Report from the EU H2020 Research and Innovation Project Artsformation:
Mobilising the Arts for an Inclusive Digital Transformation

The Social and Civic Impact of the Arts

Kirsti Reitan Andersen, Víctor Renza, Christian Fieseler, Fiona McDermott, Róisín McGannon, Aris Papadopoulos

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arts formation

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State-of-the-art literature review on arts and social and civic impact

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About Artsformation: Artsformation is a Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation project that explores the intersection between arts, society and technology Artsformation aims to understand, analyse, and promote the ways in which the arts can reinforce the social, cultural, economic, and political benefits of the digital transformation. Artsformation strives to support and be part of the process of making our communities resilient and adaptive in the 4th Industrial Revolution through research, innovation and applied artistic practice. To this end, the project organizes arts exhibitions, host artist assemblies, creates new artistic methods to impact the digital transformation positively and reviews the scholarly and practical state of the arts. The following report is one part of this ongoing effort.

For more information, please visit our website: www.artsformation.eu

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Executive Summary

The arts have always been part of civil discourse and have always been socially engaged, not least in response to radical transformations of social, political, and economic life. In this report we explore the engagement of artists with the effects of the digital transformation, with a particular focus on the extent to which and the ways in which artists are addressing the social repercussions of this transformation. Our report reviews the literature and discussions surrounding the role of socially engaged artists in sense-making in civil society. This state-of-the-art review constitutes one of the research deliverables of the *Artsformation* project funded through the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. The review is part of three parallel reviews on the role of the arts and digital transformation, and can be read alongside the two other reviews on the role of the arts in the digital transformation, *(Alacovska, Booth and Fieseler, 2020)*, and the role of the arts in enterprise *(O'Dea, Alacovska and Fieseler, 2020)*. In this report we primarily explore the social turn in the arts, whereby the focus is on the *impact* of artworks on society rather than the traditional focus on the aesthetic values of art. Specifically, we focus on the so-called socially engaged arts and their potential to empower those in society who are not reaping the proclaimed benefits of the digital revolution or indeed are negatively affected by this ongoing transformation.

The aim of this report is twofold. First, it examines and discusses the methods employed by socially engaged artists to bring about social change. This is necessary to develop an understanding of the potential effects and obstacles of socially engaged art practices, specifically focusing on the ways in which artists are influenced by and seek to influence new and emerging digital technologies. This report reveals three overarching types of relationship between artists and the digital transformation: i) artists use new digital technologies as part of their artwork, i.e. technology is part of their artistic toolbox; ii) artists and cultural institutions are influenced by the digital transformation in sometimes challenging ways that demand shifts in organisational approaches; and iii) artists have begun to produce artworks that highlight the challenges and opportunities associated with the digital transformation. The report makes it evident that artists are reflecting on and responding to the digital transformation in more complex and sophisticated ways. This evolution starts from what we might see as an initial fascination with new technological tools to a more critical stance towards the effects of this transformation. Second, this report examines the organisational approaches adopted by socially engaged artists, revealing a trajectory in such approaches that suggests it is possible to imagine artists addressing the social issues of the digital transformation in three ways: i) the artist as a commentator; ii) the artist as one who gives voice to a community; and iii) the artist as a social entrepreneur. These three roles, it should be noted, are of course not mutually exclusive.

Our report proposes that there is much of value to be found in the methods and organisational approaches of socially engaged artists and that socially engaged art has the potential to play a key role in the transformation towards a sustainable and inclusive digital future. This report also reveals an urgent need for more in-depth knowledge about the ways in which socially engaged artists operate in order to be able to reap the benefits of such approaches as mediators of change. Finally, we propose there is also an urgent need to identify viable ways to lead the public towards and understanding of the potential value of the arts beyond an immediate source of 'entertainment'.

1. Introduction

The Digital Transformation and Socially Engaged Arts

Two decades into the new millennium it is almost impossible to imagine a future in which digital technologies do not play a key role. The term 'digitalisation' here goes beyond the employment of new technology for improving business performance to encompass the wider social changes induced by technology (Chew, 2015). Digitalisation changes many properties of political, social, cultural and economic entities through a combination *of information, computing, communication and connectivity technologies* (Vial, 2019). Accordingly, the social consequences of the digital transformation have increasingly been addressed by artists in recent years.

An earlier report of this project (2.1.) by Alacovska, Booth and Fieseler (2020) discussed some of the ways in which the arts can moderate the digital transformation and facilitate social transformation. In that document the authors conceptualise the arts as a metaphorical '*pharmakon'* that has the potential to remedy some of the negative consequences of the digital transformation by making use of the opportunities brought about by that same transformation. The authors identified a number of ways in which the arts can support a sense of self-discovery, self-enhancement and self-empowerment within individuals and communities ('*art as re-enchantment'*). Their report further suggested ways in which the arts can address the *carelessness of* society and the careless institutions that perpetuate exclusion, discrimination, destitution and suffering that imbue daily life in neighbourhoods and communities *('art as care')*. The review further found that the arts can serve as an 'imaginationary laboratory' to bring new ways of solving deadlocked, deep-seated and long-standing societal, organizational and technological problems *('art as imagination')*. Finally, the report proposed that the arts may bestow individuals and communities with the capabilities to conceptualize, conjure up and aspire to better political, social and economic worlds *('art as capability')* (Alacovska, Booth and Fieseler, 2020).

The past two centuries have witnessed three industrial revolutions and we are currently experiencing a further technological revolution, i.e. the so-called Fourth Revolution, whose scale, scope, complexity, velocity and systemic impact will reshape the foundations of how we live, work and formulate our social ecosystem (Schwab, 2016). Societal change is no longer linear and incremental but exponentially accelerating, and interwoven into every facet of society. In the last decade alone, the velocity of change is such that we are no longer evolving within the framework of a well-defined industrial revolution but rather entering upon a reality of converging technologies that blur the lines of physical, digital, and biological strata, requiring citizens to continuously acquire more integrated education, employment and social skill-sets in order to grow and flourish (World Economic Forum, 2018).

Although the rapid advancement in mobile technology and unprecedented public access to the worldwide web has opened countless windows of opportunity for millions of people, enabling them to seek and obtain information and knowledge independently, levels of equality and equity in accessing these opportunities remain tethered to outdated models that create new societal divides. Artificial intelligence, autonomous vehicles, robotics, energy storage and quantum computing, to name just some of the key emergent technologies, are disrupting economic and societal structures and hierarchies (World Economic Forum, 2020). How many of the world's

citizens will be able to capitalise on the changes now being brought about is a matter of fierce debate, particularly as we are still struggling to resolve fundamental issues related to social cohesion, including racial inequality and unequal access to public health.

Throughout history the arts have always reflected major transitions as they unfold (Alacovska, Booth and Fieseler, 2020) and this applies equally in the case of the digital transformation. In recent years we have seen artistic examinations of the digital transformation become increasingly complex, evolving from what we might understand as a fascination or embracement of digital tools to reflections on the transformation itself. We see artists increasingly employing digital tools as part of their artwork and/or as a means of communication. We increasingly see artists and arts institutions affected by the digital transformation, sometimes in rather challenging way that demand shifts in their strategic and methodological approaches. And finally we now increasingly see artistic projects that speak to and raise our awareness of issues related to digital technologies, such as widespread data collection and surveillance. While the arts do not speak in a unified voice, there may nonetheless be inspiration and larger answers to be found among these artistic projects and the methods and strategic approaches artists have adopted to tackle societal issues.

It is beyond the scope of this particular review to present a fully comprehensive overview of all the challenges and opportunities arising from the digital transformation. However, it is important to mention some of the most recurring themes emerging in the literature to gain an idea of what types of opportunities and challenges exist and that socially engaged artists are beginning to tackle.

Inequality

Inequality exists in societies in many forms, including socio-economic, health, gender and racial inequalities, and the digital transformation has the potential, it is argued, both to offer solutions to these inequalities as well as to exacerbate them. Mobile technologies, for example, can be used as assistive technologies that support greater social inclusion and active citizenship for people with disabilities. Technology may also be used to advance gender equality and peace (Robertson and Ayazi, 2019). In order for such potential to be realised, however, it is essential to overcome existing inequalities in the distribution of access and digital skills and capital (Darcy, Yerbury and Maxwell, 2019; Robertson and Ayazi, 2019; Suwana and Lily, 2017). The complexity of technology adoption is highlighted in a study by Neves, Franz, Munteanu and Baecker (2018, p. 1682) among frail and institutionalised elderly people, finding that such adoption is "based on a complex set of interrelated factors: social, attitudinal, physical, digital literacy, and usability" that "interact recursively and cannot be studied in isolation" (Neves et al., 2018, p. 1694). Focusing specifically on the African context, Mutsvairo and Ragnedda (2019) highlight that the digital transformation agenda is driven by Western-centric interests (and ownership), thus also often neglecting useability in different social and cultural contexts.

Although digital technologies have the potential to support processes leading to greater equality, they are often seen as perpetuating and even exacerbating inequalities. Dastin (2020) reports an example of such exacerbation in the case of facial recognition technology installed by Rite Aid, a US-based company with links to China, in stores throughout mostly lower-income, non-white neighbourhoods in the heart of New York and the city of Los Angeles (Dastin, 2020).

According to the *AI Report Now 2018* (Whittaker et al. 2018, p. 15): “Concerns are intensifying that facial recognition increases racial discrimination and other biases in the criminal justice system.”

With her art project *Gender Shades* of 2018, the Ghanaian-American computer scientist and digital activist Joy Buolamwini called attention to the fact that facial recognition technologies can be used to discriminate on the basis of gender and race. In this project she evaluated the potential algorithmic biases in facial recognition technologies from Microsoft, IBM, and Face++ with respect to demographic subgroups, including female and male as well as phenotypic subgroups from darker to lighter skinned. Her evaluation found that “all classifiers performed better on male faces than female faces”, as well as “lighter faces than darker faces”, and that “all classifiers perform worst on darker female faces” (Buolamwini, 2018). Buolamwini exhibited *Gender Shades* in 2019 at the 40th Anniversary of the *Ars Electronica Festival*. As the founder of The Algorithmic Justice League, Buolamwini also testified before the U.S. Congress on gender and racial bias in facial recognition technology in May 2019 (Schiller, 2020).

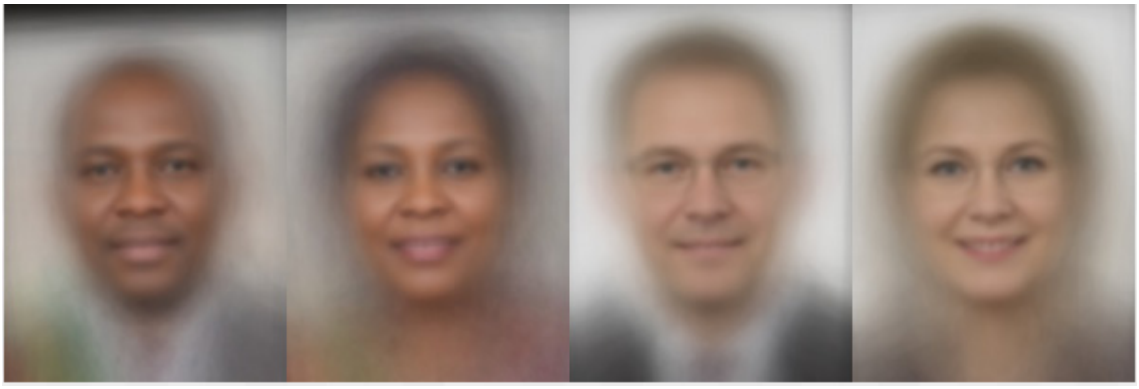

Figure 1: Gender Shades, by Joy Buolamwini (2018). Screenshot from: http://gendershades.org/index.html

Another example of how digital technology can be used to raise awareness in support of greater equality is the Question Bridge project, which the artmakingchange.org site describes as:

> An innovative transmedia project that facilitates a dialogue between a critical mass of Black men from diverse and contending backgrounds and creates a platform for them to represent and redefine black male identity in America. The project uses digital media (mobile and web-based) to create a “living archive of Black male voices that can be searched by location and timeframe”. (http://artmakingchange.org/projects/question-bridge/)

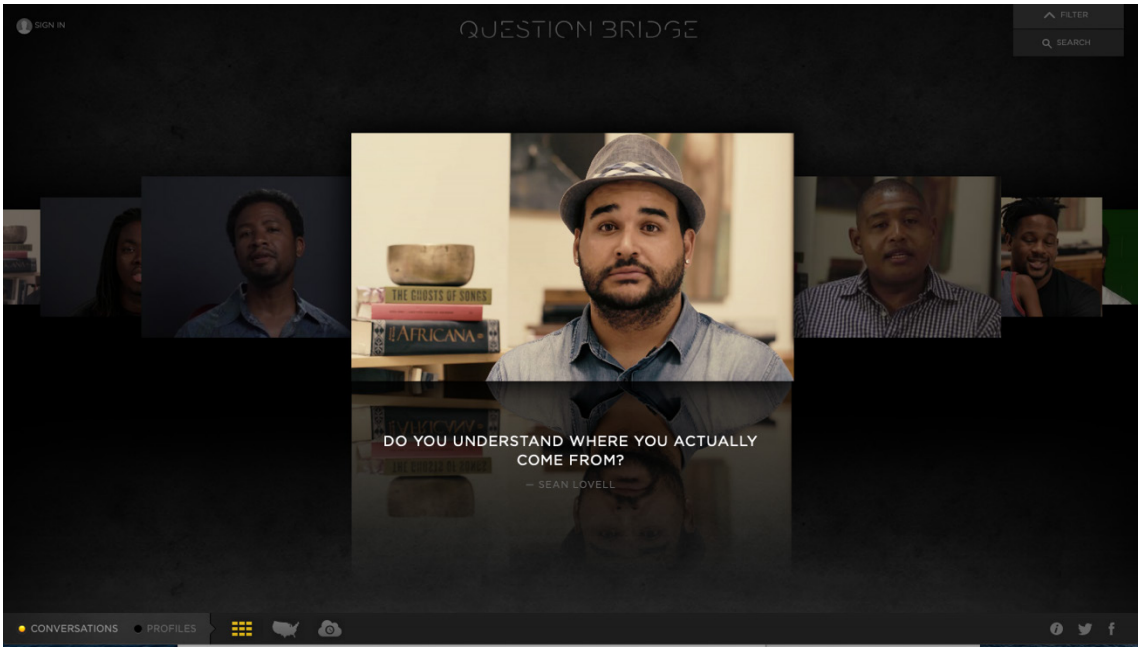

Figure 2: *Question Bridge (screenshot), : http://questionbridge.com/#*

These examples indicate the potential of socially engaged art to address issues related to the digital transformation. Given that this potential has largely gone unfulfilled to date, a number of open questions arise regarding the role of socially engaged art as a commentator and/or as a facilitator. For while such art might play a role in calling attention to the widespread need for digital literacy, for example, the question arises as to whether socially engaged art might also serve to build digital skills and motivation through a more explorative and open process. Could digital technologies serve as one tool amongst others to help create societies in which people have equal opportunities?

Data Collection

Digital technologies enable the collection of data on an unprecedented scale, raising issues regarding the favourable and unfavourable consequences of such collection and analysis for democracy, equal rights and representation. A study on algorithmic discrimination by Gangadharan and Niklas (2019, pp. 889–890), for example, highlights the ambivalent outcomes of data collection by showing how a lack of data about marginalised groups leads to greater marginalisation, finding that "civil society groups need data to make the case for equal treatment" (2019, pp. 889–890), while also highlighting the need for legal safeguards to avoid misuse of data. Data collection is thus a double-edged sword, having the potential to support processes of democratisation and equality while at the same time being a tool that can exacerbate existing inequalities and power relations.

Park and Humphry (2019) show how the design of automated and AI-driven systems of data collection and analysis can create new forms of disadvantage and reinforce existing social inequalities, basing their findings on an analysis of two cases of such systems used in the Australian welfare system: the *Robodebt* Online Compliance Intervention system and the National Disabil-

ity Insurance Agency's intelligent avatar interface, *Nadia*). Such automated and AI-driven systems are machines and programmes that perform tasks based on algorithms that enable automated decision-making. Gillespie (2013, p. 167) defines algorithms, "in the broadest sense" as "encoded procedures for transforming input data into a desired output, based on specified calculations". In this way, algorithms are meant to provide short-cuts to complex problems using the available data (Park and Humphry, 2019, p. 937). However, as Park and Humphry (2019, p. 934) find:

> The two cases show how the introduction of automated systems can reinforce the punitive policies of an existing service regime at the design stage and how innovative AI systems that have the potential to enhance user participation and inclusion can be hindered at implementation so that digital benefits are left unrealised.

Such negative consequences of an ever more intensively datafied world are described by Gangadharan and Niklas (2019, p. 882) as forms of "algorithmic discrimination".

Artist Naomi Bueno de Mesquita highlighted some of the effects of digital technology in public space as part of her 2015 project 'Mapping Invisibility', a workshop aimed at contributing to the debate about the Dutch government's policy on undocumented immigrants residing in Amsterdam. In this project Mesquita grouped designers and undocumented illegal immigrants together to walk through the city with a tracking device, recording changes in their dominant emotions (e.g. happiness or stressful). From this cartographic exploration the participants then created a "topographic map of the emotional landscape of the city" reflecting the undocumented immigrants' experience of the city, with specific attention to the immigrants' hiding strategies in the public spaces of Amsterdam. Amongst other issues, Mesquita's project highlighted the immigrants' fear of being caught – a fear closely connected to the use of digital technologies in public space, including the need to avoid places and routes where cameras are installed to collect data.

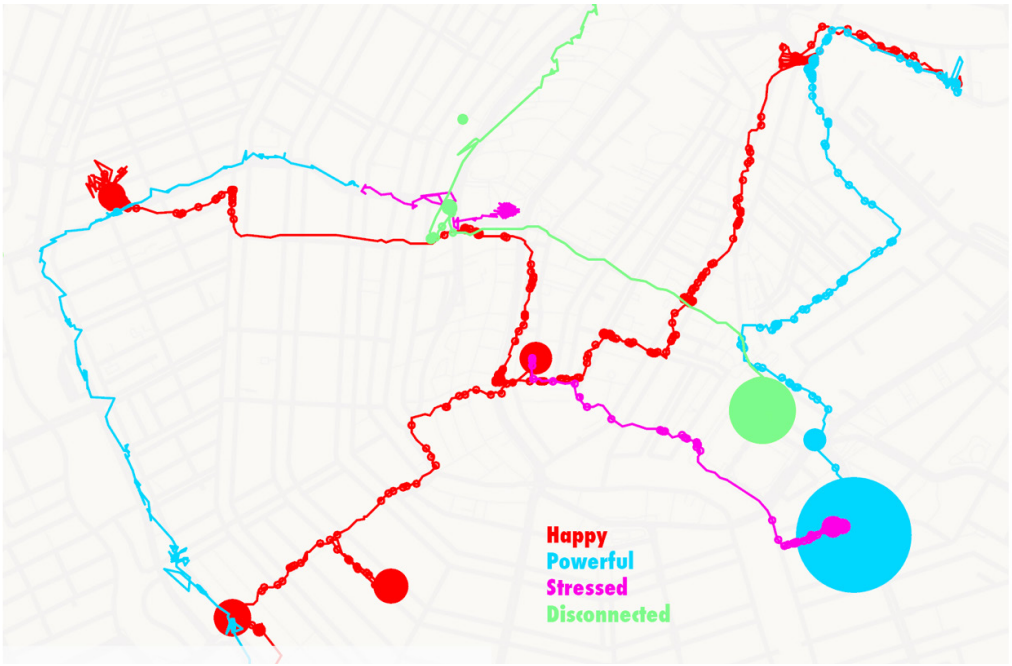

Figure 3: *Mapping Invisibility, by Naomi Bueno de Mesquita, 2015. (screenshot): http://performativemapping.com/outofstate/*

The potential of socially engaged arts projects like *Mapping Invisibility* to make us more aware of and perhaps even act upon the challenges and opportunities arising from the increased collection and (mis)use of data raises several more open questions. For while it is increasingly widely recognised that the arts can contribute in interesting ways to engage citizens, policymakers, private partners and other participants in societal issues, we still know little about the methods and effectiveness with which this can be achieved. For example: What characterises the methods used by artists to question current processes of data collection and the use of that data? And how can artistic methods empower citizens to act against the unrightful collection and use of data?

New ways of working

Technological change continues to reshape the ways in which we work, including the places we work and the people we work (or no longer) work with. For many decades it was commonly believed that the types of jobs threatened by automation were those requiring little or no education or skills, based on the assumption that automatable jobs tend to be routine and repetitive. As technology has become more sophisticated, however, it is clear that an increasing number and range of business processes are likely to be automated. While the digital transformation will continue to have an impact on low-skilled jobs, software automation and predictive algorithms are now advancing so rapidly in capability that technology is beginning to take over the jobs of college-educated white-collar workers (Ford, 2015, p. xiv). The founder of the World Economic Forum, Klaus Schwab, has emphasised that we need to better harness the potential of new technologies to create new high-quality jobs and improve the quality and productivity of the existing work of human employees (Schwab, 2018). In order to prevent a lose-lose scenario whereby technological changes are accompanied by mass unemployment and growing inequality, Schwab argues that businesses need to take an active role in supporting their existing workforces through reskilling and upskilling. Individuals, meanwhile, will need to take a proactive approach to their own lifelong learning, and these efforts need to be assisted by governments, Shwab (2018, p. v) maintains, by rapidly and creatively developing an appropriate enabling environment for such learning.

While much of the current attention to automation, AI and the future of work focuses on the prospects of people losing their jobs, Brian Callaci (2020) points to another use of new technologies that has tended to receive less media attention, i.e. the use of tracking technologies to monitor employees and their performance of tasks. More and more employers surveil their workers through digital tools as Callaci (2020) indicates:

> The Marriott hotel corporation tracks how long it takes housekeepers to clean a room via an app that gives the employer real-time data on the worker's location in the hotel. Some warehouse workers, e.g. those working at Amazon, wear devices on their bodies that track their movements around the warehouse. Restaurant corporations like McDonald's process data from cash registers to track exactly how long it takes workers to complete an order. These technologies affect workers and the broader economy differently than automation. Where robots often replace humans with stronger and faster machines, workplace surveillance technologies are designed to raise profits through another mechanism: “they push each employee

> to work harder, striving to convert every possible second into a peak". (https://phenomenal-world.org/analysis/digital-scab-digital-snitch#fn:gartner).

In support of work automation it has been argued that increased automatization will free workers to concentrate on the more creative elements of their jobs (Autor, 2015; Pistrui, 2018). However, in the last few years we have started seeing AI becoming surprisingly good at mimicking human creativity. An example of such mimicry was created by Dr. Ahmed Elgammal 'in collaboration with' an artificial intelligence named AICAN for which he wrote an algorithm resulting in an exhibition of prints called *Faceless Portraits Transcending Time* shown in 2019 at the HG Contemporary gallery in Chelsea, New York (HG Contemporary, 2019). In this work, Elgammal explored whether AI can be creative without human intervention, explaining his aims as follows:

> We're trying to show the world two things: first, what the machine can create by itself. Second, that these are creative partners for artists in the future. I think this is analogous to the creation of photography in the 19th century, because when it was invented the definition of art back then was depicting the world on canvas, but then you have this device that can capture the world for you with the click of a button. So, what's your job as an artist? The definition of art changed as it was influenced by photography. Art focused more on the conceptualization and abstraction of the world rather than just depicting it. We now have a tool that can create things for you. It won't take the jobs of artists away. It can explore a space of possibilities for you as an artist. You're framing it in terms of what details to feed to the machine, what you want to do with the data. Your job as an artist is the same — to control the process — but now you have a partner. (https://aiartists.org/ahmed-elgammal).

The extent to which *Faceless Portraits Transcending Time* is the work of AICAN and/or Dr. Elgammal lies at the core of much contemporary debate about technology and creative work (Bogost, 2019).

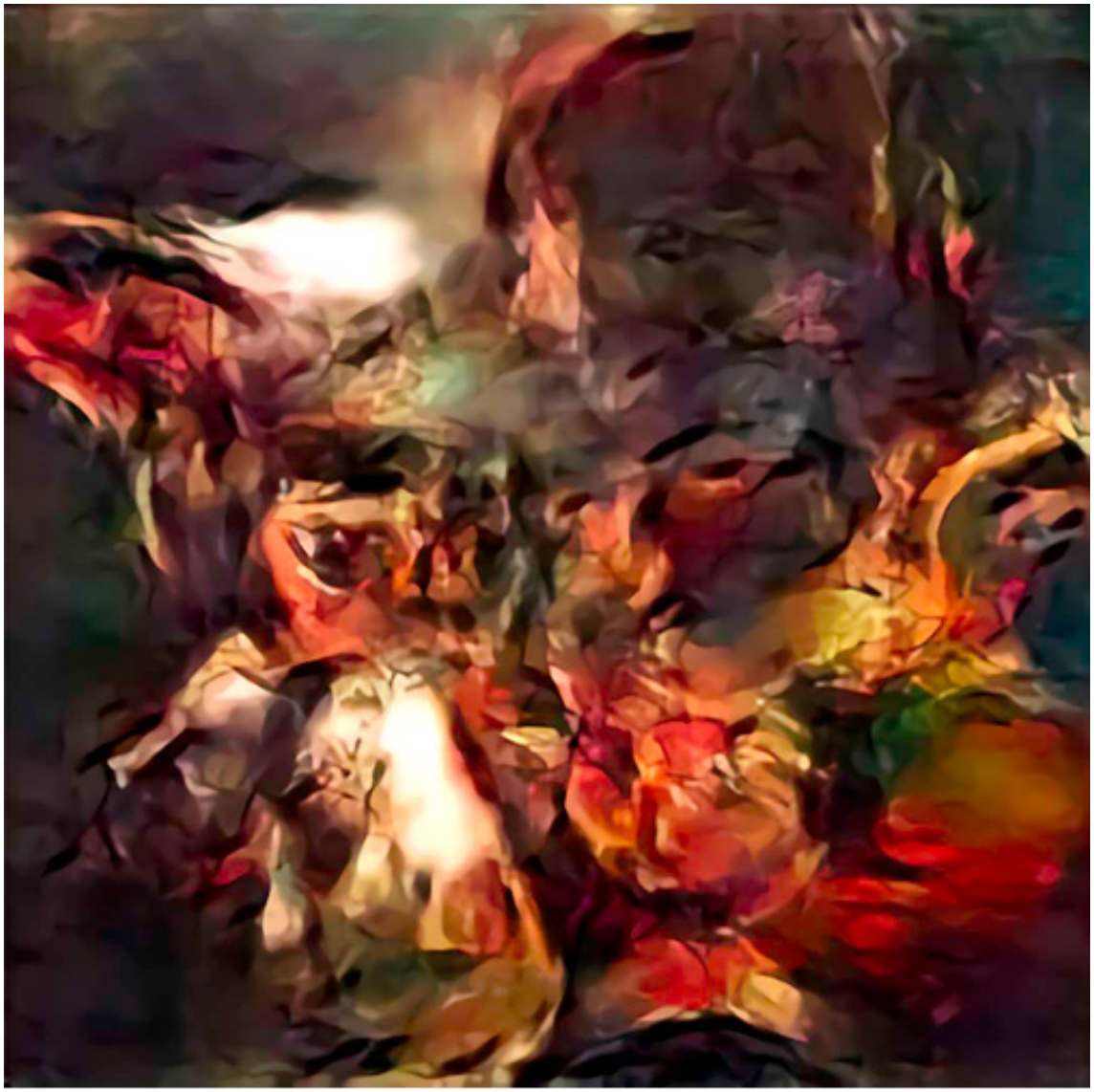

Figure 4: AICAN + Ahmed Elgammal, Faceless Portraits #4, 2019, Digital Print on Canvas (screenshot): https://uploads.strikinglycdn.com/files/3e2cdfa0-8b8f-44ea-a6ca-d12f123e3b0c/AICAN-HG-Catalogue-web.pdf

Some relevant questions thus arise with regards to the ways in which technology will impact the jobs of tomorrow. Will new technologies create new jobs, occupations, or industries? Or will they displace workers and concentrate wealth and power among those who own the machines? While the arts increasingly begin to voice concerns about — and explore the use of — new technologies, we do not know how the methods used by artists might, for example, support new and healthy relationships between people and machines. How might the arts give voice to the people who maintain and repair automated systems that seem to work like magic? To what extent is this invisible work devalued, underpaid, or unaccounted for?

The Arts as Change

In seeking to answer these questions we take as our starting point the view that technologies are deeply embedded within larger social systems and processes and thus also inscribed with

the rules, values and interests of typically dominant groups – a view set out, for example, in the work of scholars such as Bijker and Law (1992) and Friedman and Nissenbaum (1996). Given this embeddedness it is important to note that, however much it may be tempting to link together both the positive opportunities and the threats and challenges arising from the proliferation of automated computer systems and the use of big data, technology assists and exists alongside a discriminatory and unjust society and is not itself the centre or cause of such inequalities (Gangadharan and Niklas, 2019). As such, it follows that the challenges we experience with the ongoing digital transformation are multifaceted and have no singular source or solution. When we see technology as being embedded in larger social systems and processes it also becomes possible to envisage how the arts might play an important role as a facilitator or mediator of the digital transformation.

In this report we primarily focus on the 'social turn' in the arts, meaning our interest is in the *impact* of artworks on society rather than the traditional focus on aesthetic values in assessing the arts (Bishop, 2006; Bradley and Esche, 2007; Simoniti. 2018). Specifically, we focus on the socially engaged arts and the potential of this art to empower people who are negatively affected by the digital transformation and those who do not reap its acclaimed benefits. In spite of the adverse effects of this transformation, both artists and citizens are currently revolutionising how the societal fabric is interlaced with and consequently the domain of socially engaged arts. We see artists and citizens alike seeking to disturb the digital revolution, for example by questioning the private as well as the public use of digital technologies. In a rapidly changing world that requires innovative and creative skills in order not to be left behind in a digitalised society, it is therefore critical to review our understanding of socially engaged arts and their potential role in empowering society to face the utopias and dystopias of the digital transformation.

The arts are inherently connected to the evolution of humankind and the *raison d'être* of the arts has thus never ceased to be explored from a multitude of perspectives, including philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychiatry, etc. (as highlighted by Alacovska, Booth and Fieseler, 2020). Such exploration persists in part at least because it assists us in rationalising our relationship with the world and with each other. Here our exploration is concerned with the role and potential impacts of the socially engaged arts on the digital transformation, reviewing what has been called in the literature the 'social turn' of the arts (Bishop, 2012).

Although our review finds a paucity of literature to date on the specific relation of socially engaged arts to the challenges and opportunities arising in the wake of the digital transformation, the literature on socially engaged arts in general is rich and provides key terms that are useful in trying to identify the potential of such arts to take on the role of a 'mediator' in the digital transformation. Accordingly, the following section addresses contemporary academic discussions on the characteristics that define socially engaged art in order to understand its essence and differentiate it from other artistic expressions or similar disciplines. It discusses whether in the process of assessing artworks one should only consider the artist's purpose and the impact it has on communities or if the focus relies more on the social interaction when delivering the artwork. These questions are critical in evaluating the acceptance and use of the arts as a way of making sense of and within the digital transformation, helping to bridge the gap between artists, communities and other stakeholders. Building on our review of the literature, Chapter 3

briefly illustrates some of the methods and organizational approaches adopted by socially engaged artists to address various societal challenges. In this way we hope to provide a better understanding of the ways in which SEA might also produce positive effects in addressing challenges and opportunities within the digital transformation. Finally, chapter four summarizes the most relevant findings of the literature review and proposes some questions necessary to deepen the understanding of the role of socially engaged arts, the artists and their methods in the sense-making of the digital transformation. Likewise, the last chapter includes some notes on the methodology used for this work.

2. Defining the Socially Engaged Arts: Evolution, Theoretical Discussions and New Social Functions of the Artist

The Evolution: Early Participatory Art Rooted in Counterculture

While the conventions of 'high art' had already been upturned by artistic movements such as Realism, with its emphasis on 'natural' depictions of everyday life, the socially engaged arts only began in earnest in the twentieth century. Influenced by early avant-garde movements such as Futurism, Dada, Constructivism and Surrealism, some artists began to question traditional notions of originality and authorship and to challenge conventional assumptions about the passive role of the spectator (Bishop, 2012), thus adopting an anti-bourgeois stance on the role and agency of art. Later influences include the new forms of politicised, reactionary and socially engaged practices such as Conceptual Art, Situationism and Fluxus that emerged in the cultural and political ferment of the 1960s in response to the perceived elitism, social disengagement and commodification of established art forms associated with the Modernism movement. In describing the relationship between these twentieth century art movements and socially engaged art, Nato Thompson (2012, p. 19) defines socially engaged art less as another type of movement and more as a cross-disciplinary practice of which the common denominator is to participate and question authority:

> Unlike its avant-garde predecessors such as Russian Constructivism, Futurism, Situationism, Tropicalia, Happenings, Fluxus, and Dadaism, socially engaged art is not an art movement. Rather, these cultural practices indicate a new social order—ways of life that emphasize participation, challenge power, and span disciplines ranging from urban planning and community work to theatre and the visual arts.

Connected by a common rejection of the current social status quo, new formations of socially engaged artists proactively sought out novel mediums to shape mutual exchanges through open and inclusive practices. The availability of new communication technologies, moreover, combined with the breakdown of medium-specific artforms, provided greater possibilities for artists to physically interact with their audience (Atkins, 2008). In reimagining art practice, these artists appropriated non-hierarchical social forms and were informed by a range of theoretical and practical disciplines, including feminism, post-colonial theory and critical theory. As questions of authorship raised concerns about who participates in the definition and production of art, the

relationship of the artwork to its viewers and the public became a new central axis for these emerging forms of arts practice.

A common goal of art movements such as Situationism, Fluxus, Happenings and various forms of Conceptual Art was to develop a new synthesis between politics, social justice and art. Through this synthesis, it was hoped, social activism would be reflected in public-facing arts practices as a radical means of eliminating distinctions between art and society. The Situationist International, for example, was formed in Paris in the 1950s as a reaction to capitalism, consumer society and the homogeneous urban planning trends of the time. As a movement, the Situationists were interested in disrupting the polar relationship between artists and consumers and in making cultural production a part of everyday life. They conceived of alternative appropriations of urban spaces and devised methods of 'psychogeography' as a means of unsettling economic functions and exploring the social terrain of the city in a subversive manner (Sadler, 1998). In this way, commonplace activities like strolling freely in the city were reimagined as statements against a society that normatively demanded high levels of productivity and consumerism. These practices corresponded with widespread political and social action, most notably inspiring the 1968 protests and rioting in Paris, in which Situationist graphics and slogans featured prominently.

Figure 5: Situationist slogan stating 'ne travaillez jamais' meaning 'never work' on the walls of Paris, 1968. http://www.redwedgemagazine.com/online-issue/revenge-of-the-spectacle-this-time-its-personal

The Fluxus movement was similarly interested in the transformative potential of art through social engagement and collaboration. Beginning in the 1960s, Fluxus artists rejected the established principles of the high art world, the permanency of art objects and the notion of the artist as specialist (Higgins, 2002). They viewed art not as a finite object but as a time-bounded experience, employing performances and theatrical experiments in which the audience were encouraged to interact with the performers, or plotless staged events that left artworks open to artistic chance and interpretation. Artworks were realised in a range of media, including performances, events and assembled environments constructed so as to envelop the observer. These initiatives

were often conceived with workshop characteristics whereby the artist operated as a facilitator, engaging the audience in philosophical discussions about the meaning of art.

Figure 6: *Licking Piece, 1964, by Ben Patterson: http://participationart.blogspot.com/2007/08/weeks-1-3-happenings-actions-and-living.html*

From the 1960s onwards, conceptual artists challenged the presumption of authorial control, stressing the thought processes and methods of production as comprising the value of the work and bringing the focus to the idea or concept rather than the tangible art object. As a result, the artworks produced could not be easily commodified and did not need to be viewed in a formal gallery setting. In addition, conceptual artists often created art that could be realised by others without the direct intervention of the artist. For example, conceptual artworks could take the form of instructions that directly involved the participants in the production of the artwork, with the instructions communicated through a variety of media such as photography, video, drawing, text, performance, sound and installations. Other conceptual artworks were conceived of as meetings and public demonstrations, happenings or 'Social Sculptures', whereby the meaning of the work was derived from the collective engagement of the participants.

As social movements were characterised by a strong reaction to the establishment during the late 1960s, artistic movements such as the Danish group Solvognen emerged as an activist and anti-authoritarian artistic response in northern Europe. Solvognen sought to grant ownership of

the theatre to the artists and the audience, with a defined political agenda influenced by socialist and anti-establishment ideas in Denmark. Audience participation was key in their street performances and the whole movement was a source of inspiration in the 1970s in the struggle to avoid the pressures faced by state-subsidised artistic groups (Jorgensen, 1982). Solvognen was an example of an artistic initiative that aimed to highlight social problems in 1970s Denmark through co-production and engagement between independent artists and the audience. However, such socially engaged movements have also been characterised by ephemerality. By the time of the economic recession of the 1980s, the vision of societal utopia organised around solidarity and proposed by Solvognen had all but disappeared. Art thereafter increasingly addressed issues regarding social justice and exclusion.

Throughout the 1980s, socio-political and economic turmoil combined with the alienating effects of neoliberalism and its impacts on social and economic stratification resulted in a reframing of the arts as a vehicle to address social issues, particularly issues of social inclusion and social cohesion. Influenced by earlier forms of socially engage and activist art, many community arts organisations and initiatives emerged at this time, bringing a focus to the role of art in inducing social change and empowering marginalised communities at local level. State bodies funding the arts began to stipulate conditions on public art organisations to encourage public participation in the arts, especially on the part of marginalised or socially excluded communities. Socially engaged arts and community arts programmes, with their emphasis on public engagement and participation, were seen as an important element in both the consensus-building process and critique of such regeneration initiatives (Bishop, 2012). This instrumentalization of the arts to address non-arts agendas contributed to a debate about the role and impact of art that continues to inform the contemporary critical discourse around socially engaged arts. The development of socially engaged art practices has thus also been informed and influenced by the development of public art programmes, many of which evolved in the context of large-scale urban renewal and regeneration initiatives in the 1990s and 2000s.

Within the domain of architecture and urban planning practice, a young generation of practitioners were “ready to leave the apolitical and non-committal artistic works characterising the 1980s and 1990s, to take on a renewed social responsibility and societal focus” ((Harboe, 2012, p. 12) . The decline of the city as an industrial centre and the simultaneous rise of the tertiary sector, or service industry, led to a polarisation of social systems, causing the social space of the city to become more hierarchical and fragmented. By the late 1990s, interventions by architects and urbanists such as the Raumlabor group in Berlin and Muf collaborative in London emerged that sought to bring about changes not only in the built environment but also in terms of input and influence from residents, users and citizens.

Figure 7: Raumlabor, Berlin (screenshot): https://raumlabor.net/moritzplatz/

Towards Relationality

Around the same time as these developments in the late 1990s, Nicolas Bourriaud developed the concept of 'Relational Aesthetics' and 'relational art' to capture emerging artistic developments that foregrounded social encounter, interactivity, conviviality and relationality as the subject of its practice. This rather open-ended term denoted what Bourriaud described in his 1998 work *Esthétique relationnelle* as "a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space" (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 113). Relational art includes work by artists such as Liam Gillick, Rirkrit Tiravanija and Felix Gonzalez-Torres that sought to produce environments in which audiences could participate and thus assimilate and comprehend the artist's specific message. Interactivity and experience is central to such art, while material, content and form are less prioritised.

The past decade has seen a rapid growth of initiatives of arts for social change as well as artistic practices that combine digital and social practice art geared towards making an actual rather than merely symbolic or hypothetical impact on human life and communal cohabitation in the digital age (Finkelpearl, 2013; Helguera, 2011). In response, digital culture has come on to the agenda of almost all cultural institutions, and social arts educational programmes in Europe in the last few years.Artistic responses to the digital transformation take different forms, ranging from a fascination with and embracement of digital tools to the questioning of private and public practices enabled by this transformation. Contemporary academic discussions of such responses focus on phenomena such as cyberactivism and social mobilisation in digital spaces to fight authoritarianism (Pirela Morillo, Almarza Franco and Alhuay-Quispe, 2020; Wang, 2017), digital participation through artistic interventions in human-computer relationships (Jacobs and Leal, 2018) and algorithmic resistance that seeks to correct or 'repair' algorithms that deepen social injustices such as discrimination on the basis of gender and ethnicity (Velkova and Kaun, 2019).

Figure 8: *Ai WeiWei: Remembering / Photograph: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images / Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2018/feb/15/ai-weiwei-remembering-sichuan-earthquake*

One of the questions addressed in these ongoing discussions is how to differentiate the constituent characteristics of socially engaged art from other similar practices, with academics, including artists, seeking thereby to provide a framework to enable a better understanding of this emergent practice (Bishop, 2012; Finkelpearl, 2013; Helguera, 2011; Jackson, 2011; Kester, 2013; Kwon, 2002; Lacy, 1995; Simoniti, 2018; Thompson, 2012; Wang, 2017). Socially engaged art has thus been characterised as people's active participation and engagement in social causes through artistic practices led by professional artists. Through such practices artists turn their interests into participative and collaborative works that aim to contribute to social changes or at least to highlight and denounce social injustices. As a relatively novel practice, socially engaged art is based on a belief in the empowering effect of collective creativity (Bishop, 2006) and seeks to solve problems collectively in an exercise of democratic participation by reinventing and challenging the status-quo structures (Finkelpearl, 2013). According to Claire Bishop (2012), the essence of this practice lies in the people participating, since they are both the means and the material of socially engaged art and thus their participation as co-authors in such artwork is what most differentiates socially engaged art from other art practices.

The Social Turn of the Arts

The 'social turn' of the arts (Bishop, 2012) brings challenges in differentiating between 'art for art's sake' and socially engaged art. Such art typically takes place outside locations such as galleries and museums commonly associated with art, since activist artists consider these spaces "bastions of snobbish elitism in an era that demanded a more accessible and egalitarian form of art" (Kester, 2013, p. 124). Socially engaged art has thus often taken place in locations unusual for art, including farms, local neighbourhoods, parks, zoos, bridges and schools (Finkelpearl,

2013). Although socially engaged art usually takes place in the public sphere in the form of social interactions and community-building practices, some of these experiences have occasionally and increasingly made their way into galleries and theatres in what Jackson (2011) has called a *performative turn* in this art practice. Socially engaged art cannot be identified as objects or images but rather as community re-shape in the form of involving processes that go beyond the typical artistic forms to which we are accustomed (Wang, 2017). As Helguera (2011) has noted, the difference between an artwork such as a painting or sculpture and a socially engaged artwork hinges on the social interactions that the latter produces as part of its creative process. The social turn – or performative turn – implies that people and communities in need of empowerment engage in art projects with the potential to transform their spheres through interaction with artists who are seen as empowered subjects (Kester, 2013).

These transformative experiences in which artists engage with people and communities constitute what Olsen (2018, p. 997) calls a "liberatory space that exists outside of present conditions and from which change and critique can be articulated". However, the question then arises as to how we can differentiate socially engaged art from other disciplines that do not strictly belong to art, such as activism and social work. The discussion framed by artists and academics about how socially engaged art can be assessed, i.e. whether by means of its impact on society or by comparing it with other social or political "non-artistic" forms, leads us on to different questions, such as 'How can we differentiate an action that is socially engaged but non-artistic from one that is considered to be socially engaged art?'. Vid Simoniti (2018, p. 80) believes that socially engaged art is interested in the political, cognitive and ethical impacts of its artworks and not in their aesthetics or epistemology, concluding that:

> If we take seriously the intent of these art practices to make a difference to the political process, then the value of these works ought to be assessed pragmatically: a socially engaged artwork is good art simply to the extent that it realizes a politically valuable end, regardless of the means the work employs.

However, evaluating artworks only by their impacts could lead us to ignore other essential aspects of socially engaged art, including its engagement with audiences.

The Relevance of Social Interactions Rather than the Artwork's Impact

Some authors question the extent to which it is possible to define whether a socially engaged art initiative is successful or not in terms of its impacts. Helguera (2011), for example, leaves the answer to art critics and attaches more importance to artists' attempts to engage with their audiences for artistic purposes. If the focus of socially engaged art is on social interactions rather than the impact of the artworks, therefore, we could agree that there are no successful or unsuccessful SEA artworks, since what is essential, as Bishop (2006) has claimed, is their capacity to strengthen social ties. Pablo Helguera (2011) likewise attaches greater relevance to social interactions, though he emphasises that these must be considered as 'artistic' expressions to qualify as socially engaged 'art'. Other scholars and artists in this debate maintain that the social interactions produced in socially engaged art initiatives should include not only the strengthening of social ties or structures but sometimes the disruption of the status-quo through artworks that seek to challenge widely socially accepted but unfair structures in fields such as work, wel-

fare and urban planning (Jackson, 2011). Socially engaged art thus has its roots in two key aspects: (i) the engagement and co-participation of the audience in the artwork; and (ii) a focus on social issues. However, this focus on social issues sometimes causes confusion as to what exactly distinguishes this practice from other disciplines that are not part of the artistic field, such as activism or social work (Rutten, Van Beveren and Roets, 2018).

Socially engaged art can be classified as an ambiguous discipline insofar as it temporarily moves people and issues that belong to other disciplines into the art-making field in order to offer new ideas and visibility to matters that are usually foreign to the artistic world (Helguera, 2011).. Schubert and Gray (2015) consider that socially engaged artists have turned the arts into a medium for social change while social work is failing to perform this role, trapped as such work in an environment ruled by a neoliberal paternalism that does not allow space for creativity. These authors analyse the relationship between social work, art and social change, showing that both disciplines have their foundations in community-based work where communication and social tensions are the norm. However, it seems that social workers have left a *vacant space* for artists to carry out the role of advocacy and promotion of societal changes as Schubert & Gray(2015, p. 1354) explain:

> As social workers have become confined by the neoliberal restraints applied by many organisations for whom they work, they have vacated the public spaces of activism and change. As this has occurred, there has been an emergence of arts-based organisations, like BE, where artists conducting socially engaged art projects are moving in to fill the growing abyss.

If social workers leave the door open to artists for the promotion of social changes, art could play a fundamental role in the emancipation of social work from neoliberalism towards a more critical, conclude the authors. Socially engaged art is not alien to the same socio-political reality of a neoliberal society and its evolution offers examples for the vindication of social work, as shown by Rutten et al. (2018). In their case study of the play *The New Forest* by the Dutch-Flemish theatre group *Wunderbaum,* Rutten et al. (2018) demonstrate how artists can inspire others to generate change in their social functions, to imagine diverse alternatives, to research, to act as entrepreneurs both financially and socially, and to challenge the current socio-political status quo (Rutten et al., 2018).

It is precisely in this social role of the artist to generate change that socially engaged art is intertwined with activism. Artists become *artivists* when engaging in socio-political struggles and use their artistic works to produce disruptions and change, using the arts as a tool for political activism (Serra, Enríquez and Johnson 2017). In this way artists can become important participants in influencing policymakers and norms to change current socio-political structures in areas such as the environment and urbanism, urging stakeholders to rethink desirable futures through art (Perovich, 2018). However, artivism leaves aside the *co-operative* essence of socially engaged art, where participants engage in artistic initiatives for a period of time, downplaying the authorship of the artwork and even the artwork per se and instead rescuing the hyper-cooperative nature we have as a human species (Finkelpearl, 2013)

Questioning Collaborative Art-Making as a Source of Transformation

The participatory and co-operative elements of socially engaged art play a central role in defining such practice. In the process of assessing socially engaged art, one could address whether it is the intention of the artist that defines their work as socially engaged. The artist's aim could be to help a community work towards achieving a common political goal, raise awareness and encourage conversation around shared issues, or improve physical and psychological wellbeing. However, are there other ways of defining socially engaged arts? Would we rather call it participatory art, for example, since as Bishop (2012) asks, what artist is not socially engaged? Should the utilization of social issues as a source of inspiration to produce politically engaged artworks be the only focus or are there other ways of doing socially engaged art? Could we agree with Wang (2017) when he proposes the use of authoritarianism phenomena as a source for artworks, i.e. turning political activities into artistic content? Is the *pursuit of publicness* the only valid entry-point for analysing socially engaged art? (Zheng, 2010). Or is it the coordination of people over a considerable period of time as a *medium and material* to explore social struggles in fields such as work, welfare or urban planning what characterizes socially engaged art, as Jackson (2011) indicates? And how can such art practices cope in a world where return on investment is seen as one of the external functions of art? Could it thus be considered that the term "social engagement" has become a market term to ensure funding in a neo-liberal logic, as Rutten et al. (2018) indicate? Or are there other ways to see socially engaged art as an opportunity for the transformation of our society? In an attempt to answer some of these questions, some scholars in recent years have turned to the concept of social entrepreneurship to explore and attain a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which socially engaged artists operate and organize and for what purposes.

Figure 9: Jeanne van Heeswijk's 2Up2DHomebaked, Design process in the Anfield area. (2017) / Photo © Homebaked / Retrieved from: https://cooperativecity.org/2017/10/19/homebaked-anchoring-the-community-through-small-businesses/

The Arts as Social Enterprise

So far we have explored the concept of socially engaged arts as practices in which artists engage with people and communities for a *limited period* of time. Such projects take place in what Olsen (2018, p. 997) calls *liberatory spaces* that exist outside of present conditions and from which change and critique can thus be articulated somewhat detached from everyday life. In recent years, however, we increasingly see examples of artists getting more deeply and extensively involved with their audiences and the challenges they face. Such art can become a long-term project, and as the engagement is longer the artist(s) become more organised.

One such example is the social enterprise *Little Sun*, which has set out to change the world with 'solar art' as they define themselves:

> *Little Sun* was launched in 2012 by artist Olafur Eliasson and engineer Frederik Ottesen at London's Tate Modern to bring clean, reliable and affordable energy to the 1.1 billion people who live without electricity while raising awareness of energy access and climate action worldwide. (https://littlesun.com/about/)

Eliasson demonstrates his conviction that art can change the world by continuing to promote *Little Sun* as an extension of his art practice, arguing that many of Little Sun's "current and future projects stem from art, involve artistic thinking or use our products themselves to create art" (Little Sun). Still working to complete its mission, , *Little Sun* is organised in a way that sets it apart from art projects that operate for more limited periods of time.

Figure 10: Little Sun. Image by Max Riché (screenshot): https://littlesun.com/life-is-light-at-paris-cop21/

Given the emergence of longer term artist-led projects that aim to create positive social change, it seems necessary to develop alternative frameworks with which to explore and understand the mechanisms by which artists operate. In recent years, scholars have started exploring whether it is possible to understand socially engaged artists as a type of social entrepreneur, and if so to ascertain what forms such social entrepreneurship might take (Alacovska, 2020; Bradle et al., 2013, Chakravarti and Rowan, 2013; McQuilten, Warr, Humphery and Spiers, 2020; McQuilten, 2017; McRobbie, 2013; O'Dea, Alacovska and Fieseler, 2020).

Traditionally the main goal of entrepreneurship has been seen as the creation of financial profit through the production of goods and services (Tan, Williams and Tan, 2005). Societal challenges such as poverty, inequality and environmental degradation were left to be solved within the competencies of local and national authorities, governments, NGOs and religious and charitable organizations. In recent years, however, the disparity between the interests of profit-driven businesses and the interests of societies have become increasingly evident (Bradley et al., 2013; McQuilten et al., 2020; McRobbie, 2013). On the one hand, severe competition between companies in an attempt to increase their market share and profit has led to numerous negative consequences for society and the environment; on the other hand it is becoming increasingly clear that the approaches used by governmental and non-governmental organizations are not capable of adequately addressing the various and complex challenges related to society and the environment. The cumbersome institutional and donor-dependent models of operation characteristic of the approaches used by these non-profit structures are now expected to adapt and to become more entrepreneurial and less institutionalised. As a result, the relatively new combination of social innovation in business settings has led to the creation of a 'social economy' that blurs the traditional boundaries between the public, private and citizen sectors (Bradley et al., 2013; McRobbie, 2013). The entrance of artists into the field of social entrepreneurship further blurs these boundaries as they bring with them artistic methods and ways of organizing.

McQuilten et al. (2020, p. 122) trace the notable expansion of the social enterprise sector to the manifold reverberations of the global financial crisis of 2008, which "elicited popular criticism of neoliberal capitalism and cultivated an interest in how capitalism could be tamed and reworked to contain widening inequalities, and ameliorate its socially fraying, if not destructive, effects". Discussing the ways in which social and economic development is funded and practised, Bradley et al. (2013, p. 88) note that social enterprise is "heralded as a possible solution to the top-down nature of how global development policy is operationalized". While the literature attests to various definitions, a social enterprise is widely understood as an organisation whose main purpose is not to generate financial profit but positive social impact (Alvord, Brown and Letts, 2004; Tan et al., 2005). In the words of Bradley et al. (2013, p. 88), social enterprises "are not meant to generate profit for profit's sake but rather make funds available that contribute towards the achievement of a specific goal, such as poverty alleviation or provision of sustainable employment". Such enterprises are generally seen as a means to support economic development in a sustainable way by privileging cultural, community and social goals at the same level with economic growth. They are "hybrid organizations situated between the public and private sectors that combine enterprise activity with the generation of social benefits." (McQuilten, 2017, p. 70).

Curiously, although the main goal of social enterprises is not the generation of financial profit, we currently see an over-representation of research focused on investigating the success of such enterprises in financial terms. McQuilten (2017, p. 69) points to a 'dark side' of social enterprises, "whereby its social welfare agendas are sidelined in favour of profit-driven motives, the outsourcing of government services and perpetuation of inequalities between those that manage and those that benefit from the enterprise". To add further nuances to the debate, Hjorth and Holt (2016, p. 50) draw a distinction between enterprise and entrepreneurship, suggesting that the dynamic relationship between the social and the economic tilts towards the economic when looking at 'enterprise' but tilts towards the social when entrepreneurship is the focus: "In an entrepreneurship framing the emphasis is upon multiple forms of social creativity without scripted ends, on bringing habits into question in a transformative way, offering possibilities for new value-creation." In this view the entrepreneur is understood as someone "whose socially enabled creativity enhances the relational capacity to act, and so to enrich the social condition by creating possibility" (Hjorth and Holt, 2016, pp. 50–51). Similarly, Raymond Kao (1993, p. 69) defines entrepreneurship as "the process of doing something new and something different for the purpose of creating wealth for the individual and adding value to society". As is the case with socially engaged art, this specific understanding of entrepreneurship is grounded in an interest in its *transformative potential,* giving attention to the *social benefit* derived from the work performed.

While some scholars have begun examining socially engaged art as a type of social entrepreneurship, it is also useful to gain an understanding of what the arts bring to the field of social entrepreneurship. For example, the ability of the arts to bring questionable social practices to wider public awareness and to explore alternative ways of organising, operating and living bring new tools and approaches to the field of social entrepreneurship that are worthy of exploration.

Arts Entrepreneurship

In recent years scholars have discussed the nature of the link between arts and entrepreneurship. One branch of the literature discussing the relationship between art and entrepreneurship is the literature on 'arts entrepreneurship'.

Given the circumstances under which socially engaged artists found themselves following the financial crisis (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; McQuilten, 2017), it is perhaps not surprising that the three most frequently used meanings of 'arts entrepreneurship' refer to common business meanings of entrepreneurship: new business ventures, locating financial capital, and developing new markets (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015, p. 22). For Colbert (2003), for example, explores how one might adapt and recombine well-known marketing tactics to the particularities of the arts market, while Chang and Wyszomirski (2015, p. 24) offer a more nuanced definition of arts entrepreneurship "as a management process through which cultural workers seek to support their creativity and autonomy, advance their capacity for adaptability, and create artistic as well as economic and social value". Contributing to the discussion, Callander (2019) calls for the acceptance of entrepreneurship research *within* rather than merely alongside artmaking, arguing that entrepreneurship can be at the heart of "artwork formation". White (2019, p. 57), meanwhile, argues that we need to distinguish between business entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs and arts entrepreneurs, proposing that

> by framing arts entrepreneurs as distinct members of the artworld who both initiate and gain participation in organizational attacks on the social structure and sacred aesthetic beliefs of the artworld, the theorist helps us to recognize that while all members of the artworld think as entrepreneurs, not all of them initiate and gain participation in organizational attacks, which is arguably a distinct behaviour of arts entrepreneurs.

In White's view, therefore, an arts entrepreneur is someone who creates change specifically within the field of the arts.

Artists as Social Entrepreneurs

In contrast to the mainly marketing and financial profit-oriented focus of the arts entrepreneurship literature, other scholars have also started investigating art as a type of *social* entrepreneurship. With an increasing focus on socially engaged art, it is clear that the arts are no longer confined to the art world only, which has generally been characterized by its individualization, originality, seclusion and the resulting artistic self-enterprise and artistic entrepreneurship (O'Doherty and Willmott, 2009; Scharff, 2016). While all art possesses socially relevant content, socially engaged artists enact social care in situ through action-oriented participatory projects (Bishop, 2012). According to Alacovska (2020), care is intrinsic to creative work but has remained largely absent in studies of individualized creative work. Her study of socially engaged artists in South-East Europe demonstrates that the arts increasingly fulfil care in various guises, moving away from the established institutions of art/arts entrepreneurship to dwell in or work in communities, neighbourhoods, prisons, brothels, etc. This branch of the literature argues that the arts might better be understood as forms of social enterprise, investigating what this means for artists, artistic values, audiences and social causes.

The arts as social enterprise take various organisational forms. The literature reports cases both of what we might understand as 'top-down' approaches, i.e. outsiders engaging in a community to create change by facilitating and promoting the artistic skills possessed by the citizens, as well as cases of what we might understand as 'ground-up' approaches, i.e. people from within communities trying to create change through the arts. Moreover, if we conceptualize the artist as a social entrepreneur, it is clear that the notion of what it means to be an artist changes. Acting as a social entrepreneur often involves being intertwined in an NGO-like structure and engaging with more stakeholders as projects take on a more long-term and participatory character (Hjort and Holt, 2016; McQuilten et al., 2020). In contrast to what we might think of as being the goal of the traditional social entrepreneur, however, it is not always the artist's intention to build a sustainable business; rather it is often their intention to make a performative point in order to impact culture, and the longevity of the organisational entity is often (but not always) temporary.

Examining an example of a top-down approach to social enterprise, Bradley et al. (2013, p. 102) found that while business skills are of value in working alongside communities to identify aspects of their tangible and intangible heritage that could be used to generate livelihoods, (e.g. music, fashion, painting), "sensitive social awareness and critical interactions are also needed by those facilitating the model's implementation". The role of the facilitator is also highlighted by McQuilten et al. (2020, p. 128), who find that the success of an arts-based social enterprise is

closely linked to "charismatic, committed and energetic founders with recognised skills and experience". Also exemplifying what we might understand as a top-down approach to socially engaged art, Ai Weiwei's project *Sunflower Seeds* created work for nearly two thousand people in Jingdezhen, a small town 600 miles from Beijing that long ago used to make porcelain for emperors. According to Hjorth and Holt (2016, p. 52), the transformative power of Weiwei's *Sunflower Seeds* extends beyond the economic impact of job creation), since the project: "effectively multiplies into social, political, aesthetic, cultural processes, all needed to make social change happen, and which spill back into productive economy". Weiwei's entrepreneurship "helps us see clearer what is central to all entrepreneurship: that is not simply enterprise, but value-creation that changes society for the better" (Hjorth and Holt, 2016, p. 53).

As examples of ground-up approaches to arts- and fashion-based social entrepreneurship, Angela McRobbie (2013) cites the "fashion social enterprises" that are part of the mostly female-led, small-scale and independent fashion sector in Berlin, arguing that this specific sector demonstrates cooperative and collaborative modes of co-working in an industry typically characterized by competitiveness and more individualistic approaches: "What we might describe as arts professionals and creative people maintain, it seems, an allegiance to more egalitarian and (loosely) social democratic principles than the advocates of the new business modelling would welcome" (McRobbie, 2013, p. 1004). Similarly, two ground-up arts- and fashion-based social enterprises in Australia are studied by McQuilten (2017, p. 81), who finds that these enterprises not only serve as a basis for generating income but also means of political engagement and critique:

> What both *Twich Women's Sewing Collective* and *Pacific Women's Weaving Circle* demonstrate is that the intersection of creative practice and social enterprise can provide a critical space to engage not only with economic systems, but also with issues of visibility, power, class and value.

Socially engaged artists are thus a type of social entrepreneur who use art to cultivate social good and/or social change, as opposed to other types of social entrepreneurs who use other means to accomplish this goal. Whether top-down or ground-up, these artist-driven organisations tend to organise themselves in much more formalised ways than socially engaged art projects of more limited duration. For example, the Twich Women's Sewing Collective is registered as a not-for-profit organization and offers retail, manufacturing, and training services, while the solar lamp producer Little Sun is a Certified B Corporation and is set up like a "real" business with both sales and communications staff. The New Forest project by *Wunderbaum* is another example of an artistic project organised in more formal ways as what Rutten et al. (2018, p. 1707) describe as "a collection of plays dealing with societal issues, a broad range of contextual events such as lectures, debates and interviews, an online community and a network of partners such as artists, entrepreneurs and scientists", though this project is also constructed as an experiment that "is flexible as a project and subject to change". In other words, these are examples of artistic projects that are organised in business-like ways and that operate across several years or with no set end-date.

Tensions

Research shows that the business model of social enterprise is rife with tension. Many social enterprises struggle to make a profit, do not succeed in creating the expected positive social change, and may even exacerbate certain problems. Rutten et al. (2018, p 1704) find a fundamental tension between the fact that more and more artists are engaging in various forms of socially engaged art while at the same time we also see increasing questioning of the societal value of art and artists. Research undertaken by McQuilten et al. (2020, p. 123) shows that socially engaged art projects often struggle to navigate "the multiple and frequently conflicting goals of creative practice, economic activity and social purpose", i.e. the tensions between artistic, economic and social goals. While neoliberal capitalism tends to celebrate social enterprises as the solution to 'development', therefore, research shows that deep tensions exist in this business model, not least in art-based social enterprises (Bradley et al., 2013; McQuilten et al., 2020; McQuilten and White, 2015, Rutten et al., 2018). While the broader literature on organizational tensions provides useful insights into the management of tensions (Andriopoulos and Lewis, 2008; Smith and Lewis, 2011), we know less about the management of competing sustainability objectives, such as the tension between artistic and social goals (Hahn et al. 2018). As Ana Alacovska (2020, p. 731) puts it, "the socialized dimension of creative work remains undertheorized".

McQuilten and White's (2015) study of tensions in art-based social enterprises shows some of the challenges but also the opportunities inherent in navigating tensions between artistic, economic and social interests. One example of the tension between artistic and social interests is the idea of art as a personal and unique experience as against the homogenising effects of the monetary value of art (McQuilten and White, 2015). McQuilten and White (2015, p. 18) also identify tensions between economic and social ambitions, as for example when a focus on economic productivity and efficiency conflicts with the need to provide flexibility and a supportive environment for employees experiencing high levels of disadvantage. As an example of a tension between artistic and social goals, McQuilten and White (2015, p. 18) point to the excitement and motivation of artistic practices reducing the time, interest and resources needed for pursuing social goals. From their study of a selection of arts-based social enterprises in Australia working with young people in various situations associated with forms of marginalization and disadvantage, McQuilten et al. (2020, p. 137) conclude that such enterprises "offer promising models of social engagement, particularly for young people who are disengaged from mainstream education and employment". However, the authors also find that managers and staff face enormous challenges because of the multiple and conflicting goals of their organisations. Notably, McQuilten and White (2015) found tension to be higher in those art-based social enterprises that were either entirely for-profit or entirely dependent on funding. In contrast, they found that enterprises with a hybrid-funding model seemed equipped to enable greater flexibility to pursue the multiple objectives of art-based social enterprises simultaneously.

While the literature shows that socially engaged artists struggle to navigate tensions between artistic, social and economic ambitions, synergies have also been identified among these three goals. For example, there seem to be less tension between artistic ambitions and social purpose amongst the creative workers in South-Eastern Europe interviewed in Alacovska's (2020, p. 731) study on the politics of care in creative work, in which she find that: "In social practice art it is

community-based social interaction and a caring orientation to the other that constitutes the (art)work itself [while] Practicing care in creative work involves a reflexive concern about what type of life and art one practices." In other words, the social purpose makes up the art — and therefore there is no artistic conflict. This does not mean, however, that the artists do not experience tension. According to Alacovska (2020, p. 739): "As a valued form of formal paid employment, creative-work-cum-care-work often involves a struggle to balance one's commitments to others with concerns for self-care and career self-interests." Amongst other synergies identified in the literature, McQuilten and White (2015) argue that a stronger social focus could result in greater artistic value due to the motivating effects of working with others.

Discussion

On the basis of this review of the literature, we suggest it is possible to imagine the artist addressing the social issues surrounding the digital transformation in three ways: i) the artist as a commentator; ii) the artist as someone who gives voice to a community; and iii) the artist as a social entrepreneur. We propose that while all three roles co-exist, intersect and share the ability to imagine new ways and generate change (Rutten et al., 2018), each role does so in slightly different ways. Thus, whereas the artist as a commentator is not directly concerned with audience engagement as part of the artistic process, such engagement is all-important to the artist as someone who gives voice to a community (Kester, 2013). The artist as social entrepreneur, meanwhile consults and facilitates a community problem in a much more 'organised' and 'long-term' manner than is typical of the two previous roles. We suggest that each of the three roles requires artists to organise in different ways, which may also impact the kinds of change they can facilitate. In the following chapter we will look at a number of socially engaged art projects in practice to illustrate some of the artistic roles and organisational approaches adopted by artists to tackle various societal challenges.

3. Socially Engaged Art and the Digital Transformation

Socially Engaged Arts in Practice

The practices presented below reflect on what Claire Bishop (2006) considers to be the artists' call in going beyond and continuously immersing themselves and their work in communities as a source of and material for their art. By taking a closer look at these projects, we wish to illustrate some of the ways in which socially engaged artists organise themselves as well as the methods they use to facilitate meaningful impact. We often see socially engaged art projects aligned with sporadic social movements that seek to disrupt the status-quo (Jackson, 2011). The widespread use of internet and social media platforms has strengthened these social movements and helped them to grow in recent decades and the inclusion of such phenomenon is also prominent in the artistic world. Artists, after all, are not alien to a reality that is increasingly digitised and interconnected, and even artists who still use traditional artistic methods are now including digital technologies in their works (Van Der Meulen, 2017). Such artworks are presented in different media festivals, including Transmediale, Ars Electronica Festival and the International Symposium on Electronic Art (Van Der Meulen, 2017).

When Claire Bishop launched her book *Artificial Hells, Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* in 2012, participatory digital platforms like Facebook and Twitter had only recently been created, while other digital tools that are now part of our everyday lives, such as smartphones and other connected medical devices, were much less developed. As a society, we are discovering new ways to relate with each other and inventing new ways to socialize and work – all the more at the time of witing in the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time, the arts are also re-inventing themselves. As previously mentioned, we generally see three ways in which the digital transformation is having an impact on the arts: i) artists are now using digital tools e as part of their artwork and/or as a means of communication; ii) artists and arts institutions are calling for shifts in organisational and methodological approaches in response to the digital transformation; and iii) artists are creating projects that speak to and/or raise awareness of issues related to digital technologies. Artists are thus finding new ways to develop their social practices aimed at making sense of the digital transformation. Rather than ignoring a reality that could be counterproductive to their discipline, they are trying instead to reshape this reality to make it more just and equitable through their artworks.

Below we briefly introduce several projects that have sought to tackle various societal struggles. Some but not all of these projects speak to the digital transformation. Our primary focus is on the various mechanisms and organisational approaches used by artists to produce and distribute their artworks.

The Chinese artist Ai Weiwei is one of the most well-known contemporary socially engaged artists. Aiming to create awareness and change, he has on several occasions immersed himself in communities as an integral part of his artistic process. For example, in 2015 the Greek Museum of Cycladic Art invited Ai Weiwei to stay on the island of Lesvos for 48 hours with the intention that he would use his stay as a source of inspiration for an exhibition. However, the artist was caught up in the terrible refugee crisis and ended up staying in the island for several weeks (Panagiotopoulou, 2016), establishing a temporary studio from where he orchestrated refugee-related projects and gathered material that influenced both his exhibition in the Greek Museum of Cycladic Art and future artworks. Ai Weiwei used the Western world's fascination with his art and dissent of Chinese authoritarianism (Wang, 2017) to humanise refugees and aid workers and volunteers and to raise awareness of humanitarian action on the ground.

Ai Weiwei's engagement with the local community, his artwork and his clever use of social media to raise awareness about the refugee crisis is interesting both from a methodological and an organisational point of view. From the start of his stay on Lesvos, Ai Weiwei helped raise widespread awareness about the refugee crisis and collect money for the cause. For example, he collected more than 14,000 refugees' lifejackets from Lesvos and exhibited them in Berlin's *Konzerthaus*, simultaneously coupling his installation with a banner carrying the hashtag *#safepassage*, which is still used to advocate for the safe crossing of refugees across the Mediterranean. Also while still on the island, Ai Weiwei closed down his exhibition at the Faurschou Foundation in Copenhagen in protest at a law passed by the Danish parliament allowing local authorities to seize the property of refugees attempting to enter the country (Panagiotopoulou, 2016). To provide financial support to humanitarian efforts, he further donated ten percent of all the proceeds of his exhibition at the Greek Museum of Cycladic Art to Médecins Sans Fron-

tières (MSF) and the Greek NGO METAdrasi. While it is difficult to measure or quantify the precise impact these actions collectively had on alleviating the adversities of the refugee crisis, we argue that Ai Weiwei's tactics managed to deliver an ephemeral 'death by a thousand cuts' to the hostile migration policies employed by local and centralised governments through his use of art to humanise refugees, mobilising the public to align themselves with the plight of refugees and validating the work of lesser known artists who were also engaging through their work with refugee and migration issues and who were often criticised for placing themselves at the centre of the artistic process rather than the refugees (Panagiotopoulou, 2016).

Figure 11: Ai Weiwei, Tyre, 2016. Marble, Photo by Paris Tavitian © Museum of Cycladic Art. Retrieved from: https://www.yatzer.com/ai-weiwei-cycladic-athens

Forensic Architecture is a research agency composed by an interdisciplinary team based in London at Goldsmiths University. Forensic Architecture conducts advanced spatial and media investigations for the purpose of gathering and presenting evidence that can be used in defending victims of human right violations, exposing human-caused and even in some cases intentional environmental catastrophes and supporting communities threatened by state and police

violence and persecution. In order to achieve their objective, Forensic Architecture engage directly with communities in the form of eyewitness testimonies and interviews. They employ an array of technologies, including digital modelling, 3D animations, virtual reality environments and cartographic platforms. Moreover, they develop effective presentation techniques to bring their evidence to victims who in turn can use this evidence in trials and tribunals seeking justice (Forensic Architecture). The work of Forensic Architecture is thus characterised by being cross-disciplinary and collaborative and also actively adopting new digital technologies in their work to empower vulnerable communities and natural environments.

Forensic Architecture's attempt to raise awareness of oil and gas pollution in Vaca Muerta, Argentina, is a good illustration of their approach. Vaca Muerta has become one of the world's largest shale oil and gas fields. It is also the home of indigenous communities, including some of the Mapuche people who live between Chile and Argentina. In collaboration with *The Guardian* newspaper, Forensic Architecture investigated a local Mapuche community's claim that "the oil and gas industry has irreversibly damaged their ancestral homeland and eroded their traditional ways of life." (Forensic Architecture). Investigations were conducted in close collaboration with a local activist group and in conversation with the local Mapuche community and their regional confederation. The team also worked with an Argentinian anthropologist and an industry-monitoring NGO. For research and documentation, they used 3D Modelling, Geolocation, Image Complex and Remote Sensing. For example, a major oil spill at the La Caverna extraction site in August 2018 was investigated using video material shared on social media by workers at the site and local activists, as well as news footage and satellite images (Forensic Architecture).

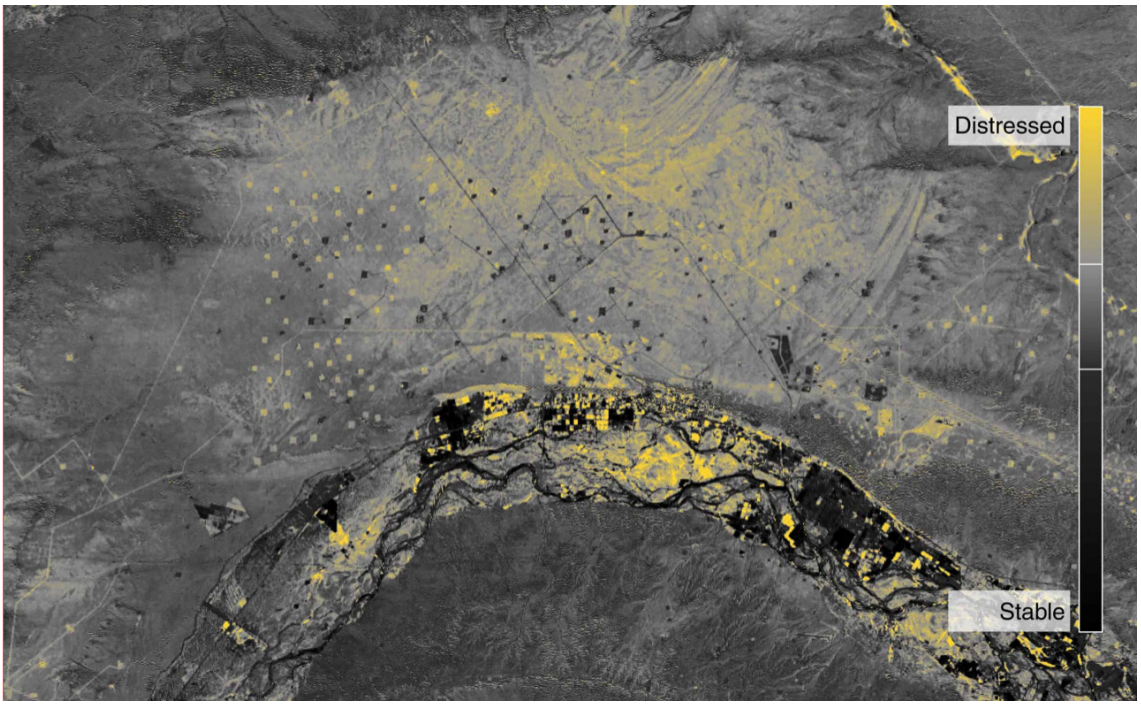

Figure 12: Normalised Difference Vegetation Index analysis of the region surrounding the town of Añelo in Vaca Muerta. 2013 (Forensic Architecture). Retrieved from: https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/oil-and-gas-pollution-in-vaca-muerta

Artists and filmmakers Milica Zec and Winslow Porter also put new digital technologies to use in their work. In their project titled *Tree,* for example, Zec and Porter make use of virtual reality in a collective project to immerse participants in the personification of a tree from its seedling to an adult tree in the rain forest. The artists not only use VR but other technologies to enhance tactile experience in synchronisation with visual experience. The participant thus becomes a rainforest tree living its own journey seeking to raise awareness about critical environmental issues such as deforestation and climate change. The project has been active since 2017 and has participated in important festivals around the world.

Figure 13: *Tree (screenshot) 2017: https://www.treeofficial.com*

Annette Markham is the Founder and Director of Future Making, an inter- and multi-disciplinary research group that brings together people from industry and academia to explore ways we can build possible futures. Speaking to concerns about the increasing use of digital technologies, Markham (2020, p. 2) asks: "How much control do we have over human-machine configurations or the future shapes and functions of digital technologies? Can we change the future of how digital services and social platforms work?" Markham and her colleagues have been exploring some of these questions in a number of projects, one of which is the *Museum of Random Memory*, a series of performative arts-based public interventions designed to spark deep reflection, or "consciousness raising", about the underlying complexities of the everyday use of digital media (Markham, 2020, p. 2). Future Making's interventions have brought about a number of interesting findings, for example pointing out just how extremely difficult it is for most people

to “identify, comprehend, and then critically reflect on the material elements of multiple supra-structures that help us accomplish everyday activities”, such as ‘the cloud’ (Markham, 2020, p. 7. What is particularly interesting in relation to our subject is the research design created by Future Making to find ways of sparking curiosity. Speaking about methods, Markham highlights the importance of “iterative interventions” as a way of creating a “radical alternative scaffolding for people to imagine otherwise” (2020, pp. 3). Markham concludes:

> As new versions of MoRM [*The Museum of Random Memory*] continue, researchers are now working out how to be more direct in these interventions, by exploring more fully what is felt as critical and urgently needed by particular audiences. This shifts us from general to more targeted groups, and from modes of engagement that sponsor general curiosity to more short-term actionable goals, using techniques akin to persuasion and activism. (Markham, 2020, p. 23).

The work of Swedish art director and designer Johanna Burai shows how algorithms are influenced by long-standing and deep-rooted social issues. In the process of researching images of hands for a student design assignment, Burai observed that searching images for the term ‘hand’ on Google resulted in almost exclusively images of white hands (Velkova and Kaun, 2019). Burai (2015) considered these results as a “clear-cut example of how being white is treated as the norm in society […] as well as to the systematic racism experienced by people of color in their everyday lives”. Although Burai declines to classify Google as a racist company (Storey, 2016), she considers the results as revealing norms of society. In response, she embarked on a highly ambitious project to create racially diverse images of hands that would appear at the top of Google’s image results (Velkova and Kaun, 2019), taking high quality pictures of racially diverse images of hands to create a dedicated website, *World White Web,* and social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest. Burai engaged a wide range and number of people in her project by encouraging everyone to share her racially diverse images to change the racist results. Although the project’s social media accounts have still not managed to attract a wide range of followers, Burai followed an ingenious process of launching a media blitz campaign to amplify her message and made it to the front page of major news media. It was through this process that Burai managed to get several of her images to the top of Google’s image search results.

Figure 14: Johanna Burai, World White Web (screenshot): http://www.worldwhiteweb.net

The American artist and computer programmer Lauren Lee McCarthy examines social relationships in the midst of surveillance, automation, and algorithmic living. With her 2019 installation *SOMEONE*, a human version of Amazon's *Alexa*, McCarthy draws attention not only to the desensitising effects of technology but also to the dehumanising attitudes of big tech companies in general. Displayed as part of a group exhibition called *Refiguring the future* held at the Hunter College Art Galleries in 2019, through *SOMEONE* the artist addressed the advances in human-machine relationships represented in 'smart houses' and tried to give back a human identity to artificial intelligent devices through active human participation. Several participants took control of the smart houses of four subjects in the project, working as their assistants and taking over tasks such as turning on lights and playing music. In this way the artist meant to make a clear call to understand how we give out our privacy by welcoming an artificial intelligent assistant into our homes and how we would react if the one taking over was another human equal to us (Ip, 2019). Human connections and smart devices inspire artists like Lauren McCarthy to explore the relationships between humans and machines through the participation of normal citizens, seeking to draw attention to concerning issues such as surveillance, privacy and social interactions in our era.

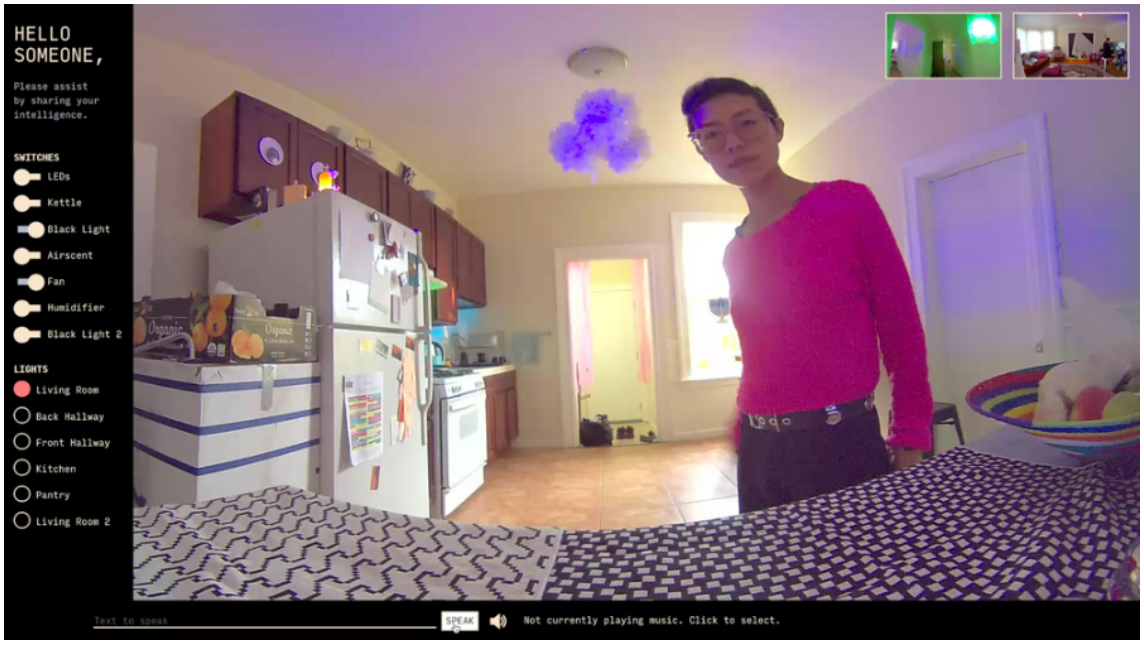

Figure 15: Lauren McCarthy (2019), SOMEONE (screenshot): https://lauren-mccarthy.com/SOMEONE

Both Johanna Burai and Lauren McCarthy actively engage their audiences to make their projects come alive. Burai does so by asking people to share images to influence Google's image search results, while McCarthy asks people to take on the role of a human intelligence device. In both cases the process of engagement for participants is also intended to be a process of learning about the ways in which new technologies impact on our everyday lives.

Tactical Tech is an international NGO based in Berlin that focuses on the ways in which "digital technologies can contribute to a more equitable, democratic and sustainable society. To enable this change, they investigate how digital technologies impact society and individual autonomy, using their findings to create practical solutions for citizens and civil society actors" (Tactical

Tech). Like Forensic Architecture, Tactical Tech is a cross-disciplinary group of people who often work closely with other partners. Whereas Forensic Architecture produce material for very specific purposes (e.g. court cases), however, Tactical Tech are interested in creating works that appeal to a broader audience generated by increased public awareness and the demand for public education around online privacy and autonomy in a data-driven world. Tactical Tech aim to find creative and accessible formats to demystify technology and give people actionable and sustainable changes to make in their own digital lives. An example of one such format is *The Glass Room.*

The Glass Room is an interactive exhibition designed to highlight the hidden aspects of everyday technologies and to provoke reflections on how we relate to the internet, data privacy and the inner workings of the tech industry today. The Glass Room itself is modelled to look like a sleek tech pop up, but as you look closer you see nothing is for sale; instead there is a collection of art, design, and technology objects that explore data, privacy and our relationship with the technologies and platforms we use in our everyday lives. The Data Detox Kit, for example, gives simple tip and tricks so that users can begin to take better control of their own privacy, security, and well-being. The Glass Room has taken several formats from large-scale exhibitions in major cities to a portable version that can be set up by anyone anywhere in the world in virtually any space. The community edition was developed as a result of high demand from visitors of larger Glass Rooms in London and New York, who also wanted to set up similar exhibitions in their cities.. As part of the Glass Room, face-to-face workshops are also offered as an added opportunity to learn collaboratively, discuss openly, and provide a chance to change your online behaviour (The Glass Room).

***Figure 16**: Tactical Tech, The Glass Room (screenshot) Retrieved from: https://www.business-wire.com/news/home/20161129005961/en/Glass-Room-Investigation-Intervention-Online-Lives-Pops-up*

In addition to such place-specific organisations and networks, the advent of internet-based art presents a new decentralised medium for exchanges between artists and audiences. These platforms arguably promote a sense of participation without the physical gathering of people in any single location and thus represent a fundamental shift in traditional notions of socially engaged art and the participation of audiences.

An example of internet-based socially engaged art is the project *Citizen Ex* by digital artist James Bridle. In this project Bridle speaks to some of the same issues brought up by Future Making's *Museum of Random Memory*, e.g. the 'invisibility' of digital technologies. Bridle explains that citizenship has traditionally been tied to the place where we are born and our parents. If we migrate to another country, our citizenship may change; but our citizenship is always connected to one particular place. Increasingly, however, citizenship is also tied to where we go on the internet. Aiming to create awareness about how the internet works and what our movements on the internet means to our rights, Bridle has created the downloadable plug-in *Citizen Ex*, which "tracks your online movements against the physical places where websites are legally registered to show your real-time 'algorithmic citizenship' and how it has affected our rights during your time online" (The Space). According to Bridle, it is of the utmost importance that we ask questions about things that we do not understand or may believe we have no control over. Art, Bridle argues, can bring new ways of thinking to these subjects (The Space - video).

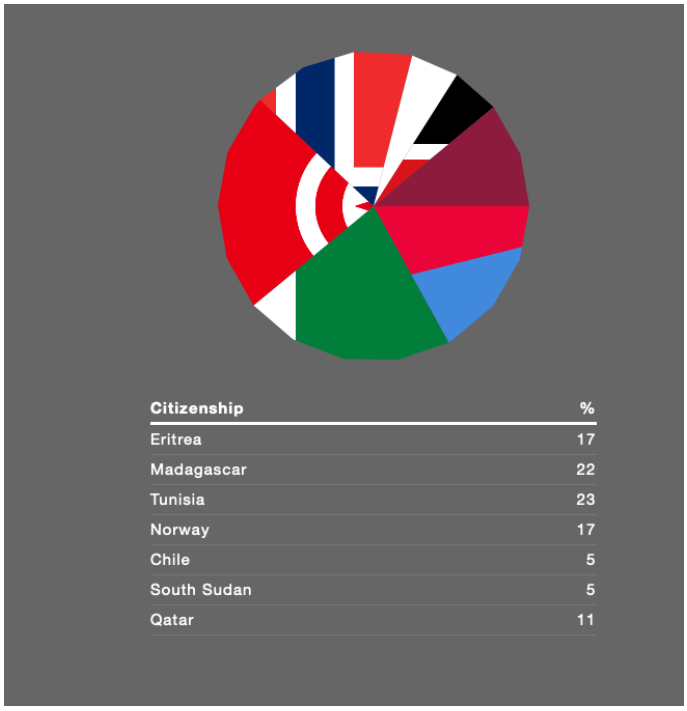

Figure 17: James Bridle, Citizen Ex, (screenshot): http://citizen-ex.com

A number of socially engaged artists have been working with refugee communities in recent years. While Ai Weiwei's project in Lesvos was undertaken to create awareness and call for political action, other projects have taken the form of types of social entrepreneurship. One such project is the SheWorks Atelier in Kolding, Denmark, an offshoot of the THREAD, research project completed at the Kolding Design School that set out to identify and showcase immigrant

women's craft skills and entrepreneurial competences. *THREAD* was a three-year project from 2017–2019 that included the following four phases: "Discover phase – identifying opportunities and developing initial ideas with internal and external partners though an events programme; Define phase – gathering further information and running the prototypes for specific event formats; Develop phase – discarding unsuccessful formats and pursuing successful ones for further development and testing; Deliver phase – reviewing, analysing and formulating the outcomes of the project. Developing legacy projects for selected aspects of the project to be continued and improved." (Skjold et al. 2020). The SheWorks Atelier grew out of THREAD and is now an independent creative collective that has enabled twenty women and men of Middle-Eastern backgrounds to establish themselves and set up a sustainable businesses in Denmark (Design School Kolding, 2020). Amongst other things, the women leading these businesses use their creative skills to create beautiful circular products from surplus and waste materials from the textile industry in Denmark. The Atelier's services include product creation and collaboration with companies, including transforming the textile waste from these companies into saleable products.

Figure 18: *THREAD (screen shot) Retrieved from: https://www.designskolenkolding.dk/en/news/path-integration-goes-through-wardrobe*

This brief overview of the landscape of current practices of socially engaged art gives some indication of the variety of societal challenges that artists work with, as well as the richness of artistic methods and organizational approaches such artists employ in their attempts to raise awareness and even bring about actual change. Taking into account the fact that the 'value' of the arts has been and continues to be a topic of heated debate, we argue there is an urgent need for a more nuanced understanding of the potential use and value of artistic methods and artistic methods of organisation, and more specifically the artistic methods and organisational

approaches adopted by socially engaged artists. Such detailed knowledge can establish the foundation for attaining a better understanding of the ways in which the arts can play an important role in addressing issues arising from the digital transformation.

4. Conclusion and the Way Forward

This review set out to examine the potential role of socially engaged art as a mediator in the digital transformation. As such it complements the reviews presented in the other Artsformation state of the art reviews and by exploring the role of the arts in society and specifically investigating the potential role of socially engaged art in empowering vulnerable people and communities who are currently not reaping the proclaimed benefits of the digital transformation. Taken together, the three reviews provide a critical and more nuanced understanding of the ways in which the arts have been and are taking on an active role as mediators of change in society and business.

This literature review has identified some of the trajectories of socially engaged art, identifying a clear progression from the work of the Situationists in the late 1950s to the establishment of arts-based social enterprise in recent decades. Historically it is evident that the evolution of socially engaged art has been framed within a counterculture movement that seeks to highlight everyday injustices, finding inspiration in complex moments from modern history. Early practices of socially engaged art, such as Fluxus and Situationism, had their roots in activist sentiments and opened the door to artists and artistic movements such as Solvognen, which consistently addressed issues of social exclusion on their agenda from the 1960s until the late 1980s.

Our review reveals that the relational aesthetics tendency that emerged in the 1990s started a new era of interaction between artists and their audiences in an exercise that aimed to engage with participants and empower them to address the social issues of the moment. Subsequently, the "social turn" of the arts documented in the work of Claire Bishop (2006, 2012) took force, seeking to distance the arts from typical elitist settings and bring them to the people in more accessible places, with the main focus of this whole movement being on engaging people and artists in social interactions rather than on the eventual artworks generated by such interactions.

In recent years we have seen an increasing number of socially engaged artists establishing themselves as social entrepreneurs in one form or another. In this process it is evident that such art projects have become more long-term and more organized. While collaborative and socially engaged art practices have been around for decades (Bishop, 2012; Kester, 2013), the emergence of socially engaged art practices that tap into the social enterprise model is much more recent. This growth of arts-based social enterprises is deeply intertwined with national and international factors, including the widespread decline in public funding for social services and cuts in the funding available for creative industries (McQuilten et al. 2020; McRobbie, 2016; Rutten et al., 2018). For socially engaged artists who already work with societal issues, the social enterprise model presents an opportunity to tap into public and private funding they would otherwise be unable to access (McQuilten, 2017; McQuilten *et al*., 2019; McRobbie, 2013). Curi-

ously, as more and more artists turn to the social enterprise model as a means of attaining impact and income, the societal and economic 'value' of art and artists is increasingly the subject of heated debate among artists, arts institutions, philosophers, cultural journalists, political and even economic and entrepreneurial stakeholders, specifically in relation to the allocation of community funds to artistic projects (Rutten et al., 2018, p. 1704).

Given the topic areas of interest (societal challenges) and the ambitions (positive societal change) of socially engaged artists, the entry of artists into the world of social enterprise seems a logical move. However, the extent to which the social enterprise framework can constructively support the work of socially engaged artists remains unclear, as does our understanding of the ways in which the specific methods and organisational approaches adopted by artists develop as a result of becoming social entrepreneurs.

Guiding Questions

Our review of the literature has traced the past and present characteristics of socially engaged art and has identified three different ways in which such art engages with the digital transformation. Our review has also raised a number of questions about the specific methods and organisational approaches adopted by artists and the ways in which socially engaged art might help towards a transition to an inclusive, user-friendly and humanedigital future.

Our review has shown that socially engaged art is both affected by and attempts to affect the digital transformation. Artistic examinations of this transformation are becoming increasingly more complex, covering a spectrum from what we might consider a fascination with new tech tools to questioning the widely acclaimed benefits of digitalisation. While the literature reveals that some socially engaged artists have begun to establish themselves as social entrepreneurs of one kind or another, thereby facing a number of organisational tensions in their everyday practices, there remains a lack of in-depth knowledge about their actual practices and organisational approaches. Some of the questions that arise include the following: i) What characterizes the methods used by socially engaged artists as compared to the methods of other socially engaged professionals such as designers and social workers? ii) What might be the value of these artistic methods in addressing issues surrounding the digital transformation? iii) What are the motivational factors driving artists to take on the role of mediators?

Our brief overview of the current landscape of socially engaged art projects has highlighted the fact that socially engaged artists work with a broad spectrum of societal challenges and adopt a wide variety of methods to bring about change, including both traditional and new ways of engaging with people, online and offline. We see many such projects being produced through teamwork, with teams composed of people from various backgrounds other than art. We see socially engaged artworks themselves "exhibited" in a wide variety of places, including court rooms, the city, pop-up museums and online. However, there is an urgent need for a more in-depth understanding of the issues raised by the following questions: i) What characterises the artistic business model?; ii) Under what circumstances do artistic interventions make a difference?; iii) What operational challenges do artists face when trying to create societal change? iv) When and if successful, is there an opportunity to adopt artistic methods specifically in relation to the digital transformation?

In proposing that socially engaged artists are a type of social entrepreneur we join other scholar, practitioners and politicians who have used this definition as a framework with which to explore and discuss the value of the arts. The social enterprise model is currently proclaimed as a 'better' response to some of the world's pressing challenges. For example, in the light of failing traditional systems of human development aid, social enterprise has emerged on the development scene as a possible alternative to the top-down approach global development policies (Bradley et al., 2013). Another reason for the emergence of social enterprise, according to McQuilten (2017), was the widespread decline during the 1980s and '90s of public funding for social services across Eastern and Western Europe, the US and South America. The reverberations of the global financial crisis in 2008 further brought about a notable expansion of the social enterprise sector. As our review reveals, however, socially engaged artists face numerous interlinked tensions in their everyday work in trying to balance artistic, social and economic goals. It is thus evident that there is a lack of in-depth knowledge concerning: i) how artists manage such tensions in everyday artistic practice; ii) how arts-based social enterprises might speak to the digital transformation; and iii) what artists and their work might contribute to the wider discussion on the transformation of the economic system and how we might measure such contributions.

From our brief look at the possibilities and challenges arising from the digital transformation, it is clear that the past and present design and development of digital technologies have not always been to the benefit of everyone. As is often the case in product and service development, the introduction of new digital technologies sometimes has (unexpected) consequences, both good and bad. Our review reveals that people rarely understand how digital technologies such as the cloud actually work, which also makes it difficult to do anything about the negative effects of these technologies. As in many other scenarios, moreover, it is often hard for people to imagine things being radically different – for example how the internet might look if it was far more inclusive. From these challenges there is thus an urgent need to understand in detail the ways in which socially engaged art and artists might take on the role of mediators in the digital transformation for the benefit both of the people developing such technologies and the people who use them. As mentioned in the WP2 review: "The transformative potential of the arts has little profile beyond the arts. This potentially reflects a deeper lack of awareness, uncertainty or even scepticism among 'outsiders' towards using the arts for transformative affect. Better knowledge of which of these holds true will be of value in formulating a response for the arts."

Future Steps

The Artsformation project has set out to answer some of the questions raised above over the next two years. In close collaboration with the other WPs, WP4 will examine the potential role of the arts in the digital transformation, specifically focusing on communities and groups of people usually left behind by current technological developments.

WP4 will conduct mapping activities, empirical studies and explorative, collaborative workshops as a basis for ascertaining the potential value of the arts in the digital transformation. Taking this approach offers a proven opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge on the topic that can then inform work across Artsformation, our development of educational material for a Massive Open Online Course, and our recommendations for governance at European level.

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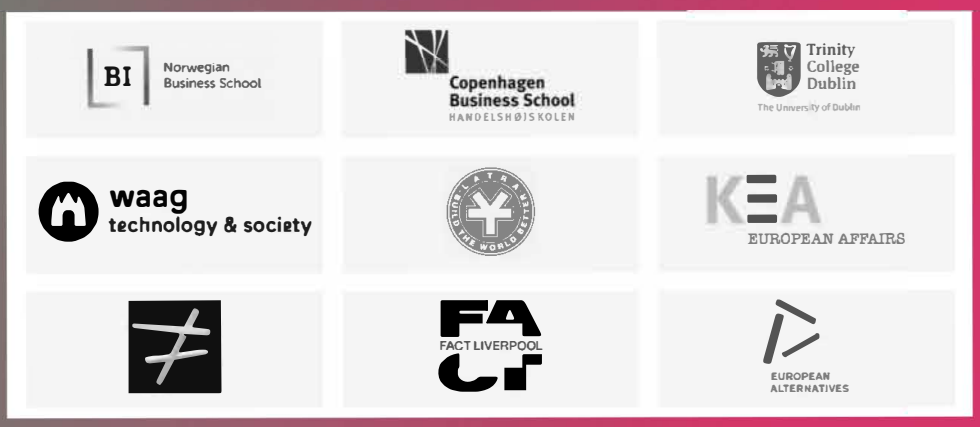
Notes on Methodology

This report has employed elements of the systematic literature review approach to identify, collect and critically evaluate relevant literature on socially engaged art and the digital transformation. The authors identified literature on specific topics in accordance with pre-established inclusion criteria to answer a research question and facilitate theory development (Webster & Watson, 2002; Snyder, 2019). Following a prior analysis of the literature on socially engaged art and the digital transformation, and after conducting a cross-checking exercise to identify words that would enable the authors to find relevant publications addressing the role of the arts in the digital transformation, the authors established the following key terms to systematically approach, collect and classify relevant literature: socially engaged art, socially engaged practice, social turn, artivism, community-based arts, empowerment, and digital transformation. These terms were used to filter academic and policy papers in five databases: *Web of Science, Science Direct, Google Scholar, Springer Link and EBSCOhost.* The literature review was conducted between March and May 2020 and included peer-reviewed articles published since 2000. In addition to peer-reviewed articles, the authors used resources such as reports, news and media articles, as well as books, reports and other secondary sources to draw on in the discussion of this study. Additionally, the authors informed their research by consulting the websites of art galleries, museums and artists to gather and accurately reflect on insights from artists and curators regarding the intentions of the artworks profiled in the examples.

Following Bryman (2012)'s social research methods, this literature review made use of a mix of theoretical sampling and snowballing approaches to identify any missing data as the process of data collection evolved. This systematic approach was completed with snowball sampling to collect any further literature cited in works that have made important contributions to the discussion of socially engaged art.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