gaining somewhat of cult status (even subsequent commercial success, which is not that important for this analysis and paper).

The artistic approach to dramaturgical conceptions of video games

The narrative by itself is important in any art form, including video games. The way it is presented can be unconventional and layered. One game appropriate as an example regarding an authentic narrative is a creation by a Russian team called "Ice Pick Lodge", which bears the name: "Pathologic", from the year 2005. In 2019, the same team created a remake of the game,

more adapted to new technologies and more suited to the needs of newer generations of video game players.

Pathologic is a prime example of a video game as a form of art. The methods used in the way in which the narrative is conceived represent an unexplored field for many video game enthusiasts, primarily because of the authentic and mysterious world, as well as the fashion in which the plot progresses and the role of the protagonist. The frame in which the plot is realized is akin to a theater play, where the play director instructs the main character about how the story should go on. A rather interesting fact is the omnipresent breaking of "the fourth wall"[2], transferring the attention of the player towards the idea that the plot is a theater play and that it is not real. If the player starts losing, it enrages the director, and he gives penalties as an increase in the overall game dificulty. It should be noted that the game is quite dificult compared to many other games in the industry. Apart from the various characters in the main plot of the game, nameless and faceless characters are present that resemble mimes. Influenced by the choir in the ancient Greek theatre, they are called "tragedians" and their function is to introduce and warn the player about the many illogical and non-intuitive aspects of the game, including the inner thoughts of characters that they are not willing to share with the player. Other faceless characters are inspired by the plague doctors from the Middle Ages, whose function is similar to tragedians, however with a grimmer and more malicious outlook. They frequently insult the player when many dificulties occur in the plot (Walker 2011).

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[2] The concept when the characters of the narrative are aware of their fictitious nature.

Methods like these are unique in their dramatic conceptions of video game narratives. It could even be compared to the idea of the Theatre of Cruelty by the French drama artist and theorist Antonin Artaud, whose idea was to erase the border between the play and the audiences with an accent on "attacking the senses" of the crowd (Artaud 1986). In this case, the auditorium is the player of the game, and the game itself is the play, its plot to be exact. Without going into detailed explanations, the plot of the game is set in a rural, nameless Russian town, which at first seems average. As the story progresses, the town, starts seeming surreal and out of place, especially with certain aspects of the town such as some architecture, and its overall infrastructure, which are not practical and, in some cases, physically impossible. The same could be said for the locals who speak riddles using philosophical rhetoric, rather different how a person would speak in reality. Without doubt, the authors of the game helped themselves with the art technique of "defamiliarization", coined by the Russian literary theorist Viktor Shkolovsky. The technique itself is based on the idea of making casual elements of everyday life seem strange and unusual, giving them a deeper context, and creating a mystery and unfamiliarity around them (Shkolovsky 2017). A good example in popular contemporary media where this technique was put to good use is the cult series "Twin Peaks" by the American movie director and multimedia artist David Lynch, from 1990.

Apart from all the barriers and abstractions in the narrative of the game, the main goal is simplistic. The protagonist is a healer who is amidst an epidemic of unusual plague in the town, and has to survive twelve days fighting the epidemic while saving the lives of notable townsfolk, who are symbolically presented

as the vital organs of the town divided into three layers: blood, bone, and nerves, while the town itself is the organism. What complicates the plot is the plague itself, which is abstract, and kind of alive, defying the laws of physics. It cannot be cured by conventional means, which can provoke frustration for the player. The plot is treated in a way where the player in the role of the protagonist has to fight the plague using not-so-obvious and unconventional methods. Considering that the plague does not only represent sickness, it is also an unnatural force symbolises the estrangement of people their nature. Artaud's concept of the Theatre of Cruelty is obvious in the story, and the antagonism between the audience – the player and the plot are more than evident, to understand human nature (Artaud 1986). In the story of Pathologic, the essence of the narrative is seen in the idea that mankind has swayed too much from their nature with their deeds (mass industrialisation and complex and unnatural architecture) by torturing the Earth, the soil on which they live. The metaphysical plague, is Earth's answer and a defense mechanism purpose is to enlighten people and make them never forget their roots and where they came from.

The concept as a whole is further defined by its stylized art direction. The original version of the game from 2005, has managed, to a certain degree, to mask its technical flaws by using the limited draw distance of older configurations and giving it a further context of a thick fog, which serves as a purpose for the story. The remake of the game annuls those technical flaws. However, by bringing it closer to Western audiences, refining some game mechanics, and simplifying the story, the game itself is not as artistically vivid as the original.

Transcending the form of a video game

There is a question regarding where the border is between the conceptualization of video games and when they become something greater, excluding computer military simulations, and educational video games. Although the script is a very important element of every game, like with film, it does not have any artistic value. The dialogue is often an accompanying element, even in some RPG (Role-playing game)[3] games where the dialogue is usually the main game mechanic. There are frequently a few dialogue options that the player can choose from during their communication with other characters in the game, or NPC-s (non-player characters)[4] as they are usually called. This is not applied in the context of multiplayer games, where communication is between real people in real-time as players. One of the good examples where dialogue is a main gameplay mechanic is an Estonian video game called "Disco Elysium", which was created by the art collective ZA/UM, with the writer Robert Kurvitz as the main game designer. Even games with a similar concept already exist, like the well-known title Planescape: Torment, none of them have gone so much into stylized art direction and a narrative so inspired by an existentialist, even absurdist philosophy.

The world and narrative of the game can be labeled, in short, as a detective story. The only thing is that the detective is an amnesiac from hard drinking and drugs. A concept like this

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3   A genre of tabletop and video games, where the player takes on the role of a protagonist in a nonlinear narrative and decides how the plot unfolds. These types of games put dialogue in focus compared to other genres of games.

4   As the name says, they are all characters that are not controlled by the player; their behaviour is programmed instead.

gives a unique dynamic to the plot, where not only is the goal to solve the mystery of a murder, but also to solve your character's struggles and to try and reconstruct your mind and memories. The main gameplay mechanic is dialogue, not only with other characters but with yourself as well, or the aspects of your mind, to be more exact. Those aspects take the form of skills, which can progress with skill points. Every aspect has its personality; some of them are rhetoric, empathy, as well as pain threshold, perception, etc. Depending on how developed those skills are, they will shape the dialogue options, and the protagonist's personal needs and struggles as well. A good foundation for dramatic tension throughout dialogue is a gameplay mechanic that functions like a skill check, which has a percentage of success. Even if it fails, the story fluidly progresses, which is a good and unique method for unfolding the plot. It can be confusing at times, and similar to symptoms of a mental illness like schizophrenia. On the other hand, it has an existentialist tone that quite skillfully incorporates philosophical concepts into the framework of the game, making it not only a game but an analysis of the human condition as well (Cohen 2019). The protagonist has health and moral points; they even function quite intuitively. On some occasions, their vulnerability seems absurd. There is one scene in particular where there is a possibility to sit on a chair that seems very uncomfortable, and if that is done, the health points are lowered. In case they are already low, the protagonist can die from that action, which is by itself absurd in real life.

Like the previously mentioned concept of defamiliarization by Viktor Shkolovsky, it is also present in this title. Even though the setting is a complete work of fiction, the influences from real-life 20th century modernism are easily seen. The only thing

is that the design of everyday objects and environments in that style seems off, otherworldly, and in some cases, impractical, from cars interior, to clothing and architecture. Politics is also important in the world of Disco Elysium. Most of the characters, during dialogue with the protagonist, use some form of political rhetoric in their speech. The script was skillfully written so that no political ideology is presented in either a positive or negative context. Because the protagonist is an amnesiac, depending on some dialogue choices, his political alignment is slowly forming until it opens dialogue options and questlines regarding which alignment has the most points. It is noticeable that the dramatic structure is inspired by the works of the well-known playwright, theatre director, and theorist Berthold Brecht. Reflected upon both plot and characters, every action and even the plainest dialogue has a deeper meaning, as it is neither simplistic nor shallow. (Brecht 1949). The same can be said for Pathologic, where the treatment of the plot and dialogue is similar but in a different art style and manner. From visual aspects to sound and music, Disco Elysium is substantially inspired by Expressionism. Graphics have a strong resemblance to oil paintings, where brushstrokes are emphasized in all details. Stylistically, it resembles the works of Wassily Kandinsky, Vincent Van Gogh, and many others of a similar style. The sound and music are also inspired by that movement, mainly by using the British post-rock group Sea Power as the author for the music.

Instead of a conclusion: the future of art in video games

Thanks to the advancement of technology and its increased availability, the possibility for creative people from other artistic directions to express themselves through creating video games as an artform is much greater. The art collective ZA/UM is a great example of this practice in use. They never made a video game before, and they managed to incorporate their expertise from other media, with the help of some hired programmers and designers, to create a critically acclaimed video game. In 2019, Disco Elysium won the prestigious BAFTA award for game of the year, which is a counterpart to The Academy Awards in film, and The Grammy Award in music. Without a doubt, this game represents an excellent example of the possibilities in future artistic and unconventional video game development. The commercial formula and the corporate conception of video games as a means of profit is negligible in this case. Video games are much more than a consumeristic product of sole entertainment purposes which time will gradually tell. There is still a lot to explore regarding this medium. Video games are extremely grateful for all kinds of experiments using many different, even avant-garde techniques and methods. Time will tell how this art-form will evolve next, and to what degree will technological advancement influence its evolution.

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PERFORMING ARTS AND VISUAL ARTS: THE POSSIBILITIES OF A SCENICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION OF THE RUŽIĆ GALLERY

Abstract

One of the aspects of the interpretation of the Ružić and contemporaries exhibition is the interdisciplinary approach to museum education for visitors of different ages. By establishing a model of good museum pedagogic practices, and understanding the exhibition of the Ružić Gallery as a space for interaction and learning, the performing arts are there to enrich the possibilities of fundus interpretation. Guided by the fact that galleries and museums are required and expected to be spaces for interaction and learning, a completely new attitude towards the audience is required-the visitor are not

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just passive observers. Galleries and museums encourage visitors' curiosity and interest in works of art, objects, and collections through learning experience. On the example of two plays that were created as a result of interdisciplinary workshops in the space of the permanent exhibition, which had as a starting point the development of storytelling and pre-reading skills, the artistic design of props and scenography, as well as scenic exercises and games, the possibilities of scenic interpretation of the permanent exhibition of the Ružić Gallery will be presented. The scenic performance ultimately takes on the role of promoter of the contents of the Ružić Gallery's fund outside the walls of the building where it is kept, with guest performances in other museum institutions.

Key words

interdisciplinarity, museum education, interaction, learning

Introduction

The perception and function of museums and galleries have undergone significant transformations in recent decades. They are no longer regarded as dull and austere spaces where visitors silently stroll and observe exhibits from a distance, assuming a passive role as mere observers. Instead, they have evolved into interactive environments that foster learning and engagement through entertaining educational content. Consequently, the cultural policy of the Art Gallery in Slavonski Brod had to adapt and prioritise communication with diverse groups of visitors. We have discovered a solution to enhance the reception of the Ružić Gallery's contents and contemporary exhibitions through an interdisciplinary approach to museum education for visitors of various age groups. By perceiving the Ružić Gallery exhibition as a platform for interaction and

learning, we have expanded the possibilities for interpreting the collections by incorporating the performing arts. Inspired by Krešimir Purgar's "In human civilisation there are not so many inanimate objects that we consider alive to such an extent that we turn to them in moments of suffering or for pleasure and mere distraction, creating in us tranquility or unstoppable rage-such as pictures." (Purgar, 2021) We found a completely new attitude towards the audience, which is not just a passive observer, but through the experience of learning and active participation in the process of creating cultural content, their curiosity and interest in works of art, objects, and collections is encouraged.

The first part of the paper presents the creation and life of the play "Kidnapping in the Gallery," which was created as part of the EU project "Galerokaz: Implementation of Storytelling and Puppetry Skills in the Museum Education of the Ružić Gallery according to the participatory management model of public and civil partnership," which the Art Gallery was implementing from October 2018 to October 2020. The project enriched the Ružić Gallery's museum education with new contents, puppetry, and storytelling activities, which give the sculpture from the permanent exhibition a completely new role; it is no longer just an exhibit (which can only provide the observer with information about the author, theme, artistic elements, technique, and period, i.e., the style in which it was created), but is also a starting point for developing storytelling skills, an incentive for developing artistic skills as part of Montessori pedagogy, and in the finale and part of the theatre show, which interestingly introduced the visitors to the permanent exhibition of the Ružić Gallery.

The second part of the paper describes the creation and life of the dance-drama show Paravani and the poetry recital Hands, which were created as part of the EU project "I see, hear, feel art-programmes of social inclusion in Slavonski Brod for people with disabilities through adapted cultural contents," which the Art Gallery conducted from February 2021 to February 2023. Through the project, we offered different types of art workshops to people with disabilities from the city and neighbouring municipalities to ensure that they realised their right to artistic creation, among others, and drama, which resulted in two performances, performed in the space of the Ružić Gallery in six sessions in front of a large audience.

Kidnapping in the Gallery

The Art Gallery of the City of Slavonski Brod, in partnership with the City of Slavonski Brod, the Ivana Brlić Mažuranić Theater Company, the Logos Children's Center, and the Vilinput Association, through activities through a joint project in cooperation with the public and civil sectors, realized a show that "brought to life" selected works of art from the Ružić Gallery, including children and the rest of the population in activities related to the preparation of a theater performance, and introduced them to the contents of the Ružić Gallery. By performing joint activities, an example of good practice of participatory management in culture was provided, and in this way, the level of public awareness of this model of management was raised.

The play "Kidnapping in the Gallery" was directed by Matej Safundžić, and performed by the actors of the Theater Company, Ivana Brlić Mažuranić, with collaborators Luka Stilinović and Dora Peić.

The starting point for the play's narrative is the artwork of contemporary Croatian artists from the collection of the famous sculptor Branko Ružić, which Ružić donated to his hometown of Slavonski Brod. To bring this valuable artistic heritage closer to primary school children, an interactive performance was created. It was extremely interesting for the children to be involved in making a play bu solving puzzles. Namely, with the help of the acting troupe, the children had to find a way out of the "escape room" and rescue Branko Ružić, who was kidnapped and captured by his sailor (otherwise, an exhibit of the Gallery, the sculpture of the same name by Vasko Lipovac), and all this before the explosion of a time bomb. Thirty minutes of the performance passed quickly, and the children did not hide their enthusiasm for this unusual experience.

The participants of the workshop create part of the scenography for the play (summer 2019, photo: archive of the Art Gallery)

The play premiered in the Ružić Gallery in Slavonski Brod on November 6, 2019, and 12 performances of the play "Kidnapping in the Gallery" were performed in the Ružić Gallery, as planned by the project.

"Kidnapping in the gallery" is a crossover between a theatrical performance in which art from the gallery "comes to life" and an escape room (a popular game for young people in which a group works together to discover clues, solve puzzles and tasks, and find "keys" to get out of captivity). The performance was created together with the children who

attended the "Galerokaza" project workshops in such a way that they, having become familiar with the works of art in the permanent exhibition through a series of workshops, suggested to the director of the play the selection of exhibits that will be the characters of the play. Set designer and author of props Valentina Srnojević started making dolls according to the selected exhibits in such a way that through a long process (photographing the exhibits from all angles, studying the details, materials, and techniques of making the originals, then experimenting with the materials from which the dolls will be made to obtain an approximate appearance of the materials and techniques of the originals), she first designed sketches and mock-ups, and then designed the mechanisms and ways of animating individual puppets and parts of the scenography. Only then did their creation follow. The children who attended the workshops participated in the creation of a part of the scenography.

Apart from the canceled performance in April 2020, which was made up in June, in which there were two performances and an online performance of the play in May of the same year due to the consequences of the pandemic, all the others were held with the audience in the Ružić Gallery, of course with the implementation of mandatory protective measures and maintenance of social distance. The last performance was on October 7, 2020.

With the completion of the project, the play continued its life outside Slavonski Brod.; On July 13, 2021, it was a guest at

the Karlovac City Museum as part of the "Star Summer 2021" program and the EMA 2021 campaign "Outstanding!"

Along with the show, an exhibition from the collection of the Art Gallery of the city of Slavonski Brod was also organised. The exhibition and overall program activities are the results of fruitful inter-museum cooperation between the City Museum of Karlovac and the Art Gallery of the City of Slavonski Brod. During the action "Out/Out/Red/No!". This type of exhibition-theatre project enables direct familiarisation with the contents (or at least part of the contents) of the gallery's holdings outside the walls of the building where it is kept, and the very way its presentation will potentially attract future users to visit the gallery.

Dance-drama performance Paravans and Poetry Recital Hands

The museum institution has to consider how to actively include all groups of its users in its activities and to create conditions for the equal participation of persons with disabilities in them, while respecting the dignity and interests of the person.

We tried to put this fact into practice by implementing the project "I see, hear, feel art". The main purpose of this project is to increase social inclusion for blind, visually impaired, deaf, and hard-of-hearing people from the urban area of Slavonski Brod through the development of a network of non-institutional service programs that, in cooperation with the public and civil

sectors, enable active inclusion and improvement of the quality of life of persons with disabilities.

The idea for a project of this type, in which we tried to at least partially enable people with disabilities to receive the cultural contents of the gallery, was present for a long time, but we received an additional boost by hosting the inclusive exhibition "I look by touch" in the space of the Ružić Gallery at the beginning of 2020. The exhibition was organised by the City Museum of Karlovac in cooperation with the Center for Education "Vinko Bek". The inclusive exhibition "I see by touch" invited us to experience art through the sense of touch and get to know the artwork of visually impaired children from the Center for Education "Vinko Bek", created according to the "pioneering method of art education by prof. Tanje Parlov."

In addition to the infrastructural adaptation of the gallery space, it was necessary to offer different types of art workshops to people with disabilities from the area of Slavonski Brod and its surroundings to ensure that they realise their right to artistic creation. As in the presentation of the content of the Ružić Gallery's permanent exhibition, we strive for interdisciplinarity, so in addition to art workshops, we have also planned drama workshops, in which participants-people with disabilities-with the help of the workshop leader and professional actors from the Ivan Brlić Mažuranić Children's Theater would prepare and perform a poetry recital through a series of workshops, inspired by the art of the Ružić Gallery and the literary writings of Branko Ružić.

By following and listening to events on the art scene, we tried to find and invite a team of experts who have extensive experience working with people with disabilities.

Drama workshop with members of the Blind Association of Brod-Posavina County (photo: archive of the Art Gallery)

Mario Kovač as director and executive producer, Branko Banković as choreographer and producer, and Nikolina Miletić as set designer and props designer were selected for the implementation of the drama workshops and the preparation of the play and recital.

Mario Kovač received his doctorate in 2015 at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb under the mentorship of Professor PhD Sibile Petlevski with the dissertation "Methodology of theater work with blind and partially sighted people," has extensive experience in theater work with disabled people.

Together with her colleagues, Kovač introduced the workshop participants to the world of theater and prepared them for the performance of the play through a series of activities and acting exercises. It should be noted that the recital is intended for both persons with disabilities and users without physical impairments, sensitize them and influence the destruction of prejudices against the abilities of persons with disabilities to participate in the reception of cultural content and active cultural life.

Thirty drama workshops were held for the preparation of a poetry recital with members of the Regoč Association, the Association of the Blind BPŽ, and the Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing BPŽ. Their ultimate goal was to create a poetic recital with a movement inspired by the permanent exhibition of the Ružić Gallery, which would be presented to the audience in the Ružić Gallery on several occasions at the end of 2022.

Premiere of the poetry recital "Hands", Gallery Ružić, 19.10. 2022
(photo: archive of the Art Gallery)

In the end, the director decided that the small parts of the play rehearsed at the workshops-etudes-will be divided into two plays, according to their character: in the first, a stage-dramatic play, the emphasis is on tactile and movement, and in the second, a poetic recital, the emphasis is on spoken-poetic notes by Branko Ružić and one of the workshop participants, Robert Poletto. The performances are mobile; the actors and

the audience move all the time through the space of the Ružić Gallery's permanent exhibition.

These activities aimed to raise the quality of life of people with disabilities and enable them to access more social content, which ultimately contributed to public awareness and had an impact on breaking down prejudices against the abilities of people with disabilities.

Through joint activities, we have achieved, as a community, several important goals: respect for human rights, tolerance and respect for diversity, information, cooperation, and responsibility of all (co)stakeholders in the development of society, the right to artistic creation, and equality despite disability.

The participants of the workshops were extremely satisfied with the workshops in the Gallery, and they looked forward to every next meeting with the leaders, especially since they had not had the opportunity to meet this type of work before, which was adapted to them and their needs and possibilities.

By participating in project activities, people with disabilities are enabled to progress in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for the reception of cultural content, social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal fulfilment.

The performances, one after the other, premiered in the Ružić Gallery in Slavonski Brod and will be played on two more dates, as planned by the project.

Conclusion

Access to children and youth is very complex and requires special commitment from us, as well as access to people with disabilities. We must strive to make their training more fun and stressful and turn their stay in the gallery into Redundant an enjoyable event. In addition to the educational element, which aims to deepen their knowledge, the aim is to encourage and develop the creativity and artistry of the youngest visitors and to involve them in the creation of museum content.

Furthermore, numerous research studies have demonstrated that art has a great and powerful role and influence. He believes that art can contribute to reducing stress and anxiety, reducing blood pressure, reducing the need to take painkillers, and increasing self-confidence. Art is often a catharsis for the artist himself, through which he removes his personal negative experiences, but also for the observer; it can be a refinement of the soul.

Ultimately, by approaching the presentation of the Ružić Gallery's art exhibition in an interdisciplinary manner, we improved the reception of the Ružić Gallery's exhibition content and created a new art audience.

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Facebook stranica Galerije umjetnina grada Slavonskog Broda https://www.facebook.com/galerijaumjetninagradaslavonskogbroda

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PRO-RATA ELEMENT: CONTEMPORARY FEMALE AUTHORS

Abstract

The contemporary writing scene in the Balkans has a beautiful tradition of transcripts, letters, and translations that can be seen and sensed almost as a native speaker feels about the original works. We archive it for the rest of the world to see, no matter the time and age that might come after-it speaks a universal language, just as the cultures in the Balkan Peninsula have universal about to their heritage. The paper will focus on the representation and visibility of female writers, including gender bias and discrimination when it comes to questions and generally when and why women are contacted-to fill the gaps in the news, or indeed for their achievements? When it comes to female writers, Bosnia and Herzegovina is filled with inspirational voices and women who are more than ready to correspond with the audience about their emotions, thoughts, social positions, and political influence. This is

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an invaluable source of introspective lines of thinking that can help those captivated inside the less educated communities. But these books (prose and poetry) are often neglected, and women are strictly pro-rata used to support the 'equality' checkmark of a certain festival or event. Many times, we are only victims of stereotypes and objectification, where our opinions are ignored, or, on the other hand, - erotica in our poetry is being degraded to 'provocation'. However, not everything is as gloomy, as female writers are readily showing their fierceness. In this paper, I will implement research through interviews with female writers, which will lead to a wide palette of opinions by contemporary female writers.

Introduction

In the art world, an issue persists: the neglect of female writers. Despite their immense talent, creativity, and valuable contributions, women artists continue to face significant issues in recognition, representation, and compensation. This pervasive gender bias is reflected in various aspects of the art ecosystem, from museums and galleries to art publications.

The problem arises from deep-seated stereotypes and biases that undervalue women's perspectives and artistic expressions. Artworks created by women are often marginalized or overlooked in favor of their male counterparts.

Just 11% of all acquisitions and 14% of exhibitions at 26 prominent U.S. museums over the past decade were of work by female artists (Halperin 2019). This neglect is limiting the overall richness of the art world. In addressing this problem, it is

crucial to challenge existing biases, promote equal opportunities, and amplify the voices of women artists. By fostering a more inclusive and diverse art community, we can break the chain of neglect and empower women artists to thrive, ultimately enriching the entire art world with their unique perspectives and creativity.

The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the pervasive issue of gender inequality within the realm of art, specifically focusing on the neglect and underrepresentation of female writers. It will explore the societal biases, limited opportunities, and gender stereotypes that have perpetuated this inequality. Moreover, the paper will highlight the significant achievements of women artists throughout history, showcasing their creativity, innovation, and unique perspectives.

But there are also certain limitations. The research primarily focuses on the experiences of women writers, leaving out other marginalized gender identities within the art world. Additionally, the paper may not encompass every cultural and regional nuance due to the vast diversity of artistic traditions worldwide. Furthermore, while the paper proposes solutions, implementing them may face practical challenges due to entrenched biases and systemic issues.

Review

Throughout history, women have made significant but often overlooked contributions to the arts. In ancient civilizations, female artists were revered, like the renowned poet Sappho in

ancient Greece. However, as societies became more patriarchal, women's roles in the arts were restricted. The Renaissance period saw a few notable exceptions, such as Artemisia Gentileschi, who defied norms to become a celebrated painter.

The 18th and 19th centuries witnessed a slow shift, with more women gaining access to artistic education and patronage. Still, they have faced challenges and were often excluded from formal art institutions. The suffrage movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries paved the way for women to assert their artistic talents. Trailblazers like Georgia O'Keeffe and Frida Kahlo challenged conventional norms, leaving a lasting impact on the art world (The Representation of Women in Art Throughout History, poppycd.art).

The mid-20th century saw the rise of feminist art movements advocating for gender equality in the arts. This activism led to increased visibility for female artists and recognition of their unique perspectives. Today, women continue to break barriers in various artistic fields, shaping the cultural landscape with their creativity and resilience. Despite historical challenges, women artists have persevered, leaving an indelible mark on the rich tapestry of human artistic expression.

Erotica in women's art is often perceived as provocative due to its challenge to traditional norms and societal expectations. Historically, women were confined to specific roles, and openly expressing their sexuality was discouraged. When female artists create erotic art, it disrupts these norms, confronting the viewer with intimate and sensual themes that challenge conventional boundaries. Additionally, erotica in women's art can be seen as provocative because it subverts the male gaze. Traditionally,

depictions of female sexuality in art were often created by male artists for male viewers, objectifying women. When women artists portray eroticism, they reclaim control over their bodies and desires, empowering themselves and challenging the dominant narrative.

Contributions of notable female writers

Throughout history, women writers have made significant contributions to literature, challenging societal norms and inspiring generations with their words. One of the earliest known female writers is Sappho, an ancient Greek poet from the island of Lesbos, celebrated for her lyric poetry. In the 19th century, Jane Austen penned timeless classics like Pride and Prejudice, exploring themes of love and social hierarchy. Emily Dickinson, an American poet, is renowned for her unique style and profound verses in the mid-1800s. Moving into the 20th century, Virginia Woolf was a prominent English writer known for her innovative narrative techniques in works like Mrs. Dalloway and To the Lighthouse. Maya Angelou, an influential American poet and civil rights activist, wrote the acclaimed autobiography "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," addressing themes of racism and identity. In the contemporary era, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie gained international acclaim for her novels, including Half of a Yellow Sun and Americanah, addressing issues of postcolonialism and feminism. J.K. Rowling captivated readers worldwide with the Harry Potter series, showcasing her imaginative storytelling (Lamber 2022).

These women, among countless others, have left an indelible mark on literature, breaking barriers and paving the way for future generations of women writers. Their diverse voices continue to enrich the literary landscape, offering different perspectives and inspiring readers around the globe.

Contemporary perspectives

In contemporary times, women writers have emerged as powerful voices, reshaping literature and society. Their works reflect diverse experiences, challenging traditional norms and advocating for gender equality. These writers explore complex themes such as identity, race, sexuality, and mental health, offering unique perspectives that resonate with readers globally.

One perspective emphasizes the importance of representation. Women authors are increasingly sharing stories that capture female existence, promoting empathy and understanding. Their narrative not only entertains but also educate, shedding light on issues faced by women worldwide. Through literature, they dismantle stereotypes, fostering a more inclusive literary landscape.

Writers from diverse backgrounds acknowledge the complexities of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. In summary, contemporary perspectives on women writers celebrate their contributions to diversifying literary narratives, promoting representation, and fostering a more equitable and inclusive literary world.

One prominent example of gender bias is the disproportionate recognition and representation of male authors in literary awards and mainstream publications. Despite the significant contributions of women writers, their works often receive less attention and acclaim.

Female authors face additional challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the next three statements from two authors and a graphic designer working on publications led by writers.

I think that female writers are in a much better position today than they were before; a lot of them are publishing their works, starting their own initiatives, and similar activities that most often work against patriarchy, and they are quite successful. As an example, I would take Lana Bastašić. On the other hand, I think writers today are suffocated less by gender or sex problems than in other environments that have problems like this. There are more important problems that writers in Bosnia and Herzegovina have, such as underfunded publishing houses and agencies.

Researcher, Master's degree in Literature, 27, F

I wouldn't say I had problems being a woman in the publishing industry. Or maybe I had, but I wasn't aware. I don't have a concrete example. There are numerous obstacles for women; I am sure of that. So, maybe I had a couple of obstacles, but I wasn't aware of them. I know that several times I had to work more than my male colleagues, but I can't remember a concrete example. But it's not a question but a matter of time when I'll have problems.

Graphic designer in publishing industry, bachelor's degree, 26, F

Despite the common belief that there is no literary production in Bosnia and Herzegovina, new voices from many genres are present. However, there is a different issue at hand: unengaged criticism. Sarajevo's rich cultural scene is reviewed by just a few critics, which is insuficient to fulfill the production-to-review ratio. On the other hand, the written word, like culture in general, is institutionally mediated because most authors rely on grants from the different Ministries of Culture, which condition a number of other factors, such as how the publication is promoted, and the majority of published books live their full lives of glory only at literary festivals, which, once again, are not diverse in scope or subject matter to support the majority of authors, oftentimes publishing newbies.

Academic and theorist, PhD candidate, 28, F

Female writers are frequently stereotyped and their stories are dismissed as limited to specific themes like romance or family, undermining the diversity and depth of their literary contributions. Moreover, gender discrimination manifests in the form of harassment. Women writers, when vocal about social issues, are often targeted with abusive comments and threats, creating a hostile environment that stifles their creativity and voice (Chemaly 2021). Online harassment of women writers is a grave violation of human rights that occurs worldwide. This despicable phenomenon stifles creativity and silences vital voices, impeding the free expression of ideas. Women writers face an alarming surge of abusive messages, threats, and derogatory comments solely based on their gender. Such behavior not only

hampers their ability to contribute meaningfully to literature and public discourse but also perpetuates inequality and fear. It undermines their right to participate in the digital realm without fear of persecution. Harassment perpetuates a hostile environment, destroying the empowerment of women and their right to share their perspectives openly.

Addressing these biases and discrimination is essential for fostering a literary landscape that is truly inclusive and representative of diverse voices and perspectives.

Conclusion

Female artists continue to face significant challenges in the art world, hindering their recognition and success. This lack of exposure makes it dificult for them to gain recognition and secure opportunities. Gender bias remains another issue. Female artists frequently encounter stereotypes and prejudices, with their work sometimes being judged based on their gender rather than their quality. This bias affects their credibility and can impede their artistic growth.

Furthermore, the provocative nature of erotica in women's art lies in its celebration of diverse body types, desires, and sexual orientations. By depicting a wide range of experiences, these artworks challenge societal taboos and promote acceptance and understanding of human sexuality. In essence, erotica in women's art challenges societal norms reclaims female agency, and promotes inclusivity, making it provocative by provoking conversations about gender, sexuality, and societal expectations.

As stated by the anonymous comments by three female artists working in the publishing industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina, gender disparities in the representation of women writers in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be attributed to historical factors. Traditionally, the region has held conservative views on gender roles, limiting opportunities for women to participate in public spheres, including literature. Furthermore, the Bosnian War in the 1990s exacerbated these disparities. During the conflict, women faced immense challenges, leading to limited access to education and resources. Post-war, the struggle for gender equality persisted, making it dificult for women writers to gain support for their work.

Additionally, the publishing industry plays a crucial role. Limited promotional opportunities further destroy their visibility, creating a cycle of underrepresentation. Addressing these disparities requires challenging societal norms, promoting equal education opportunities, and supporting initiatives that encourage women to participate in literature.

On a global scale, being a female writer has undeniably left an indelible mark on the art world and society at large. Overcoming historical barriers, women writers have brought unique perspectives, diverse voices, and powerful narratives to literature. Their impact is profound, challenging societal norms and sparking essential conversations about gender, identity, and equality. In the art world, women writers have inspired new genres, challenged established conventions, and enriched the literary landscape with their creativity and innovation.

From these initiatives, we have learned invaluable lessons. First and foremost, the importance of amplifying marginalized

voices. Women writers have shown us the significance of representation and illuminating experiences that were previously overlooked. Their work has fostered empathy and understanding, bridging gaps between different cultures and backgrounds. Additionally, these initiatives have highlighted the necessity for breaking down gender biases in publishing and academia, paving the way for future generations of women writers.

In conclusion, being a female writer is a transformative force that has reshaped our perceptions of the world. The resilience and creativity of women writers have set a powerful example, reminding us of the profound impact literature can have on society and the importance of embracing diverse voices in shaping our collective narrative.

Efforts towards equal recognition, fair critique, and combating online harassment are crucial steps in empowering women writers and ensuring their meaningful participation in shaping contemporary literature. Recognizing and celebrating the literary achievements of women writers in Bosnia and Herzegovina is crucial for a more inclusive and diverse understanding of the country's cultural heritage.

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