State of the Ar(t)chive:

An investigation into the current state of online visual arts archives & collections in Ireland and their role in artistic research and enquiry

- - - - -

Conall Cary
MA Digital Cultures
University College Cork
November 2020

- - - - -

Supervisor:
Shawn Day

- - - - -

www.conallcary.net

- - - - -

Table of Contents

Declaration

I have read and understood the Departmental policy on plagiarism.

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education.

Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

Signature: *C. CARY*

Date: 04 / 11 / 2020

Acknowledgments

I want to thank the lecturing staff of the Digital Arts & Humanities department in UCC; Mike Cosgrave, Orla Murphy, Máirín MacCarron and Catherine Bourne for their support, flexibility, and encouragement throughout this year.

Special thanks goes to my supervisor Shawn Day for his guidance, feedback, and generosity of knowledge.

Thank you to all of my artistic colleagues for their advice, insights, and time spent listening to me!

My biggest thanks to Maria for putting up with all of the madness of this year, and for helping me to get through it all.

Finally, I know I should be seen to thank my children, but they have offered very little concrete help in writing this dissertation.

Abstract

This research project investigates the role of online visual archives and collections in the artistic research process, and assesses visual archives in Ireland through criteria developed from within the Digital Humanities.

Websites from the Irish visual arts sector are assessed in order to understand the current state of visual arts archives in Ireland, and internet surveys are used to investigate and visualise the ways that artists use online resources for the purposes of artistic research and knowledge production. A series of email interviews further investigates current issues, upcoming developments and alternative templates for the creation and development of online visual archives by Irish arts organizations and institutions.

Definitions of 'generous interfaces' and 'serendipitous discovery' are used as guiding principles in creating the criteria on which websites are assessed, and also in defining a model for the ways in which online arts archives can help to maximize their research potential.

The research shows that quality visual arts archives play an important role in the artistic research process, and starts to define some of the obstacles that need to be overcome in order to create these research portals and archives for artists in Ireland.

A final aim of the project is to take the results of the website assessments, surveys and interviews, combined with other research material, and to create an interactive web publication that functions as a digital artefact of the project that will be disseminated to the Irish arts community in the coming year.

1 | Introduction

As I sit writing this paper in the midst of a second nationwide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of quality online research portals has never been more apparent to me. At the moment, all cultural galleries, arts centres, museums and public arts institutions are closed in Ireland. As an artist, my only way of experiencing and researching the works of these organisations and institutions is through their online content and material. This research project began before the current pandemic, and is not a direct reaction to the issues of lockdown or of limited access to cultural resources. However, recent events have certainly served to highlight and emphasise many of the issues touched on in this research, and cast a more urgent and necessary light over the project as a whole.

As an artist, I have often struggled to describe the artistic research process to others, as it can mean so many different things, and can change its definitions and parameters based on the individual artist or artwork. I often find that attempting to concretely define artistic practice and methodologies can be tricky, as Lucy Cotter says in her recent book on artistic research 'art begins where language ends, or at least tries to reconstitute a language that we do not yet speak"(Cotter, 2019, p.135).

Visual art often does not transition naturally to textual representation, and as such, it is important to offer visual content instead of textual descriptions when representing the visual arts online, so that we are not mistranslating a visual artwork from 'a language that we do not yet speak'. This research finds through an analysis of websites from a cross section of the Irish visual arts sector, that currently, the majority of online content provided by arts organisations & third level institutes in Ireland does not offer searchable visual material. When visual artworks are presented online, they are often unaccompanied by basic forms of faceted navigation, such as artist name, date created, or medium or discipline used in their creation.

This lack of online representation creates a kind of invisibility cloak over artistic content produced in the country, especially at a local and regional level. It limits the potential of local artists, arts events, projects, talks, etc. to function as research and reference material for artists in both Ireland and abroad. If artists find limited content within Irish archives and online collections, then they are more likely to take influence from more famous or popular artists represented in the larger collections of international museums, galleries and institutions, as opposed to lesser-known local or national artists.

For many visual artists, designers, and illustrators today, the research process begins with an image search, or image gathering across online and offline platforms, amassing elements, styles, and compositions from a variety of sources into a collection of items/images/objects/artefacts. Aspects of this visual collection are viewed through the lens of thematic or conceptual concerns and help develop a starting point(s) for the creation of authentic new work(s) by the artist(s). This process of visual foraging is often guided by a serendipitous approach and outlook. It's similar to how one might browse a shop for items, without an idea of exactly what

one is looking for, but usually having a broader area of interest; like 'winter-wear', or slightly more specific like 'something for that sunny patch at the back of the garden'. The discovery of a new visual of interest often pivots the artist into a slightly new direction, creating a meandering pathway made up of smaller 'steps' with varying degrees of 'pivot' in between them. Marian Dork visualizes this as the information seeker 'bumping into information' (Dork , 2011, p.6). The problem is that the visual framework of many websites, archives, and databases in Ireland do not encourage this type of 'visual foraging' and discovery.

Many Irish artists and groups display visual content on social media platforms such as Instagram, but as this research will show, a large percentage of artists and arts students that were surveyed did not rank Instagram highly as a frequently used research resource, whereas in comparison the official websites/archives/collections of more recognized museums and galleries were ranked higher. The challenge for the Irish visual arts sector is the creation of visual arts archives of local, regional, and national work, that are imbued with the serendipitous nature of a physical gallery or space, while also standing as bastions of credibility and quality.

The final part of this research project involves the creation of an interactive web publication that will be disseminated to the Irish arts sector in the coming year. The publication will function as a digital artefact of the project, making the research findable, shareable, and interoperable. The web publication will also allow for a more visual

representation of the research, which emphasizes the importance of placing visuals at the heart of conversations surrounding the visual arts. The interactive nature of the web publication will encourage a more direct engagement with the research findings, as well as its ability to connect with people that may not have an immediate interest or an understanding of the background issues surrounding the research.

The basic assumption of this project is that the presence of more local, regional, national and third level institutes' visual arts archives would offer a valuable research portal to artists in Ireland, in addition to their importance as a visible record of the cultural capitol produced in the country. This research project does not design a solution for the lack of visual arts archives and online collections in Ireland, but rather it highlights the issues involved, and offers a springboard from which to begin a conversation on how this gap might be addressed going forward.

2 | Literature Review

This review looks at some of the work that has been done regarding the underlying and ancillary issues surrounding the research focus of digital collections of visual artworks, the role of cultural archives and collections, and definitions of artist research.

The Literature review has been broken into three sections. The first is 'Visualisation of Online Arts Collections', where I start by looking at how 'visualization' has been defined in general, and then look at the role of 'visualization' within online cultural collections and the Digital Humanities. I'll then survey some of the work that has been done regarding the form and function of visual archives and online collections within the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) sector.

The second section will be the "Importance of visual archives for research and cultural analytics", where the importance that these archives and databases play culturally, scientifically, and academically is explored.

The final section is "Artist Research: Definitions, Habits, and Methodologies", where I look to define artist research in terms of this research project, and to look at the habits and methodologies that have been documented so far, as well as survey some unanswered questions that have been posed in the field, and how my research intentions might serve to address/expand on some of them.

2.1 Visualisation of Online Arts Collections

What does it mean to 'visualize' content? According Lev Manovich, "until we "visualize" something, this "something" does not have a visual form. It becomes an image only through a process of visualization."(Manovich, 2010, p.11 b) This seemingly self-explanatory statement strikes at the core of what's important to online content within the visual arts: if we don't offer a visual in describing or representing visual artworks or artefacts, then we cannot call an online collection of works a 'visual archive'. If we simply provide a textual description of a work in a collection, even if this is accompanied by a small thumbnail or low resolution image, then as far as someone online is concerned, this work doesn't function as an accurate representation of the original visual entity at all.

Manovich also states that within the humanities 'to show the artifacts in full detail is crucial'. This idea, that an original visual artefact cannot be digitally replaced by abstract or textual representation for research purposes, forms the need for what is termed 'direct visualisation'. Direct visualisation calls for high quality/ high resolution versions of the original artefact in order for them to be used accurately for research purposes. For my research into visual arts archives, I will be arguing that one of the main benefits of these archives, in addition to their cultural significance, is their function as important research portals. If we consider the artworks that would be represented in these archives as

'original artifacts' then the need for high quality visual representation of these artworks within their overall collections is crucial for them to function properly as research tools in a 'close reading' approach. 'Direct visualisation' of content becomes a minimum requirement in the criteria for a best practice approach to online visual arts archives, collections and databases.(Manovich, 2010 b)

The challenge in digitizing original artworks for large collections is to facilitate for 'close reading' of individual artworks within the wider collection or archive. "To enable for appearance of the particular and unique, while at the same time managing and processing large sets of data, is herein presented as the most important conquest of automated visualisation within the field of cultural analysis" (Cruz, 2019, p.185).
It's not good enough anymore to simply be content with offering any kind of digital representation of a collection or archive or visual artworks. If we can't house large quantities of works online, while at the same time allowing them to function as they were meant to as unique works of art, with all that uniqueness displayed visually and generously, then we are falling short of a best practice approach.

There are valid reasons why institutes might feel hesitant in releasing digital representation of their collections online; that 'digital images are destined to enter the flow of information in it's infinite, uncontrollable dissemination.", and that by releasing

high quality visual content openly, the unique selling power of the original will be lost in the ever growing ocean of online imagery. (Cruz, 2019, p.187)
Joris Pekel addresses other concerns that many institutes within the GLAM sector currently face regarding the decision to pursue open publishing:
"*On the one hand, the benefits of publishing collections in an open way are acknowledged more, as it allows material to be easily shared in a variety of different places on the web. This results in a great increase in the visibility of the collection and institution. On the other hand, the process of digitisation is costly, cultural budgets are being cut and institutions have been told to look for other sources of income.*"(Pekel, 2014, p.10)

The positive effects of opening up collections to the public are demonstrated in the prominent case of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. A 2011 survey revealed to the Rijksmuseum that there were over 10,000 low quality versions of Vermeer's "the Milkmaid" alone circulating online without the museums permission. The majority of these reproductions were of a very poor and 'yellowish' quality. "*people simply didn't believe the postcards in our shop were showing the original painting. This was the trigger for us to put high-resolution images of the original work with open metadata on the web ourselves. Opening up our data is our best defence against the "yellow Milkmaid"* (Verwayen et al..2011)

The museum decided to clear the copyrights to images and

publish high resolution content freely, and they now have over 200,000 artworks that meet this criteria. They have found that traffic to the website, and time spent there by each user, has dramatically increased, without seeing a fall in revenues for its image licensing.(Rowley and Terras, 2015)

The approach of the Rijksmuseum answers the call by Mitchell Whitelaw for the need for more 'generous interfaces'. He calls for online collections to have interfaces that 'offer rich, browsable views; provide evocative samples of primary content; and support an understanding of context and relationships. " Other important aspects of these generous interface are that they should be "liberal in giving or sharing", as well as "large, abundant, (and) ample" regarding the quality and quantity of their visual content. (Whitelaw, 2015, p.2a)

While collections have now begun to create 'generous interfaces', many still rely on a text fed search feature in order to unearth quality visual content. The effect of this type of text fed interface is illustrated well in the analogy of someone visiting a gallery or museum in real life if that gallery or museum functioned the same as its' online equivalent:
"*The visitor enters the building, whose collection she hasn't encountered before. Instead of expansive exhibition halls however, she finds a small, drab lobby with an attendant at a desk. The attendant asks the visitor to write her query on a small slip of paper. The visitor invents a query, and the attendant disappears*

for a moment before returning with a line of artworks on trolleys, which are paraded - ten at a time - through the lobby."(Whitelaw, 2015, p.3a)
The 'artworks on trolleys' analogy is applicable to many institutes and organisations. The institute or organisation may have gone to the effort of properly photographing and uploading high quality visual representation of original artworks or artefacts, but if a visitor isn't familiar with their collection and doesn't know the correct words to type in the text search box, then they don't stand much of a chance of stumbling upon these works online.

On the other side of the 'artworks on trolleys' approach were tools developed by Stamen Design and Florian Kratuli for SFMOMA (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art) and the TATE Modern that allowed an entire collection to be visualised on a single, zoomable, pan-able, timeline(Timeline Tools : Florian Kräutli, n.d.). These ground-breaking data visualisation tools allowed visitors to explore images from the entire collection at a single glace, and followed Stamen Design's motto to 'show everything'(Whitelaw, 2015b). Interestingly, neither of these visualisation tools are used anymore by the respective institutes. In guessing why this might be the case, we can look at observations made by Manovich regarding visual data saturation, where he points out that a person wouldn't be able to notice the difference between looking at 2 billion and 4 billion images, as the volume would simply be too high for people to process (Manovich, 2017).
This demonstrates our human limitations in processing large

amounts of data; when the quantities of images grow too large for us, perhaps the "show everything" approach is actually numbing as opposed to engaging. This could be especially true for the 'casual user', defined by Windhager et al, who differentiates between the ways in which 'casual' users and 'expert' users access and explore online collections, and how interfaces are often designed in such a way that will favour one type of user over the other. So while an 'expert' user might not be daunted by the 'show everything' approach, the 'casual' viewer might need a more curated visual pathway into exploring an online collection. (Windhager et al., 2019, p.5)

Data visualizations play an important role in weaving narratives from large cultural collections that open the collection up to visitors and offer pathways into these large data sets.(Davis, Vane and Kräutli, 2016) In many instances, these data visualisations and the visual interface in which we access original artefacts and artworks becomes an equal partner to the works themselves, as Windhager et al states "We consider visualizations and interfaces to CH (Cultural Heritage) data to be contemporary cultural artifacts in their own right."(Windhager et al., 2019, p.16)

'Serendipity' has been used by many DH researchers to describe the kind of viewing and browsing experience that cultural collections should aspire towards in their online collections. In its literal meaning, serendipity describes "the faculty or phenomenon of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for"

(https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/serendipity). The joy of experiencing a gallery or museum environment in real life is the ability to take our time getting lost in the works, to follow new interests, to be surprised by new content, to find 'valuable or agreeable things not sought for'.

The need for a serendipitous search experience has been highlighted frequently in the work of Marian Dork, who famously called for the internet to facilitate a new type of user; the 'information flaneur', who similar to the original 'urban flaneur' traversing and exploring urban cities (notably Paris), ambles through online content, allowing themselves to be distracted and surprised by new discoveries along the way.(Dörk, Carpendale and Williamson, 2011)

Dork et al also argues for the importance of 'slow search', in allowing for these 'serendipitous discoveries', with an emphasis on quality browsing, similar to how one would browse in a physical bookshop or library.(Dörk, Bennett and Davis, 2013)
As we will see later in the 'artist research' section of the literature review, the language used to describe the 'information flaneur' and the 'serendipitous search' process is remarkably similar to that used to describe the 'research for art process' of visual artists.

Fig. 1: 'Visual Forager' Conall Cary, 2020.

Infusing online visual collections with the qualities of generosity, serendipity, and depth has been a challenge for the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) sector, and we are only starting to discover how online collections should look and feel in order to facilitate a more human-centred and engaging viewing experience.

This human centered perspective will need to visualize a middle ground between the 'artworks on trolleys' and 'show everything' approaches, as well as the 'expert' and 'casual' user.

In this research project, I will take Whitelaw's definition of 'generous interfaces', combined with Dork's emphasis on the importance of 'serendipity', and use these as guiding principles in developing a criteria to assess Irish visual arts websites on how successfully they encourage artistic research and exploration of visual content.

2.2 Importance of visual archives for research and cultural analytics

 "Cultural analytics refers to the use of computational, visualization, and big data methods for the exploration of contemporary and historical cultures."('Cultural analytics', 2020)
Going by this definition, cultural analytics can be seen to operate out of a digital humanities (DH) approach, but occupies its own 'visual wing' of the DH 'building'. I am very interested in applying the process of cultural analytics to archives and databases of the visual arts in Ireland, as it could allow us to make observations, define trends and behaviors, and to speak about important aspects of our culture and society. In order to do this, these archives and databases must exist and be maintained; without them we lose an important sampling of our cultural fabric.

(Manovich 2017) talks about the importance of 'creating systematic and representative samples of culture', and the issue of who gets visually represented in a society is an issue that is incredibly important, as underrepresentation of different groups and minorities can lead to a false portrait of cultural identity. Local arts projects, events, exhibitions, etc. often excel in this aspect of the arts. Projects that include local minority groups, that deal with issues facing the local community, and that give voice to marginalised aspects of society are common from locally funded artists and arts groups, and yet the long term visual record of this kind of work is often absent. The importance of permanent visual archives and online collections of the works that take place on local and regional levels as such cannot be understated.

In his recent research, Manovich focuses on images shared on social media platforms like Instagram, and previously has conducted analysis of the art site deviantart.com, self-described as 'the world's largest online social community for artists and art enthusiasts' which comprises mostly of hobby artists and amateurs, with a heavy focus on the gaming, comic, and manga industries (deviant art.com at DuckDuckGo, 2020) There has also been research into the website Artsy.net, which represents higher paid or more established professional artists represented by professional galleries and collectors whose purpose is the buying and selling of art.(Boucher, 2013)

The research profiles explored in these studies either looks at amateur/hobby artists (in the case of deviantart.com), or well established/well known artists (in the case of Artsy.net). These profiles don't fit the majority of professional artists in Ireland, who make their money from public and private commissions, and public grants from city, county, and national arts councils.
The documented works of these artists would offer a valuable research portal for the wider artistic community.
To investigate this research potential, I'll first look at the ways in which artistic research has been defined and studied so far, and what trends or gaps might need to be studied further.

2.3 Artist Research: Definitions, Habits, and Methodologies

"*Stored images in the mind are the basis for new creative ideas*" (E.W. Sinnot).

This quote from E.W. Sinnot is referenced in the 1st Conference on Arts-Based Research(Fendler, 2013), and offers a nice inroad to an understanding of an artists' idea of what might constitute general 'research' in their goal of making new and original works of art. If we change 'stored images in the mind' to 'stored images online', then it gets closer to what I'm trying to argue for in the call for online visual archives functioning as source material in artist research. This idea of research can be somewhat alien to other academic disciplines, and different definitions of artist research in art & design in general can lead to confusion and misunderstanding.
A good attempt at defining different strands of research within art & design is offered by Richard Frayling, who breaks down artist research into the following three categories:

1. Research into Art & Design
2. Research through Art & Design
3. Research for Art & Design

Category one encompasses Art History, Aesthetics Studies, Theoretical Perspectives, etc., while category two describes things like materials research, development work, and action research, with an emphasis on the final artefact. As Frayling himself points out, "it's Category Three that is more difficult to define or to defend from an academic perspective, and this is the idea of research *for* art. This is often what artists would consider to be the gathering of reference materials; objects, images, textures, text, etc., typified by a course of browsing or searching" (Frayling, 1994).

The artist Sarat Maharaj describes that "*At the beginning of an art project, we don't know where the work's inspirations, nudges, hints, come from...we don't know how this slow gathering of elements takes place and this configuration emerges that we begin to work at and call art*." (Cotter, 2019, p.197).

In his investigation into the research practices of visual artists, William Hemming defines 'browsing' as 'intentional, engaged passivity'(Hemming, William S., 2008) (the language here is also interesting in it's similarity to Dork and Whitelaw's vision for how browsing should function for cultural collections mentioned above). This is the type of 'research' that generates the 'stored images in the mind' that are 'the basis for new creative ideas', and it's this research for art & design that interests me most for the purposes of this project.

While there have been recent expansions of definitions of artist

research in general, there have been few studies that look at how the internet and social media have had an influence on the 're-search for art' part of the artistic research process.

There have been studies that look at social media's role as an instructional aid in art education (Kirby 2016), and there have been exhibitions that feature works exploring the effect of social media on the arts (DW 2019)(Welle www.dw.com), but these have been quite limited in both scope and detail.
Kylie Budge has looked at 'virtual studio' practices for artists re-sulting from social media platforms, and touches on some of the ways that artists engage with platforms like Instagram and Twit-ter in their professional practice, but also acknowledges the lack of work that has been done in this arena: "Virtual studio practice in relation to the use of social media tools is currently un-re-searched and requires exploration"(Budge, 2013, p.17). Her initial research is interesting, yet slightly dated in its' focus on the 'blog-ging platform' and the 'advent of the smart phone'. Other work from Budge focuses on the impact that Instagram has had on the GLAM sector, and not so much on the individual artist. (Budge, 2013)

Hemming also calls for a need to look at the impact of web and digital media on research methods and patterns:
"There has been very little discussion of multimedia and Web-based resources in even the most recent literature. We can guess that use of these resources by artists has increased dra-matically in the past decade, but there is no documentation of which resources are used or how they are used, or if they have supplanted more traditional sources"(Hemming, William S., 2008, p.697)
Additionally, there have been no studies undertaken that inves-tigate the online visual research habits of young people (I define 'young people' as people aged 13-18) with artistic inclinations or who wish to pursue an artistic career.
Manovich has some interesting observations involving the cre-ative design habits of young instagrammers in his study on 'The Aesthetic Society: Instagram as a Life Form', but in-depth re-search into the ways that young artists research and create their artworks has yet to take place.
Manovich notes in this Instagram study that many of the more polished Instagrammers had no formal training in art & design, and that many were too young to have even attended an art col-lege, institute, or university. He notices though that their 'visual sophistication' and the 'overall quality of their feeds are often su-perior to that of the big commercial brands and adult, profession-ally trained image makers"(Manovich, 2019, p.24a) He hypothe-sises that the reason for this high level of media competence is down to their following and studying the traits and behaviours of well know web designers, web sites, blogs, apps, etc. and by 'soaking up' these design principles and infusing their own sites with what they have acquired through their observational re-search. (Manovich, 2019 a)

This interests me, as I have noticed similar traits in students at the third level art college where I work. Some of the younger students have a much greater design concern and awareness than you would expect to see in someone with no formal training. I have also noticed a trend in the 'fine art' works that are being produced over the past few years to lean towards quite a 'designed' aesthetic. This is echoed in research carried out by Kang et al on the connection between artistic content and the number of 'likes' and 'followers'. They found that "Social media has changed the experience of appreciating the image, and it provides many filters and design tools to make our pictures look better. Various artworks are rapidly presented in a "design+ photography" way on social media"(Kang, Chen and Kang, 2019). In a CNN article looking into the effects of social media on arts and culture, a major digital media brand director notes "We're seeing a lot of repetition and similar types of events cloning themselves... that trend might reach a saturation point, because some of them aren't so differentiated from each other."(Michaels (photography), 2018)

The contemporary artist Yuri Patterson describes being 'interested in the effect of the internet and how, instead of making the world a more interesting and vibrant place, it is currently having a flattening effect"(Cotter, 2019)

2.4 Conclusion

This Literature Review has attempted to outline the importance of online visual collections and archives, and to highlight the current lack of research into the impact of online collections, web based imagery, and social media platforms on the artistic research process. It has helped to define the questions that I need to ask regarding this impact, and who they need to be addressed to.

From the existing research that has been carried out within the Digital Humanities into visual interfaces for online collections, I have formulated a criteria for what components I feel need to be present in an online archive or collections of visual artworks in order for them to function as high quality artistic research portals. This criteria has then been used to evaluate current collections (both small and large) in Ireland, and to rate/rank them accordingly.

There are also some important questions that need to be asked as to the ways that social media, web design, and new media are used in the 'research for art' process. To investigate this I have conducted a national survey of Third Level arts students in Ireland, compared with an identical survey sent to more established 'professional' artists that asked them what kind of a role social media plays in their research for art process, or the process of artistic knowledge production.

3 | Epistomology

As a practising artist, I have frequently been frustrated at the lack of quality imagery and information that I can find online in my area of interest, in the research for art process, or the process of artistic knowledge production. In particular, it has often been difficult for me to find quality imagery of locally funded artists, projects, talks and events. If imagery is present in the description of a local exhibition, project, or event, it is usually no more than a poster image that doesn't necessarily represent imagery from the event itself. If I'm intrigued by the textual description and would like to see more, then sometimes I can find imagery on the artists' or groups' own websites(s), but this is certainly not always the case.

This situation is very understandable, as these visual arts events are designed around the audience or viewer experiencing them in person. This is especially apparent in the visual arts, where the vast majority of work that is produced in the sector is created for in-person interaction and engagement. Digital representation of content, indeed if there is any, is often an afterthought, or else is used for publicity purposes via more informal channels such as social media. Visuals often serve to document that something took place in such a such location on such and such a date, and are not designed for a 'close reading' approach for viewing the original artistic artefact or work. By not giving digital representation of original artworks or artefacts the proper consideration and development, their potential to act as research material is severely limited.

County and City Arts Offices in Ireland some of the main funders of local arts projects, exhibitions, talks and events. Yet the majority of these public bodies do not have any kind of visual record or representation of funded content available to view and to search. The reasons behind this need to be investigated and articulated clearly, so that pathways for addressing this can begin to be explored in earnest.

The issue of online representation of third level arts institutes in Ireland also needs improving (although as I will discuss later on, the recent COVID-19 lockdown has actually acted as a positive catalyst in improving this situation slightly). Up until the previous year, there were very few archives of end of year exhibitions of third level works in Ireland. The graduates from these programmes create works that are the culmination of four years study, work and research. Many of these students go on to either pursue career pathways that run tangentially to the visual arts, or else go on to pursue careers in completely different sectors altogether. As such, the college works that they produce are the only record of their time spent pursuing the visual arts.

The annual nature of these events offers scope for documentation, time-lining, trend tracing, comparative studies, cultural analysis, etc. As an artist working within a third level arts institute, I am interested to explore the research potential that such archives would have for students currently studying, allowing them to investigate and explore the work of their peers instead of only

having to rely on the works of more famous, established, or 'popular' artists. It also allows them to look back on artists that have become famous and to be able to trace their progression back to their initial degree work, which opens up even more possibilities for research and enquiry, and also makes these artists more relatable to current students, highlighting the importance of progression and development in their practice.

Recent successful online visual arts archives, such as the Royal College of Arts 2020 'Digital discovery platform' (RCA, 2020), and the Irish 100archive (made up of the best 100 graphic design projects of each year in Ireland), help to visualize what the future could look like for online visual arts archives and collections in Ireland. In the case of the 100archive (100 Archive, 2012)), I'm interested to find out how they operate as an organisation, and are able to fund and deliver an ambitious visual archive without following a traditional public funding model.
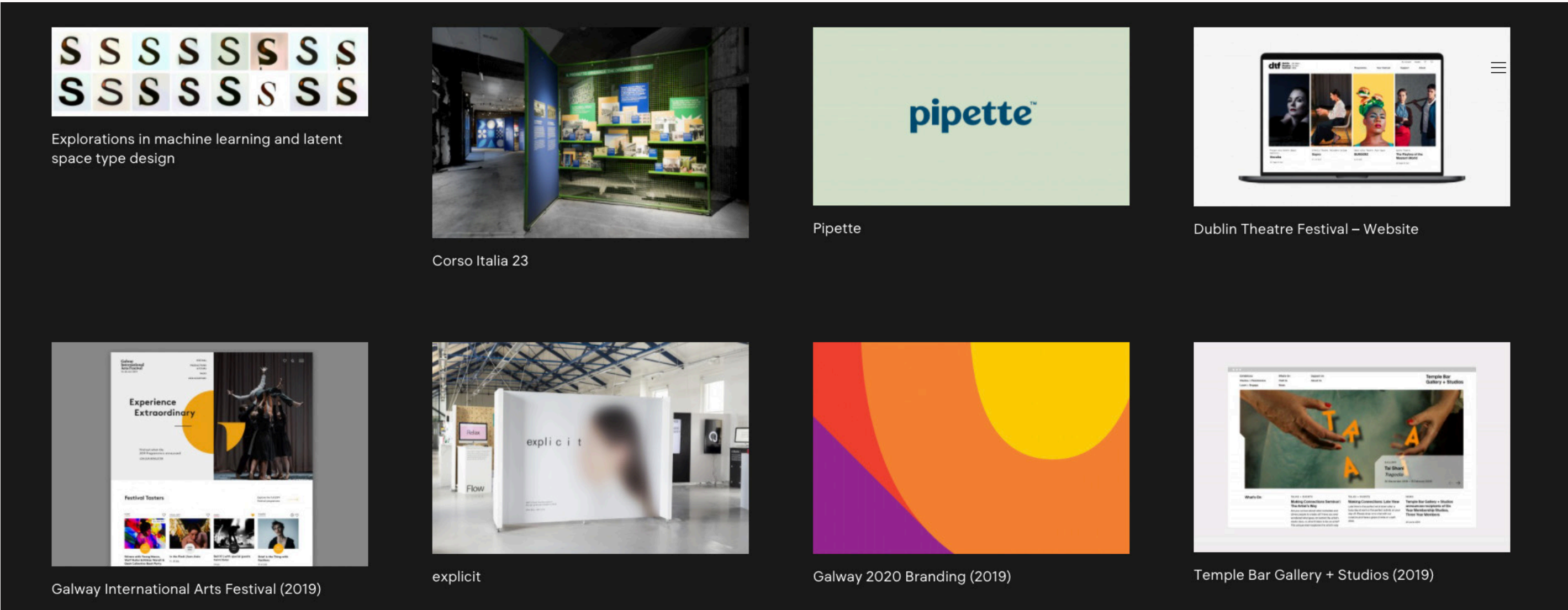

Fig. 2: screengrab from http://new.100archive.com/archive/2018. Accessed: 31 Oct. 2020

The Royal College of Art's 2020 'digital discovery platform' shows other institutes how a third level archive can look and function as an exciting tool for artistic research, discovery, and exploration. With curated collections, background stories, an extensive series of talks and events, along with a visual archive of full resolution imagery and accompanying metadata search-able by thousands of conceptual tags, this 'discovery platform' explores the exciting potential of digitizing third level end of year shows.

Official archives should represent a quality sampling, with consistent metadata, high resolution content, and multiple pathways for exploring large data sets. Recent events have ramped up the timeline for when we need these types of archives. Instead of planning on having something in place in the next few years, organisations and institutions might be rushing to create them now. This research aims to offer some guidelines, standards, and inspirations to those that are in the process of trying to translate their in-person visual arts content to an online platform.

Menu   +   Search 🔍

Tags

16Mm Film | 1:20 | 22 Bishopsgate | 24/7 | 2d | 2d Animation | 2md | 3d | 3d Character | 3d Modeling | 3d Printing | 3d Scan | 5g | Abandoned Space | Ableism | Abstract | Abstraction | Absurd | Absurdity | Abuse | Access | Accessibility | Accessoires | Accretion | Acrylic | Action | Activism | Activism | Activity | Adapt | Adaptability | Adaptation | Adolesence | Ads10 | Ads2 | Ads4 | Ads5 | Advertisement | Aesthetic | Aesthetics | African | Ageing | Agency | Agenda | Agenda Project | Aging Society | Agrarian | Agriculture | Agriculture | Agritech | Ai | Air | Air Pollution | Albatross | Alchemy | Algae | Algeria | Algorithm | Alien | Alienation | Allegory | Alleyway | Allocentrism | Allyship | Alone Together | Alter | Alternative | Alternative Lifestyle | Aluminium | Alzheimer'S Disease | Amazigh | Ambiguity | Analogue | Analogue Experiences | Analogue Photography | Ancient | Andes | Animals | Animals | Animated | Animated Documentary | Animation | Anthology | Anthropocene | Anti-Censorship | Anti-Gaze | Anxiety | Applied Arts | Approach To Knit | Appropriation | Ar | Arch | Archaeology | Archeological | Archeomorrow | Archetype | Archetypes | Archipelago | Architectural | Architecture | Architecture And Space | Archive | Archway | Arctic | Arrangement | Art | Art And Science | Art History | Art Jewellery | Art Prints | Art Writing | Art&Culture | Artifacts | Artificial | Artificial Intelligence | Artist Book | Arts In Education | Artwork | Asia | Assemblage | Astronomy | Atmosphere | Attention | Audience | Audio | Audio Design | Augmented | Augmented Reality | Aura | Autobiography | Automotive Design | Automotive Interior | Autonomous | Autonomous Futures | Avatars | Backstage | Baking | Balance | Bamboo | Banal | Banality | Bananas | Bank | Barbican | Barriers | Basilica | Battersea | Beach | Beast | Beauty | Beauty Ideals | Becoming | Beds | Behavior | Behavioral Change | Behaviour | Behaviour Change | Being-With | Beleif | Belief | Bespoke | Bespoke-Wear | Bestiary | Between | Binary | Bio Inspired | Bio Systems | Biochar | Biodegradable | Biodesign | Bioindication | Biological Design | Biology | Biomaterial | Biomechanics | Biomimicry | Biopolitics | Bird | Birds | Bitch | Black | Black And White | Black Humour | Blacklivesmatter | Blackness | Blandness | Blank | Blessing | Blockprinting | Blood | Blue | Blue And White | Bluetooth | Blur | Blurriness | Blurring | Blurry | Board Game | Bodies | Body | Body Architecture | Body Horror | Body Modification | Body Piece | Bodymodification | Bodypiece | Book | Bookbinding | Books | Border | Borders | Boredom | Boundary | Boxes | Branding | Breath | Breathing | Brexit | British | Brixton | Broadcast | Bronze | Brooch | Bruising | Brushstroke | Brutalism | Bubble | Buffer Zone | Building | Building Common Knowledge | Buoys | Business

RCA2020 ⬤

4 | Methodology

My research methods for this project have utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, incorporating quantitative responses from the surveys and website assessments, and more open ended qualitative methods in both the question parts of the surveys and in the email interviews.

I wanted to obtain concrete information in the form of quantitative analysis that would allow me to say that x percent of y amount of artists feel such and such is important, but I also wanted to tease out more open-ended opinions on what artists and organisations felt, liked, or viewed as important in the form of qualitative questions and interviews. The quantitative analysis of the survey results are also very useful in visualizing interest levels and demand to relevant organisations, institutions, and funders.

In order to get an accurate picture of the level of online visual representation of content in Ireland, I created a scoring rubric for assessing websites based on qualities put forth by (Windhager et al., 2019) (Whitelaw, 2015a) and (Dork et al., 2012), surrounding generous interfaces that feature high resolution content and facilitate 'serendipitous' discovery. This was combined with my own criteria of if the website contained an existing archive, and if so, how far back the archive went. The criteria was then used to assess nearly 50 websites from cross sections of the visual arts sector.

To investigate the ways in which artists conduct research online, I created a Google Forms survey and disseminated it to all artist studios and groups in the country with an affiliation on the Visual Artists Ireland network. The results were then compared against a survey sent out to all third level arts students in Ireland, to see if there was any difference between the online research habits of established artists versus emerging artists.

Finally, I sent a series of e-mail interview questions to the National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL), the 100Archive, and the Cork City Arts Office.

NIVAL is currently in the process of re-designing their website and updating their archive, offering a good opportunity to discuss what criteria they were following in this process, as well as their inspirations, and ambitions for the project..

The 100archive is a successful visual archive of the best 100 graphic design projects in Ireland each year. I wanted to investigate what might be learned from the alternative structure represented in the 100archive model, and whether this model might be adapted and applied to the creation of artist-led local or regional archives for the visual arts.

The Cork City Arts Office is a large funder of local arts and artists in Cork, and currently has no visual representation of funded content available online. The interview looks into the reasons be-

hind this, and if there are plans on changing or developing this in the future.

To analyse the results of the website rubric, I created data visualizations using Adobe Photoshop. The visualisations are broken into four separate categories in order to compare different sectors within the visual arts. The Google Forms surveys generate their own visualizations, which I have used and will expand on in programs like Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator for comparative analysis.

In order to condense and share the results of the research, I am creating an interactive web publication with Adobe InDesign and the In5 plugin that is a visual distillation of the research, and allows for ease of dissemination and distribution of my findings to both the arts and academic communities. The web publication will incorporate a variety of information display tools, such as data and network visualisations, animated objects and an interactive interface. The web publication will function as a digital artefact of the compiled research I have undertaken through my literature review and environmental scan, combined with the results of my online surveys and e-mail interviews into a single interactive document.

5 | Tools & Methods

5.1 Website Assessment Visualisations

To create the visualisations for the website rubric analysis, I used the program Adobe Photoshop. The main reason for choosing to use Photoshop was that it is a programme that I am very familiar with, and am able to quickly customize the ways in which I want to display my information. To create the visualisations, I first sketched out my columns and values the old fashioned way with pencil and paper, and then created a canvas in Photoshop and re-created my pencil work on the computer.

To highlight the differences in the data, I assigned opposing colours to represent yes and no values. I then applied a gradient across each value, which created a defined break between neighbouring columns of data, without having to add in column lines or breaks. This allowed me to display more information at a higher resolution and with less interference. The assessments are broken into four separate visualisations, with each visualisation representing a different category of arts group, organisation, or institution. Each visualisation has its' own colour scheme for ease of differentiation, assessment, and comparative studies.

5.2 Online Surveys

For the surveys that I sent out nationally, I looked at the many survey tools and engines available to choose from, among them Zoho, Survey Monkey, Survey Planet, Qualtrics, Survle, freeonlinesurveys.com, Google Forms, and many more.
I was looking to a use a free tool that would also allow me to keep and distribute the data indefinitely with no strings or subscriptions attached. Many of these engines dropped off the list after this simple criteria was applied, as the 'free' or 'basic' plan is in many cases only a trial version, and in other instances there are 30 day limitations on place for the duration period of the survey.

I decided to go with Google Forms, as it is something that I have immediate access to through my university email account, with no sign up or subscription required. As it's tied into my email account, it's very easy for me to log in wherever I am and on whatever device to look at results as they come in. Google Forms surveys also indicate at the bottom of the home page that it is a survey "created inside of University College Cork", which adds credibility to the source of the survey. There is no time limit as to the duration that the survey is active, and I continue to maintain control of the data in the future without having to pay any subscription fees.

As with other survey engines, Google Forms allows for anonymous collection of data, with no identifying personal information. It also generates simple data visualisations that are perfect for the purposes of this dissertation in displaying results. These are also great building blocks for creating more bespoke illustrations of the findings for both comparative analysis and for the interactive web publication. The data can automatically be opened in Google Sheets, and the .csv files can then be used in the creation of data visualisations, and also for sharing with interested third parties. At the conclusion of the project, I can also upload this data for other artists or researchers to freely download from my website.
(Links to all data can also be found in the Appendices Section of the paper, p. 60)

5.3 Web Publication

The web publication is an integral part of this project, as it will be the face of the research to the wider Irish arts and academic community/sector, and function as the main digital artefact of the research going forward. Very few people in the arts sector are going to read a 70 page dissertation, and so the web publication brings the findings of the research to the reader in a more accessible format, while still adhering to academic standards and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reproduceable) data principles.

There are many options out there for creating web publications, and it was important the correct programme or software was selected in order to achieve my goals for the research. The following section discusses the main players in the web publication market, and describes my decision making process in making my selection.

Web Publication Programmes:

Issuu
Many web publications that I would have been familiar with from within a visual arts context have been created and published through Issuu (https://issuu.com/)('Snapshot', no date a), which allows for a flipbook style viewing of a PDF or digital document. Issuu offers a free trial period, and it's relatively easy to put to-

gether your initial document or publication, and straightforward to disseminate and distribute via e-mail and public facing links or web pages. What Issuu lacks is extended interactivity and control of content (e.g. you aren't able to animate objects or embed data visualisations that retain their interactive qualities); you can't create customized content outside of the set templates. In order to customize your output or unlock limited interactive features (e.g. video embeds) you have to pay for the pro subscription.

Lucidpress

Another major player in the web publication game is Lucidpress (https://www.lucidpress.com/pages/) ('Lucidpress: Brand Templating Platform', no date), who offer a wide range of fairly interactive templates for producing and publishing content. They offer the option to upload a template that you create yourself in Adobe InDesign (Adobe's publishing software programme), which I was very interested in. Another nice addition is a free subscription for students and educational institutes, which helps in terms of initial accessibility. On further research and after briefly trying the free trial, I found that much of the interactive functionality from InDesign won't import to Lucidpress, and that your design alters in the upload process, so you don't have complete creative control of what your finished product will look like. Lucidpress is good if you want to work from a pre-designed template with small amounts of customization, but if you have a need for in-depth customisation, then it could be quite limiting.
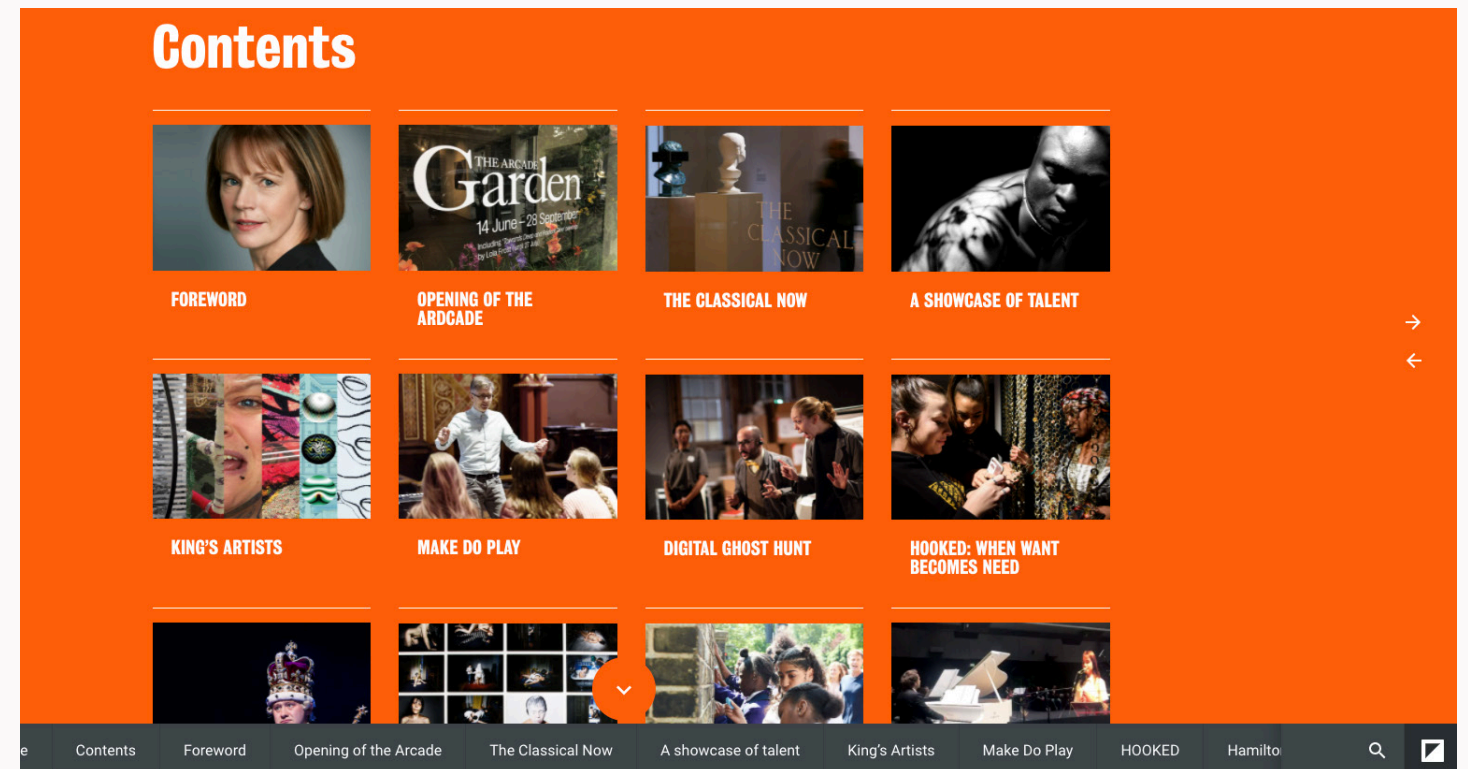
Fig. 4: screengrab of web publication made with foleon: https://kings-college-london.instantmagazine.com/starting-point/showcasing-success-2017-18/contents/

Foleon

A high end version of the template driven web publication service is Foleon (https://www.foleon.com/) ('Foleon: Produce content that stands out', no date), which provides very nice templates with an extensive amount of customization options. If you wanted to create a high quality product quickly and easily, then Foleon looks to be a great way to go. Foleon also makes a point of designing their products around the accessibility guidelines laid out in the WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines). Unlike Lucidpress and Issuu, all Foleon publications are built with standard programming languages (e.g. HTML5, JavaScript and CSS). They also allow users to customize headings to indicate

the hierarchy of text, set alt tags to describe imagery, set the language of a publication so that screen readers can properly interpret content, etc.

I fell in love with Foleon quickly, but was also concerned that there didn't seem to be any costs mentioned anywhere, which in my experience is not a good sign! It turns out that their cheapest plan starts at about €450 p/m, which as a potential tool puts it out of my reach, and certainly out of reach for many smaller arts organisations as well. I think it's still important to rank and compare it though as a good option for certain organisations; if the budget was available it could offer the best solution to developing high quality web publications and digital content with very little experience or background in web publication software.

In5

One of the more intriguing options was software that was developed by Ajar Productions (https://ajarproductions.com/) through a kickstarter campaign in 2012-14 called In5 (https://exchange. adobe.com/creativecloud.details.100761.in5-indesign-to-html5. html). In5 is a plugin for Adobe InDesign that allows content created in InDesign to be exported fully in HTML5, JavaScript, and CSS, meaning that it retains all of its interactive qualities regardless of the browser or display it's viewed on. It allows full creative control over the document that is produced, meaning in addition to being able to design for display, it's also easy to design for accessibility, such as building in keyboard accessible navigation, clear and contrasting backup headers (e.g. to replace image

based headers if they fail to load), descriptive links and Image text alternatives (Alt text), and formatting embedded media playback options correctly.

There is an additional free Wordpress plugin for In5 that allows content to be quickly and easily embedded into a blog page or post. In terms of accessibility, a drawback of In5 is it's cost (€35p/m), and also the fact that it only works if you have access to the Adobe suite (which costs additional money).

In order to compare the different options I put together a simple comparison chart based on my top criteria for a web publication toolset:

Web Publications comparison

This chart compares some of the features of three of the major players in the field of web publications and software: **In5**, **LucidPress**, and **Foleon**.

	In5	LucidPress	Foleon
Fully Customizable	✔	✖	✖
Uses standard programming languages (html and css)	✔	✖	✔
Free initial usage plan	✖	✔	✖
Supports video and interactive data visualizations	✔	✖	✔
Facilitates designs created in Adobe InDesign	✔	✔	✖
Adheres to accessibility guidelines	✔	✖	✔

Fig. 5: 'Web Publications Comparison' Conall Cary, 2020.

In5 can be seen to have met the most of my criteria, with Foleon in second place followed lastly by Lucidpress. In some ways the results are a bit misleading; Foleon is not actually a realistic option for me due to the price tag, and I decided not to include Issuu in the comparison as a low cost option, as it was similar to Lucidpress in terms of features, yet was more expensive. In reality I would use Issuu before I would use Foleon, but for the purpose of the comparison I wanted to limit myself to a single low, middle, and high cost option.

In5 came out on top, and yet in terms of accessibility, it has an added layer of restriction; in addition to the extra cost associated with both its monthly subscription and also the need for an Adobe InDesign subscription, it also requires a certain degree of pre-existing familiarity with the InDesign software.

However it's the best in terms of creative control and interactivity, which allows the developer to easily meet web standards for sustainable language and accessibility. Also, In5 works by exporting an InDesign file into HTML5 language that is completely owned and controlled by the creator to do with as they please, meaning that in terms of sustainability (which wasn't a category for comparison), it scores more points than the others as the content that is created is not dependant on or beholden to the values, structures, or fortunes of a business or commercial entity.

In making a selection I had to keep in mind who I was looking to develop a web publication for in the first place; which is not individual artists or students. It's important to note that in my experience working within the arts sector in Ireland and the U.K., most arts organisations have access to the Adobe Creative Suite of programmes already, as do all art colleges and institutes. Also, the monthly fee for In5 is around €35 a month, which for an individual artist or student might be high, but for an organisation or institute may not be as much of an issue.

In the end I have chosen to use the In5 plugin for Adobe InDesign, as I feel it ticks the right boxes for me in reaching my target audience, and my need for high levels of creative control over the content that I produce and how I choose to use this research going forward, while also meeting recognized standards and guidelines.

Publish Online with InDesign
A final option which I have not included in this list is the ability from within Adobe InDesign to create a Digital Publication and export with the 'Publish Online' export option. This exports pixel perfect reproduction of your design that retains full interactivity and animated functionality at the click of a button. The reason that I haven't included this feature in my tool selection is that the only option for publishing your content is to have it hosted on an adobe server, with the adobe prefix coming before the content name in the url. The content is hosted completely at the discretion of Adobe, and they can alter their service and discontinue this feature at any time. All of the other web publication toolsets allow the finished product to be published on an alternate plat-

form (even if they don't all allow you to download the full html). I would view the ability to retain ownership of a finished product as a base or threshold criteria for an academic or artistic toolset, and is the reason why I haven't included it in the selection process.

Technical considerations & future sustainability

An issue in terms of future sustainability will be the fact that my web publication will need to be hosted online in order to continue to be disseminated, viewed, and referenced. The restriction of online access to web publications has been addressed already by w3c (World Wide Web Consortium). The following quote is from a manifesto written by the w3c web publishing interest group outlining aspirations for what web publications can/should be:

Web publications can be packaged and they can be portable.
Web publications work online or offline.
Web publications can be accessible, linkable, and annotatable.

Web Publications have a ways to go still in achieving some of these objectives, yet they are headed in the right direction, and as far as future sustainability goes, I believe that beginning to structure the ways in which we create, design, and publish our research for a web publishing platform is a good direction to be headed in.('Publishing WG Charter', no date)

Meeting recommended standards

The FAIR data principles (that data should be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable) for metadata associated with my digital artefact are also an issue. The w3c publishing interest group suggests the universal implementation of a manifest to accompany every web publication/application, supplying comprehensive metadata in the form of a .JSON file. At the moment this is something that is still being worked towards, but which hopefully could be an option for me in the future to incorporate into the digital artefact to make it more compliant with FAIR data principles('Publishing WG Charter', no date).

Transparency & Reproducibility

I will be making the accompanying HTML5 data that I export through the In5 plugin for Adobe InDesign freely available to download, so that any person or arts organisations with access to Adobe InDesign that wishes to start down a similar path of creating interactive content can start from manipulating my pre-existing 'template' and further customising as they wish.

As for my dissertation, I will be putting the full dissertation up on my blog freely available to download, and the finished dissertation will also be housed in the CORA repository in UCC(CORA Home, no date).

6 | Process

6.1 Website Rubric & Assessments

For the rubric used to assess the various visual arts websites and online collections, I created a criteria for assessing websites based on qualities of 'generous interfaces' that feature high resolution content and facilitate 'serendipitous' discovery. This included questions about image size, search functionality, and faceted navigation. This was combined with my own criteria regarding if the website contained an existing archive, and if so, how far back the archive went. This resulted in the following criteria being applied to the 52 websites:

Does the website have online representation of content?
Does it have an archive of 5 or more years?
Does it have an archive of 10 or more years?
Does the archive offer generous sized imagery?
(generous is defined here as 800px x 800px or more)
Does the archive have a search function?
Does the archive have faceted navigation of content?
Can you filter the collection by date?
Can you filter the collection by artist name?
Can you filter the archive by medium or discipline?
Are works accompanied by descriptive tags or hyperlinks?
Can you search the descriptive tags or links?
Do tags include thematic or conceptual concerns?
Does the archive offer related or connected imagery to an initial search?
Does the archive feature a scrolling feed of content?

Institutes and organisations either score a yes or no value against the different criteria. I would have liked to have added in at least another value here, such as 'some', but this would have been too difficult for me to accurately quantify in a consistent way, as some organisations have thousands of works represented, while others only have a handful. The nature of the value of 'some' also changes based on the sector that is being examined, for instance, we would expect that publicly funded large scale museums and galleries such as IMMA and The National Gallery would have works ranging from the hundreds to thousands in their collections, whereas smaller artist run organisations such as Sample Studios or Catalyst Arts would not be expected to have this many works represented. What would amount to 'some' for one sector would not translate to the next sector, and as such it made more sense to only assign yes or no values to the proposed criteria so that all of the categories could be assessed equally and consistently in the time frame of this project.

I assessed the websites within four categories or groups within the Irish arts sector: publicly funded visual arts galleries and institutes, artist run studios or organisations, third level visual arts institutes, and county arts offices from each of the 28 counties in the Republic.
Within three of the four groups, I picked eight representative institutes or organisations from within the sector, with representation from Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Belfast where possible (with the exception of the City and County Arts Offices, in which 28 county arts offices and 3 city arts offices were assessed)

I then assessed each organisation, institute or gallery on the listed criteria, and coloured in a cool (blue/green) hue if they scored a 'yes', and a warm (red/yellow) hue if they scored a 'no' against the listed criteria. I used a cool shade to indicate a 'yes' answer, as yes responses are viewed as positive for this assessment. Alternatively, warm or reddish hues are used to indicate 'no' responses, with the connotation of a 'warning' sign effect.

Taken together, they allow for a broad visual representation of the current state of searchable online visual arts content in Ireland, although as I will discuss some of the scoring can be a bit misleading.
I will look at and discuss each visualisation more in depth in the analysis and findings chapter later on.
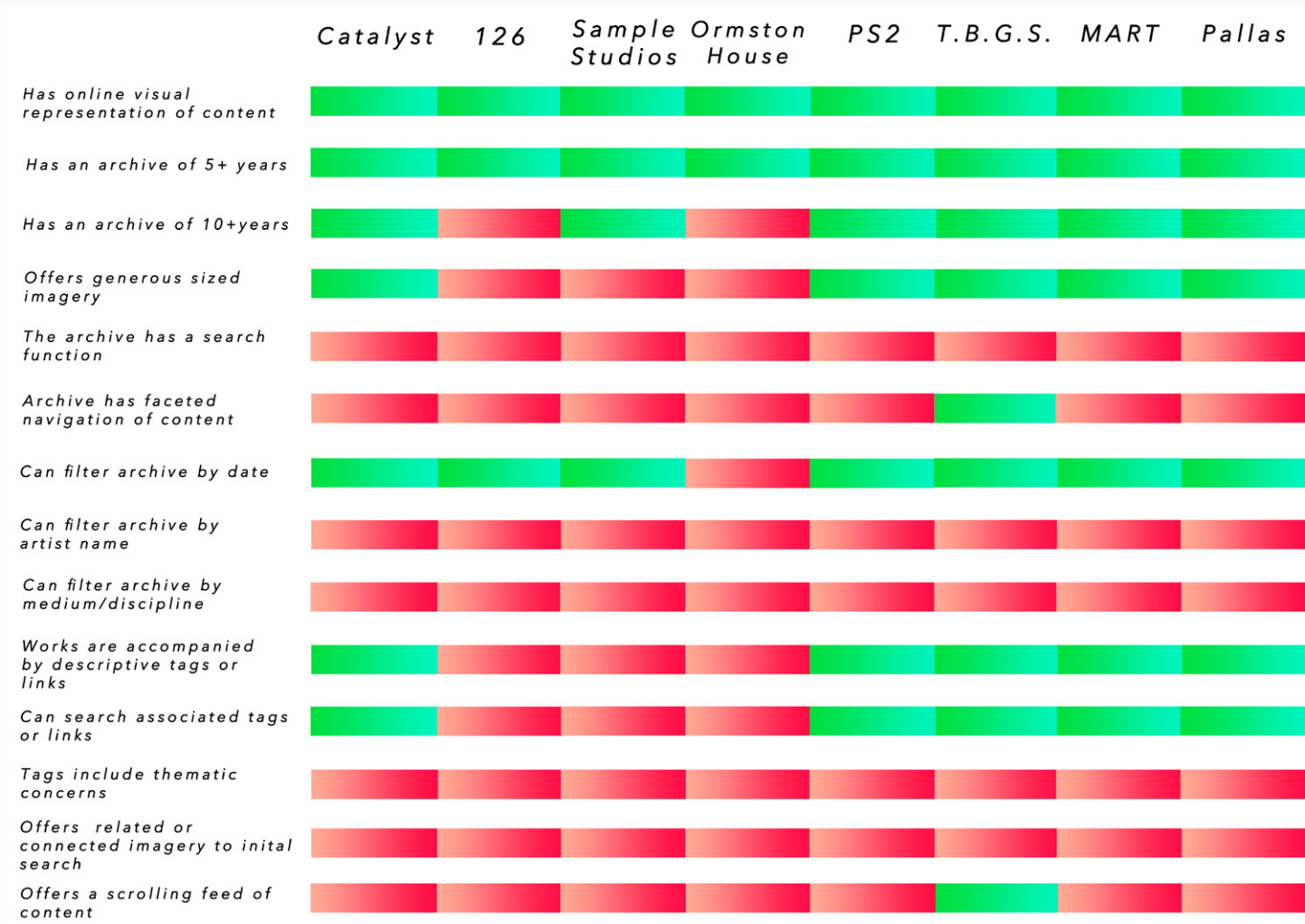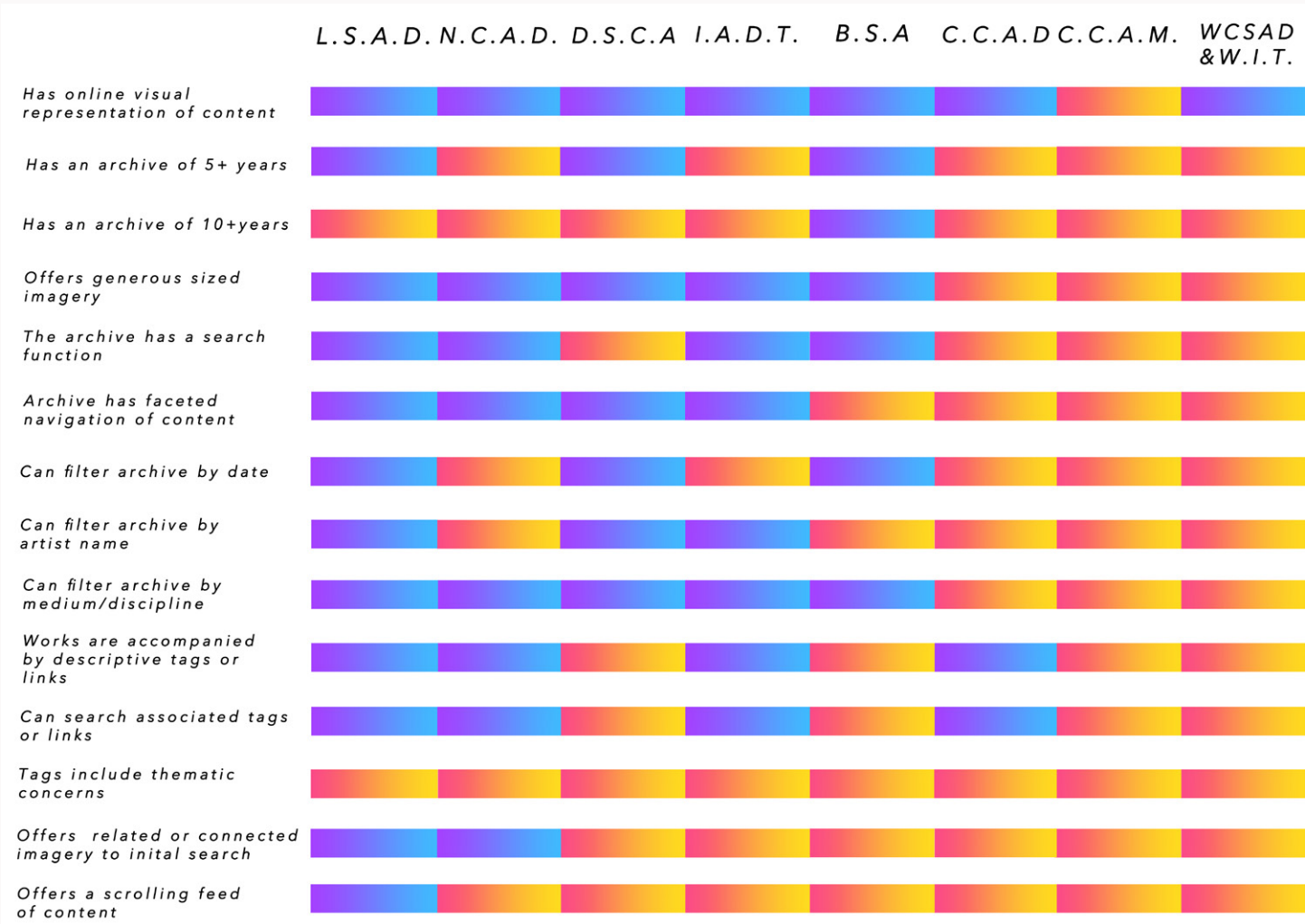
Fig. 6: Examples of website assessment templates

Home/start page of online artist survey in Google Forms

6.2 Surveys

The Google Forms survey asks participants to select how often they use well known websites or apps for the purposes of artist research, such as Google, Instagram, and Pinterest, along with online collections and websites from galleries, museums, and educational institutes.

It asks respondents about their research behaviour, there attitude towards public archives and collections, and the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown and the current pandemic on their on-line research habits and behaviours.

Google Forms also generates basic visualisations that depict results to questions in simple pie charts and bar graphs, such as those shown here (in depth analysis of responses and corresponding data visualisations will be looked at in The Analysis and Findings Section - Chaper 6.2):

Fig. 7: Examples of data visualisations generated through Google Forms

Survey for professional Visual Artists

I sent out identical surveys to both professional visual artists as well as to third level art students. In both instances I also included a copy of my Information and Consent Form about the research, along with departmental acknowledgment of Ethics Approval. For the professional visual artists, I focused mainly on artists associated with the Visual Artists Ireland network.

Visual Artists Ireland is the representative body for the visual arts in Ireland, and has compiled an extensive database of all visual arts groups and organisations in the country. I used this database as my main pool for the survey, sending out a link to all visual arts studios, groups, and member-based organisations in Ireland associated with the database.
The timing of sending out the links to the survey was roughly staggered by location; for instance I first sent the survey out to Belfast based groups, followed by Dublin, then Cork, and so on. I did this so that I would have some idea of the response and initial uptake from each area, and also to make sure that at least some artists from each locale were included in the national survey.

Survey for Third Level Arts Students

For the third level survey, I contacted the heads of school/department of the 8 third level institutes who advertise a course in fine arts or visual arts on the island of Ireland, asking for permis-

sion to send out the survey. I received responses from all of the institutes except for IADT and LSAD. As such, I cannot say that the survey includes responses from every third level art institute in the country, although I do say that the survey was sent out to all third level institutes.

6.3 Interviews

For the e-mail interviews, I contacted the National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL), the 100 Archive, and the Cork City Arts Office. These three organisations represent a very interesting cross section, as NIVAL is in the process of creating a new website and updating their online collection, the 100 Archive have one of the best visual archives in the country, and Cork City Arts Office funds and supports a wide variety of local artists, arts groups and arts events, yet has no visual representation of funded content online.
I also contacted The Royal College of Art, the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Limerick School of Art & Design to see if I could ask them questions about their recently created online archives, but didn't receive a reply from these organisations.

For NIVAL, I asked them what some of their reasons were for needing to upgrade the website/collection/archive at this time. I wanted to know what are the main things that they are hoping to achieve through the new website? How do they want the new website to look, feel, and function like? What are some of their

reference websites/archives/online collections that they take inspiration from/model themselves after? And also, has the recent lockdown due to COVID-19 impacted on the project, and if so in what ways.

For the 100 Archive, I asked them how they operate in regards to funding(i.e. if they operate mainly on a volunteer or a paid basis). I also wanted to know what other archives or online collections they might have looked to for inspiration when creating/setting up the archive, and if there were any plans for future development and expansion of the 100 Archive as an online research resource.

For Cork City Arts Office, I wanted to know what reasons there might be for the lack of visual archives and online collections of funded projects/artists/events by city and county arts offices in Ireland, and if there were any plans for Cork City Arts Office to create an online archive or collection of funded works, projects, events, etc.in the future. As with the rest of the interviews, I also wanted to know if the current COVID-19 situation has changed or impacted any of this.

The responses are discussed in the analysis and findings chapter later on.
(Full transcripts of the interviews are provided in the Appendices, pp. 61 - 65)

6.4 Web Publication

Work in earnest has yet to begin on the web publication, but initial steps have involved downloading and installing the In5 plugin for Adobe InDesign, and undertaking the online tutorials in the basic steps and operation procedures for using In5. The plan going forward is to create more illustrative data visualisations that build on the basic visualisations generated in Google Forms, and take them into Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to create bespoke visualisations for the purposes of the web publication. The .csv data from the surveys will also be uploaded to create interactive data visualisations that will retain their interactivity when exported from InDesign using the In5 plugin. This will allow readers to interact with the data as they read the research, encouraging a higher level of engagement with the content.

VAI (Visual Artists Ireland), NIVAI and the 100archive have all expressed interest in consulting and contributing further to the web publication, and plans are being made as to the creation of a working plan/schedule with these organisations going forwards.

7 | Analysis & Findings

This chapter analyses the results from the web assessment, surveys, and interviews, and relates the findings back to the initial research concern of the state of online visual arts representation in Ireland and the importance of online visual arts archives and collections to the artistic research process.

Limitations in the research and further questions are identified and articulated.

7.1 Web Assessment Analysis:

For the analysis of the website assessments, I will initially focus on each of the four categories separately, examining and discussing them individually before conducting comparative analysis between the categories.

Description of abbreviations and acronyms
The following is a description of the abbreviations and acronyms used in the data visualisations for each category, along with the website url (click on url to be redirected to website):

Category 1: Publicly Funded Galleries, Museums and Arts Centres
IMMA - Irish Museum of Modern Art : https://imma.ie/
National Gallery - The National Gallery of Ireland: https://www.nationalgallery.ie/
Douglas Hyde - The Douglas Hyde Gallery: https://www.douglashydegallery.com/
RHA - The Royal Hibernian Academy: http://www.rhagallery.ie/
Glucksman Gallery - The Lewis Gluksman Gallery: http://www.glucksman.org/
LCGA - Limerick City Gallery of Art: http://gallery.limerick.ie/
Naughton Gallery - The Naughton Gallery at Queens: https://www.naughtongallery.org/

Category 2: Artist Run Studios and Organisations
Galway Arts Centre: https://www.galwayartscentre.ie/en
Catalyst - Catalyst Arts: https://www.catalystarts.org.uk/
126 - 126 Artist Run Gallery and Studios: https://126gallery.com/
Sample Studios - Sample Studios & Tactic Gallery: https://www.sample-studios.com/
Ormston House: https://ormstonhouse.com/
PS2 - Paragon Studios Project Space: https://www.pssquared.org/
T.B.G.S. - Temple Bar Gallery and Studios: https://www.templebargallery.com/
MART: http://www.mart.ie/mission-statement/
Pallas - Pallas Projects/Studios: http://pallasprojects.org/about

Category 3: Third Level Arts Institutes
LSAD - Limerick School of Art & Design: https://lit.ie/lsad
NCAD - National College of Art & Design: https://www.ncad.ie/
DSCA - Dublin School of Creative Arts: https://www.dit.ie/creativearts/
IADT - Institute of Art, Design + Technology (Dún Laoghaire): https://iadt.ie/
BSA - Belfast School of Art: https://www.ulster.ac.uk/faculties/arts-humanities-and-social-sciences/art
CCAD - Crawford College of Art & Design: https://crawford.cit.ie/
CCAM - Centre for Creative Arts & Media: https://www.gmit.ie/about/centre-creative-arts-and-media-ccam
WCSAD - Wexford Campus School of Art & Design: https://www.itcarlow.ie/courses/department/wexford-campus/school-of-art-design.htm
WIT - Waterford Institute of Technology: https://www.wit.ie/courses/bahons_in_visual_art

Category 4: City and County Arts Offices
Clare - Clare County Arts Office: http://www.clarelibrary.ie/arts.htm
Fingal - Fingal County Arts Office: http://fingalarts.ie/
Louth - Louth County Arts Office (Create Louth): http://www.createlouth.ie/collection/
Dublin - Dublin City Arts office: http://www.dublincityartsoffice.ie/
Sligo - Sligo County Arts Office (Sligo Arts Service): http://www.sligoarts.ie/
Kilkenny - Kilkenny County Arts Office: https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Arts/
Cavan - Cavan County Arts Office (Cavan Arts): http://www.cavanarts.ie/Default.aspx?StructureID_str=1
Remaining 21 Counties: No visual representation of content of any kind.

Category 1: Publicly Funded Galleries, Museums, and Arts Centres

	IMMA	National Gallery	Douglas Hyde	RHA	Glucksman Gallery	LCGA	Naughton Gallery	Galway Arts Centre
Has online visual representation of content								
Has an archive of 5+ years								
Has an archive of 10+years								
Archive offers generous sized imagery								
The archive has a search function								
Archive has faceted navigation of content								
Can filter archive by date								
Can filter archive by artist name								
Can filter archive by medium/discipline								
Works are accompanied by descriptive tags								
Can search associated tags								
Tags include thematic or conceptual concerns								
Offers related or connected imagery to inital search								
Offers a scrolling feed of content								

We can immediately see that the largest organisations, IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art) and The National Gallery, have the best scores. Few of the other organisations have any archive going back farther than 5 years and searchable by anything other than date, with only The Glucksman Gallery offering generous sized imagery in their online content.

IMMA scores the highest of any Irish organisation in the website assessments, and was also listed numerous times by artist in the online survey as one of their most valuable artistic resources during the lockdown period.

Fig. 8: Category 1 Website Assessment Visualisation

Category 2: Artist Run Studios and Organisations

	Catalyst	126	Sample Studios	Ormston House	PS2	T.B.G.S.	MART	Pallas
Has online visual representation of content								
Has an archive of 5+ years								
Has an archive of 10+ years								
Offers generous sized imagery								
The archive has a search function								
Archive has faceted navigation of content								
Can filter archive by date								
Can filter archive by artist name								
Can filter archive by medium/discipline								
Works are accompanied by descriptive tags or links								
Can search associated tags or links								
Tags include thematic concerns								
Offers related or connected imagery to initial search								
Offers a scrolling feed of content								

Fig. 9: Category 2 Website Assessment Visualisation

Category 2 shows us that nearly all of the artist run studios and organisations in the country do not have an archive searchable by more than date, although the majority do offer generous sized imagery.

Descriptive tags are a bit misleading, as it only means that a single descriptive tag needed to be present in order to score a 'yes', and this was in fact often the case.

The table leader is Temple Bar and Gallery Studios, which similar to Category 1 is a Dublin based organisation and one of the largest organisations in relation to the rest of the category.

Also similar to Category 1, not a single organisation has any thematic or conceptual tags associated with online imagery. In fact none of the websites, archives and collections that I assessed in Ireland had any way of searching or connecting works on the site by 'concept'.

Category 3: Third Level Arts Institutes
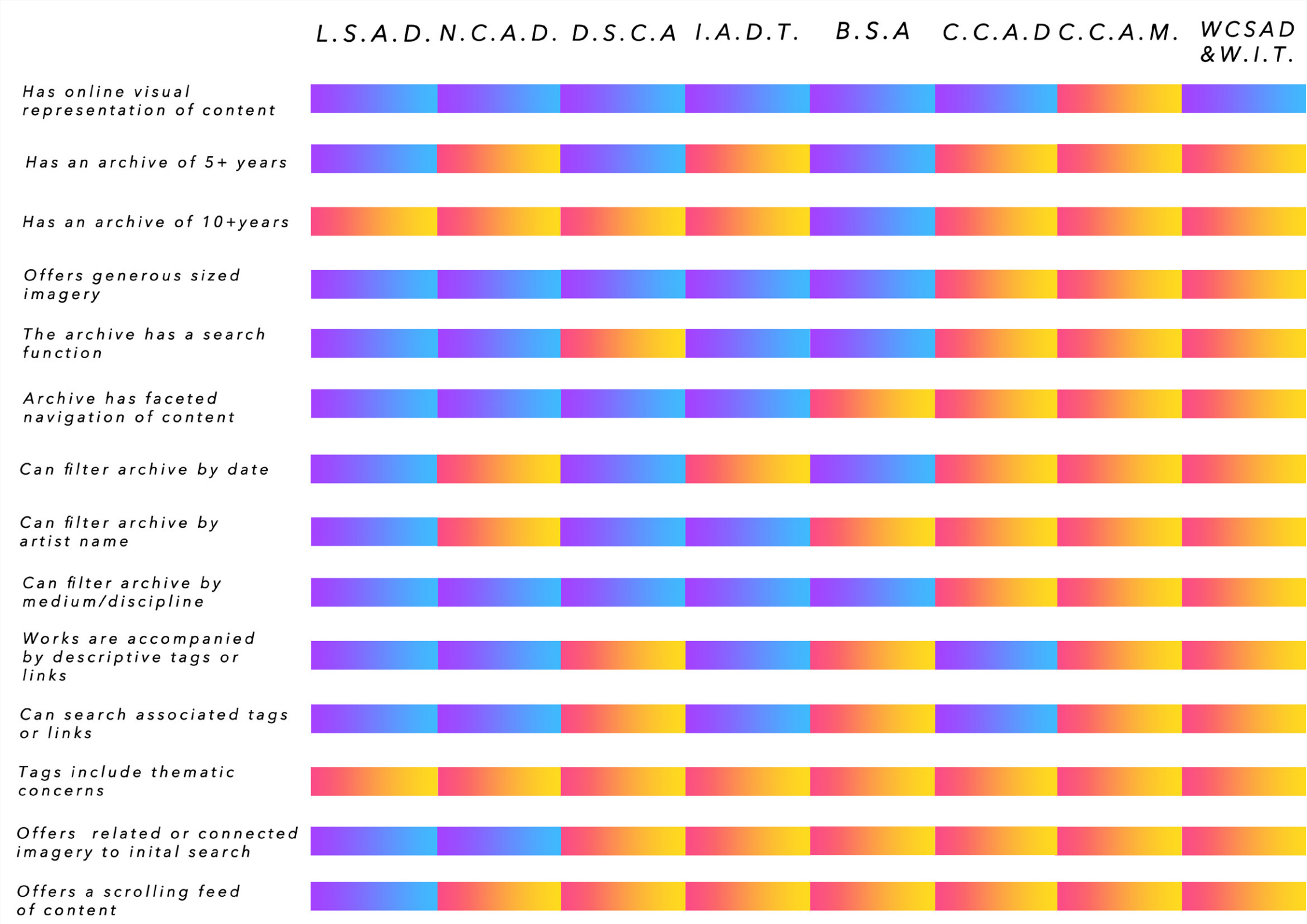
Fig. 10: Category 3 Website Assessment Visualisation

We can immediately see in the third level assessment that there is a marked difference between Dublin based Institutes and the rest of the country, with the notable exception of table leader Limerick (LSAD). However, NCAD (National College of Art & Design) and IADT (Institute of Art, Design + Technology, Dún Laoghaire) don't technically have an actual archive, only a dedicated page documenting the 2019 or 2020 end of year show. In this regard, BSA (Belfast School of Art) should actually appear to rank higher in relation to the research focus on archives and collections. It also means that only 3 out of the 8 Visual Arts Institutes in Ireland have an official searchable archive of previous years' works. If this assessment was carried out 6 months previously, that number would have only been 2.

Category 4: City and County Arts Offices

	Clare	Fingal	Louth	Dublin	Sligo	Kilkenny	Cavan	Remaining 21 counties
Has online visual representation of content								
Has an archive or of 5+ years								
Has an archive of 10+years								
Offers generous sized imagery								
The archive has a search function								
Archive has faceted navigation of content								
Can filter archive by date								
Can filter archive by artist name								
Can filter archive by medium/discipline								
Works are accompanied by descriptive tags or external links								
Can search associated tags or external links								
Tags include thematic concerns								
Offers related or connected imagery to inital search								
Offers a scrolling feed of content								

Fig. 11: Category 3 Website Assessment Visua4isation

Category 4 ranks the poorest of all the categories, with only 4 out of 28 counties having any type of archive, and only 7 out of 28 having any type of visual representation of content online.

It is also the only category that is not Dublin led regarding table leaders, with Lough County Arts Office standing out as the only City or County Arts Office in the country with a searchable visual archive.

However, the Lough archive is based on the collection of purchased or donated works, and not necessarily indicative of locally funded works. It's also the only archive out of all the assessments that doesn't allow for search by artist or date.

It was unsurprising to me that county arts offices and artist-led organisations scored poorly in the assessments, as there are valid reasons for neither to have invested their limited resources into developing online platforms to date. Funding is highly competitive in these categories, and resources are constantly stretched thin. As such, the physical production of a project, event, exhibition, etc. often takes precedence over its digital documentation and cataloguing.

In the case of Category 2: Artist led organisations, nearly all of the websites in this category have generous sized imagery, have an archive of 5+ years, and are searchable by date. However, the visuals often function more as a poster image for a past project (such as picture here below from TACTIC Gallery archive), and in most cases, don't function as an educational resource for artistic research in a meaningful way if following the principles of 'generous interfaces', which incorporate 'rich, browsable views; provide evocative samples of primary content; and support an understanding of context and relationships. "
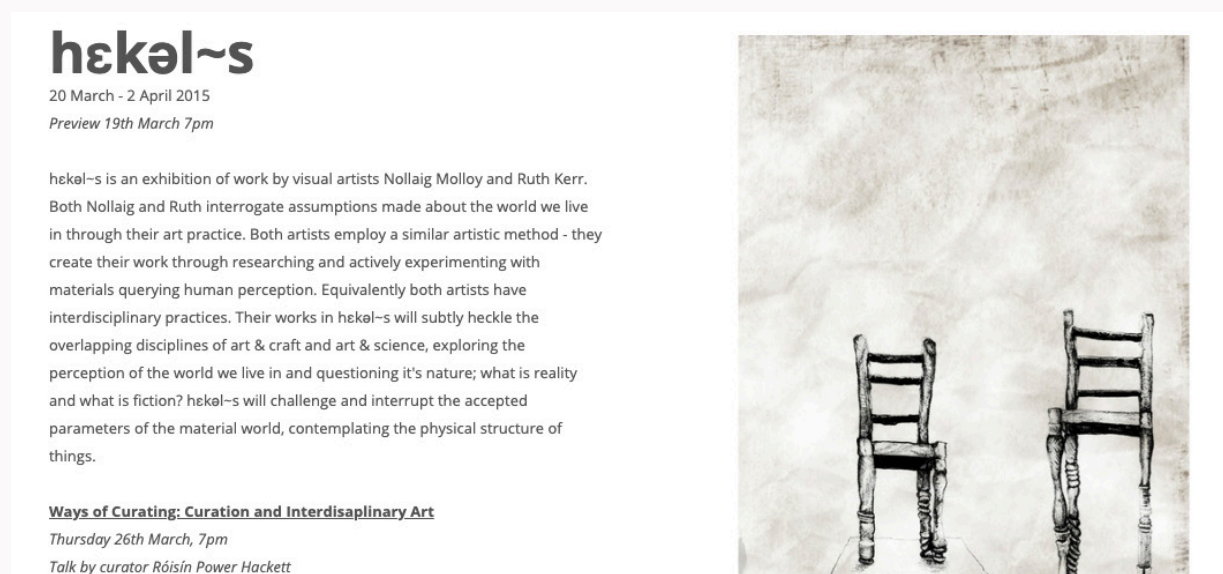
Fig. 12: screengrab from https://www.sample-studios.com/tactic-2015.html.
Accessed: 31 Oct. 2020

Nearly across the board, there is no way to search archives beyond the date they occurred, and no tag system in place that allows the user to search or filter an archive based on artist, medium, thematic or conceptual concerns. This makes the archive more of a public facing record of what has been done, similar to a news bulletin saying 'this artist did this here on this date', with sometimes more or less information than that provided.

From my experience in working in smaller artist run organisations where funding applications are made constantly, these archives often function as a box-ticking exercises for funding, to demonstrate that 'this is what we have done', and to help outline 'what we are planning on doing and why we need funding to support it.' If you want to experience depth of content from these organisations, you have to go and see the artists, events, exhibitions, projects, talks, etc. in person, as they are created and programmed to be experienced.

Recently though, the Arts Council has advertised the Capacity Building Support Scheme with a maximum award of €20,000.00 (http://www.artscouncil.ie/Funds/Capacity-Building-Support-Scheme/), which has been developed 'In light of the unique circumstances presented by COVID-19' as a 'once off award to support arts organisations to gain support, skills and expertise to review and adapt their artistic and/or business models and support their strategic development'. This funding stream has the potential to help address some of the issues surrounding digital

representation and web presence of visual arts content, and will be interesting to see what a review of the sector again in a year's time would show in terms of change and development.

In Category 4: City and County Arts Offices, these organisations are responsible for funding and supporting large amounts of arts production in the country, and yet, 21 of the 28 counties in the Republic don't have a single link, image, or listing of works that have been funded or created within the city or county, let alone a searchable archive.
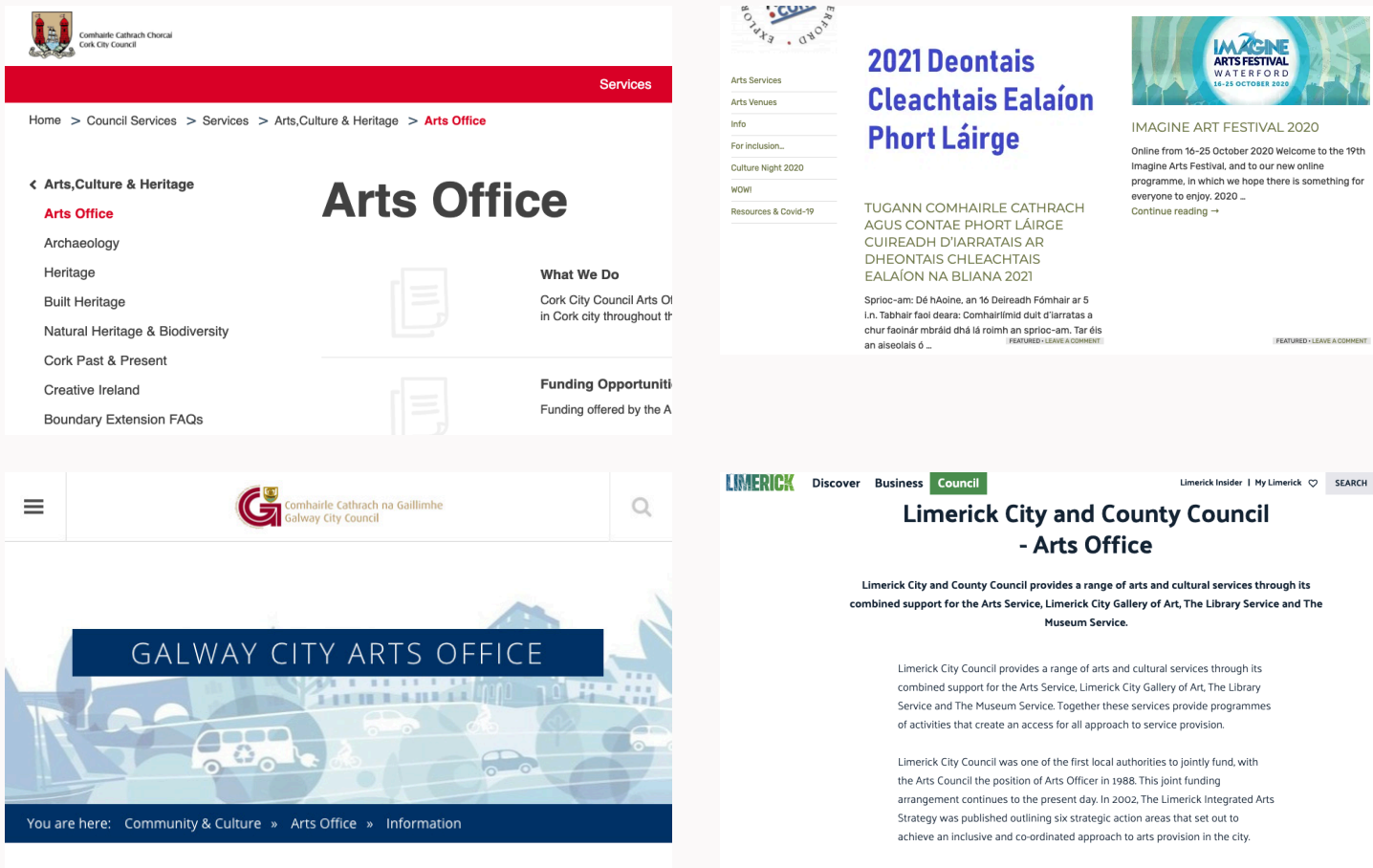
There were some notable exceptions, such as table leader Louth County Arts office, which has an online collection that can be searched by a wide selection of categories (pictured below). The Sligo Arts office (http://www.sligoarts.ie/), while not offering much in the way of generous sized visual content, has an artist database that is searchable and that provides textual links to artists websites, as well as providing resources under a number of other headings such as 'Arts in Health', 'Arts in education' and 'Youth Arts' . The Kilkenny Arts office has created a flickr page that records some past projects and funded events, and which at least shows an attempt to offer some kind of visual record of funded content (https://www.flickr.com/photos/46486038@N06/)

Fig. 13: screengrabs from https://www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/ser-vices/arts-culture-heritage/arts-office/, https://www.limerick.ie/limerick-city-and-county-council-arts-office, https://www.galwaycity.ie/arts-office-in-formation, https://waterfordarts.com/ All Accessed: 31 Oct. 2020
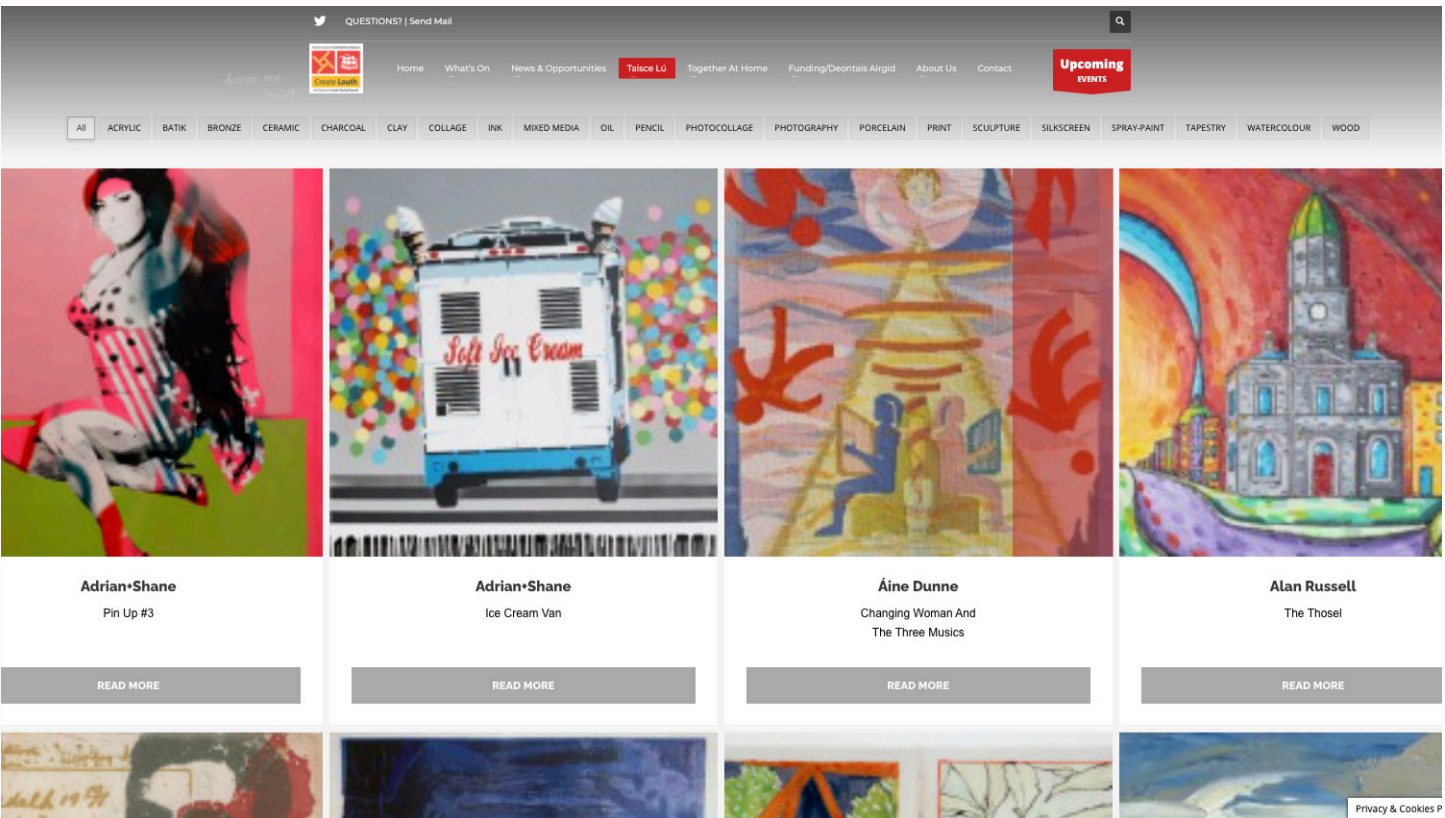
Fig. 14: screengrab from http://www.createlouth.ie/collection/ Accessed: 31 Oct. 2020

Many of the county arts sites were assigned a 'yes' value for having online representation of content, and also for having and archive, yet this is slightly misleading, as for most of these, the only works they had displayed were thumbnail sized imagery of per cent for art commissions. Per Cent for Art Commissions are large scale public art commissions that respond to specific briefs given out by publicly funded building projects, such as schools, hospitals and roadworks schemes, for new artworks to be included with the build. They are historically quite specific to the building, locale, and history of their physical surroundings, and are not necessary an accurate representation of the more everyday arts activities of the area.

Category 1: Publicly Funded Galleries, Museums, and Arts Centres, is the most unbalanced category, with two organisations (IMMA, National Gallery) receiving nearly perfect scores, and the rest of the category scoring quite poorly. In this way, Category 3: Third Level Arts Institutes is quite similar, in that only 3 out of the 8 institutes had any type of annual archive of end of year exhibitions. Also, between Category 1 and 3, all of the best scoring organisations and institutes (with the notable exception of LSAD) are Dublin based, and are much larger organisations than the rest of their category.

What these assessments don't take into account is visual representation of content through social media platforms such as Instagram. Many of the organisations and institutes assessed in

Categories 1, 2, and 3 have a strong presence on social media, in-particular on Instagram. In the case of the well-known private/commercial gallery the Green on Red Gallery in Dublin, the home landing page for the website even has two choices for viewing their content; to go to their Instagram page or to enter the website.
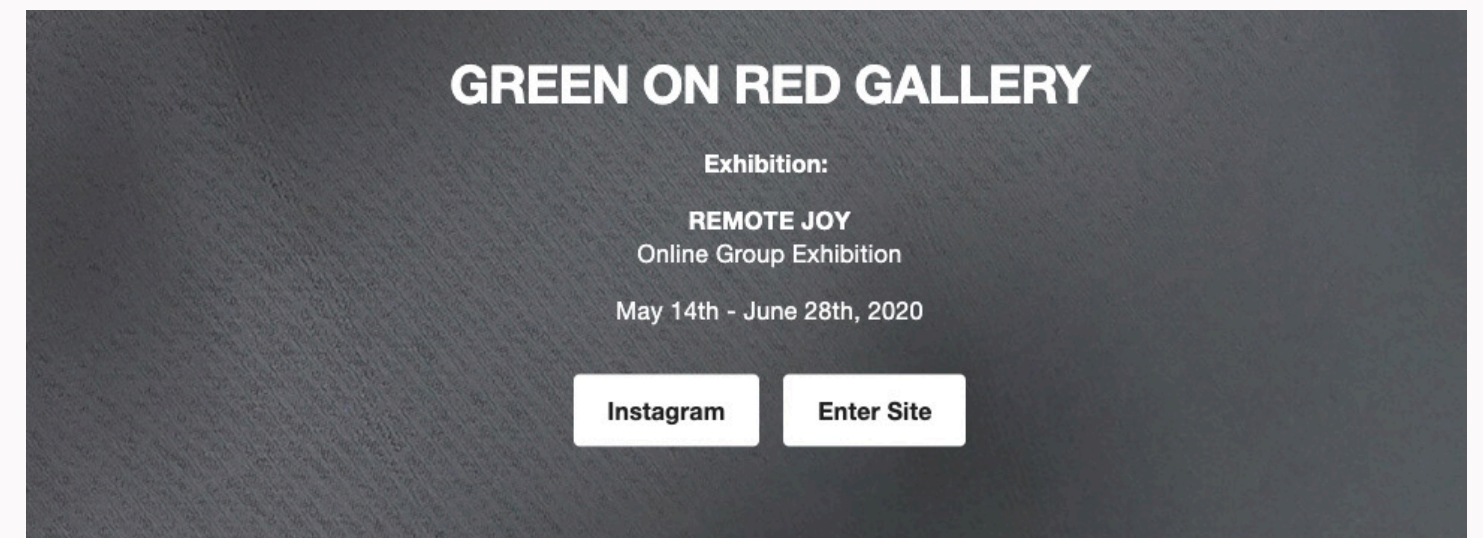
Fig. 15: screengrab from https://www.greenonredgallery.com/ Accessed: 31 Oct. 2020

I chose to focus on the official websites and more permanent archives of the organisations and institutions assessed for a number of reasons: Instagram offers a generic and uniform format in displaying imagery that does not depict 'the artefact in whole', and often does not include additional metadata or contextual information about the work. Instagram is made up of 'snapshot' style imagery, functioning more as a visual teaser or a trailer rather than faithfully representing the original artistic artefact. Feedback from the surveys also showed that Instagram works well at drawing the viewers' attention and re-directing them to the proper source (i.e. the museum or galleries collection, or the art-

ists personal website), although Instagram did not rank as highly as the official websites, collections, or archives of museums and galleries for the purposes of artistic research.

While many of the websites had archives going back 5 or more years, most of these archives offer very little in quality or generous sized imagery, and don't incorporate faceted navigation other than a general 'search by date' function. In the majority of websites, if you come across an artist or group that is of interest, there is no way to search the rest of the website for further content associated with that artist or group.

All of this leads to a hindering of the process of 'serendipitous discovery', and also severely limits the ways in which an artist can 'browse' the collection. As nearly 80% of artists surveyed identified their online research habits as 'browsing with intent', this creates a problem that needs addressing. The websites and collections that allow for this type of intentional browsing best are the larger institutes and organisations, such as the Irish Museum of Modern Art, and third level institutes such as LSAD and DSCA. The reason that LSAD and IMMA scored so highly is that you are able to search the collection visually and through numerous filters and categories. Scrolling feeds of visual content encourages and facilitates new discoveries and tangential explorations, and the high resolution imagery with associated metadata allows the content to function properly as credible research material. This is also backed up by the results from the surveys,

where IMMA was listed by both professional artists and students as one of their most valuable research resources over the lockdown period.

Here we see the positive effects of lockdown, where plans that might already have been in the pipeline were prioritised and put in place; if I had created this website assessment 6 months ago, then the top two scoring sites in Ireland (IMMA and LSAD) wouldn't have existed. Time and resources come into play as significant barriers between smaller and larger organisations. As such, the question needs to be asked of what can be done, or what tools can be developed to help improve online delivery for smaller organisations and institutes?
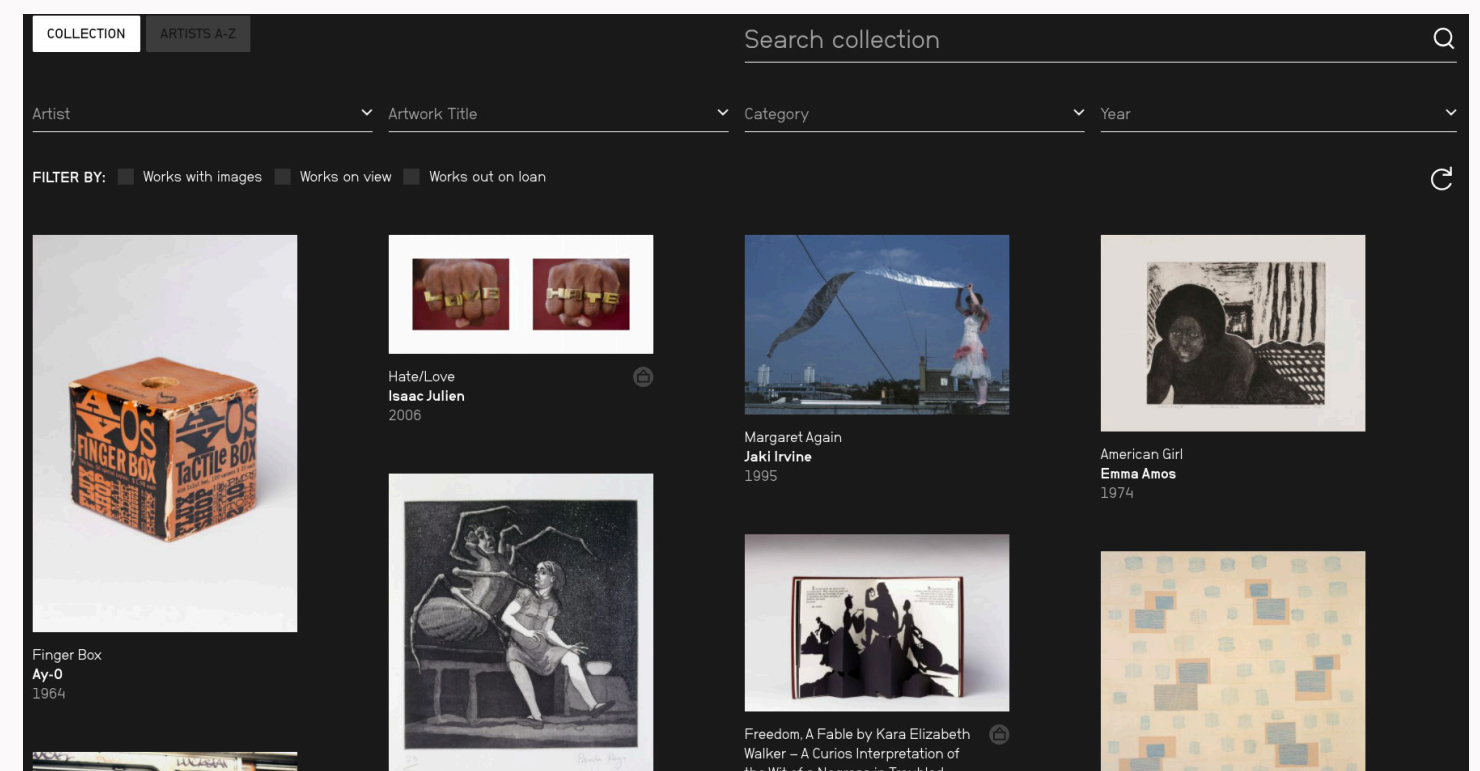
Fig. 16: screengrab from https://imma.ie/collection/ Accessed: 31 Oct. 2020

7.2 Professional Artist Survey

The Artist survey seeks to answer some of the ways in which artists use online resources for the purposes of knowledge production. The survey was sent to all arts organisations listed on the Visual Artists Ireland Network, as well as any other arts groups that I was aware of or that I came across in my research.
The artists were first asked to rank how often they used a list of popular websites and apps in their artistic research process, from 1 representing 'never' to 5 representing 'all the time'.
The first website was Google/Google Images, which perhaps unsurprisingly was used 'all the time' by the majority of respondents:

Instagram is one of the more 'visual' social media platforms, often associated with artists and arts groups now as their main social media presence, and so I was expecting to perhaps see similar results to Google in terms of frequency of usage. However, it was a much more equitable breakdown, with 40% of artist' identifying with limited usage (scored 1-2), and only 35% of artists identifying as using it more regularly (scored 4-5).

Fig. 17: Google Images survey results from Artist Survey
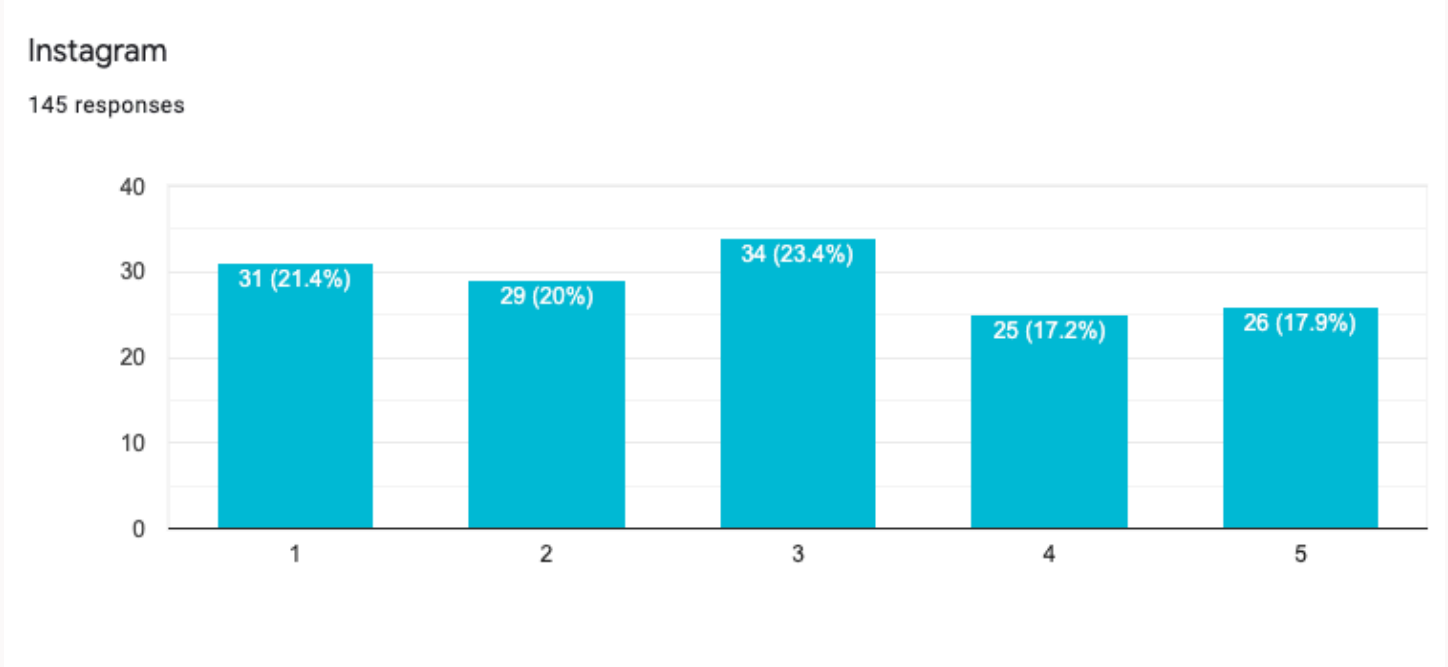
Fig. 18: Instagram survey results from Artist Survey

Pinterest, Behance (Adobe's official portfolio site), Facebook and Twitter all scored similarly in that the majority of artists ranked that they almost never use these platforms in their artistic research process.

Facebook

144 responses

Pinterest

147 responses

Behance

142 responses

Twitter

143 responses
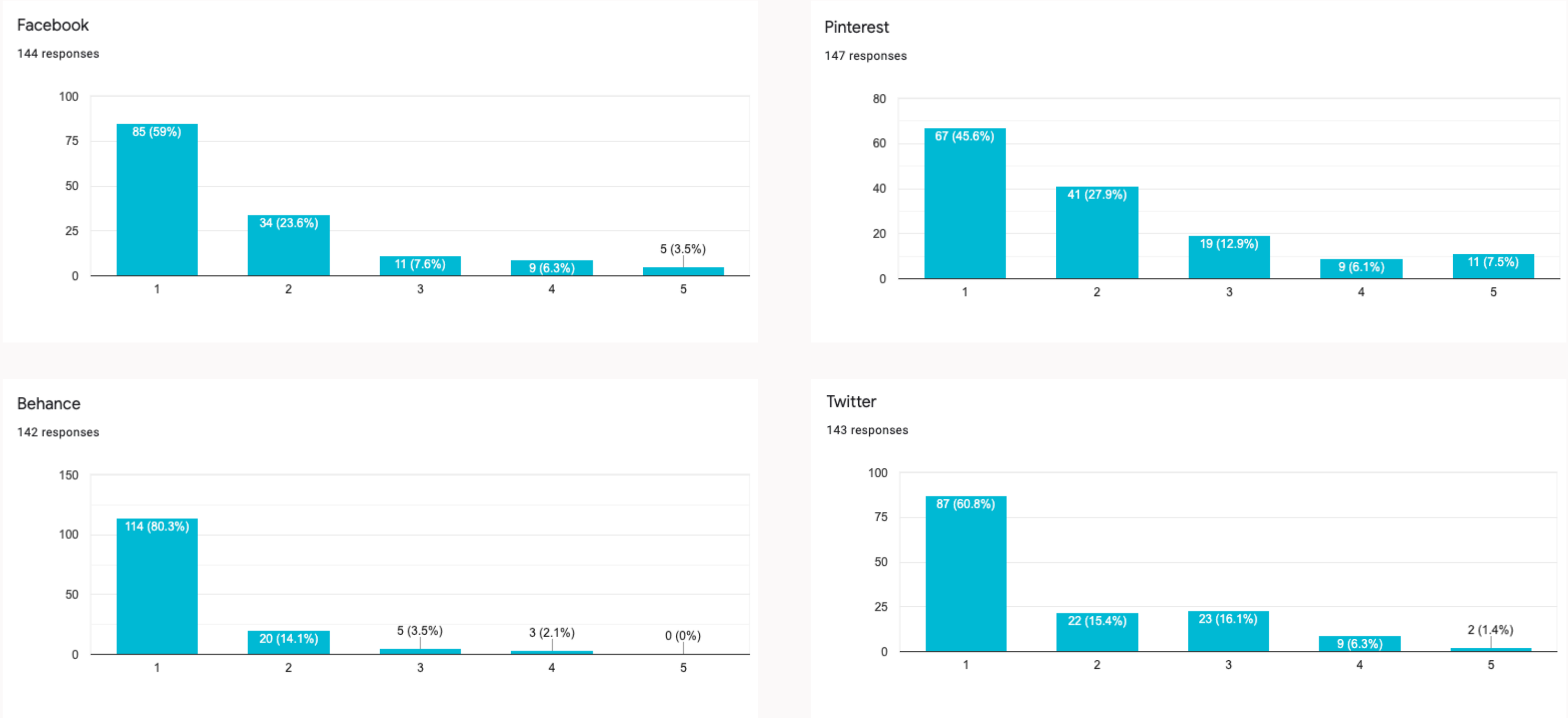
Fig. 19: Facebook, Pinterest, Behance and Twitter survey results from Artist Survey

Online collections of museums and galleries were the most frequently used research resource, with over 50% of respondents identifying with using them regularly.

Online collection of a museum or gallery

149 responses

Visual archives of an arts educational institute were used somewhat, though not as much as a museum or gallery

Visual archive of an arts educational institute
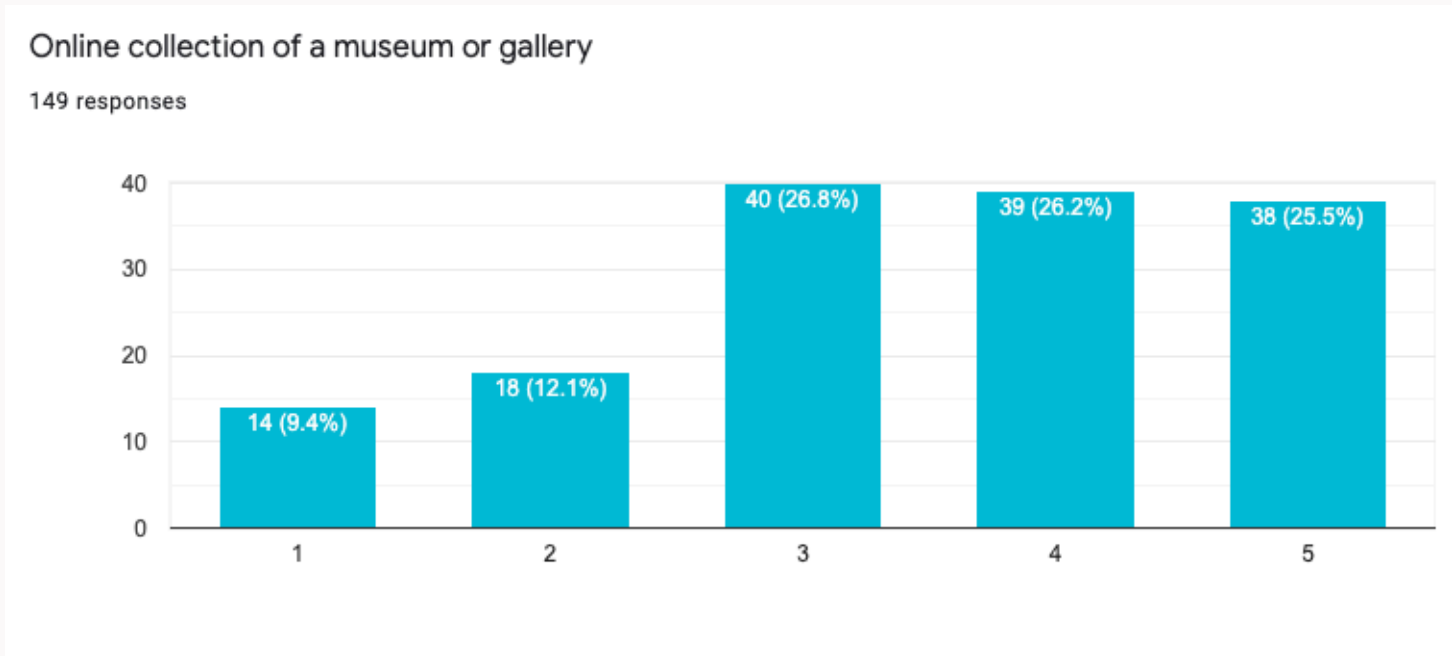
149 responses

Social media of galleries and museums mirror the responses to Instagram usage in its' more equidistant breakdown.

Social media of a museum or gallery

146 responses
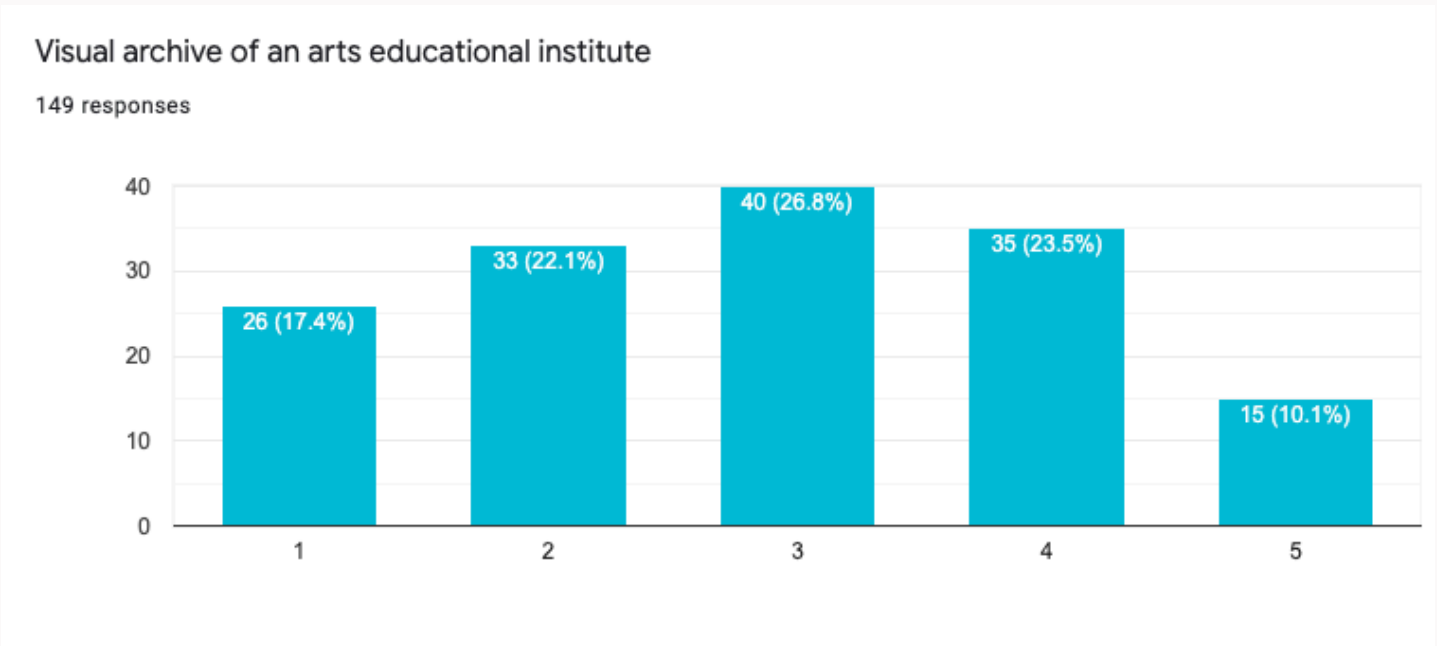
Social media of arts educational institutes ranked lower again.

Social media of an arts educational institute

147 responses
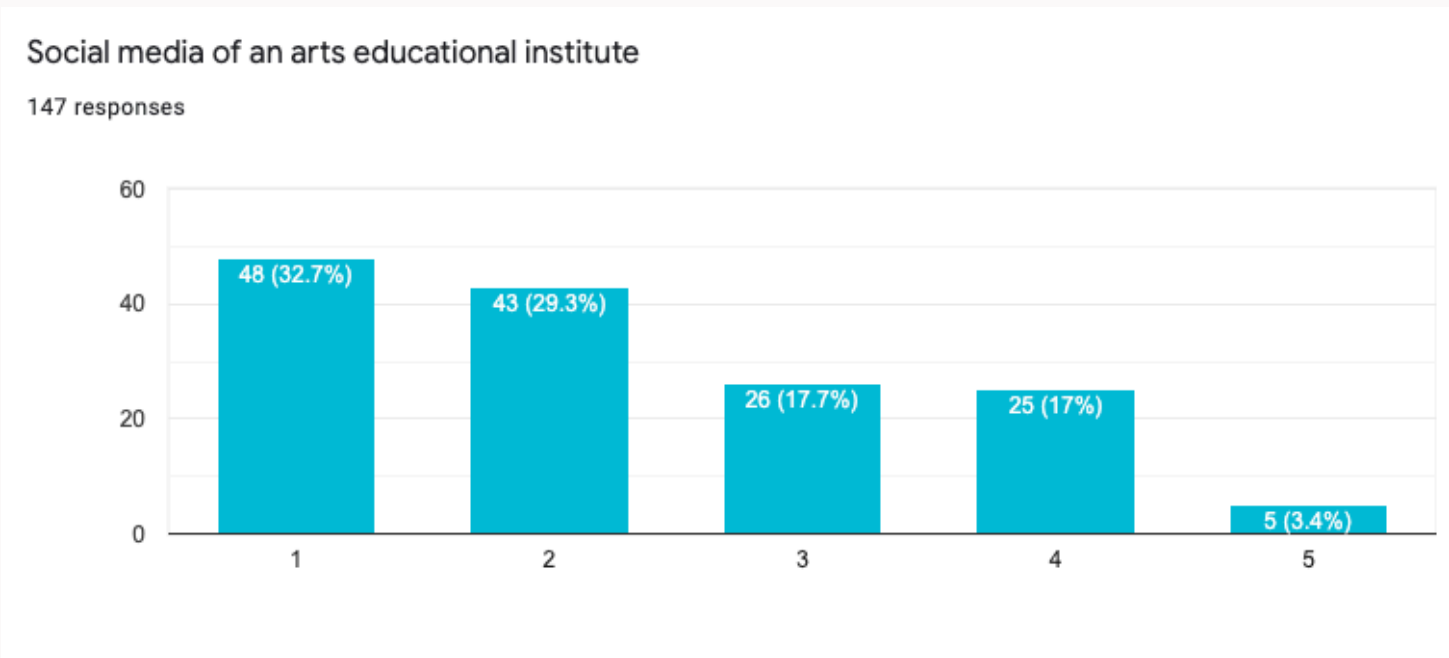
Fig. 20: Online Collection of a Museum or Gallery, Social media of a Museum or Gallery, Visual Archives of an Arts Educational Institute, and Social Media of an Arts Educational Institute survey results from Artist Survey

Over twenty five percent of respondents said that they find it difficult to unearth quality resources when conducting research online, with nearly half of all respondents saying that they found it 'somewhat' difficult

One of the important findings that backs up existing DH research is that nearly 80% of artists describe their search behaviour in line with values of serendipitous discovery. They were asked to describe their behavior as 'focused and specific', 'random and unplanned' or 'browsing with intent'
Nearly 70% of respondents identified as 'browsing with intent'
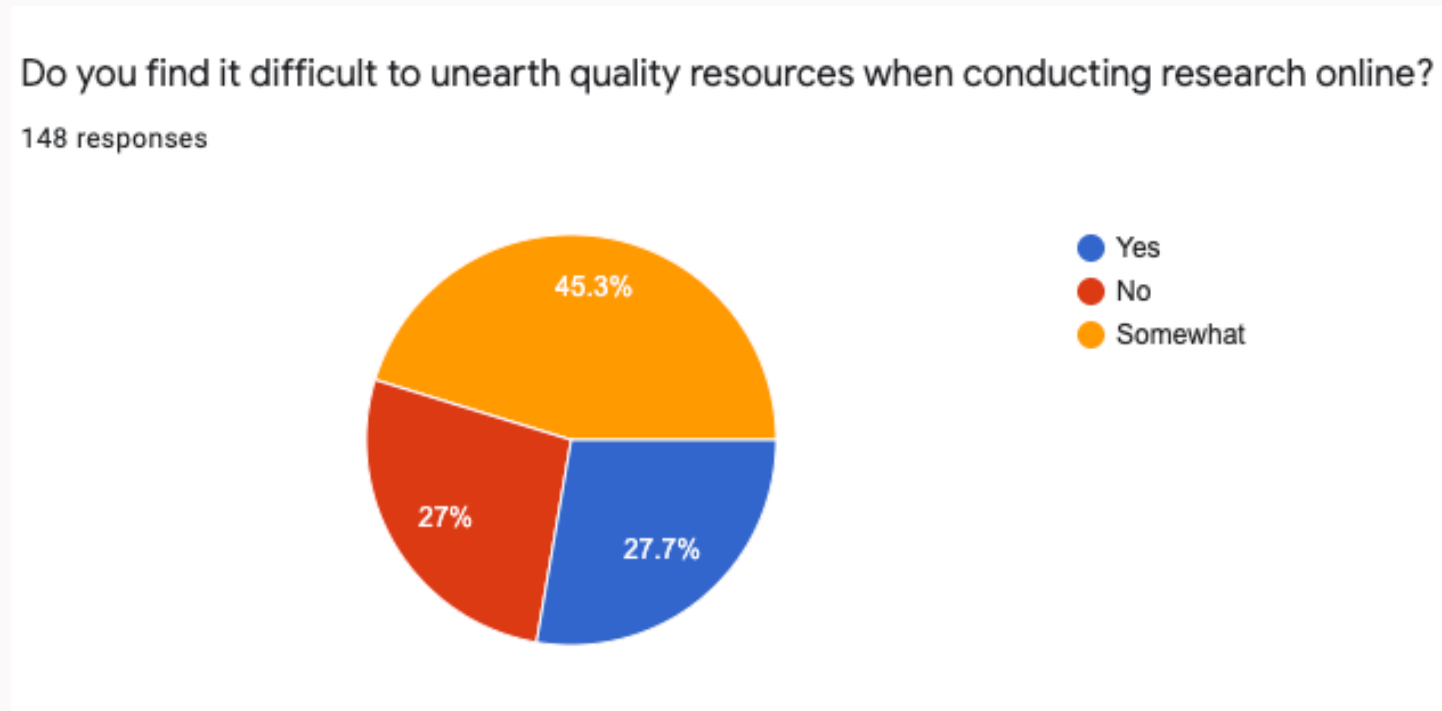
Fig. 21: 'Do you find it difficult to unearth quality resources online"
Survey results from Artist Survey
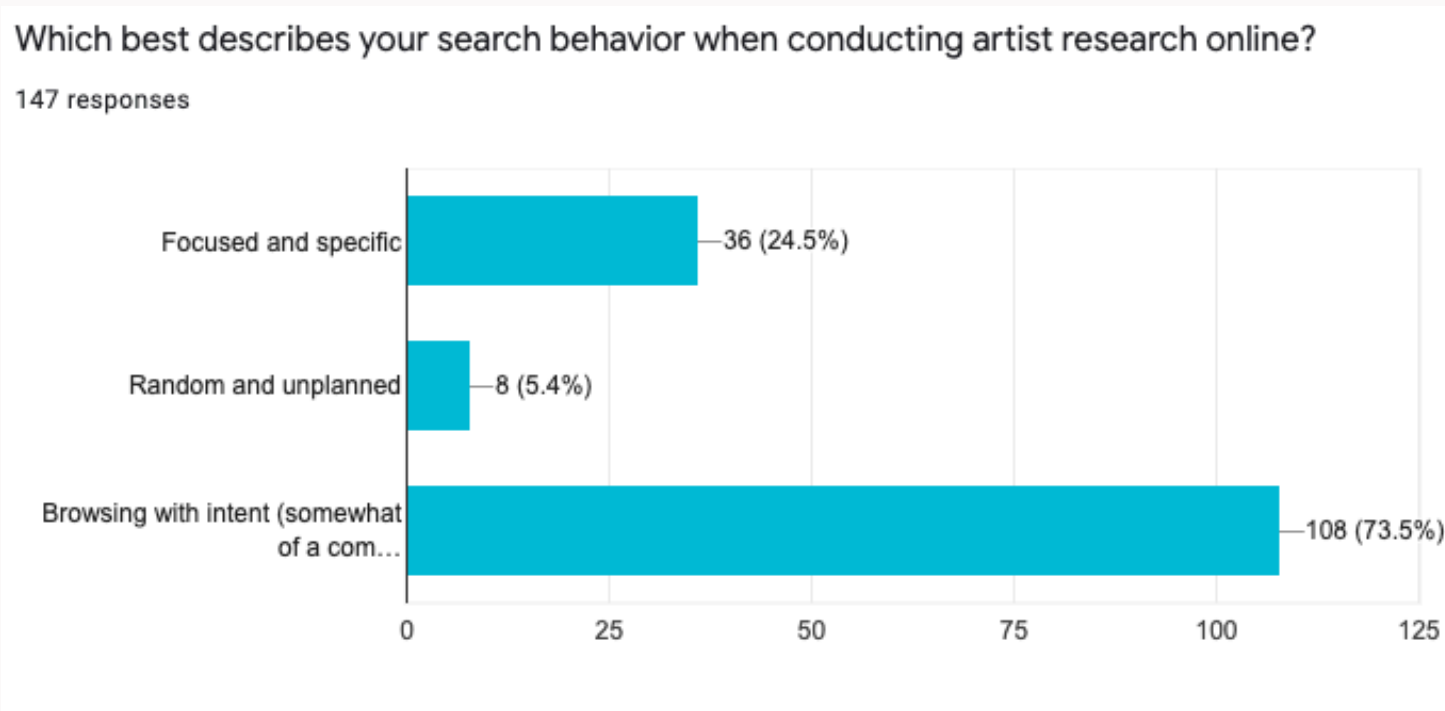
Fig. 22:
'Which best describes your search behavior when conducting artist research online?"
Survey results from Artist Survey

This backs up research that artists utilize 'browsing' in a more focused and purposeful way, and that their search process doesn't necessarily follow a strictly laid out plan or agenda.

Nearly 90% of artists returned that their work is represented online, with Instagram being the most common place where they responded that their work could be found
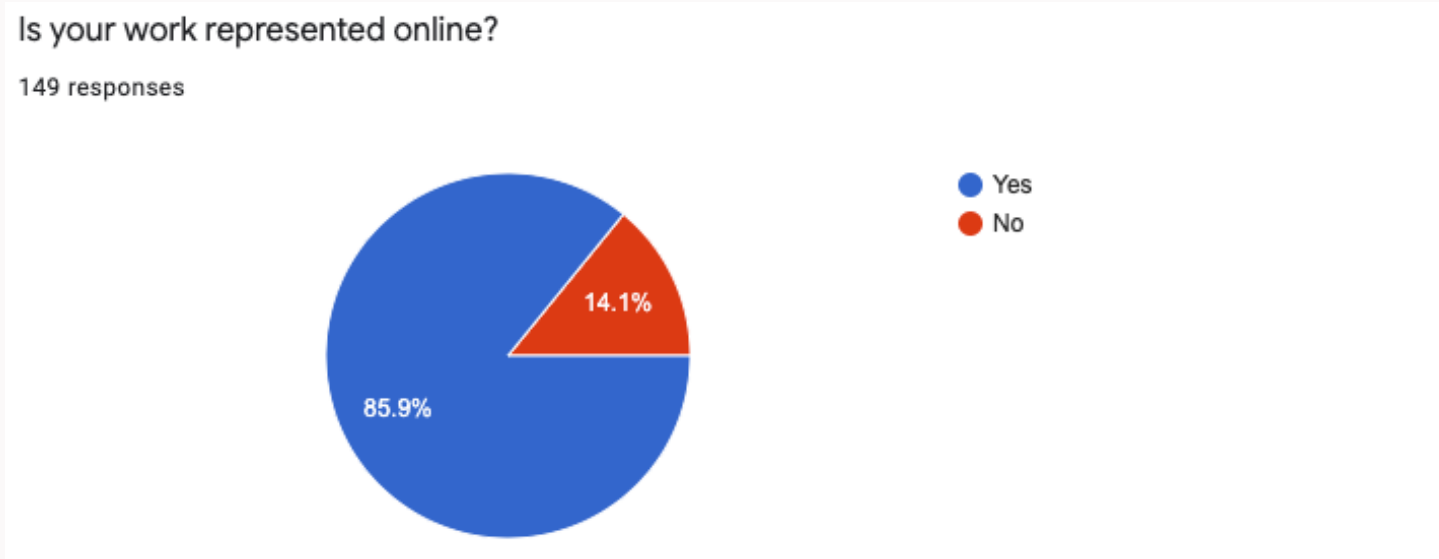
Fig. 23: 'Is your work represented online"
Survey results from Artist Survey

This is interesting to see, as Instagram didn't score as unanimously as a place to conduct artistic research, but scores highly in terms of personal artistic representation.
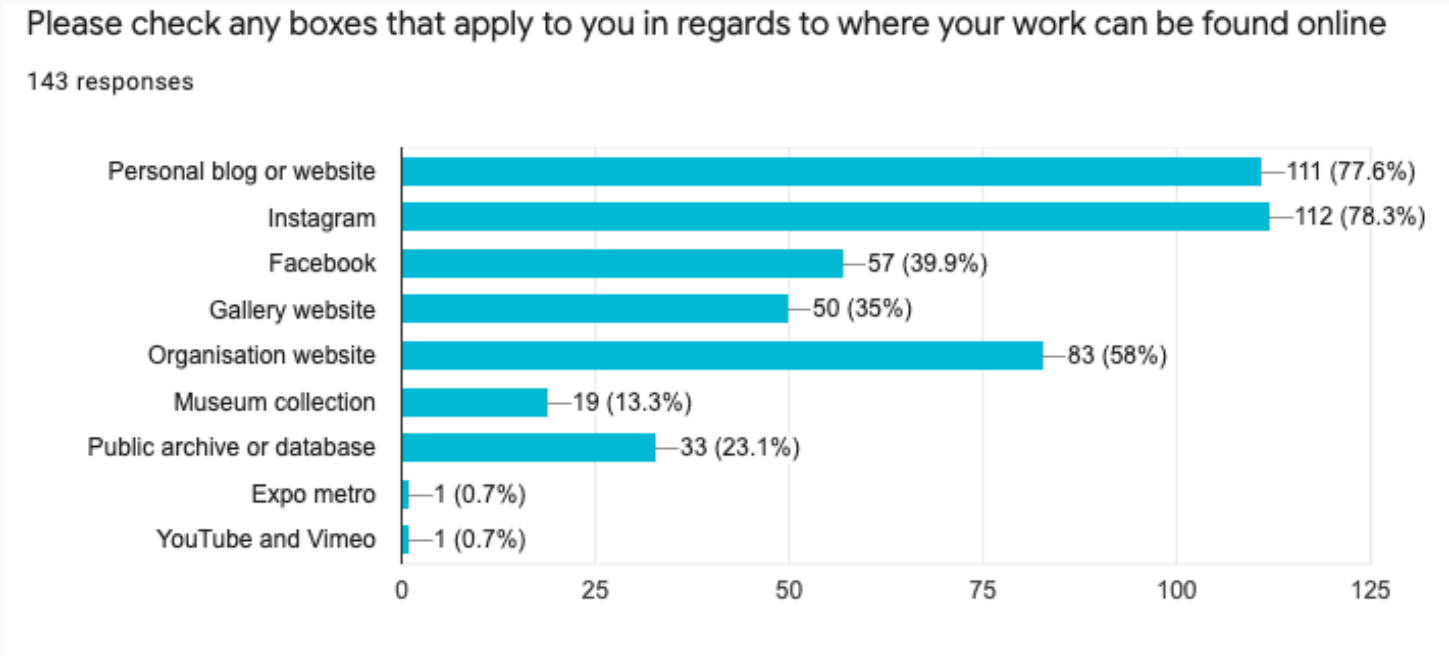
Fig. 24: Online Representation: Survey results from Artist Survey
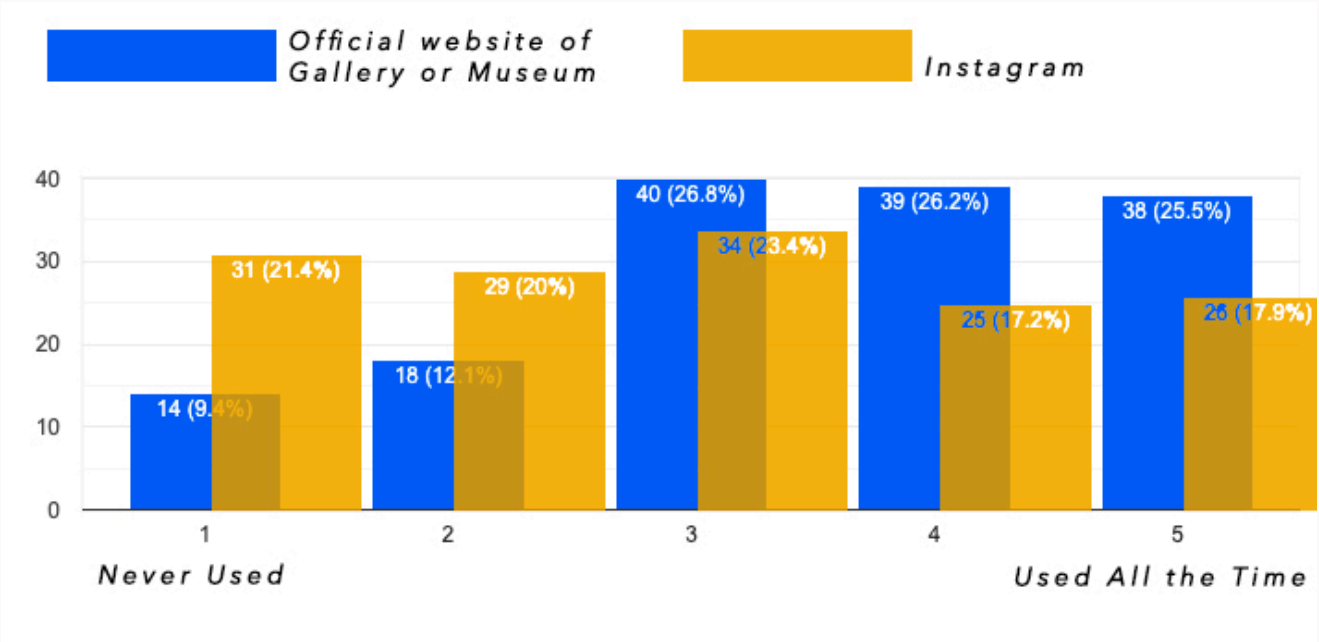
Fig. 25: Gallery & Website vs. Instagram Comparison Visualisation

Nearly 25% of respondents said that they thought Irish arts organisations, publicly funded groups and institutions were doing a bad job of online representation, nearly 15% said they thought they were doing a good job, with the majority feeling that they are 'average'
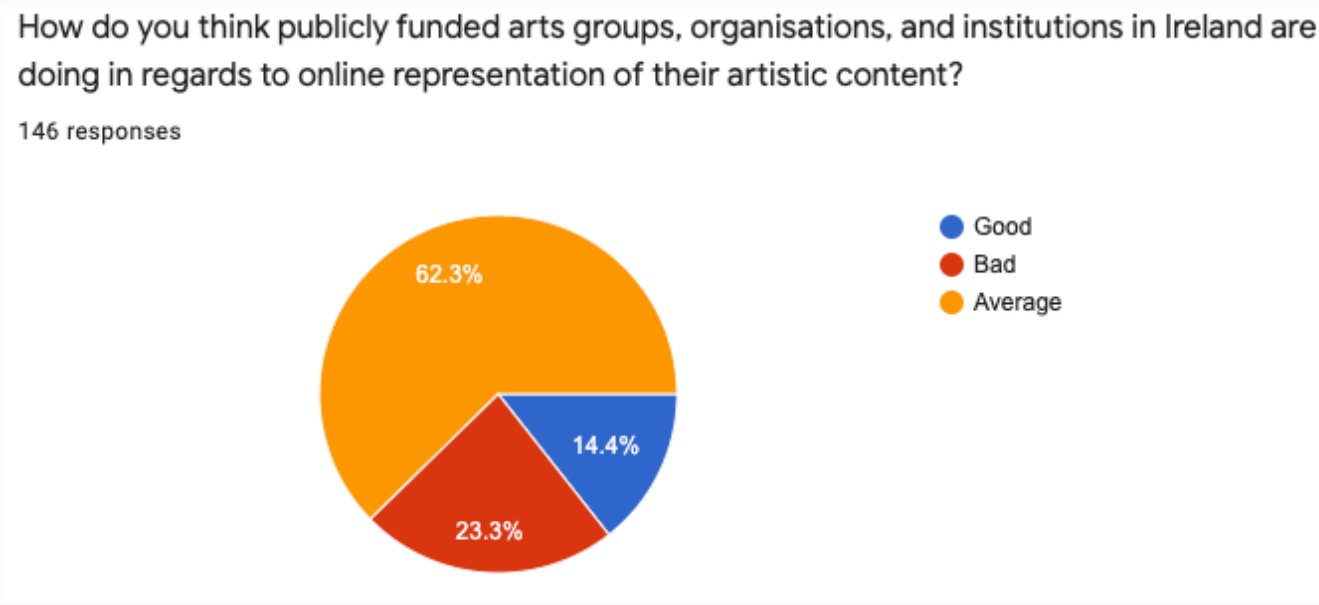
Fig. 26: Publicly funded representation: Survey results from Artist Survey

Nearly 90% of all artists surveyed felt it should be a requirement for publicly funded arts groups, organisations and institutions to maintain a searchable archive of projects, exhibitions, talks and events, with 10% not sure.
This is good to see because it backs up my main argument, and puts forth a concrete number to show organisations and institutes in relation to interest and demand.

Do you think it should be a requirement for publicly funded arts groups, organisations and institutions to maintain a searchable archive of projects, exhibitions, talks and events?

150 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

9.3%
87.3%
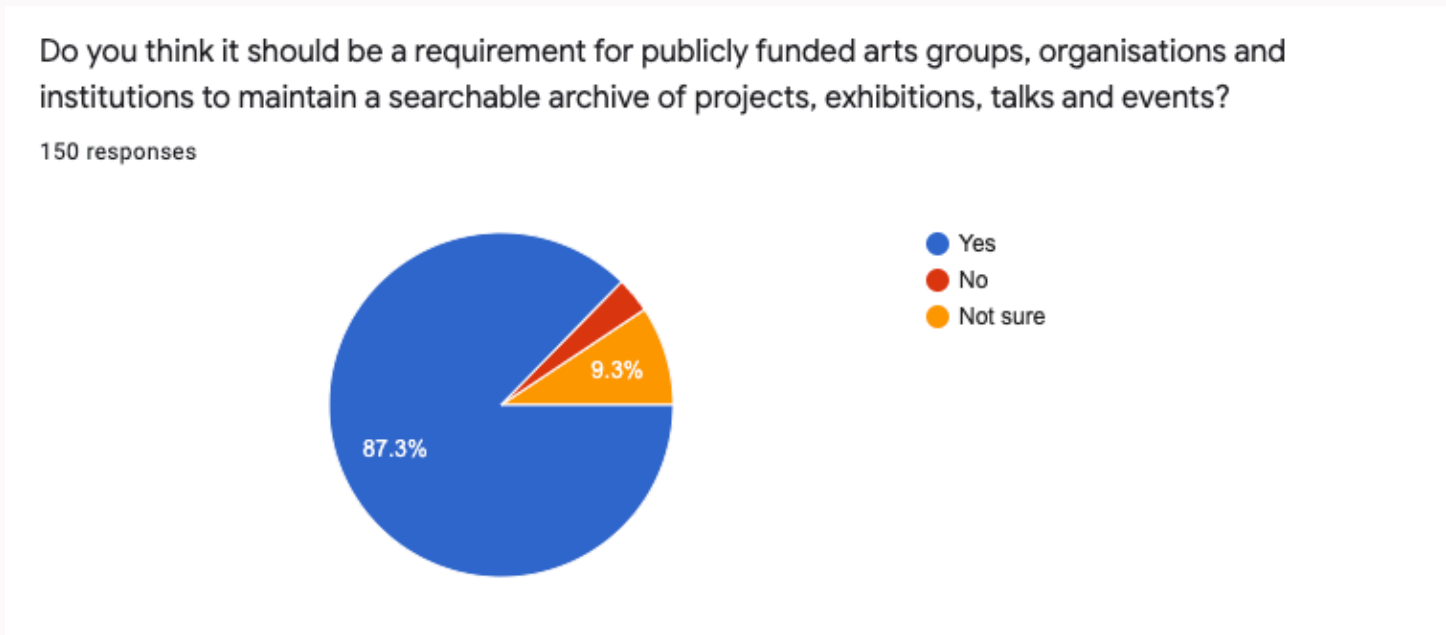
Fig. 27: Requirement to maintain a searchable archive: Survey results from Artist Survey

Over 80% of artists replied that they would submit works for inclusion in an archive like the 100project, which is exciting as I will be exploring the 100archive later on as an alternative type of platform for regional and local representation of the visual arts

If there were curated visual archives (such as the 100 project for Irish design - http://new.100archive.com/), that allowed for artists and groups to submit works for inclusion, is this something that would interest you or a group you are associated with?

149 responses

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

14.8%
81.9%
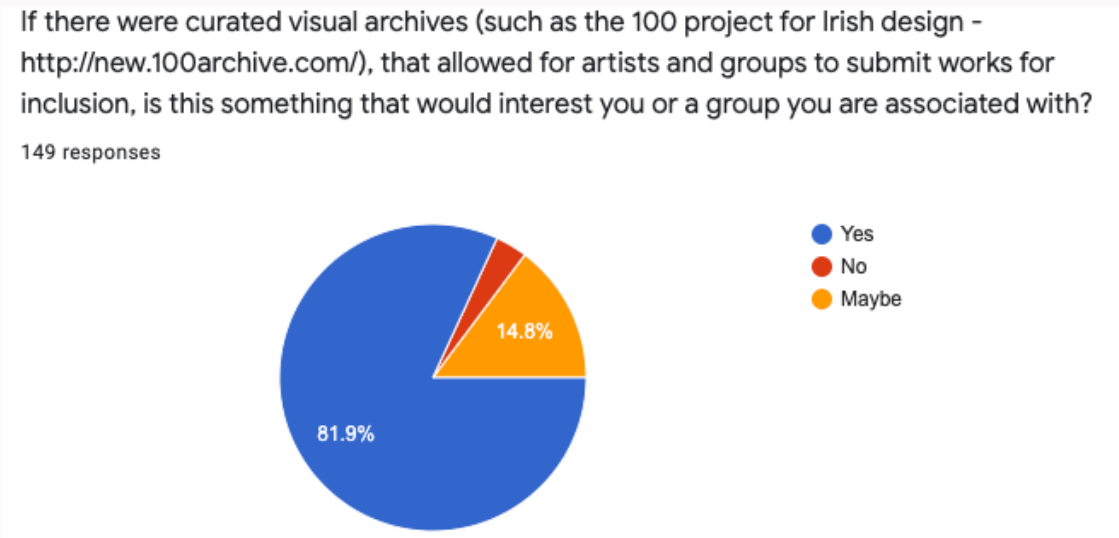
Fig. 28: 100 archive interest levels: Survey results from Artist Survey

Almost identical numbers replied that regional and national archives would be beneficial to their artistic research practice, which again is very positive in quantifying levels of interest and demand going forward.

Do you think that regional and national online visual arts archives would be a valuable research material to your artistic practice?

149 responses

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

14.1%
82.6%
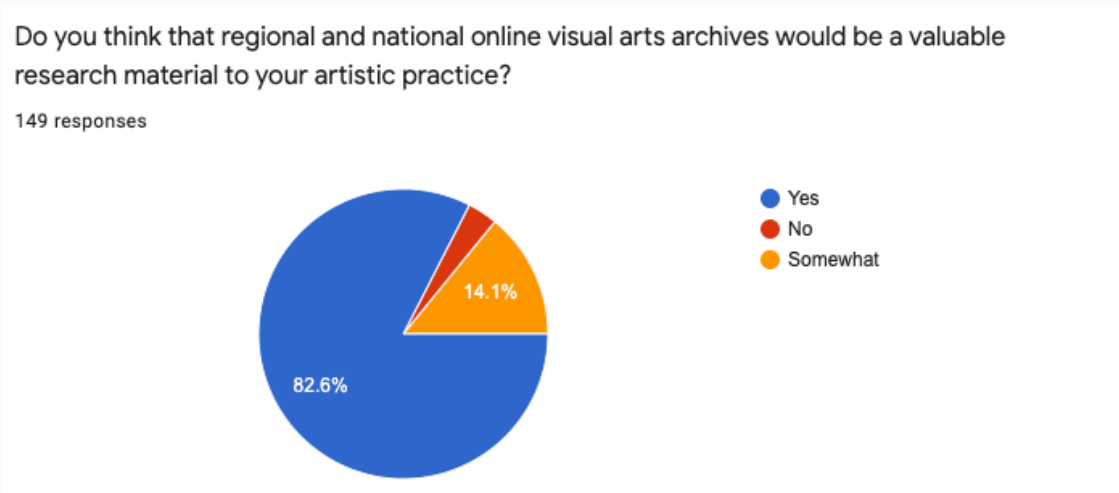
Fig. 29: Requirement to maintain a searchable archive: Survey results from Artist Survey

The final multiple choice question asked about the effects that lockdown has had on the artists' online artistic research process. Respondents replied that the majority had not changed due to lockdown, although nearly 30% claimed that they had.

Have your online research habits changed due to the experience of the COVID-19 lockdown and the current pandemic?

148 responses
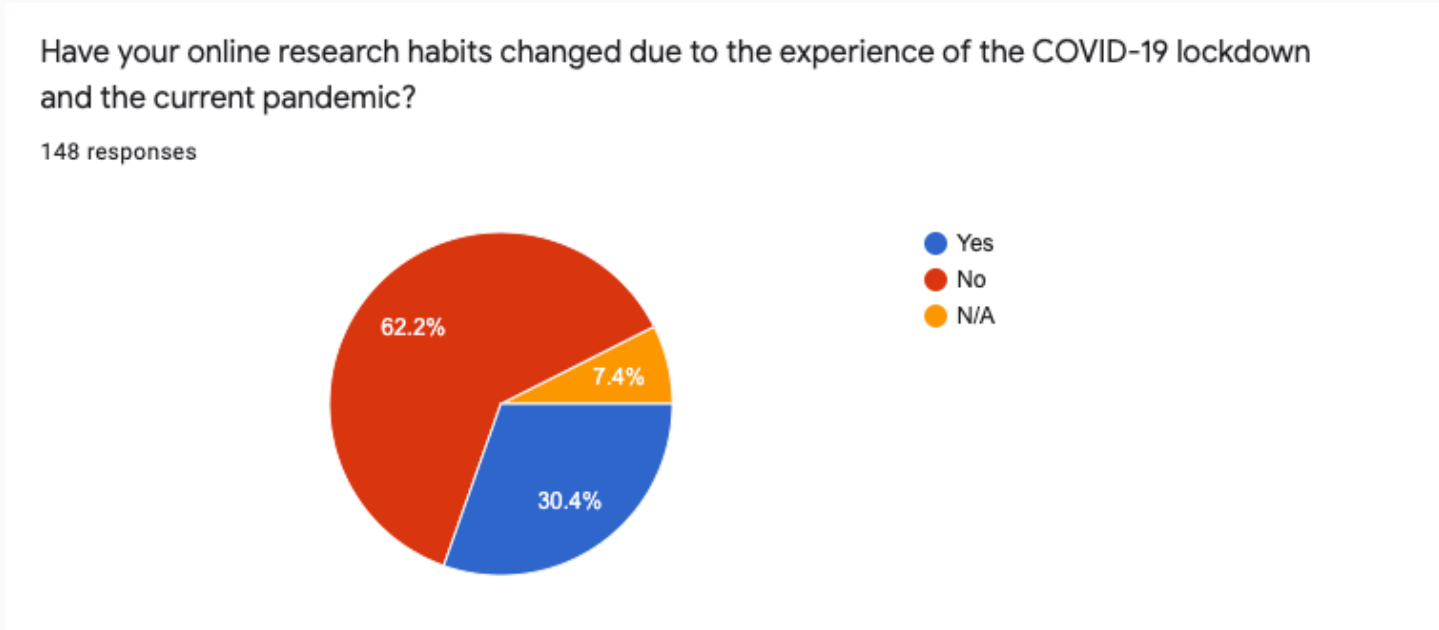
Fig. 30: Changes due to COVID-19 Survey results from Artist Survey

The artists were also given the option to reply in what ways their online research practice might have changed due to COVID-19, to which 35 artists replied.

Here are two such responses:

"I've noticed my previously random and unplanned approach to be non-conducive to learning or research and have made a conscious effort to browse reputable resources and avoid moving through social media vaguely for networking purposes."

"Mostly that in person visits to galleries and artist studios have been restricted. However access to talks and workshops has expanded, via online platforms I'm now able to engage with people and organisations in different places around the world."

The first comment is interesting in that it talks about the artists' move away from social media and towards more reputable sources, which seems to echo the higher scores given to galleries and museums as research resources, while the second comment talks about some of the more positive aspects of expanded online platforms during the time.

Finally artists were asked to list any online resources that they found particularly useful during lockdown. There were lots of official archives listed, such as IMMA, Tate modern, MOMA, 'artist specific archives', academic platforms such as JSTOR, the Smithsonian, ARTSTOR and many more.

If applicable, can you list some important online resources to you during the lockdown period? (Again this is completely optional!)

35 responses

IMMA, Royal College of Art Archive, Cargo Collective Feeds

Visual Artists Ireland

Linked Learning/ututbe/google

MOMA, IMMA, Tate, curator space, VAI

Fig. 31: Important online resources during lockdown:
Survey results from Artist Survey

At the conclusion of the survey, artists were asked to share any additional thoughts, comments or suggestions. Some comments backed up the call for the ability to search archives and websites by conceptual tags

"It is very difficult to search other artists or exhibitions online according to concept."

Others raised very valid concerns in relation to the difficulties facing smaller organisations and arts institutes:

"In relation to the question about art centres and gallery online content, it is important to remember that most funding avenues do not cover this in their remit. Most galleries and artists will not be able to secure funding to develop and maintain online presence and exposure…. it is a commitment which takes up a huge amount of time/money to get right and most artists/organizations do not have the expertise to develop their online content it is hard enough to pay artists and get their work even documented to a professional standard with the current budgets. A perfect example is that IMMA only recently got their own website developed after years of underfunding. My worry is that already stretched funds will now be expected in the 'covid era' to now also cover this public output remit."

Third Level Art Student Survey

The same survey questions were sent in a separate Google Forms survey to all third level arts institutes in Ireland. The results were very interesting, in that I was expecting a much greater difference between the student survey and the practising artist survey, which was not the case.

The student survey shows that students ranked usage of popular websites and apps very similarly to that of practising artists, with the main differences being higher usages of Pinterest and Youtube, and multiple comments listing tumblr as a popular additional research tool. (tumblr is an interesting listing, as it is basically an entire online platform built around the qualities of 'serendipity')

Fig. 32: Pinterest Comparison Visualisation
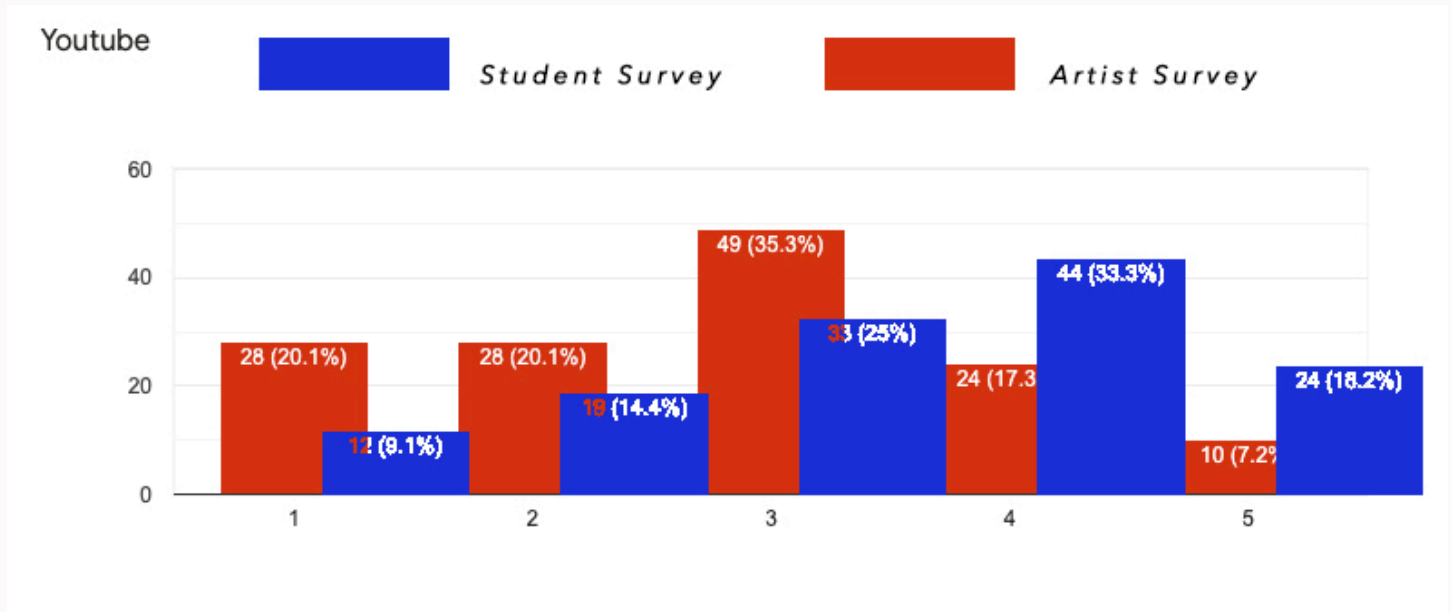
Fig. 33: Youtube Comparison Visualisation

'Browsing with intent' was again very similar in that over 75% of students identified with this most as their behaviour type when conducting online research, although nearly double the amount associated with a 'random and unplanned' style of searching, while fewer associated with 'focused and specific'.
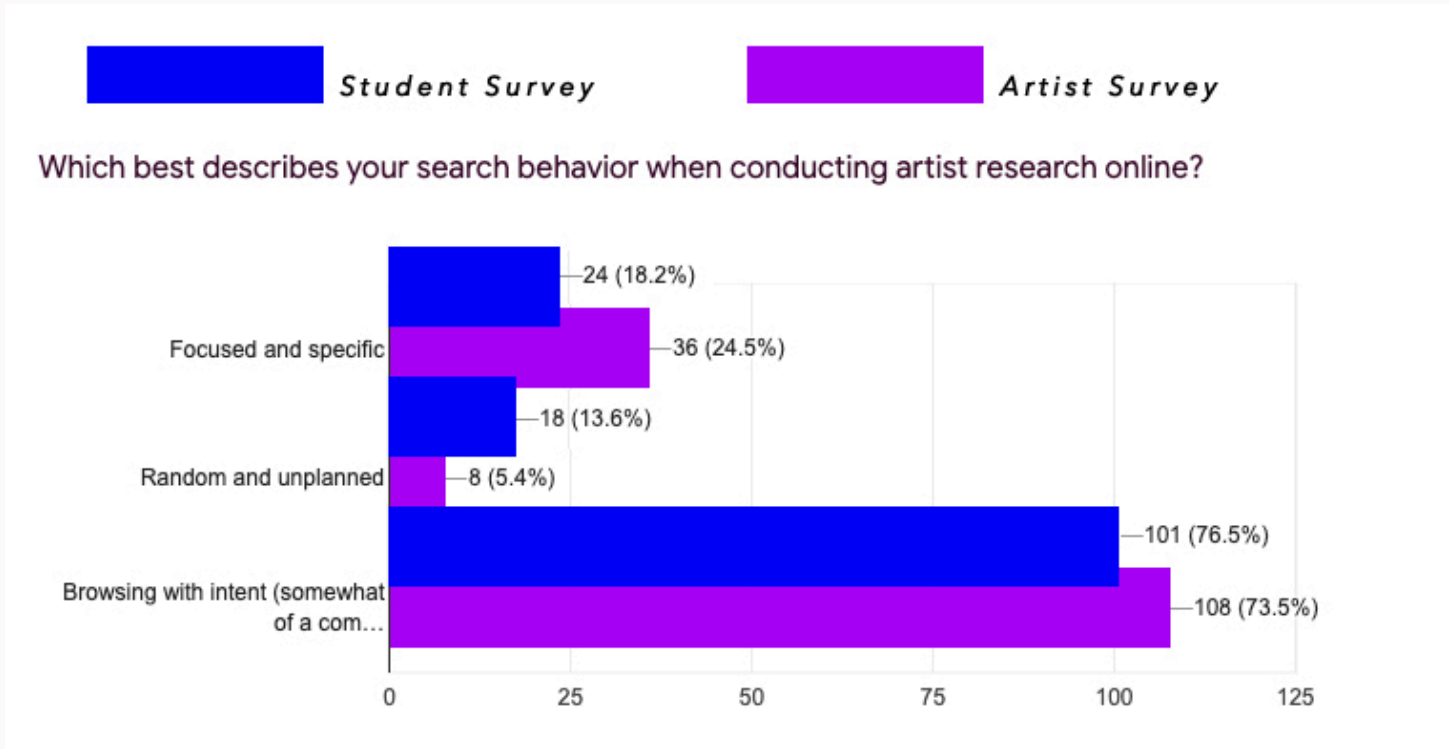
Fig. 34: Browsing Behavior Comparison Visualisation

This could have to do with the fact that students are less likely to have a central theme or issue that they explore in their work in their early stages as an artist.

The results of the survey somewhat disproves my theory that students are doing more research on social media platforms instead of more accredited platforms. However, the students surveyed are working within the academic context, and will have been shown proper resources and explained where to find them. I would feel that an additional survey is still needed that is targeted at younger people with artistic inclinations on how they conduct artist research before attending art college. If social media factored much higher in such a survey, then it could explain the trend I have noticed lately in works to lean towards a more designed, photographic, and generic format.

Unsurprisingly, the biggest difference between the professional artists and the students is that nearly half of all students don't have work visible online, compared with over 90% of professional artist that do.
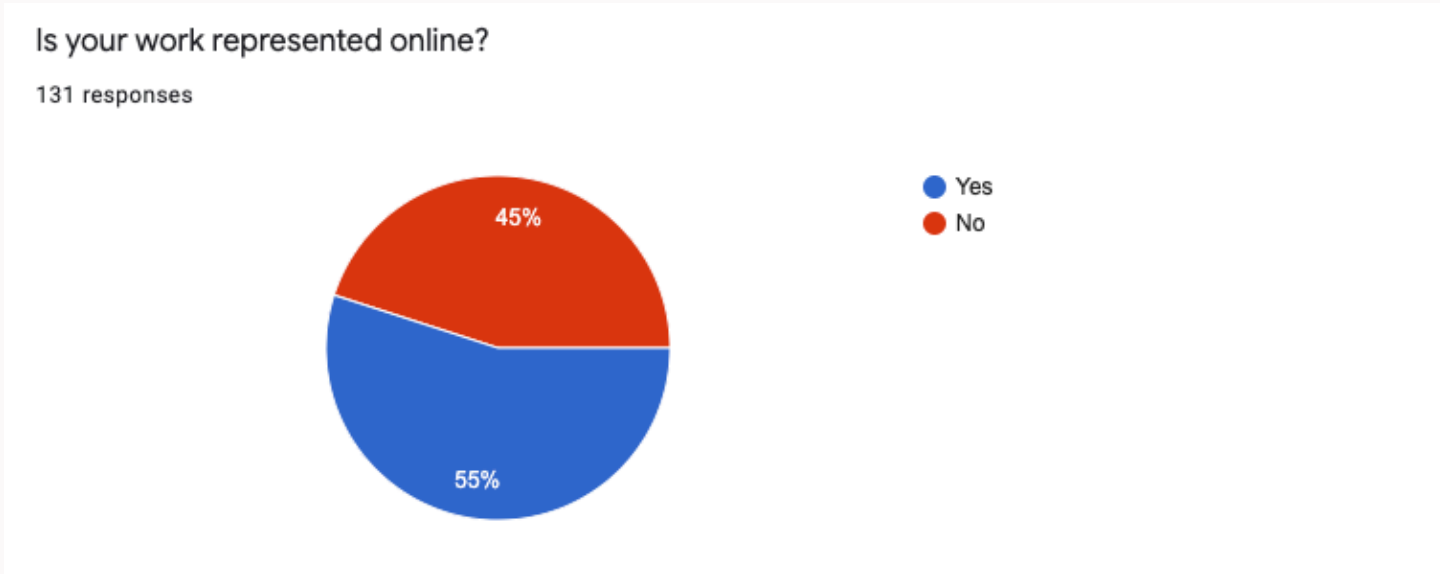
Fig. 35: 'Is your work represented online' Student Survey results

In line with the lack of online representation, nearly all representation of students' work is found on Instagram, followed by Facebook, personal blogs and websites.

Nearly 90% of students believe that it should be a requirement for publicly funded orgs to have a searchable archive, and nearly 80% of students feel that regional or national archives would be of benefit to their artistic research practice.
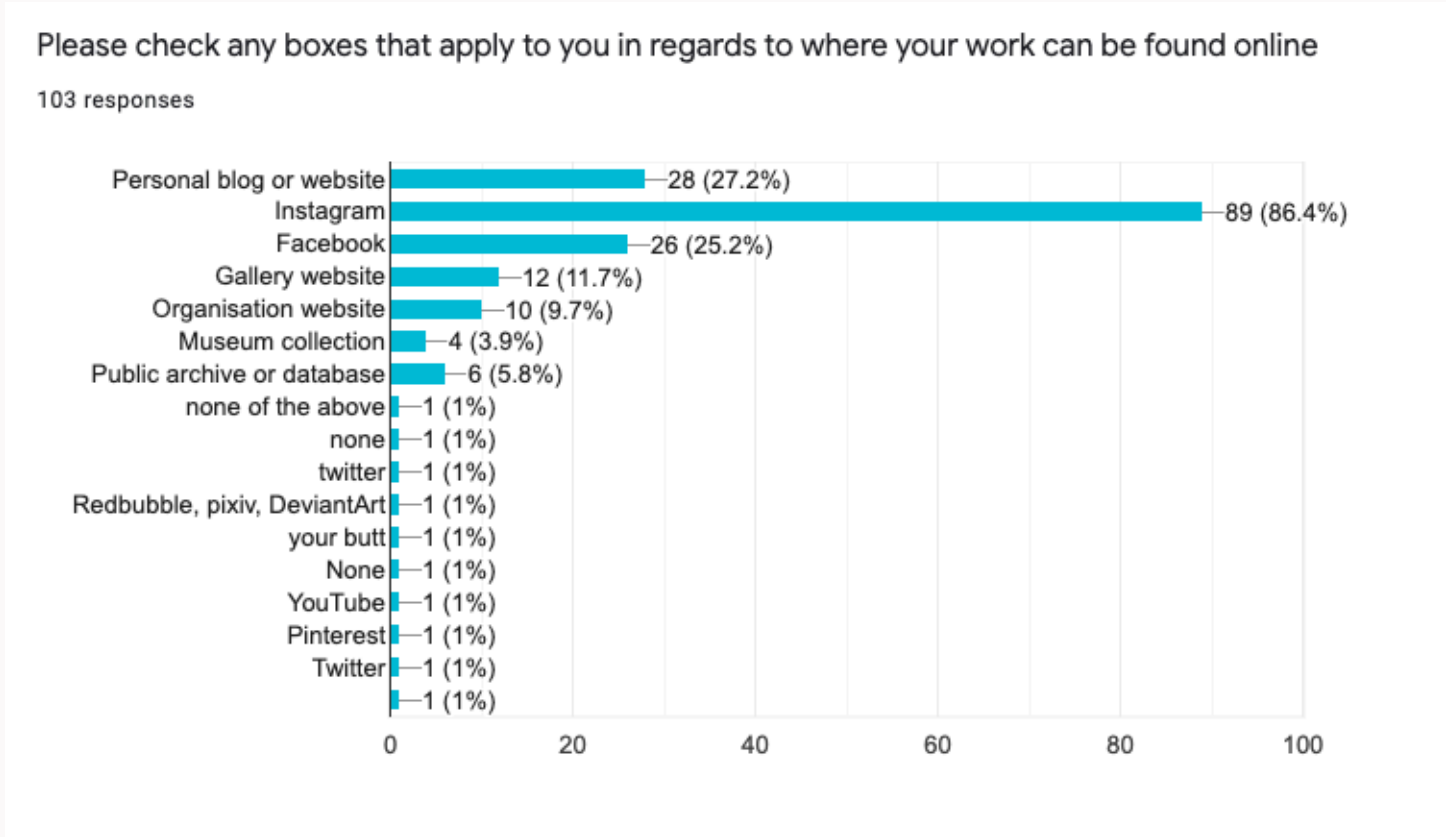
Fig. 36: Online representation of work: Student Survey results

This difference would be expected, in that students haven't had representation on a gallery website, museum collection, or other professional archive yet at this stage in their career.
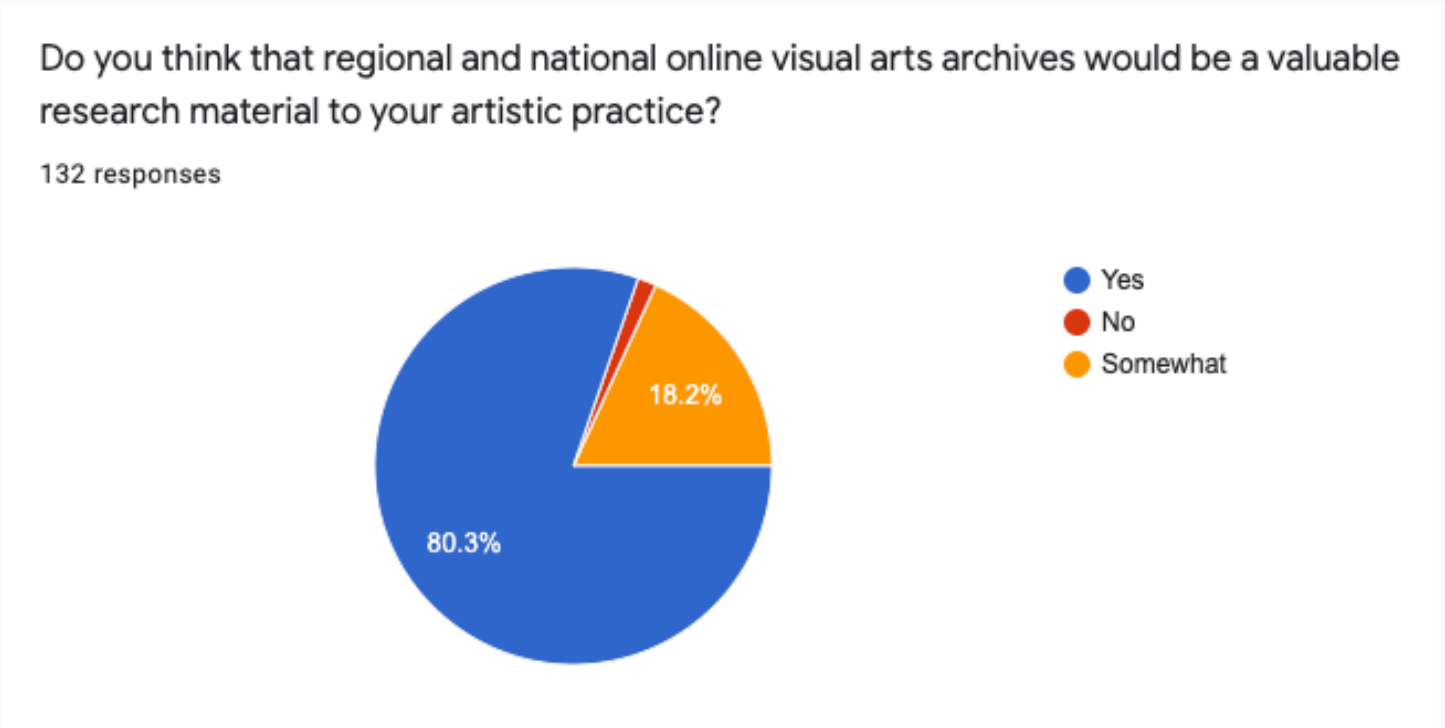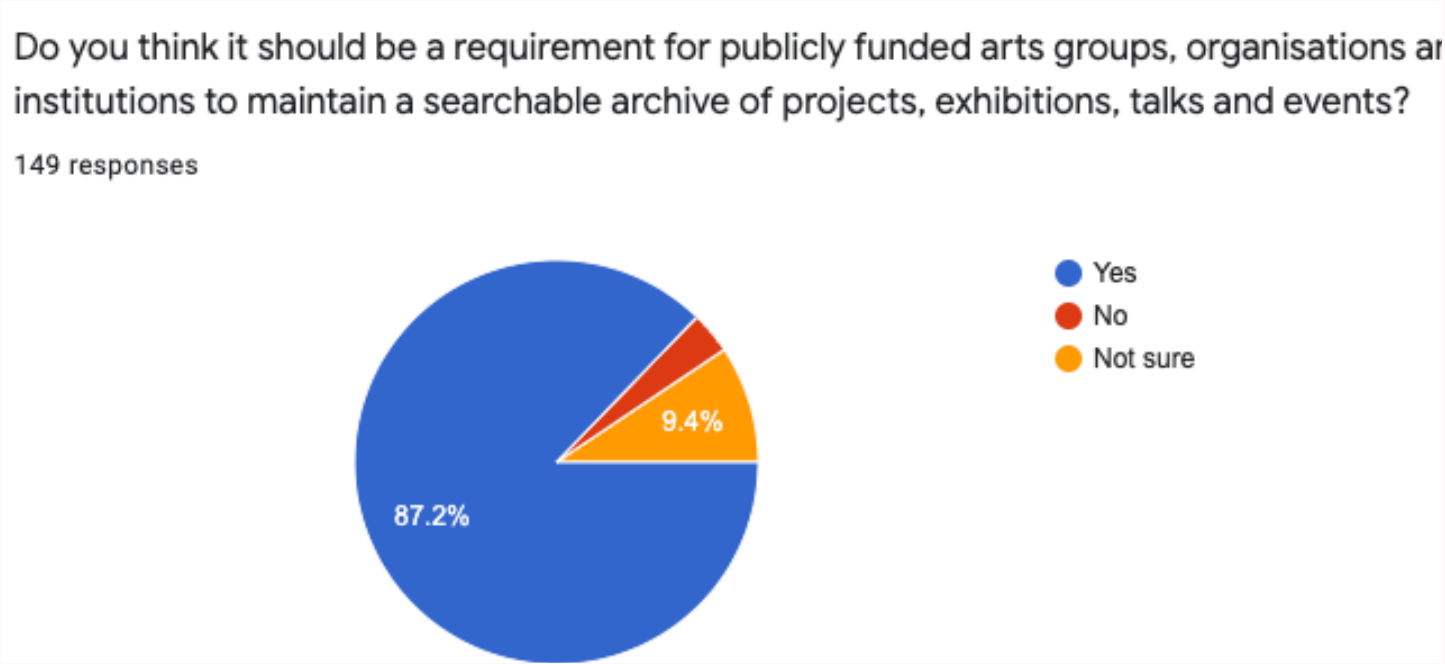
Fig. 37: Mandatory archives and archives as valuable research material: Student Survey results

68% of students said that COVID-19 lockdown had no effect on their online research habits, which is a higher percentage than the professional artists. This might possibly be due to numbers of more physical workshop or studio based artists associated with the 'professional artists' survey.
When asked about what ways their practice might have changed, responses included:

"Doing a lot more of it , but it's less focused because of the distance from school"

Important resources online over lockdown echoed the professional artists, in that they were mostly recognized institutes, archives, and galleries, such as: JSTOR, ARSTOR the Smithsonian, etc. Multiple students also referenced podcasts as important, which wasn't seen in the professional artist responses.
Final comments from students spoke about the potential importance of third level arts archives and online showcases:

"As 3rd level students will be submitting their college assessment work more and more online, this is an opportunity for colleges to become more involved in creating online archives (within GDPR regulations) and curating online exhibitions of students' art."

This was great to see, as it articulates a desire for Third level Institutes to further develop these platforms from the students themselves.

7.3 Interviews

The website assessments and the surveys show that there is a real need/desire for publicly funded arts organisations and institutions to have a searchable visual archive, but there have been some very understandable reasons as to why this has not taken place yet to date.

Fig. 38: screengrab from: https://www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/services/arts-culture-heritage/arts-office/
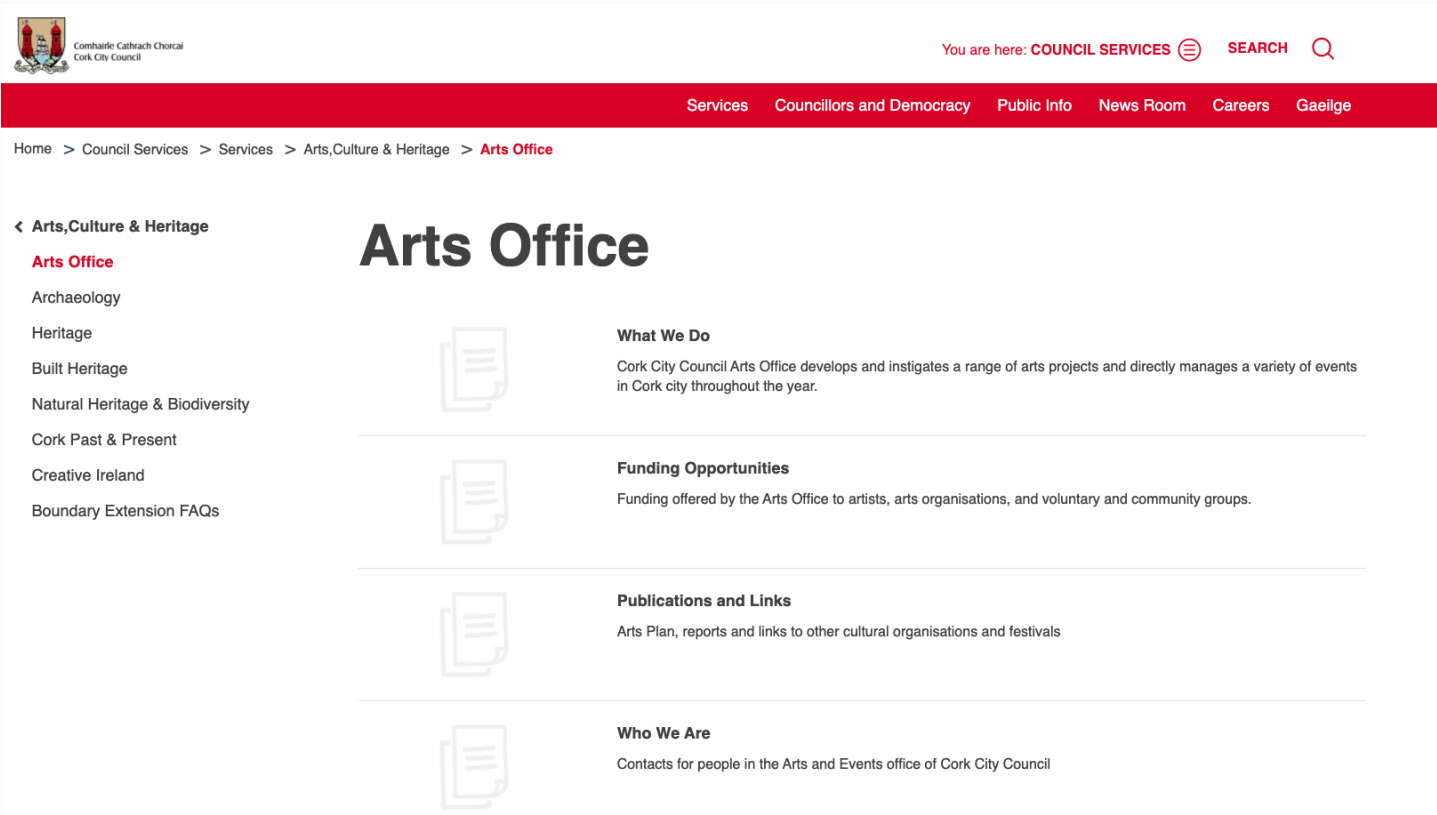
The Cork City Arts Office is one such organisation that currently does not have any visual respresentation of funded content available to view online. I interviewed Michelle, Carew (MC), the new Director of Cork City Arts Office, to explore what some of the reasons for this might be.

(MC): The Arts Service has a page on the overall CCC website. The functioning and design has to align with a broad range of services from Roads, Planning, Community to Housing etc. There would not be the space or functionality to host an online collection. Therefore a separate site would need to be developed. Not impossible but would need to take its place amongst many competing priorities that the Arts Service must balance.

Designing a separate website means a much greater investment from the Arts Office as opposed to other independent arts organisations that would have the option of adding an archive or database into the existing structure of their website.

The other practical hurdle for them is the issue of storage:

(MC):Typically the types of documentation, reporting of funded projects are clerical or administrative in nature and are filed as evaluations, reports etc. as records/ evidence of dissemination of public funds. The type of material that would be of archival or public interest is generally not collected by the Arts Office. High quality images and other media would require significant storage if we compiled from each and every funded project. Our server space is ltd. (Not yet cloud based!)

This is worrying, in that the Arts Office has no ability at the moment to collect any visuals of funded projects, but they have expressed interest in working with third parties to see what kinds of solutions could be developed going forwards.

An interesting alternative to a publicly funded model can be found in the success of the 100archive, a graphic design archive that selects the 100 best graphic design projects under a variety of categories each year, and creates a permanent, searchable archive of every years selections going back to 2010 (and with plans to go back even further).
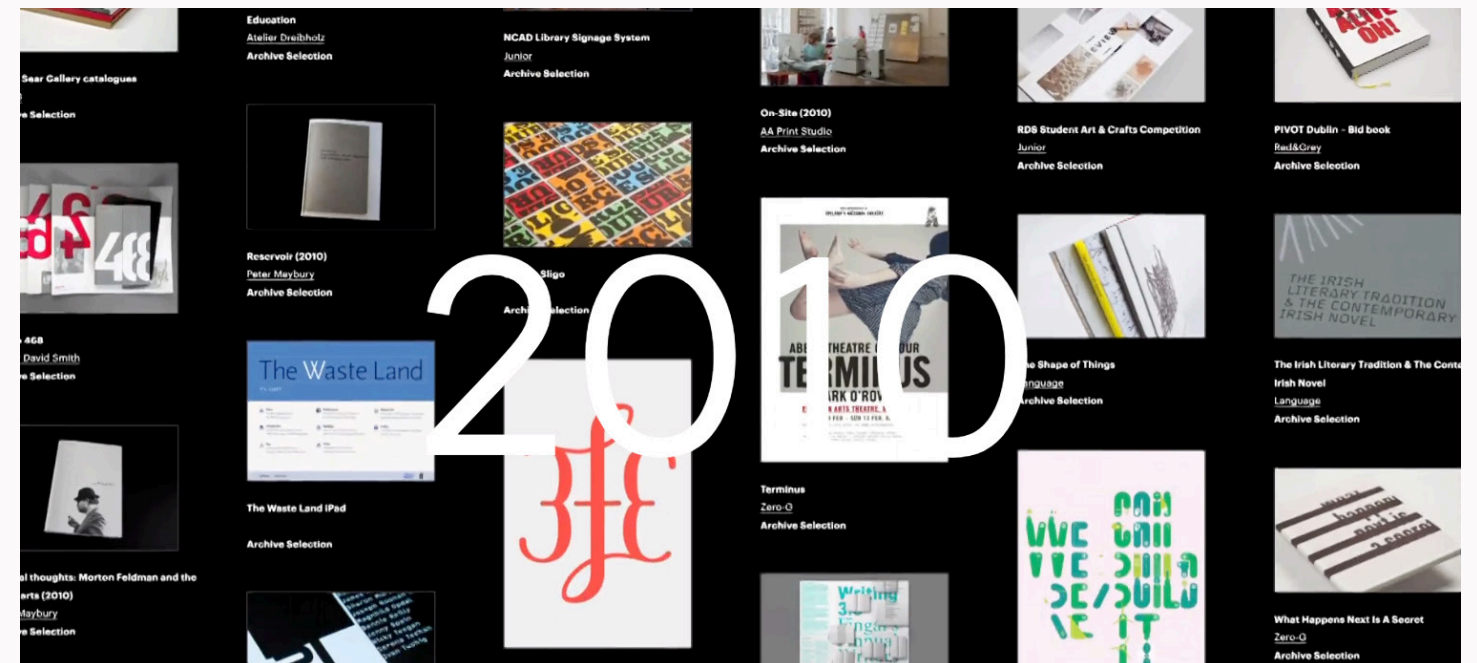
Fig. 39: screengrab from: http://new.100archive.com/

Aideen McCole (AM) of the 100 archive kindly agreed to respond to questions about the 100archive's funding structure and organizational structure, as well as its inspirations and plans for future development.

The 100archive stands out from other types of visual archives in that it is built on a hybridized model of paid submissions, voluntary contributions, and corporate and public funding/sponsorship.

(AM): the mechanism we have developed to archive the contemporary through an open call and a two-stage submission process; to have that process occur and manifest online and to take a community-led approach, they're all pretty unique...our core funding comes from the design community. This takes the form of project submissions and subscriptions: designers and studios pay a nominal fee to submit their work for consideration for each year's archive selection...It is almost entirely a voluntary effort."

This model could be an interesting one to try to adapt to the visual arts community in Ireland, as similarly to the 100archive, artists could pay to submit their works for inclusion to the archive, as well as individual organisations, studios, and institutes. The fee for submission is low (€30 per project, or €120 for unlimited numbers of submissions). This removes the impetus for smaller overstretched organisations to try to take this on by themselves. It also creates a one stop hub that greatly improves findability, as well as creating a space where works from a variety of contributors can be viewed and compared side by side.

This model is by no means a straightforward fix-all solution, and issues of sustainability and maintenance need investigating and looking into. The 100 archive themselves said in relation to these issues that:

"under the hood, the 100 Archive is struggling to achieve financial sustainability, and that has been further hampered by a dramatically changed fundraising landscape. We will struggle to continue what small progress we have made to secure both public and corporate support."

While they may be struggling to continue to sustain the project, the fact is that they have still achieved a remarkable amount without regular public funding, and that there are many positive aspects of the 100archive model that could be used as a template in developing an alternative platform for archiving works in the broader visual arts sector.

When asked about future plans, it was also positive that the 100archive expressed a desire to make connections with 2nd and 3rd level education:
"we see amazing potential in our collections to better connect to third level (including and beyond the study of design practice), and eventually second level too. We also think that, through partnerships with other institutions (such as our existing partnership with the National Library of Ireland) and smart curatorial activity, we could better connect design to audiences in the general public than we have previously seen in Ireland."

The 100archive offers an exciting new avenue of options for the creation of public archives. Other visual artists could follow a similar trajectory, either nationally, regionally or locally. A two stage submission process coupled with paid fees for submission could possibly help to fund an initiative that received some type

of match public funding. This is not an unreasonable ambition at this time, as we have recently seen funding streams like the Capacity Building Support Scheme advertised for arts groups throughout the country. The results from the survey showing that nearly 80% of visual artists surveyed would be interested in submitting work to such an initiative quantifies the strong levels of interest for this within the visual arts community.

The 100archive is specifically a design archive, and it will be important to see what the different needs might be for a broader visual arts platform. To investigate this, I addressed questions to the National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL). NIVAL is a public research resource dedicated to the documentation of 20th and 21st century Irish visual art and design. It collects, stores and makes accessible for research a collection of documentation about Irish art in all media. The collection contains documentary material in all formats including books, catalogues, videos, slides, artists' papers and ephemera in print and digital format. (http://www.nival.ie/)

At the moment, NIVAL is on the process of updating its website and access to the online collections. I asked them questions about the reasons for this, as well as the main things that they were hoping to improve or implement with the new site. They replied that the exisitng website is currently operating under an extremely outdated CMS, which has been the main reason leading to needs for re-development.

Fig. 40: screengrab from:http://www.nival.ie/

This situation is certainly not unique to NIVAL, and similar issues have faced previous arts organisations that I worked with. For these organisations, updating the CMS simply wasn't possible, so the increasingly outdated websites were kept straggling along, and updating them became a bigger task with every passing year. The website assessments show that this is the case for many visual arts organisations. Re-development will soon be the only option for many of these websites. This situation creates

an opportunity for the development of new sites that build in improved functionality and facilitate 'generous interfaces' and 'serendipitous discovery'.

When asked about the main aspects that they were hoping to improve and devlop in the new site, NIVAL replied that they wanted to create *"easy to navigate and visually engaging digital collections and databases"* and to build in *"increased search functionality"*. This is very positive to hear, and is in line with what this research project is calling for regarding online presentation of the visual arts. Amongst other models or organisations that they looked to for reference or inspiration during the re-devlopment process, NIVAl mentioned the DRI (Digital Repository of Ireland). The DRI is an important cultural research portal founded in 2015 that allows for institutes and organisations to upload content to for safekeeping and preservation, and that if properly taken advantage of could also serve as an important research portal for the visual arts in Ireland. This type of shared portal also offers pathways to underfunded and overstretched organisations for archiving material, without the need to fund, staff, and maintain it themselves.

Finally when asked about the impact of COVID-19 on the re-devlopment processs, NIVAL replied that:
"The temporary closure of NIVAL due to Covid-19 restrictions definitely highlighted the website redevelopment as an urgent need…. [there was] a 15% increase in visits to the website, based on the same period in 2019."

As is the case for many arts organisations and institutes in the country, COVID-19 placed an 'urgent' label on web development. As I will discuss in the concluding chapter, there are some real risks associated with rushing to fill this urgent need without giving the proper amount of thought and preparation. In the case of IMMA and NIVAL, they are fortunate to have already given time and thought into the best ways for them to develop their content for their respective audiences, but the fear could be that other organisations who have not benefited from pre-existing research and planning could rush to produce online content that is not completely suitable to the needs of their members or to the wider artistic community.

We can see from both Cork City Arts Office and the 100archive, that funding is a massive issue when it comes to development and sustainability of visual archives, and that even the 100archive, who outwardly seems to show no signs of this issue, are struggling to sustain and further develop their platform and plans. Thought needs to be given as to how a successful hybrid model of funding and staffing can be developed to take the pressure off of individual organisations and institutions. Other models such as the Digital Repository if Ireland could also be looked into for building relationships and connections with smaller arts organisations, in addition to expanding their existing relationship with third level arts institutes.

For a copy of the full transcripts from all of the interviews, please see the Appendices pp. 61 - 65

8 | Conclusion

A significant amount of cultural capital is created and lost in Ireland without being documented and recorded. The website assessments show that in particular, the works of locally funded artists, groups and organisations are poorly represented.
Their work occupies a crucial cross section of our society, a vital 'sample of culture'; these are the artists that work on residencies in schools, that run community arts projects, that work in Arts and Health in our local hospitals, residential centres, and care homes. They are artists that receive public grants to pursue non-commercial works dealing with an incredibly diverse range of issues, and are not necessarily bound by popular interests to make work that is 'sell-able', 'collect-able', or that follows specific trends.

In Ireland, these works have no official archives, no databases, no centralised collections. They live on a myriad of personal blogs, websites, and social media platforms, if they have any life online at all. This means that the potential for these works to function as research material for the scientific, academic, and artistic communities is severely limited, and there are no official data sets from which we can perform cultural analysis on and gain valuable insights into our culture and society.

In addition to the societal and cultural importance of archives, the findings from the research show how important dedicated visual archives are to the artistic research process, especially during the current COVID-19 situation.

Irish visual archives such as the 100archive allow artists to be inspired and influenced by their own artistic community, and help to foster a national awareness and appreciation of the amazing works that are carried out and created in the country.

This comment from New Zealand designer Amie Norman articulates the importance of the international visibility the 100archive brings as well:

"The 100 archive is an important initiative for both past and future to acknowledge the significance of a design heritage in Ireland and certainly puts it respectably on the map. Particularly as it is so accessible, it's exciting to consider submissions from designers from varied stages in careers and studio backgrounds side by side…"
Amie Norman, NormanHulzink – NL (100 archive, 2012)

This also brings up another important aspect of an archive; its ability to showcase the established and emerging side by side, its equal placement of famous and obscure, popular and forgotten.
Similarly, archives of third level art colleges and universities function in the same way, for example, that the work of now famous artists from 10 years ago can be found within the same portal as those just beginning their careers. This self-levelling, democratic platform for visual representation is important not just to the arts community, but also to our culture and society as a whole.

The interactive web publication will be the face of this research project presented to the Irish arts sector. It will function as a resource for visual arts organisations that are in the process of developing their online or digital platform, and to highlight the ways in which these platforms can be developed to better facilitate artistic research and discovery. It will be distributed to the VAI network, to all Third level arts institutes, and to all City and County Arts Offices in the country. Included in the web publication will be a guide to all of the online resources for artistic research that I have discovered during the project, with contributions from some of the nearly 300 artists that were surveyed as to what online resources they used the most or found helpful. My hope is that this guide can be of value to a wide variety of artists and art students attempting to navigate a practice that is increasingly reliant on online sources for research and inspiration.

Final Thoughts:

Following the closures of cultural organisations and institutes in the wake of the second COVID-19 lockdown, the art world has rushed to 'go online'. Morgan Quaintance comments for the recent edition of Art Monthly that:

"This knee jerk explosion of online presentations has foregrounded the need for examining a still neglected territory. What are its' possibilities and art-historical antecedents? How might the presentation of art on the internet broaden the making and digestion of work? What are the benefits and pitfalls of curating online?" (Quaintance, 2020)

While Quaintance is speaking more about temporary online exhibitions as opposed to more permanent archives, the questions remain valid for all aspects of the visual arts at this time. In the rush to push content online, has the proper consideration for the full potential of the digital platform been given in order to explore new and exciting aspects of this ever expanding platform? Will we miss an opportunity to transform the ways in which we conduct research and pursue the production of knowledge online?

The challenge set out for the visual arts sector is to develop ways of imbuing the digital with the spirit of the physical. As cultural organisations and institutes across the country are currently closed, time for the consideration of a digital identity may have presented itself where previously there had been none. To take full advantage of this time, it's important to allow for slow thinking and a considered approach.

When I think of my most important moments as an artist, they are the moments I never saw coming; when I was 'set free' from my initial plans through the act of stumbling upon something unexpected. My vision for visual archives are that they are portals for this type of unexpected discovery; that they allow us to find things we didn't know we were looking for. As Mark Forsyth says in his short "The Unknown Unknown:

"Lord, deliver us from what we already knew we wanted. Give us some new desires, the weirder the better."(Forsyth, 2014)

9 | Bibliography

100 Archive (2012) 100 Archive. Available at: http://www.100archive.com/ (Accessed: 24 October 2019).

Boucher, B. (2013) 'Art.sy becomes Artsy.net', ARTnews.com, 4 January. Available at: https://www.artnews.com/art-in-america/features/artsy-becomes-artsynet-59186/ (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

Budge, K. (2013) 'Virtual Studio Practices: Visual Artists, Social Media and Creativity', Journal of Science and Technology of the Arts, 5(1), pp. 15–23. doi: 10.7559/citarj.v5i1.84.

CORA Home (no date). Available at: https://cora.ucc.ie/ (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

Cotter, L., ed. (2019) Reclaiming Artistic Research. Berlin: Hatje Cantz.

Cruz, M. T. (2019) 'Art curation and critique in the age of digital humanities', International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media, 15(2), pp. 183–196. doi: 10.1080/14794713.2019.1638647.

'Cultural analytics' (2020) Wikipedia. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cultural_analytics&oldid=970471624 (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

Davis, S. B., Vane, O. and Kräutli, F. (2016) 'Using Data Visualisation to tell Stories about Collections', in. Electronic Visualisation and the Arts. doi: 10.14236/ewic/EVA2016.44.

Definition of SERENDIPITY (no date). Available at: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/serendipity (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

deviant art.com at DuckDuckGo (no date). Available at: https://duckduckgo.com/?t=ffnt&q=deviant+art.com&ia=web

(Accessed: 30 August 2020).

Dork, M. et al. (2012) 'PivotPaths: Strolling through Faceted Information Spaces', IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics, 18(12), pp. 2709–2718. doi: 10.1109/TVCG.2012.252.

Dörk, M., Bennett, P. and Davis, R. (2013) 'Taking Our Sweet Time to Search', p. 4.

Dörk, M., Carpendale, S. and Williamson, C. (2011) 'The information flaneur: A fresh look at information seeking', in Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems. ACM, pp. 1215–1224.

Fendler, R. (2013) '1st Conference on Arts-Based and Artistic Research. Critical refections on the intersection between art and research.', Conference proceedings. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/2445/45264 (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

'Foleon: Produce content that stands out' (no date). Available at: https://www.foleon.com/ (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

Forsyth, M. (2014) The Unknown Unknown: Bookshops and the Delight of not Getting What you Wanted. London: Icon Books Ltd.

Frayling, C. (1994) Research in Art and Design (Royal College of Art Research Papers, Vol 1, No 1, 1993/4). London: Royal College of Art. Available at: https://researchonline.rca.ac.uk/384/ (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

Hemming, William S. (2008) 'The information-seeking behaviour of visual artists', Journal of Documentation, 64 No.3, pp. 343–362.

Kang, X., Chen, W. and Kang, J. (2019) 'Art in the Age of Social

Media: Interaction Behavior Analysis of Instagram Art Accounts', Informatics, 6(4), p. 52. doi: 10.3390/informatics6040052.

'**Lucidpress**: Brand Templating Platform' (no date). Available at: https://www.lucidpress.com/pages/ (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

Manovich, L. (2017) 'Visual Semiotics, Media Theory, and Cultural Analytics', in.

Manovich, L. (2019 a) 'The Aesthetic Society: Instagram as a Life Form.', Data Publics, eds. Peter Mörtenboeck and Helge Mooshammer (Routledge, forthcoming). Available at: https://www.academia.edu/41332065/The_Aesthetic_Society_Instagram_as_a_Life_Form (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

Manovich, L. (2010 b) 'What is visualization?', p. 41.

Michaels (photography), A. K., CNN |. Jake (2018) Exploring the effects of social media on art and culture, one selfie at a time, CNN. Available at: https://www.cnn.com/style/article/instagram-installation-art/index.html (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

Pekel, J. (2014) 'Democratising the Rijksmuseum', Europeana Foundation, p. 15.

'**Publishing WG Charter**' (no date). Available at: https://www.w3.org/2017/04/publ-wg-charter/ (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

Quaintance, M. (2020) 'Remote Viewing', Art Monthly, 437. Available at: https://reader.exacteditions.com/issues/88235/page/8.

RCA2020 (2020). Available at: https://2020.rca.ac.uk/ (Accessed: 3 August 2020).

Rowley, P. G. E. G. and P. J. and Terras, M. (2015) 'Opening Access to collections: the making and using of open digitised cultural content', Online Information Review. doi: 10.1108/OIR-06-2015-0193.

'**Snapshot**' (no date a). Available at: https://issuu.com/ (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

'**Snapshot**' (no date b). Available at: https://exchange.adobe.com/creativecloud.details.100761.in5-indesign-to-html5.html (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

'**Snapshot**' (no date c). Available at: https://www.force11.org/group/fairgroup/fairprinciples (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

Timeline Tools : Florian Kräutli (no date). Available at: http://www.kraeutli.com/index.php/2016/04/08/timeline-tools/ (Accessed: 13 April 2020).

Welle (www.dw.com), D. (no date) The influence of social media in art | DW | 28.12.2019, DW.COM. Available at: https://www.dw.com/en/the-influence-of-social-media-in-art/a-51810515 (Accessed: 30 August 2020).

Whitelaw, M. (2015a) 'Generous Interfaces for Digital Cultural Collections', Digital Humanities Quarterly. Available at: https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/153515 (Accessed: 22 October 2019).

Whitelaw, M. (2015b) 'Representing Digital Collections', in Performing Digital: Multiple Perspectives on a Living Archive, ed. David Carlin and Laurene Vaughan (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2015). Ashgate Publishing.

Windhager, F. et al. (2019) 'Visualization of Cultural Heritage Collection Data: State of the Art and Future Challenges', IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics, 25(6), pp. 2311–2330. doi: 10.1109/TVCG.2018.2830759.

10 | Appendices

10.1 Ethics Review and Approval

Ethics approval was applied for in May 2020, and officially granted through the Department of Digital Humanities in UCC on 15th May 2020.

Details from the Ethics Approval Application regarding consent, usage and storage of data, and other ethics issues are outlined here:

Prior to collection of the data, a consent form is provided to the participants.

Additionally, an information form and the option to view the research proposal, ethics form, or other material created prior to the research is provided to the participants.

All surveys will be anonymous, optional, and online.
Interviews will not include any personal/private data related to the individual, but only refer to their professional experience of working with an arts archive/database or arts environment.

Before the interviews the researcher will explain to the participants that they have the right to withdraw or redact data from the study without having to provide an explanation. Where data are identifiable (e.g. from email interviews yielding qualitative data), participants can withdraw within two weeks of participation and ask to have their data destroyed. I will be collecting data from an online survey(s) and possibly a series of interviews. This will be done through an online questionaire and series of email interview questions.

Consent forms for the usage, preservation, and sharing of data will be collected and kept on file for all surveys/interviews.

Data will be stored in two locations:

The survey data is encrypted and kept on the hard drive of the researcher's computer and on an encrypted Office365 cloud storage account for Cork Institute of Technology with automated backup service. The cloud storage limit for this service is 2TB, which will be sufficient for the purposes of housing all research collected.

The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study, available only to me and my research supervisor. On completion of the project, the data will be retained for minimum of a further ten years and then destroyed.

The interviews will be via e-mail online. Emails would then be backed up and stored in the encrypted Office365 cloud storage facilities for Cork Institute of Technology.
The researcher computer is password protected. So is the folder containing the interview and survey data. The cloud based storage is protected with the researcher's staff login details. The password for staff login is updated every 30 days. All data stored in cloud based Office365 storage through Cork Institute of Technology will be password protected, and only available to the researcher.

Prior to collection of the data, a consent form is provided to the participants.
Additionally, an information form and the option to view the research proposal, ethics form, or other material created prior to the research is provided to the participants. Participants will be informed that they have the right to withdraw or redact data from the study without having to provide an explanation.

Prior to collection of the data, a consent form is provided to the participants

Additionally, an information form and the option to view the research proposal, ethics form, or other material created prior to the research is provided to the participants

No one under the age of 18 will be involved in the study.

No vulnerable persons or adults with additional learning difficulties/comprehension difficulties will be involved in the study.

10.2 Information and Consent

The following Information and Consent Form was supplied to all studios and organisations involved in the surveys, as well as all Interviewees:

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Purpose of the Study. As part of the requirements for my MA in Digital Arts & Humanities at UCC, I am carrying out a research study concerned with the importance of a visual archives and online representation of content for arts institutes and organisations in Ireland. To this end I am also investigating the online research habits of practicing visual artists and third level art students.

What will the study involve? The study will involve an anonymous online survey along with a small series of selected email interviews.

Why have you been asked to take part? You have been asked because you have been identified as being a visual artist, or as being associated with a visual arts organisation in Ireland.

Do you have to take part? No – participation is voluntary. A consent form is included overleaf. The information in this sheet and the consent form are the participant's to keep. Participants have the option of withdrawing before the study commences, even if they have already agreed to participate, or to discontinue participation after data collection has started. Where data are identifiable (e.g. from email interviews yielding qualitative data), participants can withdraw within two weeks of participation and ask to have their data destroyed.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential? The data of all participants in the online survey will be anonymous. The data of those who agree to participate in the email interviews may choose to allow their information to be referenced in the published research or may select to keep their participation in the study confidential.

What will happen to the information which you give? The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study, available only to me and my research supervisor. It will be securely stored on the Cork Institute of Technology's encrypted cloud-based storage. On completion of the project, they will be retained for minimum of a further ten years and then destroyed.

What will happen to the results? The results will be presented in my dissertation. They will be seen by my supervisor, a second marker and the external examiner. The dissertation may be read by future students on the course. The dissertation will be accessible to the public and permanently housed in UCC's Cork Open Research Archive (CORA). The study may be published in a research journal.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part? I don't envisage any negative consequences for you in taking part.

What if there is a problem? If at any point you have issues with your information being utilized as part of the study, you can contact me directly and I will endeavor to rectify the problem immediately and to the best of my ability.

Who has reviewed this study? Approval for this study is granted by the Digital Humanities Ethics Committee of University College Cork.

Any further queries? If you need any further information, you can contact me directly:

Conall Cary

0857818921

conallcary@gmail.com

If you agree to take part in the e-mail interview part of this study, please sign the consent form overleaf.

CONSENT FORM

.

I……………………………………agree to participate in Conall Cary's research study.

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

I am participating voluntarily.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of the email interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I understand that anonymity can be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity if I so wish.

I understand that extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

    (Please tick one box:)
    I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview   ⌐
    I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview   ⌐

Signed: …………………………………….   Date: ………………..
PRINT NAME: …………………………………….

10.3 Survey Data

Links to Survey .CSV Data:

Link to full .csv data for Artist Survey here:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1PZh7BHdrSmt64x-
9NF7T-0gqvqRULIo6SSI1Uey7CDtE/edit?usp=sharing

Link to full .csv data for Student Survey here:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qiGhLBB0GkI8Yu8K-
LZsbKbdNiqwK9GFK3k9mVZz_yYE/edit?usp=sharing

Links to Survey Forms:

Link to full Artist Form here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YnOKvgEDUdYsKdFOTN-
N0XHaSxfXH5QabQDO8u846rVI/edit?usp=sharing

Link to full Student Survey Form here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1cOxu-QnIEUg_
JHV-3MRFZpTq0y6vehOKde3mT7o_CNY/edit?usp=sharing

10.4 Interview Transcripts

Full transcript of email interview between Conall Cary(CC) and Aideen McCole (AM) of the100 Archive on 16th October 2020:

CC: Where does the 100 Archive receive funding from?

AM: While we have received project funding from the Heritage Council and the Creative Ireland Programme (for our recent Map Irish Design project) and occasionally broker sponsorship from other design organisations or corporates, our core funding comes from the design community. This takes the form of project submissions and subscriptions: designers and studios pay a nominal fee to submit their work for consideration for each year's archive selection. I say nominal: we really don't earn enough from this at all, so we have been exploring ways of diversifying our income.

CC: Does the 100 Archive operate mainly on a volunteer or a paid basis?

AM: It is almost entirely a voluntary effort. A steering committee currently of five members looks after organisational decision making and those in their studios often weigh in behind events or projects by supplying the design of materials; two panels each of five people makes the archive selections; a team of 10 commission, write and edit our articles; collaborators around the country help us deliver events and activities. All of this is voluntary. The one exception is that I am paid to work on the project one day per week to try to ensure a degree of consistency in the delivery of our aims. We could do with much more dedicated time spent on it, but that's what we can afford for now.

CC: Were there other archives or online collections that the 100 Archive took inspiration from when being created?

AM: When originally conceived in 2012, those founding the 100 Archive consulted with the National Archives here in Ireland and NAGO, the Dutch Graphic Designers Archives, in order to better understand the context we might situate ourselves in. But there is no collection quite like the 100 Archive: the mechanism we have developed to archive the contemporary through an open call and a two-stage submission process; to have that process occur and manifest online and to take a community-led approach, they're all pretty unique.

CC: Has the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent lockdown situation impacted the project in any way?

AM: On the face of it, no. We operate primarily online and if anything, were in a position to launch our biggest research project to date, Map Irish Design, and our 2019 Archive Selection, at a

time when people were keen for rich and interesting online content. But under the hood, the 100 Archive is struggling to achieve financial sustainability, and that has been further hampered by a dramatically changed fundraising landscape. We will struggle to continue what small progress we have made to secure both public and corporate support. It is towards the end of this year that the design community will begin to prepare their 2020 work for submission and renew their subscriptions: we will see then if that core funding has also been affected to Covid-19...

CC: Are there plans for future development and expansion of the 100 Archive as an online research resource?

AM: I would say aspirations rather than plans! It took a huge amount of work to get Map Irish Design over the line, and we are currently pushing towards the launch of a totally new, custom-built site (the front end has been refreshed, but the back end is nearing completion). These have been enormous tasks which have left us more than stretched, so we are reluctant to commit to more in the short term. Plus, we have no way of funding new activity right now, nor will we for the foreseeable. So for now, it's about ensuring we keep our key activity — selections and articles — going, and going as well as we can.

That said, we see amazing potential in our collections to better connect to third level (including and beyond the study of design practice), and eventually second level too. We also think that,

through partnerships with other institutions (such as our existing partnership with the National Library of Ireland) and smart curatorial activity, we could better connect design to audiences in the general public than we have previously seen in Ireland.

Full transcript of email interview between Conall Cary(CC) and Clare Lymer (LM) of the National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL) on 12th October 2020:

CC: What are some of the reasons for needing to upgrade the website/collection/archive?

CL: NIVAL's website was launched in 2011 and has not had an update since. Due to the outdated CMS the website is no longer fit for purpose. In addition to outdated design, there is restricted functionality with display errors and security issues. It was built on an open-source PHP CMS called TYPO3. NIVAL operates on TYPO3 v.4.5, and the most current version is past v.10.0. The gap in updates means that it is not a straight forward jump from v.4.5 to the most up to date version, so we are looking at alternative redevelopment options.

CC: What are the main things that you are hoping to achieve through the new website?

CL: NIVAL holds over 100 Special Collections and Archives of print-based material, with a rate of acquisition of 5% per annum. Digitisation of collections is ongoing with about 15% currently accessible online. NIVAL has a proven track record of facilitating research in Irish art and design through public access to unparalleled collections and is committed to making collections accessible to everyone for exploration, education and research. In order to continue to lead in this service, we hope the new website will provide

- an impactful online presence for NIVAL
- increased access to digital resources
- easy to navigate and visually engaging digital collections and databases
- increased search functionality
- scalable design to allow for growth in collections

CC: How do you want the new website to look, feel, and function?

CL: Ideally the website will be visually engaging with research facilities/resources and collection materials showcased. It should be easy to navigate and mobile responsive. Website statistics show us that half of visitors to the NIVAL website use a mobile device or tablet. Website visitors most frequently consult the Artists Database and Online Special Collections. These pages are currently not instantly accessible or obvious from the home page but are 2-3 clicks deep, so we hope to bring these forward

and highlighted. The search function is currently very restrictive and doesn't offer similar results, we would like to expand on this to encourage further research (and allow for spelling errors). It needs to be user-friendly on the front and back end, and scalable - NIVAL staff update database entries weekly as well as the ongoing additions of digital collections and resources.

CC: What are some of your reference websites/archives/online collections that you take inspiration from/model yourselves after?

CL: TATE Archive, Smithsonian, National Archives, DRI, Europeana.

CC: Has the recent lockdown due to COVID-19 impacted on the project? If so, in what ways?

CL: The temporary closure of NIVAL due to Covid-19 restrictions definitely highlighted the website redevelopment as an urgent need. During the temporary closure, we promoted our digital collections and accessible resources through social media campaigns. This resulted in a 15% increase in visits to the website, based on the same period in 2019. We have seen the increased demand for online content from the NIVAL collections and are committed to adapting to the evolving needs of artists and researchers.

Transcript of email interview between Conall Cary(CC) and Michelle Carew (MC) of the Cork City Arts Office:

CC: What might be some reasons for the lack of visual archives and online collections of funded projects/artists/ events by city and county arts offices in Ireland? Is funding, staffing, and lack of resources the only reason, or have there been competing priorities, etc.?

MC: As well as the issues as outlined by yourself (funding, staffing, resources), the positioning of Arts Services within Local Authorities does not necessarily lend itself to such practices. While archiving and documentation is central to some local authority services such as public museums, libraries and archives etc. The Arts Service /Office tends to sit within the administrative functions of the Local Authority. The systems and infrastructure that the Arts Service operates within are therefore oriented in that manner. Just some examples of practical challenges as a result include:
Website – The Arts Service has a page on the overall CCC website. The functioning and design has to align with a broad range of services from Roads, Planning, Community to Housing etc. There would not be the space or functionality to host an online collection. Therefore a separate site would need to be developed. Not impossible but would need to take its place amongst many competing priorities that the Arts Service must balance. Storage! Typically the types of documentation, reporting of fund-ed projects are clerical or administrative in nature and are filed as evaluations, reports etc. as records/ evidence of dissemination of public funds. The type of material that would be of archival or public interest is generally not collected by the Arts Office. High quality images and other media would require significant storage if we compiled from each and every funded project. Our server space is ltd. (Not yet cloud based!)

CC: What might be some reasons for the lack of visual archives and online collections of funded projects/artists/ events by city and county arts offices in Ireland? Is funding, staffing, and lack of resources the only reason, or have there been competing priorities, etc.?

MC: No. Not as it stands, but you raise an interesting suggestion. I'm personally in this role just over two months so new projects of scale are not my immediate priority. I can see a real potential value in this and would see that it would need to involve collaboration with bodies within the Council (Archives, Library) and potentially outside (e.g. UCC).

Final question and answer overleaf ------>

CC: What might be some reasons for the lack of visual archives and online collections of funded projects/artists/events by city and county arts offices in Ireland? Is funding, staffing, and lack of resources the only reason, or have there been competing priorities, etc.?

MC: As a result of high quality recording and digital presentation due to the big move to online, I would see that in 2020 at least we would have the beginnings of some strong materials that might form a visual archive.

10.5 List of Figures