

SPANISH WOMEN ARTISTS AND THEIR ECONOMIC ACTIVITY: PRECARIOUS WORK IN TIMES OF RECESSION. ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON FROM A GLOBAL STUDY

Marta Pérez Ibáñez e Isidro López-Aparicio Pérez
Invest. independiente; Universidad de Granada

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the activity of Spanish women artists, based on the results of the research carried out by the authors at a national scale. It includes data provided by more than 1100 artists, first in-depth analysis on the sector of visual artists in Spain, about their professional activity, economic and work circumstances, relationship with the art market, and its historical evolution during the last decades. The authors have segmented the group of women artists, 52% of the total, analyzing their circumstances and comparing them to men and to global data, and contextualizing it within the current economic circumstances. Thus, along with general aspects of female creation in Spain and its relationship with the market, we provide data on the precariousness and inequality in which Spanish women artists live and work.

KEYWORDS: artist, woman, art market, precariousness, crisis.

LAS ARTISTAS EN ESPAÑA Y SU ACTIVIDAD ECONÓMICA:
PRECARIEDAD LABORAL EN TIEMPOS DE CRISIS.
ANÁLISIS Y COMPARATIVA A PARTIR DE UN ESTUDIO GLOBAL

RESUMEN

Este artículo describe la actividad de las artistas españolas, partiendo de los resultados del estudio realizado por los autores a nivel nacional con datos aportados por más de 1100 artistas, primer análisis en profundidad sobre el sector de los/las artistas plásticos y visuales en España, su actividad profesional y circunstancias económicas y laborales, su relación con los agentes del mercado del arte y la evolución histórica de las últimas décadas. Se ha segmentado al colectivo de mujeres artistas, 52% del total, analizando sus circunstancias y comparándolas con los hombres y con los datos globales, y contextualizándolo dentro de la actual coyuntura económica. Así, junto a aspectos generales de la creación femenina en España y su relación con el mercado, aportamos datos sobre la precariedad y desigualdad en la que viven y trabajan las artistas españolas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: artista, mujer, mercado del arte, precariedad, crisis.



0. INTRODUCTION

The need to know in depth the current economic situation in which the work of the artists in Spain unfolds, the conditions in which they establish relations with the system and the art market, the necessary adaptation to a habitual situation of precariousness that has been aggravated by the current crisis¹, are reasons that led the authors to develop a research project that was first published in February 2017², with a second extended and revised edition in 2018. This primary source, with data provided by more than 1100 Spanish artists through a comprehensive survey, from which 52% are women, is a milestone in the knowledge of the artistic sector in our country, the first study in depth and, above all, first analysis of how the current economic recession is affecting artists. The data provided by this research have contributed to the writing of a new Spanish Statute of the Artist in 2018, which was recently approved by the Spanish Congress of Deputies.

This study aims to defend the rights of a sector in a permanent precarious situation, equate them with the rest of workers and professionals in our country, and recognize the importance of artistic production in the Spanish cultural development. The segmentation of the 569 women artists exceeds any previous study conducted in our country, and sheds light on very specific details of their activity and the differences with global and male data.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

From the first publication of *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* in 1981³, the work of Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, a fundamental reference in criticism about art and gender, until its reissue in 2013 after Parker's death, many things had changed. The attempt initiated in the early seventies mainly by Linda Nochlin was the first approach to art history from a nonexistent feminist point of view, primarily based on the recovery of forgotten names of women who

¹ We agree with other sources to set the cut-off point in relation to the start of the current economic crisis in 2008, the date of Lehman Brothers' fall, while sources from the Anglo-Saxon area (C. WALTER, *Arts Management: An Entrepreneurial Approach*. New York: Routledge, 2015, p. 235) place their start in the previous year, 2007. Regarding the situation in our country, Dr. C. McANDREW in her study on the Spanish art market (*El mercado español del arte en 2012*, Barcelona: Fundación Arte y Mecenazgo, 2012, p. 11), refers to the «two years of market contraction, from 2007 to 2009». Therefore, we take that reference and place in our analysis the year 2008 as a turning point from which the general situation of the market in Spain changes.

² M. PÉREZ IBÁÑEZ e I. LÓPEZ-APARICIO. *La actividad económica de los/las artistas en España*. Granada: Fundación Nebrija-Universidad de Granada, 2017; revised edition, *El contexto profesional y económico del artista en España. Resiliencia ante nuevos paradigmas en el mercado del arte*, Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2018.

³ R. PARKER and G. POLLOCK. *Framing Feminism: Art and the Women's Movement 1970-1985*, London: Pandora, 1987.



claimed their space. It also sought the necessary verification of the negative impact of institutional sexism throughout history by denying those artists the place they deserved, preventing them from receiving an artistic education at the same level as men, relegating them to a place of amateurism and domestic practice, denying even that the genius could come from a woman.

In the history of art, the masculine-western-white model has proved inadequate, as Nochlin⁴ argues, not only for its moral, ethical or elitist character, but mainly for intellectual reasons. When considering a system of values hitherto unrecognized, by incorporating an element outside the system into historical research, the failure of this paradigm, its presumption, its *naïveté*, demonstrates a subjective masculine white supremacy that proved not to be so, in confrontation with a new social order that is truly fair, inclusive and plural, more adequate and historically accurate. Nochlin's question «Why have not there been great female artists?» may become a catalyzer, an intellectual instrument, for traditionally accepted assumptions, covering other disciplines. That question presumes a false reality and hides a malicious response, implying that no female artist is capable or worthy of greatness at the same level as a man. But one cannot speak of a «feminine» art, there are no categories that distinguish the work of artists and artists, neither in the themes nor in the technique nor in the materials, as Hustvedt⁵ also exposes. The problem does not lie in that conception of art in terms of femininity, but in the naive, socially accepted idea that art is the direct and personal expression of individual emotional experience. Art implies a conscious act of free creation, subject or not to conventions, schemes or pre-established systems, developed through teaching, learning or individual practice, both by men and women. The difference does not lie in the artistic practice itself, neither in its formation nor in its development. As Nochlin stated: «The fault [...] lies not in our stars, our hormones, our menstrual cycles or our empty internal spaces, but in our institutions and our education –education understood to include everything that happens to us from the moment we enter this world of meaningful symbols, signs and signals»⁶.

Pollock and Parker proposed a paradigm shift in the line initiated by Nochlin, surpassing the restrictive formalism that had impoverished and reduced art. They posed a question and gave an answer: «In reality, does it matter what people see and know in museums, art galleries, art history books, university courses?»⁷. Their response was that it really matters, that a segregated, limited culture, where women or ethnic or social minorities are marginalized, offers society a partial, unreal, mutilated image of their own identity, lacking a plural and integrating vision of a

⁴ L. NOCHLIN. «Why have there been no great women artists?», in L. NOCHLIN. *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays*, New York: Routledge, 1988, pp. 147-158.

⁵ S. HUSTVEDT. *La mujer que mira a los hombres que miran a las mujeres. Ensayo sobre feminismo, arte y ciencia*. Barcelona: Seix Barral, 2017.

⁶ V. GORNICK & B.K. MORAN. *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness*. New York: Basic Books, 1971, p. 483.

⁷ R. PARKER, R. and G. POLLOCK. *Old Mistresses...*, p. XXVII.



varied and singular society, that society that we all build together. In Spain, the widespread discourse in the art system, according to Méndez⁸, the canon that causes an under-representation of women in the programming of institutions and galleries, is not solved with quotas or with positive discrimination that would hardly solve the problem, whose quantitative consequences have a qualitative hard core, coinciding with the approach of Parker and Pollock: «The generations are marked by what we show and tell, and by what we do not show and do not count», says Pollock⁹.

The problem when analyzing the place of women in art, especially in contemporary art, transcends visibility and recognition, and connects with the notable labor differences between men and women that are still evident today. It goes beyond, also, the identification of women in the social context¹⁰. As Acereda¹¹ argues, the right to work has ceased to be a recognition mainly assigned to men with family responsibilities and has been extended to the whole society equally, involving a large number of women in the labor market. Currently, women's employment has stopped responding to reasons of strict survival to fulfill a role of professional and personal fulfillment, a vital project linked to creation in the case of artists, and a way to maintain a certain life level. In the family economy, the existence of two sources of income has been generalized, as it is increasingly common for women to maintain the weight of single-parent families, single women with dependent children or dependent elderly, although the problem of work-life balance is still associated with women and their employment situation¹². Also, the evolution of female labor models in recent decades, the passage of working mothers to working daughters as Acereda¹³ suggests, also implies that in the most advanced age groups, as fewer working women are active, we can expect to find fewer active artists, as we will corroborate later in our research. The opting-out option¹⁴ has marked the work of many women who began their artistic activity in past decades, leaving it for economic or family reasons. Another effect of the crisis on the Spanish labor economy, caused

⁸ L. MÉNDEZ. «Artistas singulares, obras plurales: las complejas relaciones entre arte y feminismo», in O. BARRIOS HERRERO (ed.). *La mujer en las artes visuales y escénicas. Transgresión, pluralidad y compromiso social*, Madrid: Fundamentos, 2010, pp. 23-63.

⁹ R. PARKER, R. and G. POLLOCK. *Old Mistresses...*, p. xxvii.

¹⁰ M. NASH (ed.). *Feminidades y masculinidades: arquetipos y prácticas de género*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2014; *Mujeres en el mundo. Historia, retos y movimientos*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2012; C. MARTÍNEZ LÓPEZ (ed.). *Feminismo, ciencia y transformación social*. Granada: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Granada, 1995.

¹¹ A. ACEREDA. «La incorporación de la mujer al mundo laboral: dificultades y obstáculos asociados», en A. ACEREDA EXTREMIANA (COORD.). *La mujer incansable. Barreras y retos laborales*, Madrid: Síntesis, 2015, pp. 29-38.

¹² C. BATTERSBY. *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics*. London: The Women's Press, 1989; A. VAN DEN BOSCH. «Women artists' careers: Public policy and the market», in A. BEALE and A. VAN DEN BOSCH. *Ghosts in the Machine: Women and Cultural Policy in Canada and Australia*, Toronto: Garamond Press, 1998, pp. 211-29.

¹³ A. ACEREDA. «La incorporación de la mujer al mundo laboral...», p. 43 & ss.

¹⁴ A. LÓPEZ PUIG. «Por qué las mujeres dejan su trabajo: causas y consecuencias del *opting out*», en *La mujer incansable. Barreras y retos laborales*, Madrid: Síntesis, 2015, pp. 119-38, p. 119 & ss.

by the increase in unemployment and the search for alternatives, is the increase in part-time work. According to data provided by Viejo¹⁵ based on reports from the EPA Active Population Survey and the National Institute of Statistics INE (2017), almost two out of every three people with a part-time job is a woman. Thus, the differences in the female work context, the difficulties also in the artistic sector have led us to analyze those points where inequality is most striking.

In general terms, the current labor situation of cultural workers presents clear signs of precariousness for both men and women, and especially in the case of plastic and visual artists: high levels of self-employment, low pay, instability, low affiliation rate for Social Security systems in different countries, closely related to the concept of «precariat» and the «artistic biotope»¹⁶. In the last years and due to the growing global economic crisis that significantly affects the art market, artists must deal with self-management, communication and professional promotion duties that must be combined with artistic production, although they nevertheless show a high level of acceptance of their situation and identity as artists¹⁷ and a positive vision of their work, despite the precariousness. In some countries, like Spain and as we shall see below, the special virulence of the crisis that began in 2008 resulted in the closure of numerous galleries between 2010 and 2012, and the income source of many artists from the commercialization of the work was seriously impaired¹⁸. Furthermore, at the work level, we face the absence of an institutional professional recognition of artists in Spain, the lack of a statute that regulates their activity¹⁹, of a census that quantifies the number of professionals in this sector and the conditions in which they work, their relatively low affiliation to professional associations as the only structure of labor protection. All this, together with the virulence with which the crisis has affected the entire network of the art system, makes it essential to provide an in-depth study of the situation of the sector, which allows to venture into ways of acting and medium and long-term resource optimization. Thus, our research offers a fundamental source to know the current reality of artists in Spain and the evolution that their relations with the rest of the art system agents have suffered in

¹⁵ X. VIEJO VICENTE. «Las mujeres y el mercado de trabajo. Efectos diferenciales de la crisis económica actual», en *La mujer incansable. Barreras y retos laborales*. Madrid: Síntesis, 2015, pp. 101-118, p. 105.

¹⁶ G. STANDING. *El precariado. Una nueva clase social*. Barcelona: Pasado & Presente, 2013; P. GIELEN, *El murmullo de la multitud artística: arte global, política y posfordismo*. Madrid: Brumaria, 2014.

¹⁷ R. ZAFRA. *El entusiasmo. Precariedad y trabajo creativo en la era digital*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 2017; L. STEINER & L. SCHNEIDER. «The happy artist: an empirical application of the work-preference model». *Journal of Cultural Economics*, vol. 37, n. 2 (2013), pp. 225-246; R. MITCHELL & S. KARTTUNEN. «Why and how to define an artist», in R. TOWSE *et al.* (eds.), *Cultural economics*. Berlín: Springer, 1992, pp. 175-185.

¹⁸ C. McANDREW. *El mercado español del arte en 2012*, p. 11.

¹⁹ As we have mentioned before, the data provided by this research have contributed to the writing of a new Spanish Statute of the Artist in 2018, which was recently approved by the Spanish Congress of Deputies.



the last years, and how this has affected their economic and labor situation. It also allows us to segment the data referring to certain groups of artists, either at the local, generational or gender level, or according to the characteristics of their activity and the economic performance derived from it.

The case of women artists in Spain shares many of these features of precariousness, but also of defining their professional identity as an artist²⁰. We can consider that artistic creation, like other occupations related to culture or education, are considered «feminized professions»²¹, with higher percentages of female presence. During the last decades, the female presence in the Spanish Fine Arts schools stands around 70%²². Likewise, according to our study, the presence of women is the majority in the youngest age groups (see fig. 1), while it decreases as the age of the artists participating in the survey grows. However, as shown by the reports of Women in Visual Arts MAV²³, the presence of women artists in art fairs is significantly lower. Likewise, the artists represented by the art galleries are usually a minority, although a detailed study of this fact has not yet been made. It also highlights the fact that, within the Spanish art market, there is also a kind of

²⁰ D. APOSTOLOS-CAPPADONA and L. EBERSOLE. *Women, Creativity, and the Arts: Critical and Autobiographical Perspectives*. New York: Continuum, 1995; A. BAIN. «Constructing an artistic identity», *Work, employment and society*, vol. 19, n. 1 (2005), pp. 25-46 & «Female Artistic Identity in Place: The Studio». *Social and Cultural Geography*, vol. 5 (2004), pp. 171-193; O. BARRIOS. *La mujer en las artes visuales y escénicas. Transgresión, pluralidad y compromiso social*. Madrid: Fundamentos, 2010; M. MCCALL. «The sociology of female artists, studies in symbolic interaction 1», en L. McDOWELL. *apital Culture: Gender at Work in the City*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1978, pp. 289-318; T. DEKEL. «At (art) work value: Gendered aspects of income and livelihood, the case of women artists in Israel». *Hagar*, vol. 11, n. 2 (2014), pp. 79-104; G.J. FEIST. «The Influence of Personality on Artistic and Scientific Creativity», in R.J. STERNBERG. *Handbook of Creativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 273-96.

²¹ A. LÓPEZ PUIG. «Por qué las mujeres dejan su trabajo: causas y consecuencias del *opting out*», en *La mujer incansable. Barreras y retos laborales*. Madrid: Síntesis, 2015, pp. 119-38; MCVL, *Muestra Continua de Vidas Laborales* (2017). Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social. <http://www.seg-social.es/prdi00/groups/public/documents/binario/190489.pdf>.

²² Data extracted from the report Data and figures of the Spanish university system. Course 2015-2016, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, Technical General Secretariat, Madrid, 2016.

²³ MAV. *Informe ARCO 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>; MAV. *Informe ARTMADRID 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>; MAV. *Informe JUSTMAD 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>; MAV. *Informe HYBRID 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>; M.J. BERÁSTEGUI-SAMPEDRO & V. MIRANDA. *Informe ARCO 2017*, en *Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV* [en línea], Madrid, MAV, 2017. <http://mav.org.es/documentacion/informes/informe-mav-16-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2017>.

«vertical segregation», as López Puig²⁴ mentions, a sector where women's work it is a majority, but where men tend to occupy the positions of greatest responsibility.

The economic crisis that has affected Spain since 2008, the aforementioned closing of galleries and the consequent decrease in income for their artists, also affect more negatively the Spanish women artists. The EPA Active Population Survey showed that, in the years prior to the crisis, the female activity rate has increased notably, from 34.5% in 1990 to 48.9% in 2007. However, this increased activity has been accompanied by aspects of clear precariousness, such as more short-term, part-time and lower-paid jobs, lower categories, segregation according to occupations, double shifts combining paid work and domestic work, etc.²⁵. Such issues will be analyzed in our research.

2. MEN AND WOMEN ARTISTS, AS PROFESSIONAL WORKERS

Unlike other sectors in which official records, union sources or professional associations allow a census of workers in a specific activity, in the case of artists this does not exist in Spain. The main reason is the difficulty to define professional artist regarding the reality of the context and including the different forms of artistic development. In our research, we have started from the numerous studies that since the 80s analyze professional artistic activity. Many of them define the artist according to Frey and Pommerehne's²⁶ categorization in eight criteria, namely, the time devoted to creative activity, the income obtained, the reputation before the public, the recognition of other artists, the quality of the work produced, membership in professional associations or associations, artistic training and self-recognition as such. Other theorists, such as Lena and Lindemann²⁷, propose five areas of approach to the concept of «artist» that define not so much what or who is an artist, but consider it a unit of analysis in itself, in its relationship with the environment and with broader study objectives, being the social, cultural, economic and political context also involved in the artist's activity and consideration. These areas are human capital, censuses and registers of the active population, creative industries, the creative environment and self-legitimization.

Thus, we find that, on a global level, the concept of professional artist is extended and adapted according to the artistic activity itself, its economic results and its relationship with the environment and society. Aware of the particularities of Spain in the way of considering the activity of men and women artists in the

²⁴ A. LÓPEZ PUIG. «Por qué las mujeres dejan su trabajo: causas y consecuencias del *opting out*».

²⁵ X. VIEJO VICENTE. «Las mujeres y el mercado de trabajo...», p. 101.

²⁶ B. FREY & R. POMMEREHNE. «On the rate of return in the art market: Survey and evaluation», *European Economic Review*, vol. 39, n. 3-4 (1995), pp. 528-37.

²⁷ J. LENA & D. LINDEMANN. «Who is an artist? New data for an old question». *Poetics*, vol. 43, n. 1 (2014), pp. 70-85.



current socio-political situation, we evaluated three main factors, according to which we have designed our approach strategy:

- Their artistic activity, creation, exhibition and relationship with the market,
- The relationship between this activity and the income received, in order to know what dimension it represents in the artist's economy,
- Their linkage with professional associations and with the art sector as a whole.

Therefore, the profile of the artist who has participated in our research represents closely the current situation of this sector, of all ages and both sexes, from very young artists at the beginning of his career to consecrated, from artists outside the art market even those with continuous exhibition and commercial activity. In the case of women, as we will see, we will find all the possible options, a plural and realistic example of today's Spanish women artists.

3. METHODOLOGY

The systematic observation we have carried out from within the system in recent years, the role of the artist as a structural support of artistic activity in Spain, and the evolution experienced during the last decade, has allowed us to appreciate how, in the current socio-economic situation in our country, the artist adopts a new role linked to all agents of the system, and a different dimension that needs to be analyzed. In our process, this first contact with the general situation had to be endorsed with data provided by the artists themselves in a survey, the fundamental source of this research.

In Spain, in fiscal or tax terms, the concept of professional artist is complex in its definition and implications. There are different classification systems in this country that encompass the creators, but there is no uniform criterion that allows delimiting the sector of visual arts creation, and analyzing their professional and economic activity through these registers, as we will see, so the data they provide us are relatively useful. However, they have all been taken into account for our study. Thus, given the difficulty of quantifying the population object of our study in the absence of a census that provides specific data on the number of plastic and visual artists with professional activity in Spain, we have counted for our research primarily with the existing literature already mentioned²⁸, combining it with the data provided by the aforementioned registries that in our country encompass the artists for their fiscal or tax activity (Tax Agency, Social Security, National Employment Institute), as well as the databases of the numerous professional associations of artists in Spain, and various online registration platforms for active artists. All this has led

²⁸ C. McANDREW. *El mercado español del arte en 2012*. Barcelona: Fundación Arte y Mecenas, 2012.

us to determine that the total number of professional and active plastic and visual artists in our country can be located around the 25 000 individuals.

Considering these data as the size of our population, based on the Arkin and Colton table (1962), and using a confidence level of 95% with a maximum error of 3%, the size of our sample should not be less than 1064 individuals. We are aware of the risk that this implies in a matter as complex as this, but we are also aware of the need to provide a rigorous figure on which we could analyze the reality of the sector.

In order to obtain the data, after defining the research questions and formulating the corresponding hypotheses, a comprehensive survey of 42 questions divided into three major groups was designed: «About the artist», «On the artist's economy» and «On the relation of artist with the market». After a period of test and evaluation of the survey with different professionals in the sector, we open the period of data collection between May and September 2016.

Since the aim of this research phase was to obtain a representative number of artists that minimized the sample bias, we chose to issue an online survey, a prevailing method according to recent research²⁹, that has left obsolete the previous in-person survey system, and that would guarantee us versatility, ease of use in different devices, viral ability to adapt to the chosen snowball sampling, and mainly the respect of anonymity, essential for the sensitivity of the data. The format chosen was the Google Forms application due to its versatility in configuration, adaptability to different devices and browsers thanks to the improvements of the Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) systems, ease of viralization and exhaustive operational analytics, real-time reports, self-generated graphics and summaries of responses. The final sample exceeded the expected number of responses, gathering data from 1164 artists. Of these, 5.3% were excluded from this study, either due to incoherence or errors in the data provided, or because they did not complete the survey completely. The remaining 94.7%, a total of 1105 individuals, turned out to be the final sample on which our study was based. Thus, according to the aforementioned Arkin and Colton table, we guarantee a confidence level of 95% with a maximum error of 3% and, therefore, a high degree of accuracy.

Regarding the degree of internal control that we would apply as a research strategy, we opted for a selective research design based on the different decisions to be made in the process: variable operation, sample establishment, conditions and period of data collection, etc. The selective design and the later segmentation of the women artist's data allowed us to describe the reality of our study sector based on the data obtained, to identify the regularities in those data and predictions of risk or causal relationships where one or more variables could be considered as a precedent for others, as in effect occurred. Thus, we took into account the reality of the sector

²⁹ M. CALEGARO, K. MANFREDA, and V. VEHOVAR. *Web Survey Methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015.





Fig. 1. Gender of participating artists.

at the gender level, the labor, economic and social implications of women's work in the arts, and compared them with the data provided by men.

4. THE RESULTS OF OUR RESEARCH

The sex ratio among the artists in our study is very balanced, with 51.7% women and 48.3% men. This balance, however, does not stay in the relationship between sex and age, since among younger artists, women are a very large majority (fig. 1): under 20 years of age, women are 84.6% of the total, and between 21 and 30 years the figure stands at 62.5%. However, this proportion is progressively decreasing until the age group over 70 years old only found 23.8% of women. The massive female incorporation to the visual arts, the majority of around 70% in Fine Arts students in recent decades, as we have already mentioned, is directly proportional to the smaller number of women artists in older ages. Similarly, in many other aspects of the activity of men and women artists, there may be noticeable differences between both sexes, as we will analyze throughout this article, such as fewer years of contributions to Social Security, lower general income level, etc., leaving record of the problems that women artists in our country must overcome to maintain their activity in the current circumstances.

The geographical distribution of our artists in the national territory is similar to the one detected in the global data of our research (fig. 3). There is a high concentration of artists, both men and women, in certain autonomous regions such as Madrid (29.7%), Andalusia (14.4%) or Catalonia (10.6%), which is decreasing in the rest of the geographical areas, with few proportional variations in the sex of the participating artists.



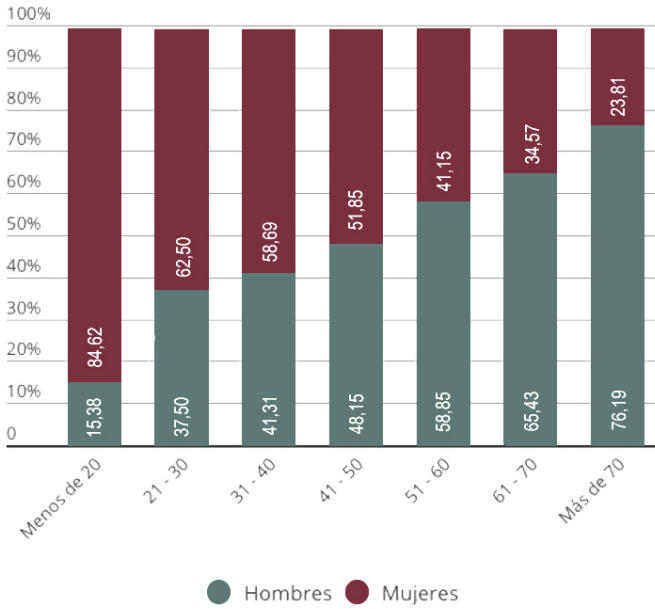


Fig. 2. Relationship between gender and age.

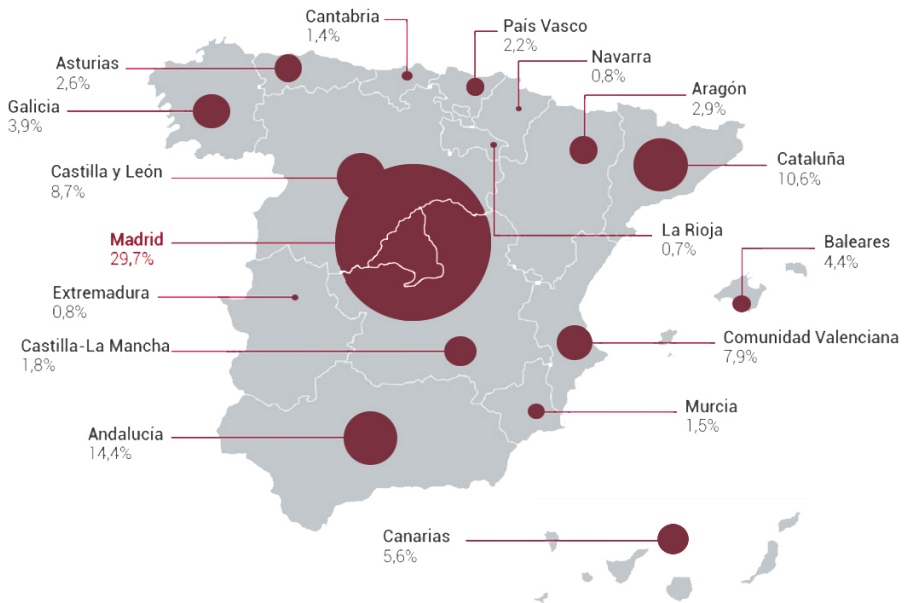


Fig. 3. Geographical distribution.



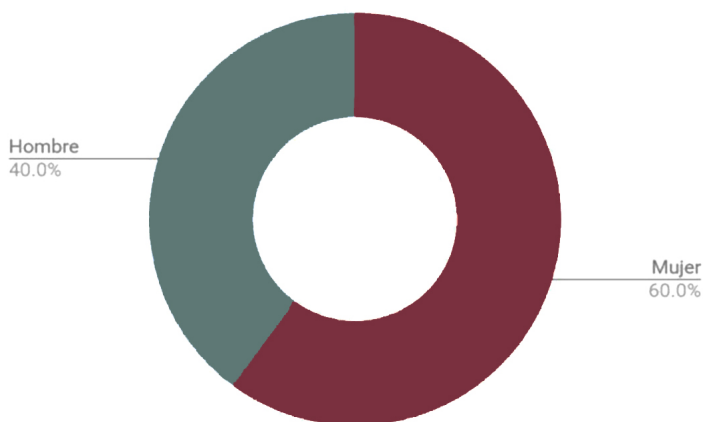


Fig. 4. Artists living out of Spain.

Likewise, we included in our study the data of 60 artists temporarily settled in other countries, a small 5.4% of the total of respondents. They showed differences in age, education and origins with respect to the global data, which indicates not only a generational change, a greater mobility in artists under 40 and with higher education, but also the result of certain policies to promote training abroad thanks to grants and scholarships, policies that differ according to the autonomous communities and that determine the fact that artists from these communities have more external presence. But the fact that surprised us at this point is that, among Spanish artists in foreign countries, the majority is female, 60% of the total, compared to 40% of men residing outside Spain (fig. 4). When concentrating our analysis on the group of artists working outside our country, while the general data of women in our study places them at 51.7% of the total, the artists displaced abroad represent 60% of the total of Spanish artists outside of our country. When analyzing the profile of Spanish artists living in other countries, the age figure is also surprising: 75%, she is less than 40 years old, a young group of mainly emerging women artists developing their career outside of Spain.

Besides, analyzing the level of global income of artists living outside of Spain, it is also interesting to see how it differs with respect to the general data in our study. While in the total of the survey, 46.9% declare to perceive income below € 8000.00 per year, in the case of artists settled abroad, this figure drops to 37.3%, and the group of artists with incomes over € 50 000.00 per year it rises from 1.4% to 6.8%. It seems that, with no doubt, one of the reasons for our artists to settle in other countries is that the performance of their work is higher. According to our study, Spanish artists who live outside our country show, indeed, a slightly higher purchasing power, decreasing the group that receives less than € 8000.00 per year up to 42.5% and increasing that of those with income above 50 000.00 € up to

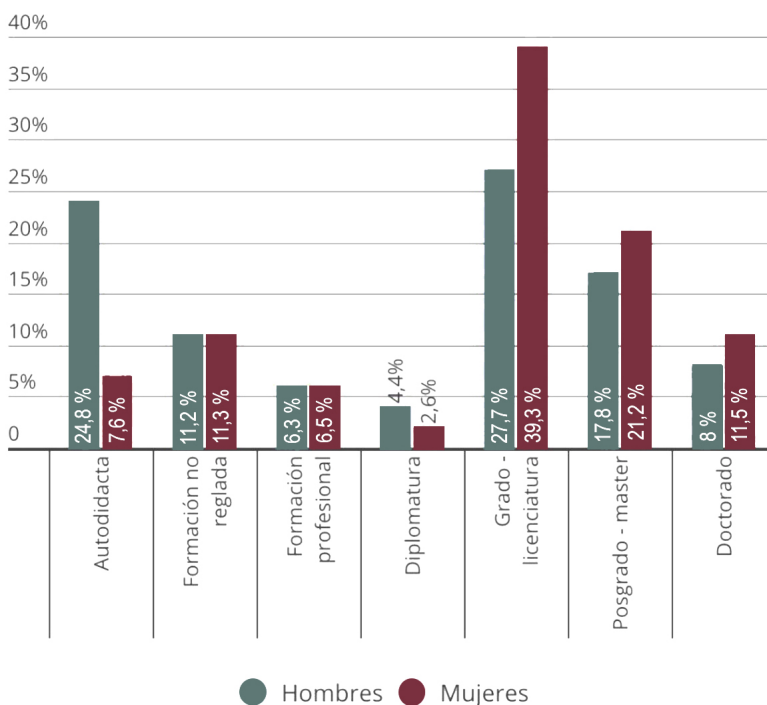


Fig. 5. Artistic education.

5%, which is significant, considering that in the global data, the total of artists with incomes above 50 000.00 € does not reach 1.5%.

The education data in our study also allowed us to discover how art education has consolidated in recent years (fig. 5). The relationship between men and women in terms of artistic training follows the same pattern as in other disciplines, with greater access for women to higher education, where the female graduates represent 58.5% graduates and 56.2% postgraduates. In our study, 72% of the women surveyed stated that they had completed higher studies in art, compared to 53.6% of men. If we extrapolate the gender difference between the artists who study abroad, we see how the majority, 57.7% are men, compared to 42.7% of women. However, among Spanish artists settled in foreign countries, the majority is female, 6.4% of the total, compared to 4.5% of men living out of Spain.

The participation in artistic collectives and common projects of creation also marks differences, albeit slight, that show a greater tendency of women to organize and create in common projects. 72% of women are or have been linked to co-creation groups, compared to 69.1% of men (fig. 6).

The question about the membership in professional associations led us to analyze not only the role that these should play in favor of the sector, as a hinge



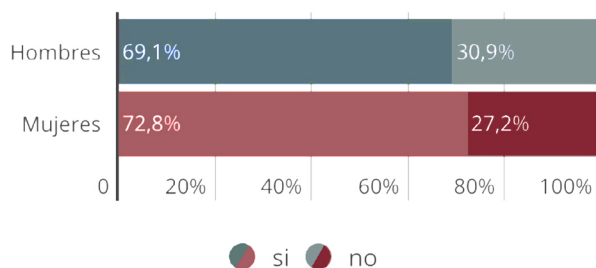


Fig. 6. Participation in artistic collectives.

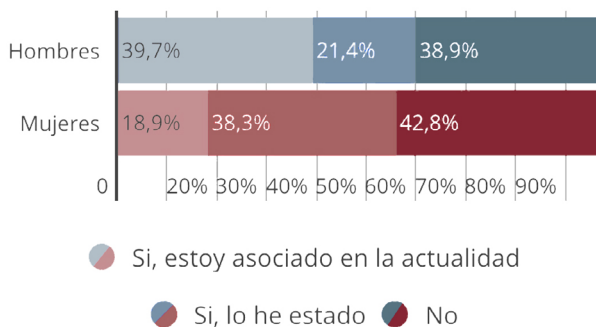


Fig. 7. Participation in professional artistic associations.

between the creators and the rest of the actors of the art system, but also how it is appreciated by the artists themselves such work, if they are really communicating their message of support and protection of the rights of the creators, or if this message is lost or is not perceived as such by those they are related to (fig. 7). In this sense, we see that the proportion between both sexes is fairly even, although the number of women who have never been associated is slightly higher than that of men.

In both cases, however, that percentage close to 40% of skeptic men and women regarding associations has caught our attention. Possibly, a more in-depth study would provide us with the necessary data to know how artists understand their work, especially if they are aware of the results of their management and how they can contribute to the development of the associated artists' activity. In Spain there is a certain lack of historical tradition of professional associationism, compared to other countries where it is much more common, especially in the artistic sector³⁰.

³⁰ The article by Lola L. Muñoz points out the decline in membership levels and the loss in the percentages of representation of the two major unions in Spain in recent years, and the great

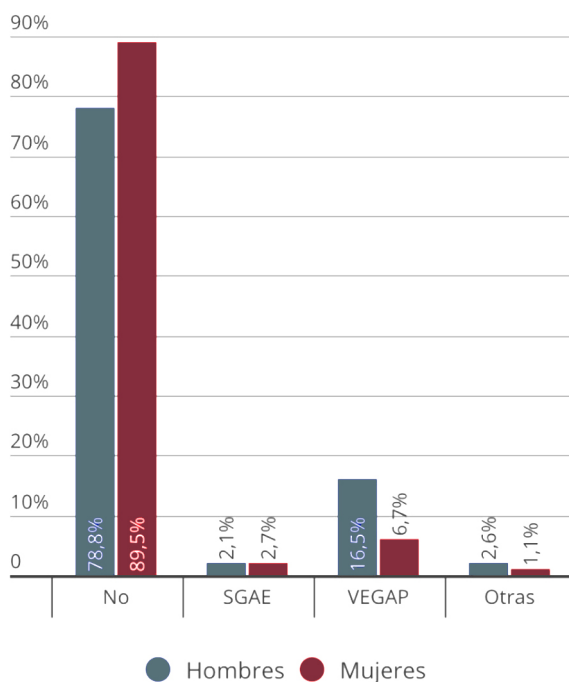


Fig. 8. Participation in author rights management entities.

This fact, together with the lack of a national structure that supports and encourages it, makes a weak Spanish association tissue, which depends almost exclusively on the associates themselves and their management.

Also, the relationship of the artists in our study with the rights management entities shows differences, maintaining in both cases the detachment from these entities. While 78.8% of men are not associated, women go up to 89.5%. VEGAP continues to be the entity with the most acceptance among our artists, but also with notable differences: 16.5% of those associated with VEGAP are men, while only 6.7% are women (fig. 8). Less than half of the artists who put VEGAP in charge of the management of their intellectual property rights are women.

difference compared to other countries in our European environment. Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway have the highest membership rates in the European Union. In contrast to the 16% of the Spanish case, 80% of the Danish workers are affiliated to a union, 74% in the case of the Finns, 78% of the Swedes and 53% of the Norwegians. And in the Nordic countries, a system other than the Spanish one prevails: the agreements negotiated by the unions only affect their members. See L.L. MUÑOZ. «Los sindicatos en España: baja afiliación, poca representatividad». *Los Replicantes*, 11 July, 2016. <https://www.losreplicantes.com/articulos/sindicatos-baja-afiliacion-poca-representatividad/>.



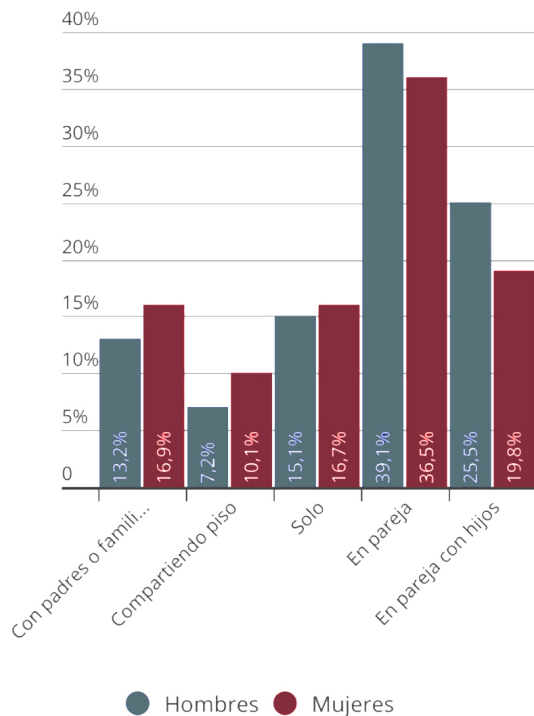


Fig. 9. Residence formulas.

When analyzing the different forms of residence of the artists, we see how women who live in single-parent family units predominate, usually with relatives under their care, whether they are children or parents. Also, artists who live alone and those who share a flat with other people predominate, while among men it is more common for them to live as a couple, with or without children (fig. 9).

As for the contribution of the artists to the expenses of the family unit, it is also worth noting that women show greater dependence on the income of other people, being always a minority in the percentage of expenses borne (fig. 10).

The proportion of women who declare having a home in property is also a minority (fig. 11) as well as those who state having been able to acquire it with income from their artistic activity (fig. 12).

One of the most important issues for our research was to know the total annual income and what part of them comes from artistic activities, which gave us a very useful context for the final objective of this survey (fig. 13). According to the overall results of our study, almost half of the artists surveyed, 46.9%, stated that their total annual income, counting all their professional activities, whether artistic or not, is equal to or less than 8000.00 € per year. This figure, considered

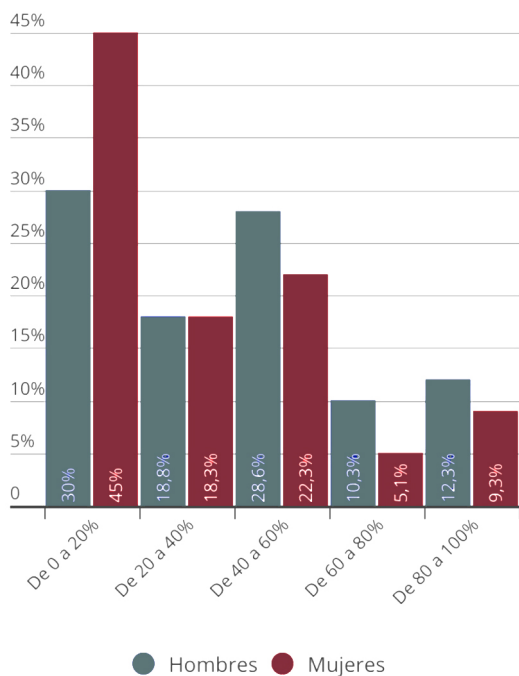


Fig. 10. Economic participation in housing expenses.

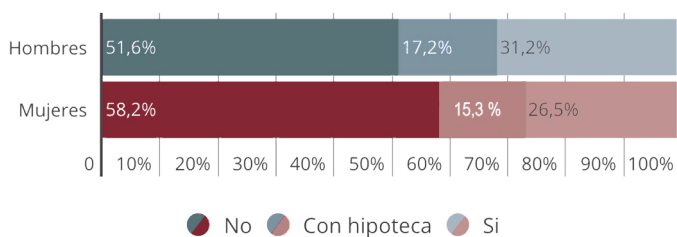


Fig. 11. Housing property.

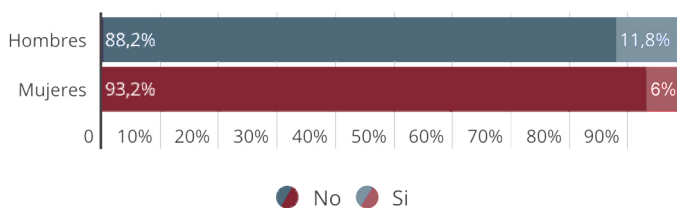


Fig. 12. Artists who have bought their housing with income from artistic activities.



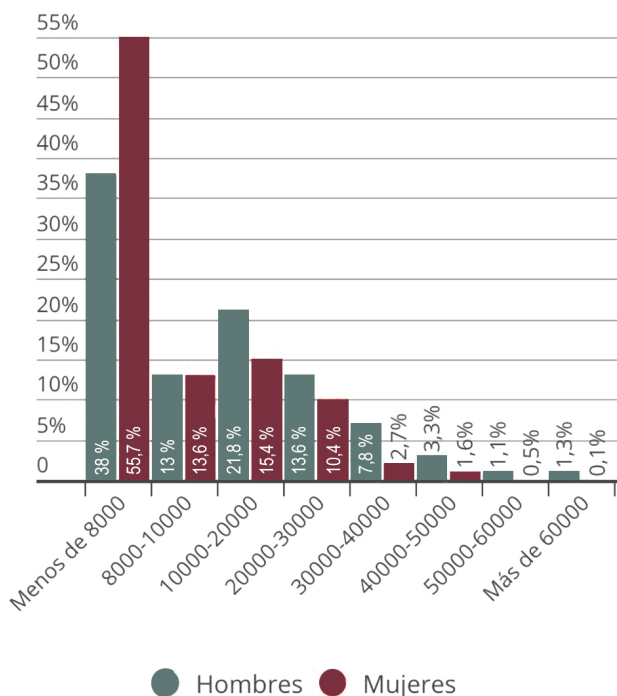


Fig. 13. General yearly income level (all activities included).

as the threshold of the minimum interprofessional salary in Spain³¹, is significant, since it gives us a first piece of information about the precariousness of the work of artists in our country. However, even more significant is the fact of income among Spanish artists and their relation to the income received by men: if 38% of men

³¹ The Spanish Ministry of Labor and Social Security, in Royal Decree 1171/2015, of December 29 (*BOE* n.º 312, of December 30, 2015), set the minimum interprofessional salary for 2016, «for both permanent and temporary workers, as well as for domestic employees», at 655.20 euros per month, which applied to 12 months gives a total of 7862.04 € / year. Hence our approach to 8000.00 € / year as a cut-off point from which to analyze the income level of artists in Spain. The ministry mentions that salary supplements, incentives to production and extra payments will be added to said salary, «without in any case an annual amount lower than 9172.80 euros». Given that most of the artists surveyed, as we will see later, declare to work as self-employed, and given that there is no minimum interprofessional salary for this collective, our threshold of 8000.00 € / year has seemed the best approach to salary minimum of other workers employed. Taking into account that, according to the Labor Force Survey of the third quarter of 2016, employed workers in Spain accounted for 16.8% of the total employed population, the data provided by our study on the income of Spanish artists it seems very significant.

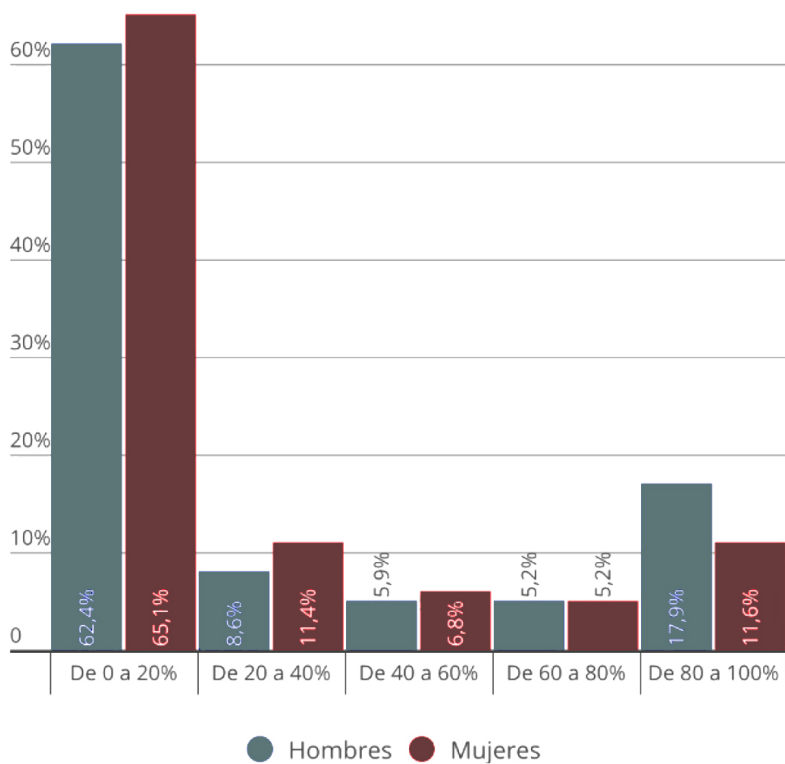


Fig. 14. Yearly income from artistic activities.

claim to receive less than € 8000 per year, in the case of women the percentage rises to 55.7%, and only 4.9% declare to perceive more than 30 000.00 € per year.

But the question about the proportion of income from artistic activities within the annual income of each artist surveyed, shows even more interesting data for our study. Among men, 62.4% declare that their income from artistic activities accounts for between 0 and 20% of their total income, that is, they cannot financially survive only on their activity as artists. Among women, this percentage rises to 65.1%. If we focus on artists who live exclusively or almost on their artistic activity, that is, for whom income from art represents between 80 and 100% of their total income, we also see an inequality between men and women, being them 17.9% and they 11.6% (fig. 14). Again, these data speak of greater precariousness among women artists with respect to men.

The number of years dedicated to artistic activities concurs with the relationship between age and sex of the artists of our study: the number of women dedicated to creation for less than 15 years is highly significant, being equal the group of men and women dedicated to art between 16 and 25 years, and significantly



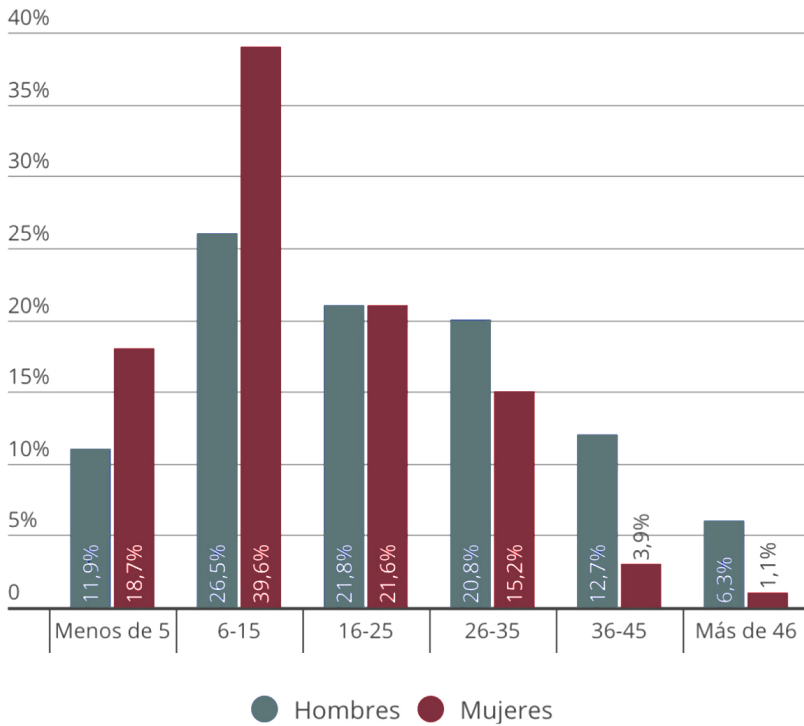


Fig. 15. Years dedicated to artistic activities.

decreasing women artists with more than 26 years of artistic career (fig 15). Once again we are shown a generation of young women artists highly active professionally.

However, the years of contribution to Social Security are, in proportion, much less in the case of women, being almost non-existent the group of women who have contributed more than 35 years (fig. 16). The youth of female artists in our study seems to indicate that both the time of dedication and the years of contribution are especially low in the case of women.

The tax status of men and women in our study is also quite unequal. The number of unemployed and hired women workers significantly increases, and the number of self-employed women decreases. The number of retired women workers is also much lower, which is consistent with the imbalance in the sex-age relationship that we discussed in figure 2: the lower the number of women in the more mature age groups, the fewer the number of retired artists. The values of civil servants and public workers, entrepreneurs and people on sick leave are more similar between men and women (fig. 17).

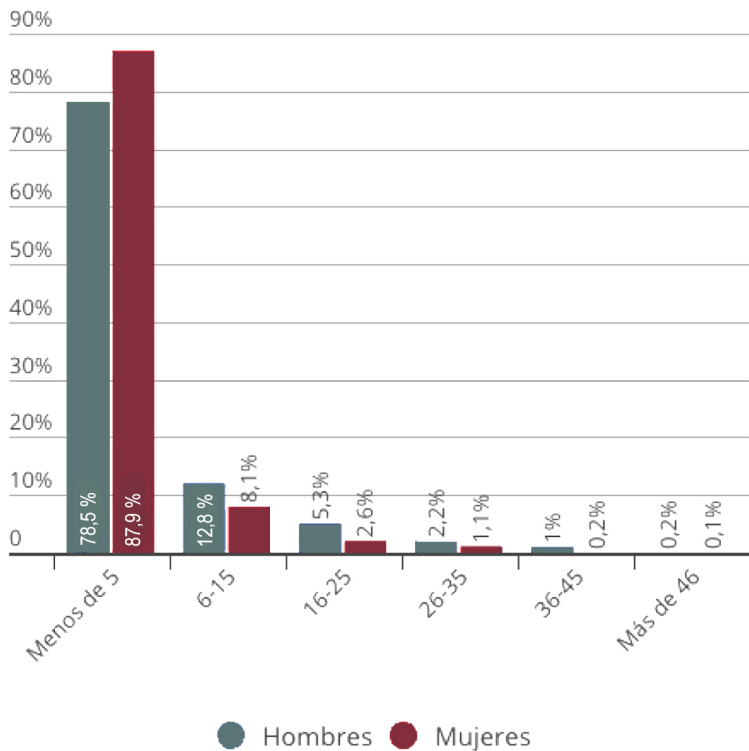


Fig. 16. Years of contribution to the Social Security system.

Likewise, when quoting as a self-employed worker, precariousness becomes evident again, since most of the artists who declare themselves as such can only face the monthly payment in the periods with income due to their artistic activity. In this case, also the situation of women is weaker than that of men in similar circumstances, being only 6%, less than half that of men, women who can face the self-employed worker quota permanently (fig. 18).

The exhibiting activity of the artists is one fundamental factor to determine the level of professionalization of our object of study. Thus, the high participation of respondents in exhibitions of all kinds, from those carried out in alternative spaces or in their own ateliers to institutional ones, in museums or galleries, has been the general trend. In our data segmentation, women artists are slightly more active than men when it comes to exhibiting their work, although the values are very similar (fig. 19).

The proportion of men and women artists who have sold works in their exhibitions during the last years remains very similar. However, the average price



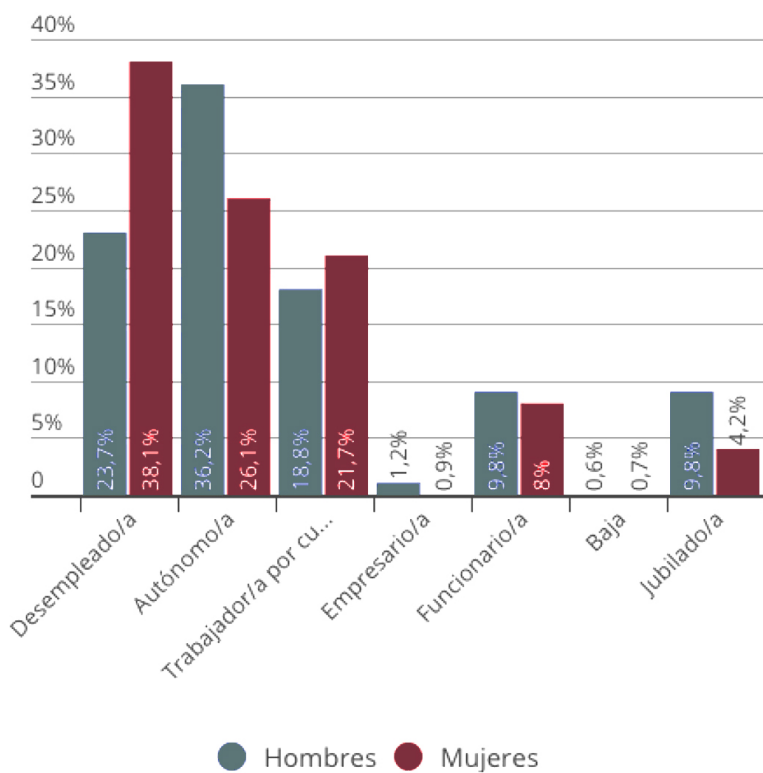


Fig. 17. Tax situation.

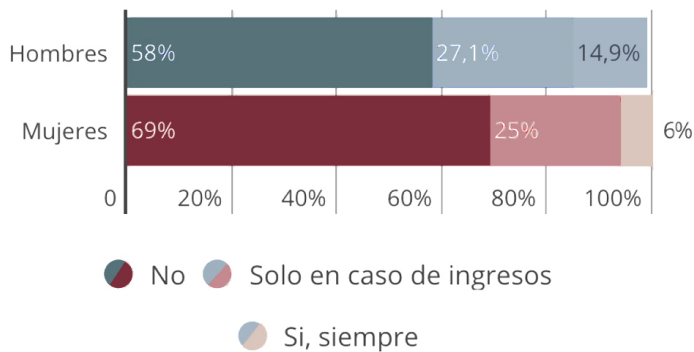


Fig. 18. Artists who pay Social Security quotas with artistic activities.

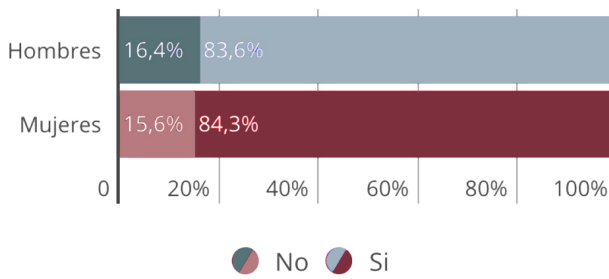


Fig. 19. Artists participating in exhibition in the last two years.

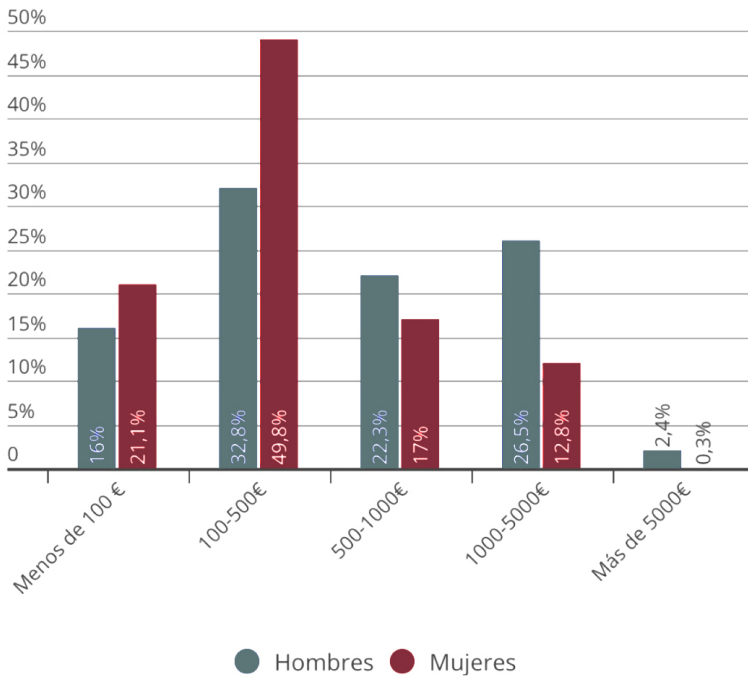


Fig. 20. Average price of sold artworks.

of works sold by women is significantly lower than that of men. Almost 88% of women sell their works below € 1000.00, while among men this group decreases to 71.1%. The proportion of women who sell their works with average prices above € 5000.00 is around 0.3%, compared to 2.4% of men (fig. 20).

Stable relationships with galleries or dealers during the last years also show differences. 36.6% of men maintain them compared to 27% of women, but in

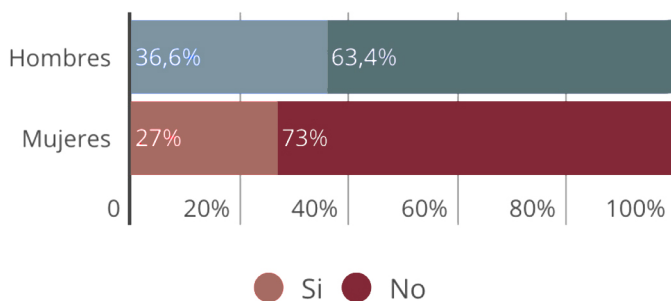


Fig. 21. Artists with stable relationship with galleries and/or art dealers (since 2008).

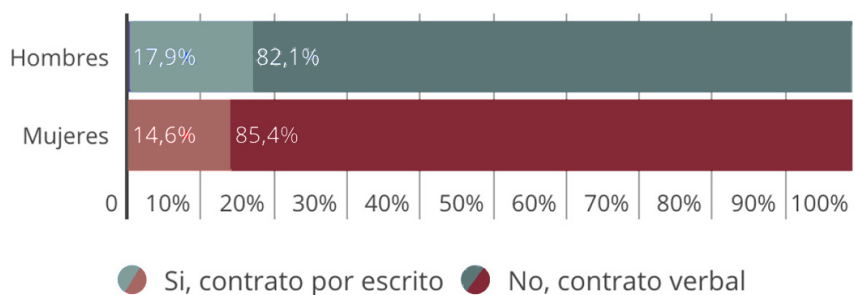


Fig. 22. Type of contracts between artists and galleries and/or art dealers.

both cases it is clear that the crisis that began in 2008 has significantly reduced the stability in the link between artists and galleries (fig. 21).

The contracts that link artists and galleries also slightly benefit men, with 17.9% of men writing contracts with their reference galleries, compared to 14.6% of women. In this case, once again, it is evident the need to raise the awareness, among both artists and galleries, to protect the rights and obligations of both parties through written agreements to which the working conditions established between them are adhered to (fig. 22).

The answer about the personal appreciation of male and female artists regarding their relationship with the market is also striking. Given that the percentage of women linked to galleries is lower than that of men, the answers that show permanent or punctual relationships with galleries are mostly male. There is also a smaller number of women who self-manage their careers independently and satisfactorily, the group of men and women whose sporadic relationship with galleries is unsatisfactory being very similar, but visibly increasing the percentage of

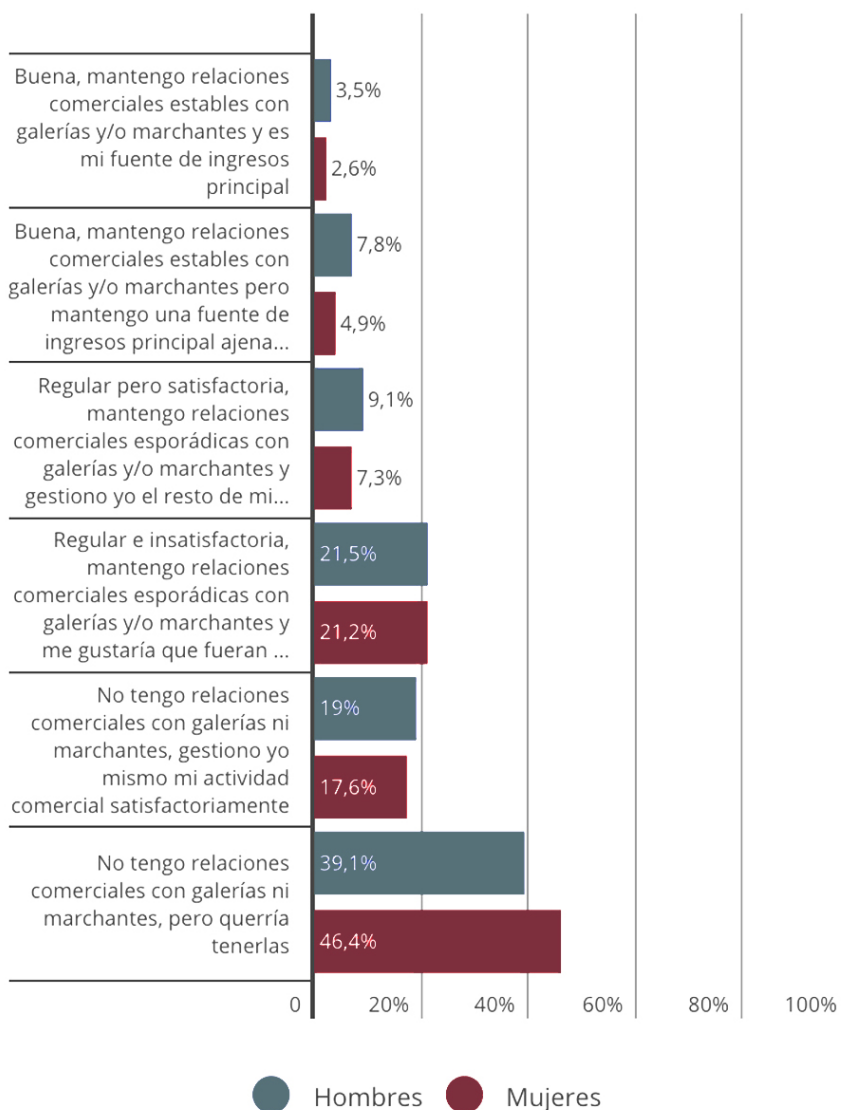


Fig. 23. Artists' appreciation of their situation towards the art market.

women artists not related to galleries but who would like to have them. Once again, it is evident from the overall results of our study, how the idea of a link with art galleries remains a goal to be followed for the majority of women artists. The fact that artists with higher income are those who maintain stable relationships with art dealers is perceived by artists as an added value to which they dedicate their efforts.



5. CONCLUSIONS

The inequalities between men and women in the current system of contemporary Spanish art are evident and do not only affect exhibition criteria, both in galleries and fairs, but also in museums, and transcend all the activity of the artists. The data provided by MAV studies on the visibility of artists in our system make clear this inequality, difficult to tackle when the criteria governing galleries, curators or museum directors are based on the quality of the work and the career of the artist and not on their sex. However, as we see through the data provided by our research, the number of women active in artistic creation being much greater, their activity and economic performance are far from being equal to those of men. A lower contribution to Social Security, caused by more irregular and less predictable income, which is also lower than that of men; greater number of women with a family burden, either in single-parent families with children or with elderly dependents, but also greater economic dependence within the family unit; a tax status that is also more precarious, with a significantly higher number of unemployed women, which explains the lower contribution to Social Security; fewer women with stable relationships with art galleries, which leads artists to look for alternative exhibition and sale spaces, and also leads to significantly lower sales prices than average prices for men; in short, an alarming situation that must be corrected.

We hope and trust that studies such as ours will lead to a general reflection of society and public stratum, and that the next generation of artists, gallerists, curators, collectors and managers, in whom the development of the future art ecosystem will rest, will demonstrate that social and labor equalization involves recognizing the work of artists at the same level, and taking the necessary measures to avoid this gap. Today we cannot understand a world outside the art produced by women, in which the voice of the artist is not heard, because women are half of our society, and it is time to reverse this inequality.

RECIBIDO: octubre de 2018. ACEPTADO: febrero de 2019



REFERENCES

- ACEREDA EXTREMIANA, Amparo. «La incorporación de la mujer al mundo laboral: dificultades y obstáculos asociados», en Amparo ACEREDA EXTREMIANA (coord.). *La mujer incansable. Barreras y retos laborales*, Madrid: Síntesis, 2015, pp. 29-38.
- APOSTOLOS-CAPPADONA, Diane and Lucinda EBERSOLE. *Women, Creativity, and the Arts: Critical and Autobiographical Perspectives*. New York: Continuum, 1995.
- BAIN, Alison L. «Constructing an artistic identity». *Work, employment and society*, vol. 19, n. 1 (2005), pp. 25-46.
- BAIN, Alison L. «Female Artistic Identity in Place: The Studio». *Social and Cultural Geography*, vol. 5 (2004), pp. 171-193.
- BARRIOS HERRERO, Olga. *La mujer en las artes visuales y escénicas. Transgresión, pluralidad y compromiso social*. Madrid: Fundamentos, 2010.
- BATTERSBY, Christine. *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics*. London: The Women's Press, 1989.
- BERÁSTEGUI-SAMPEDRO, M.J. y MIRANDA, V. *Informe ARCO 2017*, en Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV [en línea], Madrid, MAV, 2017. <http://mav.org.es/documentacion/informes/informe-mav-16-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2017/>.
- CALEGARO, Mario, Katja Loza MANFREDI, and Vasja VEHOVAR. *Web Survey Methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015.
- DEKEL, Tal. «At (art) work value: gendered aspects of income and livelihood, the case of women artists in Israel». *Hagar*, vol. 11, n. 2 (2014), pp. 79-104.
- FEIST, G.J. «The Influence of Personality on Artistic and Scientific Creativity», in R.J. STERNBERG (ed.). *Handbook of Creativity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 273-96.
- FREY, Bruno & Werner POMMERHNE. «On the rate of return in the art market: Survey and evaluation». *European Economic Review*, vol. 39, n. 3-4 (1995), pp. 528-37.
- GIELEN, Pascal. *El murmullo de la multitud artística: arte global, política y posfordismo*. Madrid: Bru-maria, 2014.
- GIMENO, María. «Queridas Viejas», 2018. <https://www.mariagimeno.com/QUERIDAS-VIEJAS-PROYECTO>.
- GORNICK, Vivian & Barbara K. MORAN. *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness*. New York: Basic Books, 1971.
- HUSTVEDT, Siri, *La mujer que mira a los hombres que miran a las mujeres. Ensayo sobre feminismo, arte y ciencia*. Barcelona: Seix Barral, 2017.
- IAC (s.f.). *Propuestas del grupo de trabajo para la ampliación del Documento de Buenas Prácticas en Museos y Centros de Arte*. Documento provisional e inédito.
- INE. *Mujeres y hombres en España*, 2017. http://www.ine.es/ss/Satellite?L=es_ES&c=INEPublicacion_C&cid=1259924822888&p=1254735110672&pagename=ProductosYServicios%2FPYS-Layout¶m1=PYSDetalleGratis.
- LENA Jennife & Danielle LINDEMANN. «Who is an artist? New data for an old question». *Poetics*, vol. 43, n. 1 (2014), pp. 70-85.





- LÓPEZ PUIG, Anna. «Por qué las mujeres dejan su trabajo: causas y consecuencias del *opting out*», in Amparo ACEREDA EXTREMIANA (coord.), *La mujer incansable. Barreras y retos laborales*, Madrid: Síntesis, 2015, pp. 119-38.
- MAV. *Informe ARCO 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>.
- MAV. *Informe ARTMADRID 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>.
- MAV. *Informe JUSTMAD 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>.
- MAV. *Informe HYBRID 2018*, Mujeres en las Artes Visuales MAV <https://mav.org.es/noticias/noticias-junta/informe-mav-18-presencia-de-mujeres-artistas-en-arco-madrid-art-madrid-hybrid-y-justmad-2018/>.
- MCVL. *Muestra Continua de Vidas Laborales* (2017). Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social. <http://www.seg-social.es/prdi00/groups/public/documents/binario/190489.pdf>.
- MCCALL, Michal. «The sociology of female artists, studies in symbolic interaction 1», in L. McDOWELL (ed.), *Capital Culture: Gender at Work in the City*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1978, pp. 289-318.
- MCANDREW, Clare. *El mercado español del arte en 2012*. Barcelona: Fundación Arte y Mecenazgo, 2012.
- MARTÍNEZ LÓPEZ, Cándida (ed.). *Feminismo, ciencia y transformación social*. Granada: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Granada, 1995.
- MÉNDEZ, Lourdes. «Artistas singulares, obras plurales: las complejas relaciones entre arte y feminismo», en Olga BARRIOS HERRERO (ed.), *La mujer en las artes visuales y escénicas. Transgresión, pluralidad y compromiso social*, Madrid: Fundamentos, 2010, pp. 23-63.
- MITCHELL, Ritva, & Sari KARTTUNEN. «Why and how to define an artist», in R. TOWSE *et al.* (eds.), *Cultural Economics*, Berlín: Springer, 1992, pp. 175-185.
- MUÑOZ, L.L. *Los sindicatos en España: baja afiliación, poca representatividad*. En Los Replicantes (11 July, 2016). <https://www.losreplicantes.com/articulos/sindicatos-baja-afiliacion-poca-representatividad/>.
- NASH, Mary (ed.). *Feminidades y masculinidades: arquetipos y prácticas de género*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2014.
- NASH, Mary. *Mujeres en el mundo. Historia, retos y movimientos*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2012.
- NOCHLIN, Linda. «Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?», en L. NOCHLIN. *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays*, New York: Routledge, 1988, pp. 147-158.
- PARKER, Rozsika and Griselda POLLOCK. *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology*. London: Tauris, 2013.
- PARKER, Rozsika and Griselda POLLOCK, G. *Framing Feminism: Art and the Women's Movement 1970-1985*. London: Pandora, 1987.
- PÉREZ IBÁÑEZ, Marta. *El contexto profesional y económico del artista en España. Resiliencia ante nuevos paradigmas en el mercado del arte*. Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2018.

- PÉREZ IBÁÑEZ, Marta. «Artistas y resiliencia: la evolución de las relaciones comerciales entre artistas españoles y galerías de arte», en *VII Workshop on Cultural Economics Management*. Oporto: Porto Design Factory, 2015.
- POLLOCK, Griselda. *Differencing the Canon: Feminism and the Writing of Art's Histories*. London: Routledge, 2013.
- RODOVALHO, C. *El precio del arte en femenino. La situación de las artistas en el mercado español del arte*. Trabajo de fin de máster inédito. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2018.
- STANDING, Guy. *El precariado. Una nueva clase social*. Barcelona: Pasado & Presente, 2013.
- STEINER, Lasse, & Lucian SCHNEIDER. «The happy artist: an empirical application of the work-preference model». *Journal of Cultural Economics*, vol. 37, n. 2 (2013), pp. 225-246.
- TORRENT ESCLAPÉS, Rosalía. «Pistolas, rifles y cuchillos. ¿Contra quién se arman las mujeres artistas?». *Asparkia*, vol. 31 (2017), pp. 99-111.
- VAN DEN BOSCH, A. «Women artists' careers: Public policy and the market», en Alison BEALE and Annette VAN DEN BOSCH. *Ghosts in the Machine: Women and Cultural Policy in Canada and Australia*, Toronto: Garamond Press, 1998, pp. 211-29.
- VIEJO VICENTE, X. «Las mujeres y el mercado de trabajo. Efectos diferenciales de la crisis económica actual», en Amparo ACEREDA EXTREMIANA (coord.). *La mujer incansable. Barreras y retos laborales*. Madrid: Síntesis, 2015, pp. 101-118.
- WALTER, Carla. *Arts Management: An Entrepreneurial Approach*. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- ZAFRA, Remedios. *El entusiasmo. Precariedad y trabajo creativo en la era digital*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 2017.



