

Museu Privê/Arte e Coleções



Só a arte salva

Das feiras online ao uso de novas plataformas e tecnologias, como o mercado de arte reagiu às mudanças impostas por 2020 e como se prepara para o futuro.

POR BIANCA CUTAIT, art editor em Miami

Como para todos os seres humanos e alguns faríamos deste mundo, o ano de 2020 foi certamente o mais, podemos dizer, diferente. Fronteiras desafiadas, negócios quebrados e mercados inteiros arrasados por uma vírus que afetou do mais rico ao mais pobre, do mais privilegiado ao mais desfavorecido. Minha família foi extremamente afetada — meu pai, médico cirurgião, se contamina gravemente e o resto é história para uma outra página. Nos últimos meses, meu pai, pode observar, de longe e de perto, alterações e adaptações necessárias no mercado de arte, mesmo que exista, e no qual eu me inclino ao mercado de arte.

Tenho uma galeria de médio porte em Miami, hoje totalmente digital e integrada à nova realidade. No começo da pandemia, fechei meu espaço físico pois me parecia inviável manter um local de trabalho com custos fixos altos sem data de retomada previsível. Não foi a única. Diversas galerias, museus, cen-

tros culturais e instituições tiveram a mesma velocidade de ação e foram colocadas em modo de espera. Aos 41 anos, tive que contratar uma pessoa de 25 para me ensinar a fazer códigos de programação e colocar um site novo no ar para vendas. Apreendi que para ter uma galeria online, é preciso pensar como um programador de 25 anos, ter a reputação de um marchand de 65 e o otimismo de um diretor pedagógico de museu em Nova York. Mergulhei em pesquisas para fazer essa alquimia funcionar: Foi quando uma tarde de lives e OVRs (Online Viewing Rooms) tomou conta do mercado de arte.

A maioria das galerias e instituições teve que incluir em suas práticas a inserção digitalização inovadora fomentada em nos encontramos agora. Temos infinitas reuniões e visitas monitoradas online de galerias, estúdios, museus etc. Algumas ricas em conteúdo, outras não. Artistas que não se preparam para falar, curadores de pijama, cachorros latindo,

microfones abertos e a falta de um mínimo de preparo — eu me senti várias vezes num episódio do Porta dos Fundos. Dentro desses tantos vigiados virtuais, as principais feiras se sobressaíram com excelentes conteúdos programados, mas com um constante despreparo de quem estava se apresentando. Um galariista de enorme importância para o cenário mundial durante a apresentação de seu stand virtual na principal feira, narrou belicamente sua ideologia política, enquanto outra galeria deixou a assistência falar e o marchand ficou apenas assistindo enquanto ela errava termos técnicos e nomes de artistas.

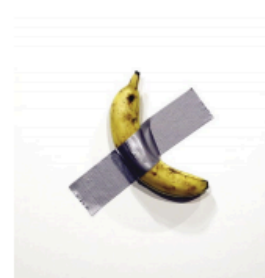
Mas houve vários acertos, como os vídeos interativos da feira Tefaf, ou a capacidade incrível dos stands da Art Basel Stage, ou a conversa com colecionadores da feira Prizm, de Los Angeles, e eventos programados de feiras menores como a Pitta Miami ou a ArtRio. A tendência agora é termos uma combinação saudável do melhor dos mundos, onde o digital fará parte de uma nova realidade presencial.

Com as feiras presenciais canceladas, vimos uma rápida adaptação das empresas responsáveis por elas ao modo online. Galerias começaram a montar suas próprias OVRs, seus investidores, líderes também se adaptaram a plataformas altamente tecnológicas. O ativismo artístico nunca esteve tão em alta, e podemos ver uma leve de processos criativos durante a pandemia. Artistas negros passaram a ter uma notoriedade necessária em instituições.

Também vimos um desenfreado colágio de vídeos em casa, com artistas produzindo obras a partir de suas realidades imediatas. Exemplo o crescimento do cabalo durante o lockdown, um prato cheio para a comunidade, influenciador Jerry Goggin ou @jerrygoggin. Trata-se de uma conta de Instagram criada por Hilda Lyn Helphinstetter como uma paródia. O colágeno acusa uma junção entre o famoso crítico de arte Jerry Saltz e o poderoso galerista Larry Goggin. Em uma conta com milhares de seguidores do mundo da arte, Hilda publicou, ou "memes", críticos e inteligentes. Artistas sem trabalho também buscam gerar conteúdo desenfreado. Alguns cantaram no Instagram, enquanto outros, como Sergio Fagundes, produziram conteúdos de altíssima qualidade em sua conta pessoal.

Dois outros casos de feitos mais importantes no mundo, houve realidades estratoféricas com alguns lotes, e obras de alto calibre sem nenhuma atenção. Com o aplicativo do Sotheby's, vemos o lote em tempo real na parede da casa, enquanto os lotes da Bonhams alcançam recordes discretos. Na Christie's, leilões falam ao mesmo tempo, mas concentram vendas iguais, enquanto na Phillips obras latam voltam a falar graças a insistência de seus especialistas.

O grande problema dos leilões internacionais é o mesmo hábito: compradores assíduos se preocupam ao adquirir peças de seus próprios países ou de seus respectivos conhecimentos. Agora, com a tecnologia, esses compradores têm acesso a obras de outros continentes culturais, fazendo com que a arte seja a cada vez mais global. O mesmo vale para as feiras online,



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com os OVRs, as pessoas passaram a se interessar por artistas e propostas alheias ao próprio tempo. Pesquisas recentes mostram que os novos colecionadores têm em média entre 25 e 28 anos. Como surgiu essa nova geração? Será que a tecnologia será a ferramenta para essa nova tribo? Ou essa jovem tribo preferiu coletar momentos em vez de elementos materiais? Isso me remete ao ano passado, quando uma banana foi a estrela da maior feira de arte do mundo. A obra, do artista italiano Maurizio Cattelan, era um pequeno manual de instruções colocado discretamente abaixo de uma banana grudada na parede, que atraiu milhares de pessoas prontas para fotografar o momento. Poucos se deram conta que aquilo não era uma obra, mas uma provocação para gerar um debate sobre o consumo desenfreado de arte sem conhecimento.

O Conselho Internacional de Museus prevê o fechamento de 15% de museus pelo mundo, e além da cultura ser afetada com essa mudança, diversos empregos e profissionais terão que ser realocados para outros locais. A recuperação de nosso econômico e o processo de cura para as sociedades após a crise será longo. A arte terá um papel importante a desempenhar na reconstrução da economia local e na reparação da trama social. O mercado de arte vai sofrer uma extrema mudança ao longo dos próximos anos. Estamos todos no mesmo barco do aprendizado e da aquisição de novas plataformas e tecnologias. Repetimos, além da resiliência, que exista preparo, cuidado, qualificação, treinamento, disposição e o mais importante: determinação para o que vier.

Bianca Cutait é art editor, diretora da galeria Arte Focussocial, em Miami, e coordenadora de clientes locais. Atuou no fechamento desta edição. Sua participação de 154 obras. O fechamento de comércio, 67 horas de vídeo e um mês de férias virtuais.

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ONLY ART SAVES

As for all human beings and some outsiders in this world in which we live at, the year 2020 was certainly the most, we can say, different. Devastated families, broken businesses and entire markets overwhelmed by a virus that affected from the richest to the poorest, from the most cautious to the most careless. Personally, my family was extremely affected - where my father, a surgeon, was seriously infected and the rest is history for another agenda. And during the past many exhausting months living in that pandemic, it is quite obvious to say that everything has changed, that we have all changed. I was able to observe, from a distance and up close in some cases, the necessary changes and adaptations within the most extravagant high-end market that exists, and in which I myself am included: the art market!

I am 41 years old and a medium-sized gallery, today totally digital and integrated to the new reality. Right at the beginning of the pandemic, I closed my physical space because it seemed financially irresponsible to maintain a workplace with high fixed costs without a visible resumption date - and it was effectively the best decision. I was not the only one, several galleries, museums, cultural centers and institutions had the same speed of action and we were consequently put on hold. In a millionaire market for the few and illusory for many, no one knew what would happen in the ensuing days. At the height of my 41 years, I had to hire a 25-year-old to teach me how to write programming codes and then put a new website up online to be able to make sales, which until then seemed to me an almost distant future. I automatically took the Google Analytics course for beginners, then the advanced one, and I was thrilled to take the so-called Tag Manager, a course for those who are 25 years old and absolutely not 41. I learned that to have an online gallery, you have to think like a 25-year-old programmer, having the reputation of a 65-year-old dealer and the stomach of a polyglot museum director in New York. So, I focused on researching what the commercial galleries with these 3 characteristics were doing, how they were doing it, and if they were doing it. And behold, a wave of lives and OVRs took over the art market ...

Sooner or later, all galleries and institutions would have to include in their conventional practices the unexpected forced interactive digitization in which we find ourselves today. We had endless online meetings and monitored visits to galleries, studios, museums etc, some very rich in content, but others made me put my hands on my face more than once. Artists who were not prepared to speak, curators in pajamas, dogs barking, open microphones and the lack of minimum preparation - I felt at times in an episode of *Porta dos Fundos (Brazilian streaming show which portrays reality in a highly sarcastic way)*. And within these so many virtual trips, the main fairs stood out with excellent programmed content, but with a constant lack of preparation for those who would be presenting. Without naming names, a gallery owner of extreme importance during the presentation of his virtual stand at the main fair, belliculously narrates his political

ideology, while another gallery let the assistant speak and the dealer just watched while she successively erred in technical terms and artist names. Mistakes can effectively happen and we are all subject to them, but the lack of preparation, when so obvious to the viewer, leaves a ballast of carelessness towards the consumer.

At the same time that we had numerous errors around the fairs, we also had several successes, such as the interactive videos of the TEFAF fair, or the impeccable curatorship of the Art Basel Switzerland stands, the talks with collectors at the Frieze fair in Los Angeles and the properly scheduled events of smaller fairs such as Pinta Miami or ArtRio which was a huge success due to careful planning. I believe that the trend now is to have a healthy combination of the best of both worlds, where digital will also be part of a new face-to-face reality. After all, art must above all be admired with the eyes, seen with the heart and consequently crowned with the admirer's financial availability.

I believe this is an age factor: younger people have a structural willingness to adapt to the electronic. Older people, however assiduous consumers and art lovers, already suffer a little more to achieve aesthetic nirvana through exclusively digital presentation. With the fairs canceled in person, we saw a rapid adaptation of the companies responsible for the magnificent art fairs to the online mode. The galleries quickly started setting up their own OVRs (Online Viewing Rooms), where each OVR is a small exhibition, an interactive catalog that visitors can browse in their own time. The fairs became immense inventories, some well done, others in apprenticeship. Auction houses added high platform technological resources to be able to supply a possible demand without even being able to predict results. And while all this was happening, the artists were able to produce, idealize and materialize possible sketches. Some projects in AR or VR (Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality, respectively) started to appear, and more and more modern. For example, Rubem Robierb, an artist from Maranhão that we talked about in previous editions, conceptualized a virtual sculpture where two birds come together to form one, symbolizing that we are all the same. Artistic activism has never been so high, and we will be able to see a wave of creative processes realized during the pandemic. Black artists have come to a highly needed notoriety in numerous institutions, and we can see that competence can be praised through visibility. In Brazil, we had important structural changes in museums, such as the hiring of Keyna Eleison, curator of the Museum of Modern Art in Rio since August. Keyna, in addition to an undoubted competence, proposes to the museum a new look of plurality. Or the hiring of Sandra Benites by MASP, a doctoral student in Social Anthropology at the National Museum of UFRJ.

However, just as we had access to a wonderful wave of content and essential twists and turns, we were also able to see an unbridled colloquium of visions at home with artists producing works from their immediate realities. In some moments, more than necessary perhaps, I saw artists showing their creations where, for example, an apple on a plate photographed from the side was the new series entitled perhaps "foods in the pandemic". Or that other artist who recorded his hair growth during the lockdown, making a full plate for comedian / influencer Jerry Gogosian. For those unfamiliar, @jerrygogosian is an Instagram account created by Hilde Lyn Helphenstein as a parody. The code name itself already accuses: a junction between the famous art critic Jerry

Saltz and the powerful gallery owner Larry Gagosian. In a restricted account with thousands of followers in the art world, Hilde is able to publish jokes (or memes, for those who are in fact 25) extremely sarcastic, creative and intelligent. And while jokes are tirelessly provoked by obviousities, jobless artists seek to generate unbridled content. I lost count of how many artists I watched cooking on Instagram, while others like Sérgio Fingermann who was concerned with making high quality content on his personal account, were taking lead.

Now, for auctions, the changes were a little more subtle. I miss having a catalog in my hand while I walk around the room with my eyes listening to whispers, while I record the results of each lot. My grandfather had in his collection a book where prices for thousands of works were available annually for consultation. Today we have online databases for past consultations, but there is some doubt about the transparency of some data, and irrelevance for some searches. Of the 4 most important auction houses in the world, we have seen stratospheric results in some lots, and at the same time works of high caliber without any due attention. With the Sotheby's app, we can see the lot in real time on any wall at home, while Bonhams auctions reach discreet records of high relevance. At Christie's, several auctioneers speak at the same time, but make agile sales, while at Phillips Latin works shine again thanks to the insistence of their specialists. The big problem that I encountered previously in international auctions is the unusual regionalism: assiduous buyers are preserved when purchasing pieces from their own countries or from their restricted knowledge. But today with the technology imposed on everyone, these same buyers have access to works from other cultural districts, making art increasingly global. A clear example for me is the exhibition held by my gallery by Ecuadorian artist Enrique Tábara, who has had an international career since the 1960s when he exhibited with Salvador Dali and Antoni Tàpies. Through an OVR, we have managed to reach collectors from Jakarta to Moscow, from Hong Kong to Miami, and from Guayaquil to the world.

Money has indeed changed hands, we have no doubt about that. But what this means for the art market is extremely complex and will bring us even more profound changes than the 25-year-old programmer can do. Many young people today are having access to financial resources resulting from the earthquake that the pandemic caused in the world, and these individuals want to have access to the best - art being at the top of this list of immediate wishes. In recent research by reports such as UBS Art Report, Deloitte Art & Finance, Hiscox UK and even the Artsy Report, new collectors average between 23 and 25 springs, and despite the lack of experience, they raise their efforts to be in the top of the world and the financial chain. How to supply these new desires? Will forced technology be the reach tool to encounter this new tribe? Or will these young collectors prefer to collect moments rather than material elements? That thought brings me back a little to the previous year, when a banana - that's right, a banana - was the star of the largest art fair in the world that generates a few billion dollars in annual revenue. The artwork itself (by the Italian artist Maurizio Catellan) was just a small instruction manual placed discreetly under a banana glued to the wall, which drew crowds of people ready to instagram the moment while frustrated security guards tried to appease the moods of queues of rampant cell phones trying to prove presence on the spot. Few until today realized that it was not a work of art, but a study provoked to generate a debate about the unbridled consumption of art without knowledge.

The positive change that online fairs brought to the new world was the differentiated de-regionalism. In other words, before we would always see Brazilians buying Brazilian works, Venezuelans buying Venezuelan works, and so on, because few knew a market other than their original one. This happens mainly in the American market, by far the largest in the world. With the OVRs, people became interested in artists and proposals outside their own navel. And this is wonderful, both for artists who can expand their horizons and for the cultural education that the world is so desperately in need of. Some rare prepared, studied and qualified advisors can now breathe easier, while others will still have to cry out for air and formal qualification to survive in the new world of immediate information.

The International Council of Museums foresees the closing of 15% of museums around the world, and in addition to the culture being affected by this change, several jobs and professionals will have to be relocated to other locations, if they can. The recovery of our economies and the healing process for societies after the crisis will be long and complex, and I emphasize again that art will have an important role to play in rebuilding the local economy and repairing the social fabric of the affected communities. Finally, it is important to note that the art market will undergo an extreme change over the next few years. Realistically speaking, the vast majority of people are learning, and we are all in the same boat of learning and acquiring new platforms and technologies. The only thing I hope for, besides the obvious resilience, is that there is preparation, care, qualification, training, disposition and most importantly: determination, however it may be.

Bianca Cutait is an art advisor, director of the gallery Arte Fundamental and advisor to several museums. Thanks to her experience that comes from generations, she has been inserted in the art market since she was 16 years old. Today, at 41 Bianca lives in Miami, where she takes care of her gallery and serves customers - virtually - around the world. Until the closing of this edition, Bianca participated in 154 zoom calls, 13 council meetings, 87 hours of videos, and attended 9 virtual fairs, actively participating in 2 of them.