sustainability

MDPI

Article

Slow Collecting: Sustainability and the Need for a Paradigm Shift by Iberian Collectors

Adelaide Duarte [1], Marta Pérez-Ibáñez [2]*

[1] Researcher at the Institute of Art History, School of Social Science and Humanities, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, TIAMSA member; duarte.adelaide@gmail.com;
[2] Professor at the Universidad Francisco de Vitoria, Madrid, Spain, TIAMSA member; marta-perezib@gmail.com; e-mail@e-mail.com
* Correspondence: duarte.adelaide@gmail.com; martaperezib@gmail.com

Abstract: Collectors are major actors in the global art market as they often spend large sums of money, fostering the business. Concerning sustainable collecting practices – i.e., the balance between the best for people and for the environment – collectors' actions seem contradictory. First, ontologically, to collect is to accumulate artworks; second, art, the object of the collectors' desire, and the global art world are not so closely aligned with the climate crisis. The art ecosystem encourages trips to participate in art events worldwide, increasing a carbon footprint impact, and rarely uses recycled materials, causing waste. The economic model of the art markets lacks sustainability. How to promote a sustainable collecting attitude? In this exploratory study, we will observe art market players, especially the Iberian Peninsula collectors' actions in terms of their contribution to reduce the environmental impact of purchases. Based on data, reports, interviews, and published sources, we will investigate collectors' awareness of the subject and evaluate actions adopted. Since, to date, no analysis has been carried out on the trends of Iberian collecting in the field of climate sustainability, we have focused our study on finding data from the primary source par excellence, the collectors themselves. The aim is to fuel the need for a paradigm shift, concluding on a slow collecting attitude.

Keywords: Slow Collecting; Art Markets; Iberian Collectors; Contemporary Art; Sustainable collecting

Citation: To be added by editorial staff during production.

Academic Editor: Firstname Lastname

Received: date
Revised: date
Accepted: date
Published: date

Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Introduction

Sustainability is at the forefront of debate nowadays as the rapid climate changes are making the issue urgent. Concerning the global art market performance in relation to sustainability, its peculiar way of functioning, depending on a strong calendar of events, such as art fairs or exhibitions worldwide, makes the topic particularly challenging. On the other side, the ability of the field searching for alternative measures, and the resistance to external shocks, has been a way of overcoming the complex issues in the sector [1]. Besides the recent health pandemic crisis and the ongoing consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the art trade has found solutions, as exploring hybrid models for buying and selling art, showing a prompt adaptation to the digital trade, and the online platforms developed by galleries and art fairs became more usual. In terms of estimated global figures, the global art market has reached an estimated $67.8 billion in 2022, according to McAndrew's report, with global sales increasing 3% regarding the previous year [2]. Regarding sustainability, however, and in consonance with the Art of Zero report launched a year before, in 2021, it was pointed an estimate of the global carbon footprint for the visual arts sector in the order of 70 million tons of CO2e per year, considering that the major percentage of the sector's is due to the visitor travel (circa 74% of those figures) [3]. These data means the visual art sector needs a stronger commitment to the transition to

net zero carbon, as it is still a very polluting industry. Nevertheless, infrastructures of the art market are showing concern with the urge of climate changes. Museums have been discussing sustainability for a long time, and the potential impact of the collections growth and how to take care of them, from the eco museums in the seventies to the museum's performance in the climate crisis [4, 5, 6]. Art fairs are presently encouraging the greening up of its carbon-heavy footprint. London Frieze Art Fair and Art Basel, two leading art fairs for the primary art market, are setting up individual measures responding to climate changes, such as the use of reused energy, biofuel, and the hybrid power model, LED lighting for galleries booths, catering with green credentials, preferably shipping by train or boat [7]. Non-profit associations are also bringing the subject to discussion. TIAMSA-The International Art Market Studies Association has devoted its annual conference to the theme, in Brussels, in 2023. Titled "Towards a Sustainable Art Market?", the conference gathered academics and researchers to debate sustainability in its relation to the art market, i.e., to museums, to the curating practices, the technology and media, the art galleries, among which this paper was first presented [8].

In spite of punctual measures, systematic change is needed. Participating or being affiliated in organizations is an indicator of a commitment towards sustainability of the art market. Launched in 2020, the Gallery Climate Coalition (GCC) is an international community of art organizations, that gathers professionals from different sectors besides gallerists, as artists and from nonprofit organizations [9]. It aims to disseminate the best practices, reduce carbon footprint and create a strong commitment of zero waste until 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. This commitment aims at a prompt reply by the sector to the climate crisis. Despite being recent, this platform has raised a global interest, and that is why we will use it as a standpoint reference in this study. Frieze and Art Basel are both members from the art sector business. Concerning galleries, first steps have been taken from the Iberian Peninsula with adhesion by six Spanish galleries (Galería Baro, Badr El Jundi, Galeria Alvaro Alcazar, Galeria Senda, Galeria ATC and Galeria Lucía Mendoza) and one from Portugal (3+1 Arte Contemporânea), as well as four foundations, museums, and non-profit institutions from Spain (Foundation Ideasbio, Fundación TBA21, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao and JOYA: AiR) and one from Portugal (Insights of an Eco Artist), three Spanish companies related to the art market (Stick no Bills, TAC7 and UreCulture) and a varied number of artists and other professionals [9].

Taking into account the growing adhesion to the Gallery Climate Coalition, a progressive awareness of the problem is evident in different agents of the art market, particularly the gallery owners and the art fairs organizers. Artists have been however pioneers in the sustainability reflection, making artistic proposals accordingly, since this issue was not yet urgent. A large number of artists have included in their works and in their creative processes a high commitment to the climate emergency since decades ago, as the "ecological artists" involved with ecological and environmental art [10, 11]. From Georgia O'Keefe to Ana Mendieta, from Hokusai to Olafur Eliasson, from Joseph Beuys to Alberto Carneiro, this concern is well noted. The work of numerous curators in their exhibitions also shows their interest in tackling this problem from curatorial criticism.

Within the remaining agents from the art market, collectors appears to be the group that seems to be the most reluctant in reacting in favor of a change of attitude. Considering that collectors are major actors in the global art market due to their purchase of works of art and care for the maintenance of their collections, travelling worldwide to attend art events, fostering the art business, it is our belief that these actors also need to be studied as their change in behaviour may act as a further step into the achievemnt of the sustainable agenda UN 2030. The art ecosystem encourages trips to participate in events, and rarely uses or proposes to use recycled materials to avoid waste. The economic model of the art markets in which collectors play lacks sustainability. A question arises: How to promote a sustainable collecting attitude? Can we identify alternative models in line with the climate change goals?

In 2022, a survey of global collecting was launched, where the report, while examining the trade patterns, inquired high net worth collectors about the environmental impact of collecting. The conclusions underline a growing concern and a higher awareness regarding the need of the adoption of sustainable options for acquisitions and management of the works of art [12]. Nevertheless, collectors plan to keep a high travel rate to see and to collect art, since they prefer to view in-presence what they want to buy. Still, they are "willing to pay a premium for sustainably" in order to "reduce the environmental impact of their purchases" [12]. According to the mentioned report, collectors are aware of the relevance of sustainability issues, but instead of a compromise with a change in behavior, they are willing to pay an extra amount to reduce the impact of their purchases, using payment as an argument to replace a sustainable collecting practice.

In this exploratory article, our main aim is to analyse living contemporary art collectors from Portugal and Spain, in terms of their contribution to the achieving of sustainable development goals, in comparison with other players of the art market ecosystem. Using primary data, an inquiry, reports, field research, informal conducted interviews, and published sources, we have studied their commitment with a sustainable environment – as participation in local art fairs or moving preferably to online platforms –, their interest in artists' discussions and agents' activities choosing a green attitude. Aware of the challenge that a preliminary research represents, the purpose of this research is to bring attention to a wider audience of scholars and academics, as much as to dissiminate knowledge and influence to the need for a paradigm shift toward purchasing behavior in the art market and to metaphorically stimulate a slow collecting practice.

2. Materials and Methods

In terms of the materials and methods we have use to build the results of the research, we have first analyzed the available literature on the subject. As this is exploratory research, the literature about the collector's awareness on sustainability issues is still scarce, and absent when referring to the Iberian Peninsula collectors. This case-study is the first approach in terms of sustainable collecting practices in this geographic region. We studied the sustainability concept to frame the subject, taking into account both academic and non-profit organization perspectives (Kagan [10], UN, Bourdieu [13]), and the collecting theoretical definition (Pomian, Alsop, Pearce, Baudrillard, Elsner & Cardinal) [14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19]. We also analyzed the slow collecting concept, a derivation of the slow movement, a need for slowing down against the frenetic productivity, the social pressure of speed [40]. We have consulted several published reports, both national and international (McAndrews [2], Bicycle [3], the Report of the World Commission on Environmental and Development, NEMO [6]), as much as unpublished reports authors had access to. We also have taken into account the specialized press (The Art Newspaper [7]). The secondary sources were discussed between the authors and confronted with primary data gathered through the field research (survey, semi-structured interviews and informal conversations with art players, collectors, gallerists, and artists on the topic). The primary data collected in the field by the authors was complemented by information by secondary sources, analyzed with the support of theoretical references.

The data examined in section 4 is coming from an anonymous survey launched to Portuguese and Spanish collectors' trough a Google Form platform, and the questionnaire was sent by email between May 22 and July 4, 2023. In terms of the sample gathered, the social category of a collector is defined as a living and active art buyer, recognized as such by themselves, by peers and agents as the art galleries from the milieu, where those collectors operate (Becker) [20]. The collectors were identified using sources such as the galleries contacts, former projects where authors were involved (Duarte) [21], their participation in the only association of contemporary art collectors in the Iberian Peninsula, and the authors knowledge of the field. Those contacts were validated by telephone (June 26-29, July 3). The questionnaire was organized in different sections to further understand how collectors have been approaching sustainability issues. The questions provide

generally closed answers, and sections are as follow: a) socio-demographic data, with inquiries about country of residency; age; gender; period of time collecting; b) commitment with the climate changes, with questions focused on: measures adopted to reduce climate impact as travels, online purchases or recycling materials derived from purchases; perspective on the art market behavior regarding the subject; acquisitions from artists engaged with climate changes; knowledge on the curators' work on the topic; the perception on how the art market looks at other forms of sustainability, such as financial support for artists and gallerists, application of Good Practices, legal sustainability such as the regulation on the online trade or the NFTs. The analysis was conducted with aggregate data.

The sample reunited a group of 39 active collectors approached differently in both countries: through direct contact with all collectors in the case of Portugal (a total of 31 collectors), given Dr. Duarte familiarity with the Portuguese 'art world'; on the other side, in the case of Spain, Dr. Pérez-Ibáñez had the support of the collectors' association 9915 *Asociación de Colecionistas Privados de Arte Contemporáneo*, the only association of contemporary art collectors in the Iberian Peninsula, with an estimate of 76 members.

For this paper, we combine theoretical references with quantitative data.

3. Sustainability and Collecting: Framing Polysemic Concepts

Sustainability is a concept that has been discussed in academia and in society, through non-profit organizations, for more than thirty years. 'Sustainability' and the 'sustainable development' have been both systematized in a conceptual closeness, the first reflecting the thought that development is synonymous with growth in a balanced evolution, and the later expression is based on a tryptic direction, as "social justice, ecological integrity and economic well-being" [10]. The author, rechercher Sacha Kagan, argues on a cultural dimension of sustainability, and using Moacir Gadotti words, states for a "dream of living well; […] a dynamic balance with others and the environment, it is the harmony among differences" [10]. On a similar perspective, the United Nation (1987) had defined sustainability as the development that meets "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [22]. The definition remains current, although climate change has made it urgent. People's actions should be oriented, conciliating their needs without endangering the needs of successors, without being a threat for the sustainable development. A balance is required between economic, social, and environmental factors that guarantees that our actions are sustainable in the long term to ensure a more equitable and prosperous future for all. We may underline two major ideas on the sustainability concept, the first is the satisfaction of the "*needs*" of societies, and the other is the idea of a "*limit*", meaning that the needs of societies must take into account the needs of the future [23], an accomplishment that requires an articulated policy.

Having these concepts in mind, what is sustainability when applied to the collecting process? How can we conciliate the *needs* of the present with its *limits*, or the needs of the future from the collectors practices perspective? The art market is often measured in terms of sales and financial transactions in which collectors play a key role. The more sales the more success for actors involved. On the other side, taking into account Pierre Bourdieu's lessons, in which art has intrinsic value beyond its economic worth, since it carries symbolic, cultural and historical contents, along with social significance [13], the art market is beyond financial asset, contributing to the promotion and preservation of the artistic and cultural heritage. More than art trade, the market configures a platform for artists, gallerists, collectors, intermediaires to engage with art and culture. So, the *needs* for a sustainable collecting practice is more than an economic issue.

Since the balance between the *needs* of the art markets and the *need* for a more sustainable collecting practice is a key question, our research will delve into how this issue is being considered in two countries, Spain and Portugal. As a main market driver, to collect (art) is a social activity of assembling things, objects of every kind, even intangible if related with projects or ideas, temporarily or permanently removed from the economic

circuit, protected, and possibly exhibited for the public view [14]. To assemble those 206
'things' implies to accumulate in a systematic way, where normally the criteria is defined. 207
Collecting may be different from acquiring in terms of its intentions, in the creation of a 208
narrative among those objects. Still, in the frame of a behavioral and cultural system, it 209
lacks a definition sufficiently precise in the literature to be universally useful [16], driving 210
to the need of a proper identification of the collection by the collector himself or herself 211
[17]. Motivations are also decisive to the collecting process, varying from aesthetics, finan- 212
cial or social engagement. From a psychological perspective, the relevance of collecting 213
counteracts the fleetingness of life through the perenniallity of works of art [18, 19]. 214

The idea of assembling that characterizes the collecting process may contradict the 215
sustainability concept when it claims for a behavior of reusing, recycling, for a slow col- 216
lecting process or a responsible collecting method. The art market stimulates consumption 217
and accumulation, so, paradoxically, discussing sustainability and the slowing down of 218
the collecting behavior is challenging its intrinsic rules. 219

Recovering the idea of the *limits* embodied in the previous definition of sustainability 220
from the UN by which collectors should take into account the needs of the future, collec- 221
tors seem to adopt a superficial perspective in their practices, as we will see below. Some 222
of them are choosing green, indeed, by adopting actions towards a low footprint carbon, 223
showing concern about it and willing to help to resolve it. But systematic actions are 224
needed. Sustainability encompasses different dimensions, implies long-term commit- 225
ment, a change of conscience, therefore a paradigm shift in attitude with the power of 226
exerting influence over others. Before returning to this perspective, we will show what 227
institutions, galleries and professionals are doing in terms of their sustainable practices. 228

3.1. The needs and the limits: Sustainability Measures from Institutions, Galleries, Professionals 229

The commitment to climate sustainability that the Spanish and Portuguese art system 230
are demonstrating is very recent and not yet widespread, with few museums, galleries, 231
and public and private institutions involved in this problem, let alone collectors, as we 232
will see in the next heading. The active measures to stop climate change are concentrated 233
above all in the activity of the Gallery Climate Coalition. As the organization states in its 234
web site [9], 235

GCC's primary goal is to facilitate a reduction of the sector's CO2e emissions by a 236
minimum of 50% by 2030, as well as promoting zero waste. We develop and share best 237
practice, provide leadership on sector specific environmental issues, and work to leverage 238
the collective power of our membership to achieve systemic changes. 239

Among their members, some stand out, especially involved in the adoption of active 240
measures. Below we will emphasize some initiatives recently developed by agents from 241
the art market, as museums and curators, galleries and art fairs, and alternative business 242
models, to put on perspective and compare it with the collectors commitment. 243

3.1.1. Museums and Curators 244

The TBA21 Foundation – Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, through a curated 245
program of exhibitions in different venues and the research activity of the TBA21 Acad- 246
emy, seeks to reinvent the culture of exploration in the Anthropocene of the 21st century, 247
while developing knowledge creation, new modes of collaboration, and the coproduction 248
of solutions for the pressing environmental challenges of today. With exhibitions such as 249
"Futuros abundantes" or *"Remedios. Donde podría crecer una nueva tierra"* [24] and with the 250
close connection with committed artists like Joan Jonas, Olafur Eliasson, Shirin Neshat, 251
Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Tomás Saraceno, and curators like Stefanie Hessler, Chus 252
Martínez and Daniela Zyman, TBA21 raises an approach to the problems arising from the 253
climate emergency and the overexploitation of resources starting from creativity, technol- 254
ogy, ancestral traditions and respect for our origins. 255

As for the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, coinciding with the celebration of its 25th Anniversary, it presented an ambitious sustainability plan, pioneer in the museum sector, aimed at minimizing the environmental impact of its activity through the implementation of energy-sustainable solutions and non-polluting processes, and promoting an activity oriented towards eco-efficiency. These measures are intended not only to guarantee compliance with environmental regulations from all legislative areas and the obligations derived from permits, licenses, etc., but to expand, as far as possible, its commitment. In 2004 the Museum obtained the certification corresponding to the implementation of an environmental management system in accordance with ISO 14001, which has allowed it to have a structure to control the environmental impact of the Museum's activity and services and maintain effective management to continuously improve its performance. Among the measures adopted, the Museum cites the following:

-Energy optimization and reduction of electricity and gas consumption
-Selective waste collection and recycling
-The authorization of a specific warehouse for the management of hazardous waste
-The reduction of sound impact in the environment
-The redirection to the drainage network of discharges (except rainwater)
-Carrying out annual external and internal environmental audits
-Training and awareness communications for the workforce

In addition to direct emissions, the Museum has calculated the carbon footprint of a substantial part of its indirect emissions during 2019 and the total figure amounts to 4,313 tons [25]. The calculation of indirect emissions, known as 'Scope 3', is key to identifying opportunities for energy efficiency and savings in its daily activity. It is the first museum at an international level to take this step. The Museum has calculated and certified the carbon footprint related to the transport of works of art and the movements of staff, which corresponds to a third of the total emissions. As a result of this verification, the Museum has consolidated some initiatives and is going to implement new actions to reduce the consumption of energy and raw materials involved in the organization of the exhibitions.

Guggenheim Museum Bilbao will also participate in the Symposium on Environmental Sustainability organized by the World Art Foundations WAF, in Bilbao, in October 2023. As the website reads, this symposium offers "a practical approach for decision makers of Art Foundations to develop and implement environmental strategies within their organizations" [26] with a clear urgency around the climate crises.

Outside the ranks of GCC we find private art institutions and foundations, other professionals and companies related to the art market that show the same commitment to sustainability, but in other ways. The Serralves Foundation in Oporto has been developing a program of good practices in terms of climate concerns, articulating a double mission of disseminating contemporary values with environmental issues. In this frame, since 2011, it signed a Cooperation protocol with the Portuguese Environment Agency for implementation of Community Eco-management and Audit System (the EMAS aims of promoting an efficient management of the environmental system) [27]. The same concern is noted in Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, in Lisbon, that developed a program since 2018 titled *Sustainable Gulbenkian*, and supports initiates and programs to stop climate changes [28]. It was launched (June 2023) the "life cycle evaluation" of "Europa Oxalá" (Europe Hopefully), a temporary exhibition with contemporary artists chosen due to their familiar origins in the ex-African colonial countries to discuss the post-colonial Europe, in 2022. Its peculiarity lies in the fact that intents to be a model for the evaluation of other exhibitions in terms of the reducing the carbon footprint [29]. In the conclusions, it was pointed the displacement of people (visitors, artists, curators, journalists) as the main factor that contributed to the carbon footprint, in order of 61%, although the Gulbenkian museum is paradoxically served with a very good access to public transports.

Museums are players particularly positioned to have a key role, raising public awareness about sustainability, as they are ment to serve societies with an inclusive profile fostering diversity and sustainability [30]. The former aim has been recently add to its

definition during ICOM's General Conference in Prague 2022, making the museum a leading institution in offering an education in favour of a sustainable commitment.

The work of curators such as Blanca de la Torre, director of the 15th Cuenca Biennial in Ecuador, entitled "Biocene Biennial. Changing green for blue", is closely linked to the need for sustainable and ethical processes at all levels. Similarly, artists like Eugenio Ampudia, with his multidisciplinary work "Concert for the Biocene", invites us to reflect on our relationship with nature through music.

3.1.2. Galleries and Art Fairs

Galleries, as private commercial structures where works are displayed [31], also seem to want to show their concern towards climate sustainability not only through the active practices and measures proposed by GCC, but by working with artists committed to criticizing over-exploitation policies and the need to raise social awareness about this problem. We can highlight Lucía Mendoza gallery in Madrid, with the work of Elena Lavellés, Miguel Sbastida, Luna Bengoechea, Agustín Ibarrola, Lucía Loren, or the Portuguese 3+1 Arte Contemporânea in Lisbon, with artists such as Adriana Proganó, Alberto Carneiro and Evy Jokhova.

Concerning art fairs held in the Iberian Pensinsula, the main commercial venue in the primary art market [32], the ARCOmadrid art fair and its subsidiary ARCOlisboa also develop environmental sustainability policies. Specific actions are carried out, proactively, that affect the reduction of any type of consumption: paper, wood, plastic, metal or textile (they do not use carpet by default, entrance tickets have been physically minimized and those that remain are no longer PVC). Online registrations in the Collectors and GUEST Programs have also been promoted and all these programs are digital. On the other hand, the modular booths are easily removable and reusable, and their composition allows their recycling. In addition, their weight has been minimized to the essential minimum without compromising safety and avoiding the use of dangerous chemical products. The lighting of all the modular booths is produced by led fixtures. In terms of food consumption, for example, ARCO communicates daily visitor forecasts so that catering companies can make the appropriate supply. ARCO promotes the use of collective transport to transfer all the guests from their accommodation to the art fair (round trip,) between 600-800 people approximately every time. There are also electric car sponsorships.

ARCO, as well as Estampa, the art fair that takes place in Madrid every autumn, is part of the public institution IFEMA Madrid and aligns with the organization's sustainable strategic management plan [33]. Therefore, it:

-Prepares and implements at least annually a CSR Plan, with the lines of action and the actions to be carried out in each of them and their relationship with the SDGs,

-Sustainability is part of IFEMA's culture as one of its values,

-Sustainability is part of IFEMA's Strategic Plan.

Regarding greenhouse gas emissions, IFEMA annually calculates its scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint, requesting the corresponding seal and updating the register in MITECO (Ministry of Ecological Transition). It has reduced its footprint by 90% in the last 6 years.

IFEMA has implemented the best techniques available regarding the consumption of electricity, natural gas, water consumption and paper consumption:

-Certified 100% renewable origin electricity,

-Installation of geothermal energy in the Puerta Sur building,

-Low consumption lighting in halls and modular stands,

-Efficient irrigation systems and irrigation with reclaimed water,

-Electronic refrigeration, dry urinals, double flush toilets,

-Paper from sustainable forests (FSC or PEFC certification).

Regarding waste regeneration:

-Provides clear information on waste management regulations in this regard (e.g. signs, public address system, written regulations, etc.).

-Offers a service to exhibitors that includes the segregation of the generated waste and its management until its recycling.

-Makes rubbish bins near its exhibition area available for the event to deposit waste in a segregated manner.

-Has reduced its waste generation ratio by 59% in the last 5 years.

-Has recycled the 83% of the waste generated in 2022.

Finally, as we have mentioned about ARCO in terms of transportation:

-IFEMA has public transport close to its facilities.

-Has parking for electric cars with 100% renewable electricity supply and parking for bicycles.

-Has internal transport (bus or similar) that uses alternative energies (electric, gas, biodiesel, or hybrid vehicles, etc.).

-Promotes collective transport and public transport from hotels to the fair for visitors and exhibitors.

It is noted that both galleries and art fairs seem aware about the sustainable challenges nowadays. They both are developing iniciatives accordingly, mainly concentrated on the reuse and recycling materials. However, there still is a lack of studies on the results of these actions evaluating and assessing their effective impact.

3.1.3. Alternative Business Models

We may also refer to alternative business models, which function in a complementary way to the art market mainstream structures. In this case, we will return to the polysemy of the concept of sustainability, expanding its meaning towards the search for a social, finantial, and ethical balance between the different agents that make up the art system. In Portugal, an online platform, The Concerned Collector [34], and a new art fair, the Mercado P'la Arte [35], both opened during the pandemic health crisis context, and despite not assuming in their mission guidelines clearly aimed at climate change, their inclusive mode of action in the art system helps to put into perspective the scope of this subject. The first is an online auction with artworks from living artists, whose works are chosen in artists' ateliers from the unsold in the art galleries. This business method does not make concurrence with galleries neither interfere with artists quotation. The auction benefit goes 100% to artists. The management of the platform takes a percentage, but only from the buyer. The second is an art fair, which has the support of a non-profit organization, P'Arte, with the peculiarity of having no intermediaries in the acquisition process, e.g., artists are in-presence monthly in a garage, in Lisbon, exhibiting and selling their works. These initiatives are meant to dynamize the art market, fostering a non-speculative business through the practice of low prices, contributing to financial sustainability of the artists. Besides, this trade modality is allowing the access of art to people that were not necessarily familiar with the artistic milieu.

Aligned with these measures, the Spanish art market became aware, after the 2008 economic crisis, of the need to commit to financial and social sustainability, and to an art market suited to the new business models that were proliferating [36]. The need to adapt to a less local, more global collecting that arouse during that period, the decrease or disappearance of public aid or an institutional collecting that until then had contributed to the maintenance of the commercial activity of many galleries, impelled the new gallery owners and the existing ones to look for ways to maintain their activity and recover the viability of the galleries. The new circumstances of the global art market, determined by the development of new technologies and by the birth of a new type of collector, made it necessary to modify the strategies used until then. The new galleries that proliferated in the Spanish market responded, therefore, to a different style. Delocalized, ubiquitous, multidisciplinary models that accommodated parallel exhibition projects focused on complementary market niches, which allowed gallery management to be sustainable. The galleries that emerged then, with a strong global component such as Sabrina Amrani or Travesía Cuatro, or with a pop-up model of great international artists such as Bernal

Espacio, or diversified in terms of their own business model such as Swinton and Grant or Delimbo, also demonstrate after the pandemic crisis that are sustainable models.

In the case of artists, the generation of independent, alternative and self-managed spaces enabled the survival of numerous artists lacking representation by galleries, spaces that we can define as "third place", the concept coined by the sociologist Ray Oldenburg (1989), halfway between the "standard" workspace and the place of exchange where artists combine similar backgrounds and objectives with their own patterns and creative, stimulating and enriching processes [37]. These spaces were true laboratories for research, development, production, artistic residences, combined with the administration and marketing of works of art, and meeting places with the public and with other agents of the art system (galleries, collectors, institutions, managers, critics, curators, other artists). Good examples of this model are Mala Fama and Nave Oporto in Madrid, and Escalera de Incendios and Chiquita Room in Barcelona.

This shows that private art institutions, alternative companies, professionals, and the most important art fairs in the Spanish and Portuguese capital are taking active measures in favor of sustainability, both environmental and social/financial, and are also stimulating the participation of galleries to compromise with sustainability values. What about collectors?

4. Results: Collectors and the Lack of Awareness for a Sustainable Collecting

In the introduction of this study, we raised the possibility of collectors being the social group that reluctantly reacted in favor of a change of attitude more suitable with sustainable concerns. Indeed, our prospecting work approaches the measurements from collecting, especially from private collecting[1]. The environmental commitment of the institutions, as well as of the corporate and public collections, is closely linked to the legal imperatives by which the Ministries of the Environment oblige to follow certain guidelines. For this reason, it was especially interesting for the authors to know whether the private initiative, whether private collectors, shared this commitment and took measures accordingly. We have also approached other ways of social and financial sustainability, including legal, to which the collectors consulted contributed their opinion.

In order to find out the opinion of a number of Spanish and Portuguese private collectors, a brief sample was taken, and a survey was launched that had to be completed online, as we explained in the materials and methods section of this paper. The survey, which was active for two weeks, was answered by a total of 39 people from both countries, very evenly distributed as Figure 1 demonstrates.

[1] In a personal interview carried out by Pérez-Ibáñez, the president of 9915 association expressed his unfamiliarity about the measures that were already being taken by institutions, art fairs and galleries, and his doubts about the need to take part from private collecting, which has been ratified in the results of our survey.

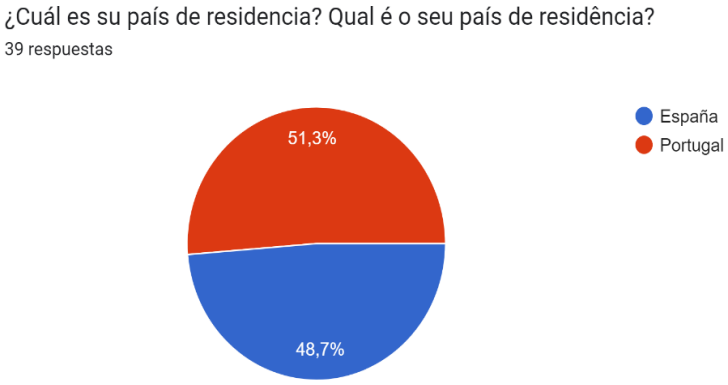


Figure 1. Collectors' country of residency. Data source: Survey conducted by authors.

The gender and age of the collectors surveyed also showed a usual trend, according to the reports on collecting in both countries: a majority of men compared to women and a majority of ages over 50 years (Figures 2 and 3) [38]. We may mention that all the collectors participating from Portugal were men.

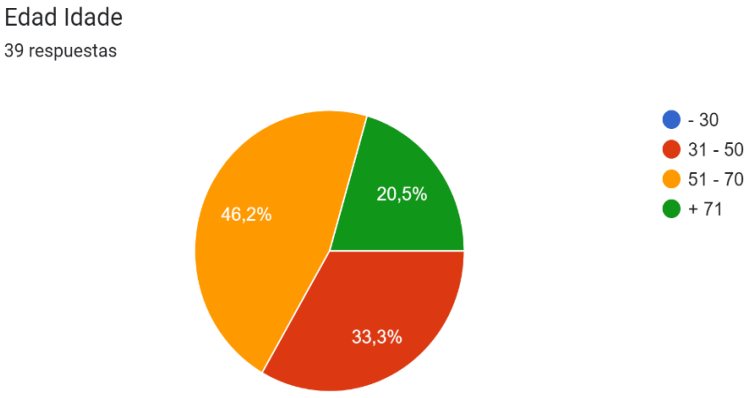


Figure 2. Collectors' age. Data source: Survey conducted by authors.

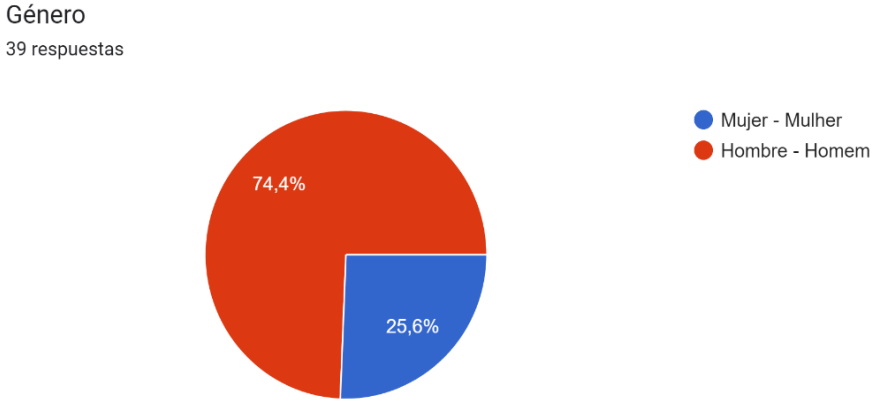


Figure 3. Collectors' gender. Data source: Survey conducted by authors.

The number of years dedicated to collecting was also within expectations, giving priority to collectors dedicated to this activity over 20 years (Figure 4.)



Figure 4. Period of time collecting. Data source: Survey conducted by authors.

Regarding the collectors' commitment to the climate change problem, only 38.5% responded positively, and only 35.9% declared that they took measures to reduce the climate impact of their activity as a collector (reduce air travel, switch from on-site purchases to online purchases, increase recycling and reuse of materials derived from purchases.)

The collectors in our study were also asked if they considered that, from the art market, galleries and art fairs, measures were being taken in this line. To this question, only 15.4% answered affirmatively. The remaining 84.6% did not appreciate any commitment from the art market for this problem.

They were also asked if they considered that the art market was sensitive to other areas, such as financial sustainability (support for artists and galleries), the application of Good Practices or legal sustainability (strengthening of regulation on digital art, of NFTs market, international market protection). In the first two cases, collectors were optimistic, less so in the third (Figure 5.)

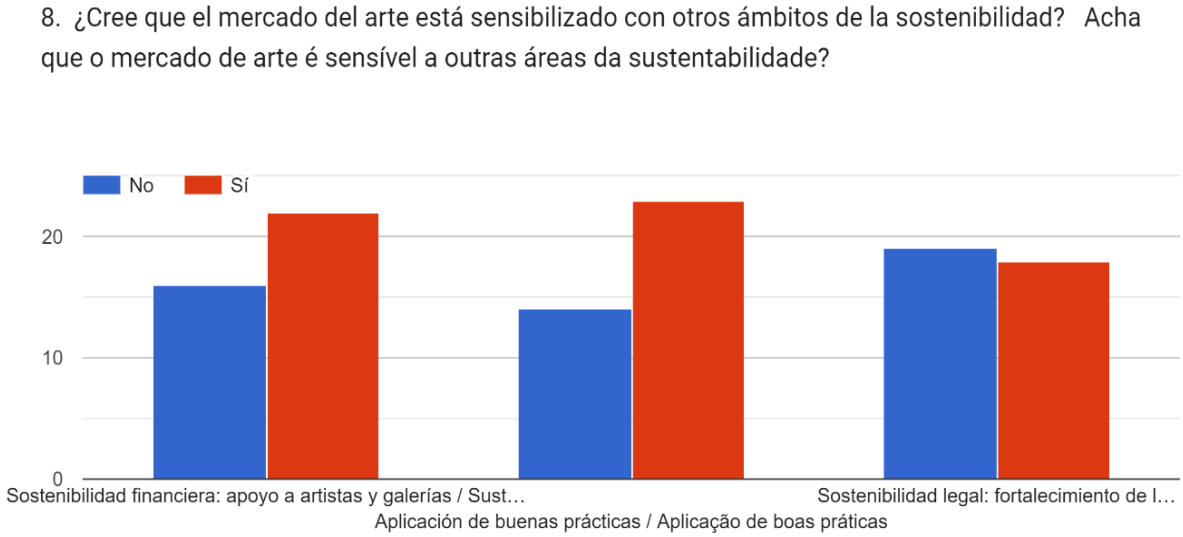


Figure 5. Collectors' commitment with different areas of sustainability: financial sustainability (support for artists and galleries), the application of Good Practices or legal sustainability (strengthening of regulation on digital art, of NFTs market, international market protection). Data source: Survey conducted by authors.

Regarding the last reflections from the surveyed collectors, it is mentioned that the commitment to sustainability is transversal, the world of the arts is not left out of this topic, it is also commented that it has been used as an advertising "flag" but with little scientific basis and above all with little result, emulating a sort of greenwashing effect, and that awareness for climate change has not yet permeated the art market, that there are committed artists and curators, but that it does not seem to be a very visible issue yet. One collector states that the lack of transparency in the art market affects the confidence of collectors and the sustainability of the market, as well as the support for artists who can oppose political correctness, distinguishing between art and social militancy.

In general, the collectors we have approached state that in the Spanish and Portuguese markets there is more awareness for regulation, economic sustainability, and viability than for climate awareness, and the lack of interest in this issue among collectors is evident.

5. Discussion: Slow Collecting and The Need for a Paradigm Shift

The results of the survey were not optimistic in terms of active measures towards sustainability and to stop climate change. As we previously noted, the majority of the collectors surveyed (61.5%) did not claim for a commitment with climate changes in their collecting practices.

Still, it is worth paying attention to some comments they have made in the frame of this inquiry because it opens the sustainability concept to a broader perspective, reinforcing what we have mentioned as a polysemic concept. When asked to share their thoughts on the topic and to point out the kind of measures they have taken, besides mentioning recycling of materials, the online acquisitions (although the increase of online acquisitions is not clearly an aim, it helps to diminish the effects of climate crisis), reducing in-presence art fairs attendance, the optimization of the conditions of collections (temperature and humidity), collectors have also stated for local acquisitions, the relevance of transparency for their own confidence and for market sustainability, the support of committed artists, the need for more adequate regulation, the financial and the legal balance. This means that sustainability is more than a sum of initiatives related to recycling, the carbon emissions, reducing plane travels, and optimization of resources. It is a behavioral change, a paradigm shift, an experimentation of alternative models of the art market functioning and collecting dinamics.

The commitment with sustainability is observed in alternative and unexpected paths, new business models, innovative and collaborative strategies [39], in small-scale trade structures. The sample of collectors from the Iberian Peninsula under analysis tend to acquire in a human scale business, local art fairs and galleries, preferably from local artists, some of them committed with sustainable materials or techniques, underrepresented communities, helping them to preserve cultural diversity, a tendency that contradicts - or complements - the global art market. Whether or not motivated for sustainable climate change reasons, taking into account the polysemic concept, this tendency is definitively relevant for financial sustainability.

Approaching an answer to the question raised in section 3, *what is sustainability when applied to the collecting process*, we think it could be the idea of slow collecting, a metaphor for a responsible collecting process, for a change in behavior that claims an articulation within the art market structures and within public policies. The slow collecting category is a derivation we appropriate from the slow movement brought up in the eigthies, demanding for a reflective behaviour, a deceleration of the frenetic productivity, valuing quality instead of quantity in a balance between the local demands and the global

aspiration [40]. Slow collecting engages deeper with artistic communities, invests time to understand the local context, develops a continuous practice of support, shows concern with the environment and the art ecosystem. Engagement with sustainability takes longer, suggests network, the adoption of political policies and ethical approaches which include transparency in the art market and the acceptance of the Good Practices towards an inclusive art world.

Collectors will not probably reduce their travels, neither change their acquisitional behavior or their taste on a sustainable premise. But some measures taken already during the pandemic lockdown, such as the turn to the online art market and to local galleries and artists, together with the recent awareness of the role collectors may take in considering climate change as one of the issues our society must face and solve, are resulting in a new way of dealing with collecting while being concerned with social and environmental problems. Regarding the fight in favor of social and financial sustainability in the art market, the economic crises have been key to detecting the need to establish measures that favor a more ethical and viable market for all the agents involved. We trust that in the future the measures that have proven to be reliable and positive will strengthen sustainability in all its aspects.



Author Contributions: "Conceptualization, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; methodology, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; formal analysis, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; investigation, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; resources, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; data curation, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; writing—original draft preparation, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; writing—review and editing, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez; visualization, Adelaide Duarte and Marta Pérez-Ibáñez. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript."

Funding: "This research received no external funding".

Institutional Review Board Statement: In this section, you should add the Institutional Review Board Statement and approval number, if relevant to your study. You might choose to exclude this statement if the study did not require ethical approval. Please note that the Editorial Office might ask you for further information. Please add "The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Institutional Review Board (or Ethics Committee) of NAME OF INSTITUTE (protocol code XXX and date of approval)." for studies involving humans. OR "The animal study protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Board (or Ethics Committee) of NAME OF INSTITUTE (protocol code XXX and date of approval)." for studies involving animals. OR "Ethical review and approval were waived for this study due to REASON (please provide a detailed justification)." OR "Not applicable" for studies not involving humans or animals.

Informed Consent Statement: "Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study."

Data Availability Statement: Google Forms platform: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1y5n_OQdnLrVZ3ke5GNJdvXBu97m0Pfx4ROOyY-WRPLjo/edit#responses

Conflicts of Interest: "The authors declare no conflict of interest."

References

1. Duarte, A.; Fialho, A. L.; Pérez-Ibáñez, M.. External Shocks in the Art Markets: How did the Portuguese, the Spanish and the Brazilian Art Markets react to COVID-19 Global Pandemic? Data Analysis and Strategies to Overcome the Crisis. *Arts*, 2021. 10(3), 47. Available online: https://doi.org/10.3390/arts10030047 (access on 20 September 2023).
2. McAndrew, C., *A survey of global collecting in 2022*. 2022. Art Basel / UBS Report, p. 19 and following.
3. Bicycle, J.. The Art of Zero. An indicative carbon footprint of global visual arts and the transition to net zero. 2021. Available online: https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ARTOFZEROv2.pdf (access on 23 June 2023), pp. 4, 17 and following.
4. Albuquerque, M. H. F.; Delgado, M. J. B. L.. Sustainable Museographies – The Museum Shops. *Procedia Manufacturing*, 2015. Vol. 3, Elsevier. Available online: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351978915009130 (access on 24 September 2023).

5. Brown, K.. Museums and Local Development: An Introduction to Museums, Sustainability and Well-being. *Museum International*, 2019. 71:3-4, 1-13. Available online: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/13500775.2019.1702257?needAccess=true&role=button
6. NEMO – The Network of European Museums Organizations. 2022. Berlin. Available online: https://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/Publications/NEMO_Report_Museums_in_the_climate_crisis_11.2022.pdf (access on 23 June 2023).
7. Buck, L.. Are Art Fairs going green at last? We break down how Frieze and Art Basel measure up sustainability. *The Art Newspaper*, 2022. Available online: https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/10/11/art-fairs-go-green-at-last (access on 17 May 2023).
8. TIAMSA News: Program Announcement, TIAMSA conference Towards a Sustainable Art Market?. Brussels, Université Libre de Bruxelles, June 30-July 1, 2023. Available online: https://www.artmarketstudies.org/tiamsa-news-program-announcement-tiamsa-conference-towards-a-sustainable-art-market-brussels-universite-libre-de-bruxelles-june-30-july-1-2023/ (access on 19 September 2023).
9. GCC. Our Story. Members. Available online: https://galleryclimatecoalition.org/about-us/ (access on 14 May 2023).
10. Kagan, S.. Art and Sustainability. Connecting Patterns for a Culture of Complexity, Wetzlar: Majuskel Medienproduktion GmbH. 2011, pp. pp.9-10, 13, 16, and following.
11. Stoltz, B.. A Nature Thing: What does Contemporary Ecological Art Produce?. *Arts*. 2023. 12, 67. Available online: https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0752/12/2/67 (access on 24 September 2023).
12. Spiegler, M.. Director Foreword. In A survey of global collecting in 2022, Clare McAndrew. Art Basel / UBS Report. 2022, pp. 8, 13 and following.
13. Bourdieu, P.. O Poder simbólico. Lisboa: Edições 70. 2011.
14. Pomian, K.. Colecção. *Enciclopaedia Einaudi*, Vol. 1. Porto: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda. 1984. 51-86.
15. Pomian, K.. Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux. Paris, Venise: XVI^{e}-XVIII^{e} siècle. Gallimard. 2004 (1.a Ed. 1987).
16. Alsop, J.. The Rare Art Traditions. The History of Art Collecting and its linked Phenomena. London: Thames and Hudson. 1982.
17. Pearce, S. M. (Ed. by). Interpreting Objects and Collections. London: Routledge. 2006 (1.a Ed. 1994).
18. Baudrillard, J.. O sistema dos objetos. São Paulo: Perspetiva. 2006. (1.ed. 1968).
19. Elsner, J.; Cardinal, R. (Ed. by). The Cultures of Collecting. London: Reaktion Boks Ltd. 1994.
20. Becker, Howard S.. Mundos da Arte. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte. 2010. (First published 1982).
21. Duarte, A. (Coord.). Diálogos de colecionar. [22] Colecionadores de arte em Portugal. Lisboa: Veritas Art Auctionners. 2022.
22. Sustainability. Available online: https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability (access on 22 September 2023).
23. Report of the World Commission on Environmental and Development: Our common Future, Chapter 2: Towards Sustainable Development. I. The Concept of Sustainable Development. 1987. Available online: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf (access on 25 September 2023).
24. Remedios. Directions to the old ways. Available online: https://tba21.org/Remedios2EN (access on 22 September 2023).
25. Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (24 April, 2022). El Museo Guggenheim Bilbao presenta un plan de sostenibilidad ambiental pionero en el sector. Press release. Available online: https://prensa.guggenheim-bilbao.eus/notas-de-prensa/corporativo/el-museo-guggenheim-bilbao-presenta-un-plan-de-sostenibilidad-ambiental-pionero-en-el-sector/ (access on 20 June 2023).
26. WAF Symposium: Environmental Sustainability. Available online: https://worldartfoundations.com/guggenheimbilbao-osymp23/ (access on 25 September 2023).
27. Fundação de Serralves, Certificação Ambiental. Available online: https://www.serralves.pt/institucional-serralves/1.96.- ok-fundacao---certificacao-ambiental/ (access on 23 June 2023).
28. Clima e Oceano. Available online: https://gulbenkian.pt/clima-e-oceano/ (access on 23 June 2023).
29. O impacto ambiental de uma exposição. Avaliação de ciclo de vida de Europa Oxalá. Fundação Calouste Gulbenlkian. 2023. Available online: https://cdn.gulbenkian.pt/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/GS_Relatorio_EuropaOxala_PT_AF2.pdf (access on 23 June 2023).
30. Museum Definition by ICOM. Available online: https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/ (access on 26 September 2023).
31. Quemin, A. Can Contemporary Art Galleries be Ranked? A Sociological Attempt from the Paris Case. In *The Sociology of Arts and Markets, Sociology of the Arts*. Edited by Andrea Glauser. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. pp. 339–62.
32. Moulin, R. *L'artiste, l'institution et le marché.* Paris: Éditions Flammarion. 1997.
33. IFEMA Madrid. Sustainability actions. 2023. Internal document.
34. The Concerned Collector. Available online: https://www.theconcernedcollector.com/sobre-nos (access on 23 June 2023).
35. Mercado P'la Arte. Available online: https://www.pratariversidevillage.com/neighborhood_events/mercado-pla-arte/ (access on 23 June 2023).
36. Pérez Ibáñez, M. Artistas, galerías y resiliencia ante la crisis. La génesis de nuevas tendencias y modelos de negocio en el actual mercado español del arte. En Elorza Ibáñez de Gauna, C. y Ayerbe, N. (eds.), *En riesgo. Diagnósticos, propuestas y luchas en torno a la precariedad del arte contemporáneo*. Madrid: Dyckinson, 2020. pp. 175-185.
37. Oldenburg, R. The great good place: Cafes, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons, and other hangouts at the heart of a community. Boston: Da Capo Press. 1999.
38. Duarte, A.. Relatório: A performance do mercado da arte em Portugal. O setor do antiquariato e das galerias de arte 2021, Lisboa, Associação Portuguesa de Antiquários / Lisbon Arts & Antiques Fairs. 2022. Internal document; Relatório: O Impacto

da Covid-19 no setor do Antiquariato e das Artes em Portugal, Lisboa, Associação Portuguesa de Antiquários / Lisbon Arts & Antiques Fairs. 2021. Internal document.
39. Resch, M., Management of art galleries. 2008. London: Phaidon Press.
40. Honoré, C. In praise of slowness. Challenging the cult of speed. 2004. New York: Harper Collins San Francisco Publishers.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.