



Eu Sou Artivista: The impact of digital art in
the awareness of Portuguese young adults
Cátia Correia

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**Trabalho de Projeto apresentado ao Instituto Superior de
Contabilidade e Administração do Porto para a obtenção do grau de
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Laura Tallone**

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Resumo:

O desenvolvimento das novas tecnologias e a criação da internet vieram alterar a forma como a humanidade se comporta e vive a vida quotidiana. As redes sociais, popularizadas no passado recente, fazem parte hoje em dia da rotina de uma elevada percentagem da população mundial, principalmente nos países mais desenvolvidos. Desta forma, tornaram-se num dos principais meios de comunicação, não apenas entre humanos à distância, mas também na difusão de informação às massas, em alguns casos substituindo a televisão, revistas e jornais, que também se foram transportando para o digital ao longo dos anos.

O mundo digital permite, desta forma, uma transformação na forma como os cidadãos praticam o ativismo e como se organizam para protestar. Este artigo pretende avaliar a conjuntura permitida pelo desenvolvimento das redes sociais como espaço de liberdade para exprimir opiniões. O projeto Eu Sou Artivista visa avaliar de que forma este leque de possibilidades nas redes sociais impactam (positiva ou negativamente) as práticas de intervenção social e qual é o papel da arte digital na tentativa de difundir consciencialização e informação, formando jovens portugueses mais ativos na sociedade e na vida política nacional.

Palavras chave: Artivismo; Redes Sociais; Arte Digital; Portugal;

Abstract:

The development of new technologies and the creation of the internet have changed the way humanity behaves and lives everyday life. Social networks, made popular in the recent past, are nowadays part of the routine of a high percentage of the world population, mainly in developed countries. They have therefore become one of the main means of communication, not only between humans at a distance, but also in the dissemination of information to the masses, in some cases replacing television, magazines and newspapers, which have also transitioned to digital form throughout the years.

The digital world thus allows for a transformation in the way citizens practice activism and how they organize to protest. This report intends to assess the situation allowed by the development of social networks as a space of freedom to express opinions. The Eu Sou Artivist project aims to assess how this range of possibilities on social networks impacts (positively or negatively) the practices of social intervention and what is the role of digital art in an attempt to spread awareness and information, encouraging more active Portuguese youth in society and in Portuguese political life.

Key words: Activism; Social Media; Digital Art; Portugal;

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The concept of *artivism*, it appears from a first contact, is the junction of the words activism and art. Eve Ensler, creator of the famous feminist play *The Vagina Monologues*, goes further and describes it as: “a kind of escalated passion... [that] has all the ingredients of activism, but it is charged with the wild creations of art. (...) where edges are pushed, imagination is freed, and a new language emerges altogether.” (Ensler).

It is from this premise of love for art and its capacity for change, intervention and awareness that the need to understand *artivism* in the digital age is born. Nowadays the world moves through screens and virtual contact networks and naturally socio-political action is shifting and adapting to the online reality as it develops. Thus, it is important to unite three concepts that, despite being present in everyday life in the present time, are still poorly analyzed and investigated in correlation to one another: art, activism and social networks.

To this end, there is the creation of an online exhibition entitled *Eu Sou Artivista*, a project that is developed around the possibility of unlimited access that the internet and the digital world allow. Sara Pascoal, Laura Tallone, Marco Furtado and Sandra Ribeiro defend in their article *Promover o património cultural através do empreendedorismo e da criatividade: o projeto GoogleArts & Culture* the versatility of online exhibitions and museums, which allow the public to access content regardless of distance, time and space in the context in which they are located. They also believe that this type of exhibition format is gaining value (Pascoal et al., 2019). With this in mind, the project intends to disseminate the art of intervention, as well as the respective social issues, through the Instagram digital platform, in order to combine all the variables that were object of research in the preparation of this project work.

Throughout the article, in three chapters, the different themes relevant to the conclusion of the research are addressed: 1) the literature review that examines and analyzes the different topics to be investigated: the pros and cons of using social networks as a means of propagating activist movements; the concept of intervention art today; the importance of image vs text in the digital world. 2) Focusing on the Portuguese scenario with the history of caricature in Portugal and art's evolution until the implementation of digital media in present time, through the example of the illustrator and activist Clara Não. 3) The methodology designed for each stage of the project, the importance of all the details involved and the results thereof.

CHAPTER I – LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Social Media as a Tool for Awareness

In a short period of time, the development of the internet and of social media platforms has radically changed the daily lives of the world's population, evolving the way human beings communicate and also their everyday habits. This transformation had a greater incidence in the last decade, when the use of such networks was trivialized. (Dean, 2021).

Social media, however, has been around much longer than the Internet. Michael S. Rosenwald, a reporter for *The Washington Post*, dates the birth of social media to May 24, 1844. This was the day Samuel F.B. Morse sent the first Morse code message from Washington to Baltimore. Alongside Leonard D. Gale, Morse studied and developed a technology that allowed the powerful countries of the time to communicate more easily and in code, a method that gained extreme importance in the war context. From Rosenwald's point of view, the Morse code marks the first form of social media communication, long before today's Facebook and Twitter. (S. Rosenwald, 2017)

On the other hand, Drew Hendricks retells in chronological order the most relevant steps in social media's history. He dates the birth of "the first recognizable social media site" to 1997, when Six Degrees was created. In this platform, users were able to create virtual profiles of themselves and "befriend" each other (Hendricks, 2013), characteristics that most resemble the platforms used today.

In any case, regardless of its starting point, it remains that what started as primitive forms of online interaction, in a few decades became a new way of living. In this period humanity has gone through an extremely quick evolution in technology, from the first commercialized personal computers in the 1970s (Zimmermann, 2017) to the development of portable, smaller devices, such as phones and tablets, culminating in today's smartphones, which have led to a shift from the message-based usage of social media to photo and video sharing. (Mariville University, 2020)

Nowadays, social networks have the power of spreading information almost instantaneously, which has been made possible through the wide coverage of wireless Wi-Fi, found almost everywhere in the world. Thus, it is possible to surf the internet on homes, workplaces and even in the middle of the street. Social Media becoming mainstream can now be measured by statistics: currently half of the world population, 4.48 billion people, are users of social networks, a number that has almost doubled since

2015, growing an average of 12.5% year on year (Dean, 2021). Hundreds of thousands of people interact with activist movements in a much more immediate and widespread way through the resources provided by each platform, such as *likes*, *reposts* and *retweets*, allowing news, discussions and activist behavior to spread out to their own individual networks of "online friends", thus creating a limitless information propagation cycle that has the capacity to *go viral* in the blink of an eye. Not many years ago, the only way for the population to be aware of what was happening in the world was through newspapers, which were gradually less consumed given the popularization of radio and television (Karamat & Farooq, 2016). Nonetheless, news were never as immediately transmitted to the receiver as it is today. In this way, "[a]ctivists have evidently become much less dependent on television and mainstream newspapers to influence public communication" (Poell & van Dijck, 2015), also due to the fact that there might be dissemination of information that traditional forms of media do not acknowledge. Activists are therefore able to raise awareness for situations that otherwise would not be given the relevance that they have, often reported in the first person (Karamat & Farooq, 2016).

1.1.1 Activism or *Slacktivism*? – The Kony 2012 campaign

While for some researchers the role of social media in the advancement of activism is undoubtedly positive, there are also eager advocates of *slacktivism*. Dictionary.com defines this term as "actions taken to endorse and promote political or social causes and movements, but involving only minimal commitment, effort, or risk: The students engage in *slacktivism* by joining civic groups but rarely participate in group projects" (dictionary.com).

Alongside *slacktivism*, one can also come across the word *clicktivism*, which focuses on more specific behaviors, such as sharing or liking a post, engaging in email campaigns or signing petitions rather than facing real world risks by protesting or taking so called "real action" (dictionary.com). Sara Rendzior, amongst many other authors, articulates the *slacktivism* reality through one of the most cited examples of this alleged lazy activism – the Kony 2012 campaign.

The Kony 2012 video and campaign, produced and released by the non-profit organization Invisible Children (<https://invisiblechildren.com/>), is one of the most controversial cases about the effectiveness of using social media for activist purposes, and is often classified as an awareness-raising strategy that calls for heavily criticized *slacktivism*. The video in question (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sqc>) was released in 2012 and, as of 2014, had an astronomical 100 million views on YouTube. It aimed to promote information about the reality of Uganda, more specifically an attempt to get the world to come together to stop the criminal Joseph Kony¹ (Taylor, 2014).

Faced with this situation, Invisible Children decided to act and use social media to disclose to the public (in this case, younger people) what was the reality of Uganda and who this man was, considering that this situation was not widely publicized in the traditional media and few people knew who Joseph Kony was, or what he was doing at that time. To achieve this end, Jason Russell directed a high production video that went viral in just days (Taylor, 2014). According to the video "Inside Story - 'Kony 2012': The future of activism" uploaded to YouTube by the news network Al Jazeera English, in four days Kony2012 had already reached 50million hits and 6 million tweets about the topic. If one considers numbers and reach as the indicators of the campaign's success, there is enough evidence that the Kony 2012 campaign was highly successful. In addition to millions of views, tweets and shares, the organization managed to raise \$28 million in 2012 through this campaign (Taylor, 2014). Nonetheless, if one considers the organization's main goal – to stop Joseph Kony and hold him responsible for his actions – it was a failure, given that this name is still on the list of “most wanted” war criminals by the International Criminal Court (*International Criminal Court «most wanted» / NGM Lawyers*). Taylor expresses that the cause for the unsuccessful outcome of the campaign might be the fact that Invisible Children set a too high and specific goal to reach, since the message to “stop” Kony was a mission already destined to fail (Taylor, 2014).

¹Joseph Kony is the criminal that led the radical group LDA (Lord's Resistance Army), who claimed to have received prophecies from beyond to attack, kill and devastate villages, terrorizing Uganda and other nearby countries. Through manipulation and brainwashing techniques, he created an army of armed children, many of whom ended up raped and/or killed. (G. Craine, 2009)

The repercussions of this campaign resulted in huge controversy, accusations that Invisible Children simplified the facts presented in the video and focused more on preparing these types of campaigns, which promote *slacktivism*, than properly arranging solutions and taking action on field. However, despite all the scandal involved, even some of the organization's fiercest critics feel divided on the pros and cons of this type of approach (Taylor, 2014), since *slacktivism* is not a static and absolute term - "(...) it is one of the varied and often contradictory ways we engage with political material online. The same people who are slacktivists toward one cause can also be staunch and sincere advocates of others." (Kendzior, 2012)

Defenders of online activism like Christopher Jones argue that, despite all the criticism, the failure of the Kony2012 campaign cannot be attributed to the behaviors of its supporters, but rather explained by the flawed and vastly criticized organization behind it. According to Jones, this campaign, among two other case studies, proves the innovative power of activism played online in transforming current political action and in spreading information and awareness almost instantaneously. The reach of online activist campaigns cannot be achieved by any other means and the author believes this one set an important example for others to come. (Jones, 2013) Jeffrey Smith, an advocacy officer for Justice and Human Rights cited by Adam Taylor in his article, is another advocate for the success of Kony2012:

I absolutely think Invisible Children produced some good (...) First, it essentially gave advocates a blueprint for how to do successful human rights advocacy on a big scale. It also helped expose the general public to a serious and long-standing issue that deserved attention and international action. (...) Our goal as human rights advocates is to take these grim scenarios, expose them to the world, and get people interested and motivated to create change. By that standard, the Invisible Children campaign was undoubtedly a success. (Smith)

1.1.2 Digital Activism done right: Arab Spring, #MeToo Movement, Black Lives Matter and Que Se Lixe a Troika

Similarly to the Kony 2012 campaign, the examples that will be dealt with in this section have also come under criticism to some extent, due to the use of social media to incite protest. On the other hand, they are also three of the most cited examples when it comes to argue social media's role on successful social movements. This section will focus on gathering relevant information and perspectives about the use of social media to increase the success of social protests, using the Arab Spring, Me Too and Black Lives Matter examples focusing later on the Portuguese scenario with Que Se Lixe a

Troika. These four case studies allow for the exploration of different phases of the internet's social media and the way users engage with social media platforms.

The Arab Spring

The revolutions that took place in several Middle Eastern and North African countries became known as the Arab Spring, due to the fact that they started in the spring of 2011. In countries such as Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, protests, whether peaceful or violent, were organized in order to fight oppressive governments. In the aforementioned regions, these protests resulted in a change of regime and the outcome of the Arab Spring is still very relevant today (History.com Editors, 2018).

The moment usually attributed to the beginning of this movement is the protest act of Mohammed Bouazizi, a Tunisian merchant who was denied a permit to sell his products unless he paid a fee to the government, for which he had no money. After his complaints were declined by the government, Bouazizi set himself on fire as a form of protest. This revolutionary act spread to the masses and sparked revolt against the governments in several Arab countries, thus giving rise to what we now call the Arab Spring.

Critics, such as journalist Malcom Gladwell (Gladwell, 2010) and scholar Evgeny Morozov (Morozov, 2009), argue that this is yet another example of *slacktivism*, social media usage in protest is ineffective and activism takes real life sacrifice. Morozov expresses that online society is over-stimulated with information and that translates to short attention spans, making them forget and focus on the next big news quickly, disregarding the current issue by trading it for the next. (Gire, 2017)

Nonetheless, Dubai School of Government's Arab Social Media Report tells us otherwise. By analyzing different variants of the usage of social media in the concerning areas during the revolution, the article provides relevant information for the debate (Dubai School of Government, 2011). It takes into account the fact that digital strategies were practiced differently and their outcomes varied according to the country, expressing that the context is also essential to understand the success of social media's role (Wolfsfeld et al., 2013). Although offline action is still essential to the success of any protest, the Arab Social Media Report provides empirical evidence suggesting that "the growth of social media in the region and the shift in usage trends have played a

critical role in mobilization, empowerment, shaping opinions and influence change” (Salem & Mourtada, 2012).

The school's Governance and Innovation program conducted a survey targeting Tunisian and Egyptian Facebook users to understand the usage patterns of the social network during the 2011 protests, with fig.1 illustrating that most of the time spent on Facebook was used to encourage organizing actions and gathering the activists, spreading information globally and raising awareness in the country about the situation in question. As expected, in fig. 2, it can be inferred that the main source of information in this period were social networks, taking into account that the questionnaire was published on Facebook. It can also be concluded that there is a big preference for independent sources of information, rather than those provided by the government. Despite the small sample contained in these survey results, which were distributed for only three weeks, it is possible to understand a trend towards the positive impact of social networks in both countries, despite the variation in response between one and the other. (Dubai School of Government, 2011)

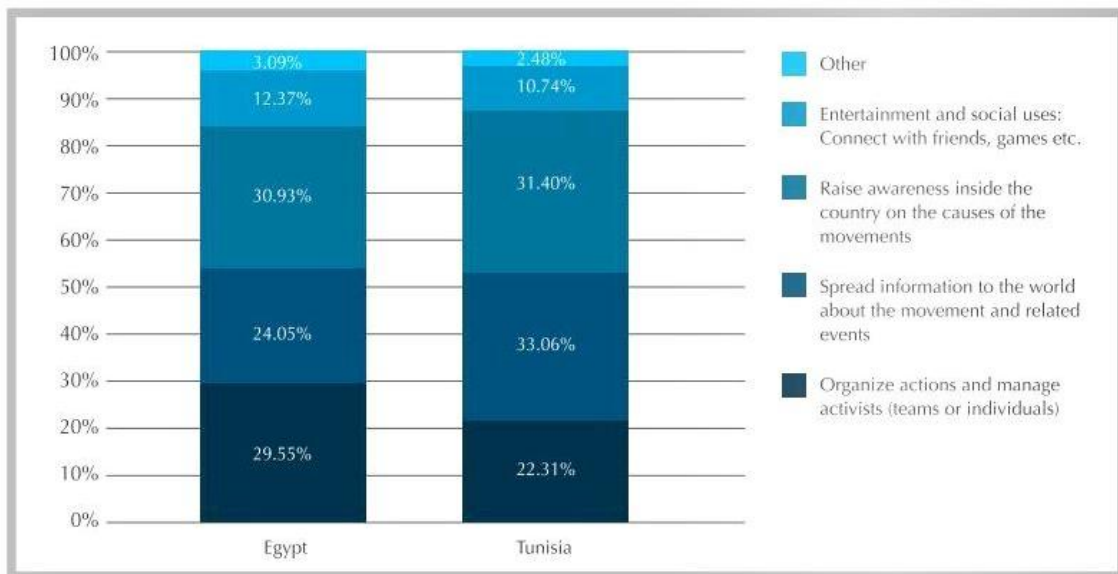


Figure 1- The Main Usage of Facebook during the Civil Movement and Events in Early 2011 was to:

Source: Dubai School of Government

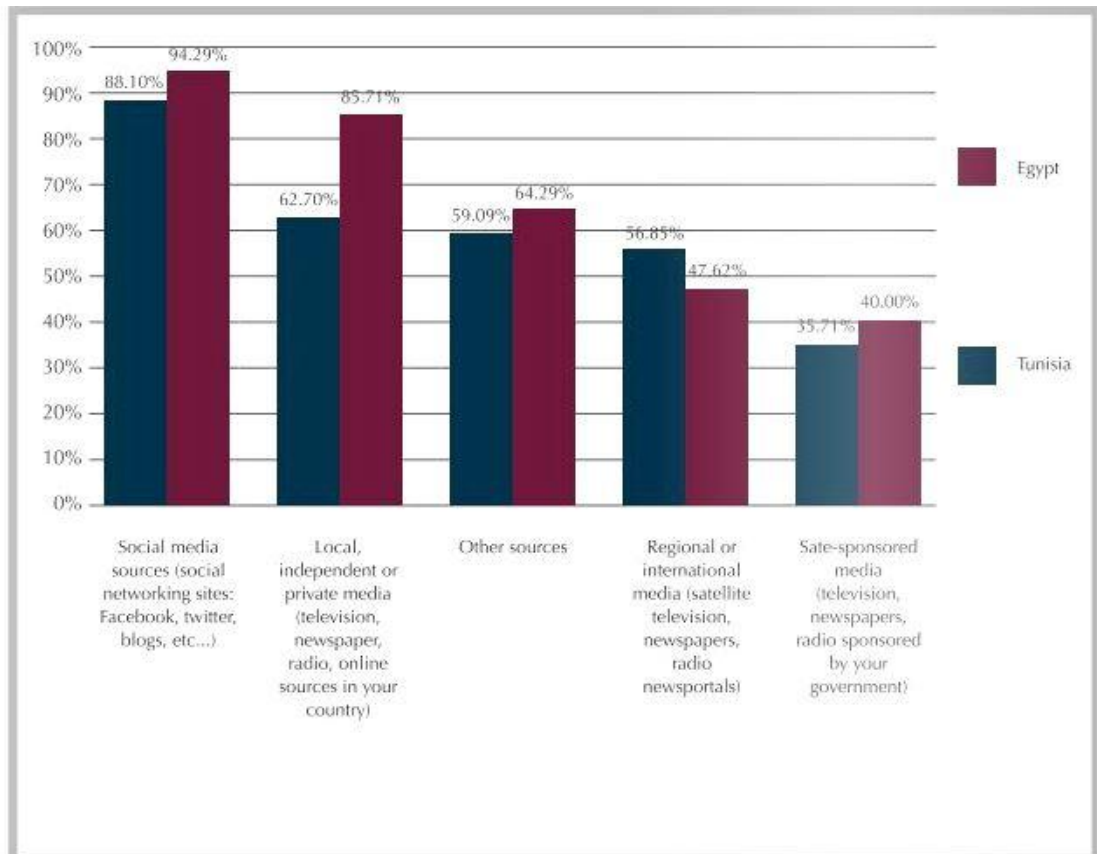


Figure 2- Where did you get your news/information on the events during the civil movements?

Source: Dubai School of Government

#MeToo Movement

Unlike popular belief, the #MeToo movement was not born in 2017, the year it went viral, but back in 2006, created and led by Tarana Burke, a North American activist. Initially, the expression "me too" was used by Tarana on the social network myspace to bring some attention to episodes of sexual abuse against women of color. Her goal was for the world to understand how frequent these types of situation are, both to raise awareness by those who have never experienced them and to demonstrate to the victims that they are not the only ones and that they have support. («Me Too», 2019)

Fig. 3 illustrates the milestone of what was the beginning of the sharing of the worldwide movement, in October 2017, when actress Alyssa Milano asked her twitter followers to respond with the expression "me too" if they had ever suffered from any kind of sexual abuse or harassment (Pflum, 2018). Motivated by then recent testimonies and accusations directed at former Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, who now has more than 80 allegations of inappropriate sexual behavior, Milano sparked a movement that quickly went viral.



Figure 3- Alyssa Milano's viral tweet that busted the #MeToo Movement

Source: Alyssa Milano's Twitter account

In less than a day this tweet had already reached thousands of people, featuring interactions like likes and retweets from all over the world, but even more prominently comments from countless people telling their own story of abuse. According to *NBC News*, Milano's testimony, a year after the famous tweet, was of immense gratification but also of surprise regarding the courage and sincerity with which these women exposed their stories (Pflum, 2018). One of the things that social media is achieving is precisely to encourage the talk about topics which are generally stigmatized and seen as taboo. This allows victims to come forward on what happened to them and expose the criminals. Sexual abuse has always been a sensitive topic in society and one that plagues women on a daily basis. Many of the cases go unnoticed for years because the victim, often a woman, is unable to report it for fear of retaliation, both from the aggressor and from society (Manikonda et al., 2018).

To investigate and reflect on the effects of the movement, MTV designed a survey in which a sample of 1800 young people aged 18 to 25 answered questions to determine how #MeToo affected them. The results demonstrate a positive transformation not only in women - the majority of victims of sexual abuse - but also in the men around them,

given that 40% of the men surveyed agreed that “the #MeToo movement has changed the way I interact in potential romantic relationships.”.

The remaining results are also conclusive that the movement on social media had a positive impact on the way young people think. Statements such as "since the #MeToo movement, they have thought about how society enables sexist behavior among men" (61%), "thought about how difficult the world is for women." (59%) and "since the #MeToo movement, I have noticed that the guys around me have changed their behavior." (25%). These statistics prove that MeToo managed to cause real life offline change (Zeilinger, 2018).

Black Lives Matter

The black lives matter movement is yet another example of digital activism. This movement was created by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi as a result of the release of George Zimmerman on the trial for the death of Trayvon Martin. The movement has gained popularity over the years with the addition of exposed cases of alleged injustice against the black community, such as the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. The most recent event that marked the movement and gave rise to the Black Lives Matter hashtag was the sharing of the video where George Floyd is murdered by an American policeman, through suffocation, on May 25, 2020 (Capatosto).

Many wonder what would have happened to this case if the video had not been shared, or if social media did not exist. These platforms make it possible to make known to the most privileged population social problems that can still be seen as "something that is in the past", but which in reality still happen frequently. After the massive sharing of the video of Floyd's death, thousands of people demonstrated their anger at the situation on the internet, also triggering several protests in the streets of the USA, as well as in other countries. The name George Floyd and the hashtag Black Lives Matter became known around the world in a very short period of time (Valinote, 2020).

To measure the reach of such movement, University of Connecticut's Professor John Murphy compares the usage of the three words to others of the most popular brands which are usually the most cited topic of the social media's users activity. As illustrated in fig. 4, Black Lives Matter far surpassed the examples of Murphy - Nike and Starbucks. After many years analyzing social media behavior in groundbreaking

situations such as elections and terrorist issues, he was quite surprised with the numbers obtained by the movement (Beckman, 2020),

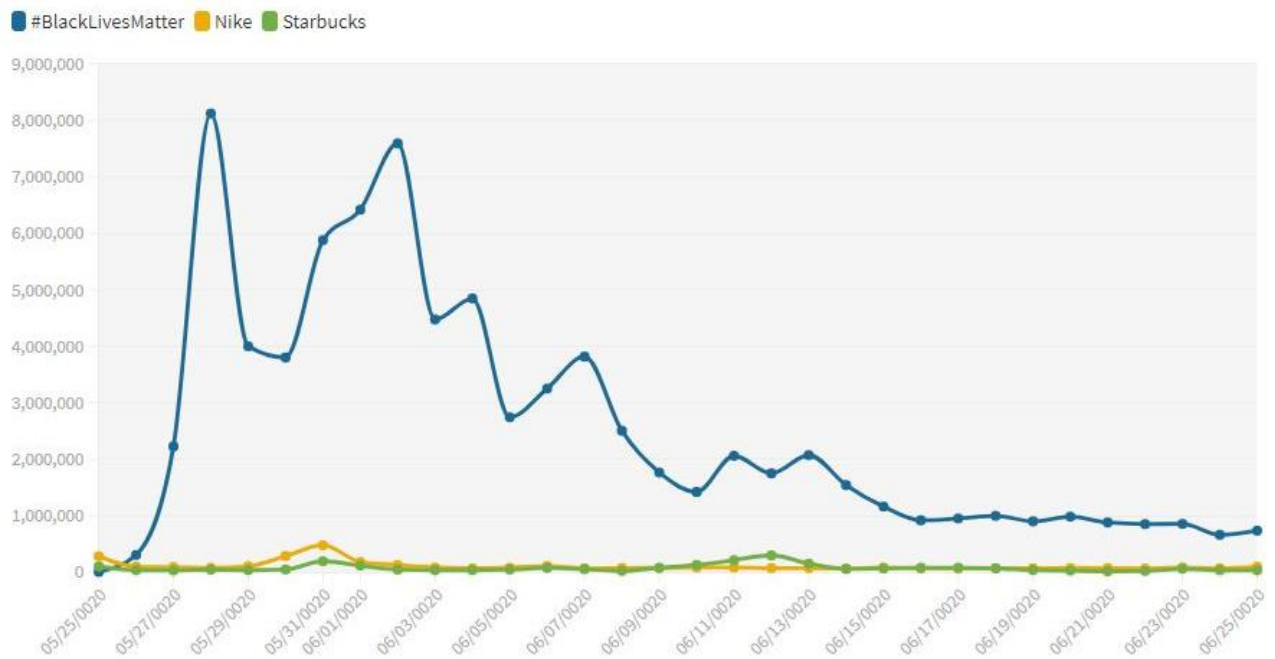


Figure 4- “#BlackLivesMatter eclipsed mentions of popular brands on Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, and other sources.”

Source: <https://mashable.com/article/black-lives-matter-george-floyd-social-media-data>

Between July 13 and 19, 2020, the Pew Research Center conducted a study to understand the potential of social networks as a tool for social and political action. 10,211 adult citizens from the United States were surveyed. This study was done in comparison to another one carried out in 2018, answering the question whether they have changed their views about a political or social issue because of something they saw on social media. Fig. 5 contains the graph corresponding to the percentage of responses to the questionnaire. It can be observed that, in 2020, 23% of participating adults admit to having changed their point of view due to social networks, compared to 15% in 2018. In these 23%, the theme Black Lives Matter and police brutality was frequently referred to as topics that have changed their perspective in the last year (Perrin, 2020).

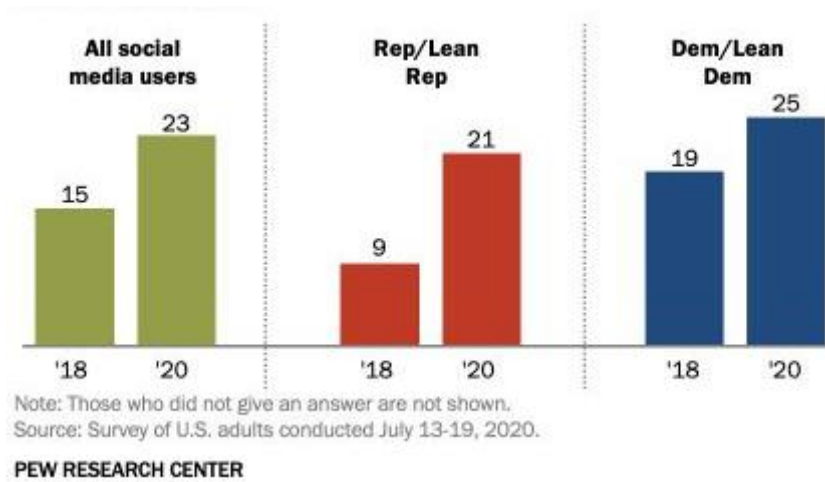


Figure 5- “% of U.S adult social media users who say they have changed their views about a political or social issue because of something they saw on social media in the past year”

Source: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/10/15/23-of-users-in-us-say-social-media-led-them-to-change-views-on-issue-some-cite-black-lives-matter/>

Que Se Lixe a Troika! Queremos as nossas Vidas! Movement

As discussed previously in the Arab Spring, #metoo movement and Black Lives Matter case studies, Portugal was also the stage for the introduction of new technologies as a tool to promote collective action.

The movement *Que Se Lixe a Troika! Queremos as nossas Vidas!* (QSLT) which translates to something like *The Hell With Troika! We want our Lives!* was sparked by the national political, economic and social situation in 2012, as a result of the crisis that hit several regions of the globe. The management of the Portuguese government in this scenario of poverty caused by public debt and the bankruptcy of several public institutions had repercussions on an agreement between Portugal and the Troika². The measures imposed by this partnership, carried out to the letter by the government that followed, were very strict and placed the Portuguese people in great precariousness. Some of the implications of the agreement were lower wages, higher taxes and cut subsidies, in a country that was already impoverished by the economic crisis.

² Troika is the name given to the team composed by the International Monetary Fund, European Central Bank and European Commission. The troika is responsible for the negotiation that aims to establish the commitments that the Portuguese authorities will have to assume in order to receive the international financial assistance requested by the Government in April 2011. (*Troika em Portugal*).

Thus, was born the QSLT, a digital platform created to bring together common citizens of all political ideals and/or colors, even with no preference, to join together in a movement against the Portuguese nation state and the measures brought about by the arrival of Troika to Portugal. It quickly spread through social networks and gathered supporters, determined to go out into the street and exercise their right to protest (Babo & Silva, 2016). In its manifesto, which can be found on the platform <http://queselixeatroika15setembro.blogspot.com/>, you can read the incentive to the national collective meeting:

It is necessary to take the streets and squares of cities and our fields. Joining the voices, the hands. This silence kills us. The noise of the dominant media system echoes in the silence, reproduces the silence, weaves networks of lies that lull us to sleep and annihilate desire. Something must be done against submission and resignation, against the bottleneck of ideas, against the death of the collective will. It is necessary to recall again the voices, arms and legs of everyone who knows that the present and the future are decided in the streets. («Que Se Lixe a Troika! Queremos as Nossas Vidas!», 2014)

On September 15, 2012, the protest took place in the streets, with the participation of hundreds of thousands of supporters, mobilized by the website of the QSLT movement and by sharing information on the social network facebook, being considered in 2013 "the largest demonstration held in Portugal since April 25, 1974" (Nóbrega, 2013)

In conclusion, the concrete example of one of the greatest manifestations in the recent history of the country, the QSLT movement, was supported by the dissemination of information and convocation through the use of activism through the internet, without disclosing the importance of the public manifestation in the physical space, that is, organized protest in the streets. (Babo & Silva, 2016)

1.2 – The Concept of Artivism in the 21st century

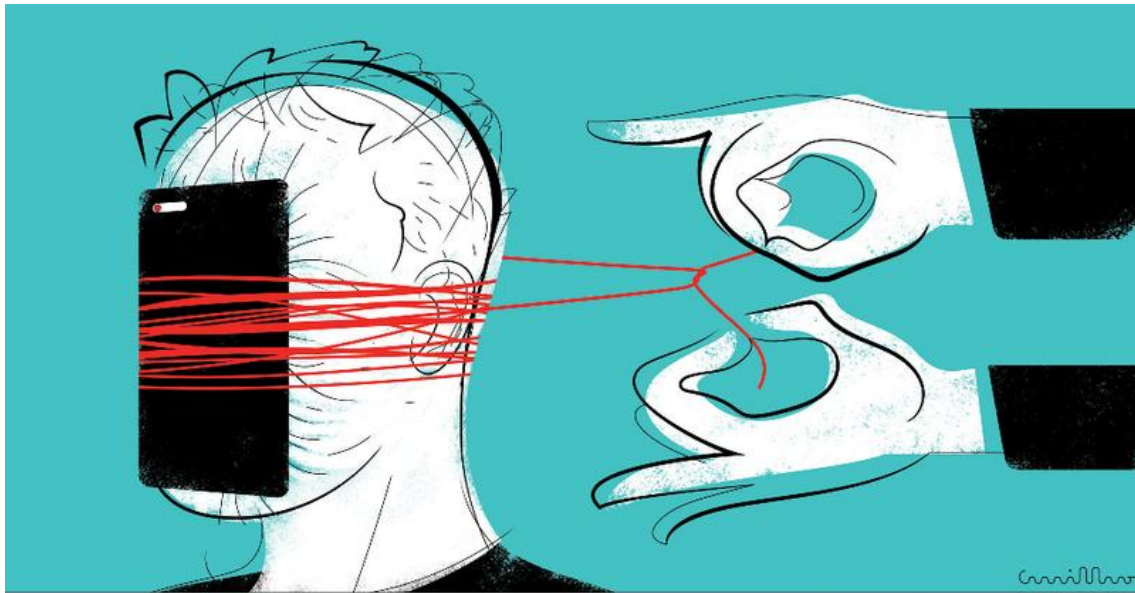
According to the Urban Dictionary, *Artivism* is "The act of using art as a means to protest your discontent for something. It is a combination of the words art and activism." (*Urban Dictionary*). Art Hazelwood, artist and author, in an article dedicated to this concept and its evolution through the ages, dates the most notorious emergence of this interventional art in the post-Great Depression scenario. In the article, Hazelwood asks the question that, according to him, every artist has heard "Do you

really think that art can change the world?" and explains that what defines political art, in comparison with any other, is the intention to have an effect in the world (Hazelwood).

Artivism can be found in varied forms in society, from performative art to examples such as carnivals full of satire and political criticism, as through cartoons that already have a long history or street art, a more recent approach. Art has always been a tool of expression and, in a fusion with the desire for social intervention and political criticism, it becomes an important new form of communication for those who still struggle to have a voice due to oppression (UNIL Université de Lausanne, 2016).

Cartoons are also a means of exposing current events and a form of visual communication that has gained popularity over the years. With the evolution of the media, one can now access this type of content through social networks such as facebook and twitter (Zahid Shaikh & Saqlain, 2016) , as well as in dedicated sections of online news sites such as the New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/topic/subject/cartoons-and-cartoonists>).

A more current example that triggered several artistic expressions loaded with social criticism and an opinion, serving as inspiration for many creations, was the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020. This event in recent world history forced the self-isolation from a considerable part of the world population, which resulted in the use of the internet to promote the most varied art genres, from music to writing and the illustration of cartoons was no exception (SAPO). One of the examples, in the Portuguese scenario, is fig. 6 which the cartoonist André Carrilho, the author, describes with satire in his Instagram account: "Apple reportedly developed its own new face shield design, to deal with the Covid-19. Hopefully it's an improvement on the old design, pictured above." (Carrilho, 2020).



Stayaway Covid

Figure 6- Stayaway Covid

Source: <https://www.dn.pt/pais/o-cartoon-de-andre-carrilho-stayaway-covid-12932210.html>

Furthermore, the internet and social networks are also important tools for the propagation of the *artivism* phenomenon. In the Article *Artivismo y NGO: Relation between Imagen and Engagement in Instagram*, the authors assume this social network, when compared to others, enhances effective communication and mobilization by NGOs with the public. This fact is justified by the artistic potential that the platform's image allows, providing a greater engagement in content that combines art and activism. This is a new form of activist communication in the 21st century, enabled by the digital platforms one has available (Carrasco-Polaino, 2018).

1.3 – The Importance of Visual Representation

With the evolution of social networks, it is possible to witness a transformation from text-based platforms to image and video inclusion, providing a more direct visual experience. Due to the ease of access to smartphones and their digital cameras, it has become common to replace the status described with text by photographs taken and shared in the moment. (Li & Xie, 2020). The results of a study carried out by Mathew Pittman and Brandon Reich show that "the more image-based social media platforms

one uses, the happier, more satisfied with life, and less lonely likely to perceive being” (Pittman & Reich, 2016).

There are also statistics that prove the supremacy of the use of visual representation as a way to capture more public attention. *Video Text vs. Visuals: Which Content Format is Effective?* shows that, ideally, the combination of the two is the most efficient way, although most of the facts presented tend to support the idea that visual images, as well as their aesthetics, have the greatest influence on the perception of information. The most relevant points for this question, listed in the video, are the following:

people following directions with text and illustrations do 323% better than those following directions without illustrations.; When people hear information, they're likely to remember only 10% of that information three days later. On the other hand, if the relevant image is paired with that same information, people retain 65% of the information three days later; Tweets with images receive 150% more retweets than tweets without images (*Text vs. Visuals: Which Content Format is Effective?* - YouTube, 2020).

Gabe Arnold, author of an article in which he claims that "images speak louder than words", expresses that an image effectively communicates with much more information than words can. This is due, in his perspective, to some factors such as the universality of the images, anyone can understand the storytelling behind an illustration, even with few or no words to accompany it, as in the case of children's books. He also claims that humans are visual creatures, understanding information better by making drawings rather than textual descriptions (Arnold, 2015).

One example that makes it clear the power of an image is the Death of Alan Kurdi photograph in 2015. This photograph went viral and, as you can see in fig.7, it depicts the drowning of a three-year-old child who was found on the coast from Turkey (Laurent,2015)



Figure 7- Death of Alan Kurdi

Source: Wikipedia

The act and decision of sharing this image breaks one of journalism's unspoken rules of not advertising photographs and images of dead children. However, the opinion of many photographic directors and experts linked to the media underscores its importance. This is the case of Nicolas Jimenez, director of photography at the French newspaper *Le Monde*, who says:

I'm convinced that until you've shown this photograph, you haven't shown the reality of this crisis, (...) We'd written about it in the past, but we hadn't shown it in such a hard way. I feel that to show like this is an important step (Jimenez)

In this way, these example highlights the violence and truth that an image can convey, when compared to the description in text form, and how powerful the message can be when translated by visual representation. (Laurent, 2015)

Not only photography, but also illustration has a power many times greater than words and written text. According to an article by Hexorial Studio, one of the powers of illustration is to facilitate the understanding of advanced information, as well as confirming the thesis that it facilitates better memorization of information. When it comes to storytelling, the visual is essential, regardless of the medium: photography, video, image, animation. But, according to the article, illustration is the most versatile and increasingly a trend in the digital world, with a growing commitment to the design of virtual platforms, due to the quick connection that the user establishes with illustrated content (Studio, 2021). A great example of this thesis is the coveted covers of *The Economist* magazine. In 2019, the magazine reached, combining digital and traditional readers, a total reach of 1.6 million in 2019 and the illustrations that often precede news

and information have become a mark of the brand. («*The Economist*», 2021). Every year, on the magazine's website (<https://www.economist.com/>) the team elaborates a recap of that year by often reuniting the 10 covers that resemble its' most relevant events («2019 in review», 2019). In 2020's case, the magazine made an article containing a compilation of some of the highlights of their illustrations. Despite the insistence on the theme of the coronavirus pandemic week after week, *The Economist* bet on reinventing and innovating in its illustrations. Although 2020 “was inevitably dominated by one story”, the ideas transported through their drawings were a refreshing way to convey the message covered in their articles («2020, as told through illustration», 2021). Among others, figures 8 and 9 are some of the examples mentioned in the article.



Figure 8- Illustration by Pete Ryan.

Source: <https://www.economist.com/news/2021/01/05/2020-as-told-through-illustration>



Figure 9- Illustration by Bianca Bagnarelli

: <https://www.economist.com/news/2021/01/05/2020-as-told-through-illustration>

CHAPTER II – ARTIVISM IN PORTUGAL

Art as a form of intervention in Portugal dates back to the late 1800's, with the emergence of a new genre of illustration shared in the national press - the caricature. This new form of social intervention gained great popularity among the Portuguese people and was incisive in criticizing the government and society's behavior, allowed by the arrival of Liberalism in the country, establishing free opinion (De Sousa, 2010). Caricature is a genre that differs from others by the exaggeration of characteristics of the target object, thus allowing a clear visual message, mostly resorting to criticism through irony and/or stereotype. This art of intervention is closely related to its context, being a form of communication tied to the present.

The historical moment that allowed the affirmation and dissemination of gender in Portugal was the socio-political situation experienced, not only at the national level, but also at the European level, of the so-called French Revolution. In this sense, print and visual and written communication, namely the distribution of caricatures of the time, served as a weapon against Napoleonic rule.

As mentioned in subchapter 1.3 *The Importance of Visual Representation*, the emergence of caricature in Portugal is also proof that, for a mostly illiterate people such as the Portuguese population at the time, the use of exaggerated and purposeful illustration was capable to convey a strong message and raise awareness among the less educated. In this way, intellectual development was allowed and it was possible to keep Portuguese society up-to-date and able to opine on the state of the country.

The tradition of caricature is very old in Portugal, having documented the various moments of political tension in history in order to defeat people's ignorance and spark critical thinking and action. («Humor, Direito e Liberdade de Expressão», 2016) However, of all the works created over time, the tremendous prominence of Zé Povinho (fig. 10) is evident, the character created by Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro, internationally renowned Portuguese artist, published for the first time in a newspaper in 1875. (Sousa Pinto, 2017)



Figure 10- First appearance of Zé Povinho in the magazine Lanterna Mágica, June 12, 1875

Zé Povinho summarizes in himself the frustrations of the common citizen, social concerns, political discontent, poverty and hypocrisy and this is the reason for his immediate success, as it is a reflection of the people (Sousa Pinto, 2017). This image, despite its first appearance in the 18th century, lasts until today, among immense reinterpretations by various artists, caricaturists and illustrators (Augusto, 1999), later becoming a republican symbol and being reproduced until the present day (Sousa Pinto, 2017). In the figures 11, 12 and 13, it is possible to observe several works from the recent past, elaborated in homage to the character Zé Povinho, as well as to his creator Rafael Augusto Protes Bordalo Pinheiro, each one adapted to the modern art scenario in Portugal.



Figure 11- Super Zé sardine from the Bordalo Pinheiro brand collection



Figure 12- Caricature of Zé Povinho and Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro at Lisbon Metropolitan Airport Station, 2012



Figure 13- Statue of Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro and Zé Povinho, inaugurated in 2021. Leiria, Portugal

Zé Povinho is not the only case of adaptation in the art form and execution in regards of the present time. All forms and genres of art are currently undergoing an adaptation allowed by the fast technological advances of the 21st century. This phenomenon is

global, so the Portuguese case also fits into this need for reflection on the development of the digital world and its connection with art (Martinho et al., 2016).

In a recent article in *Jornal Económico*, Portuguese art curator Inês Valle reflects on the growing trend of investing in digital, predicting a growth in the sector driven by millennial art consumers. She points out that these were the biggest drivers of visits to museums and 100% virtual exhibitions produced by the needs caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic and also celebrates the potential of social networks to increase online art sales, bringing the consumer closer to the artist. Thus, it is concluded the importance of valuing art and the incredible tool that the digital can constitute for the rise of the industry in the Portuguese current panorama (Sousa, 2021).

2.1 – Clara Não – Case Study

This subchapter aims to analyze the work and career of the artist Clara Não as a successful case study in raising awareness among young Portuguese people using social media as a sharing platform for activist illustrations.

Clara Silva is an illustrator from the city of Porto, with a degree in Communication Design from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto and a master's degree in Drawing and Printing Techniques. In her work, she links illustration and writing, a passion she gained in a creative writing class she participated in at Erasmus in Holland (*About - Clara Não*).

In an interview with *Rua* magazine, Clara explains how her Clara Não project was born, starting to share her work on the social network Facebook, which, according to her, "was the most important in 2015" (Silva, 2019). At this moment, it already has 127,000 followers on the Instagram social network, being part of the Portuguese community that has the verified batch⁴ of the app (<https://www.instagram.com/clara.nao/?hl=pt>). Initially, her work focused mainly on the use of textures, transforming over time into a collection of claiming works, where the focus is on the author's activist message (Teixeira, 2018). The artist believes that it is important for someone who makes art to

⁴ A verification symbol is a symbol that appears next to an Instagram account name in search and profile. It means that Instagram has confirmed that an account is the authentic presence of the public figure, celebrity or brand it represents. (Distintivos de verificação | Centro de Ajuda do Instagram)

be able to leave self-centeredness and do something that impacts the world, in order to transform it to the better (Cruz, 2019).

In fig. 14, one of the achievements of Clara's success among her followers can be seen, her book released in 2019 *Miga, esquece lá isso!* —*como transformar problemas em risadas de amor-próprio* or, translated by herself, *Gurl, let it go!* — *how to turn problems into laughs of self-love*, which became a bestseller in Portugal for several weeks (*Miga, Esquece Lá Isso!* - Clara Não).



Figure 14- *Miga, esquece lá isso!* —*como transformar problemas em risadas de amor-próprio*.

Source: <https://www.bertrand.pt/>

This book speaks of love, for others and for oneself, heartaches, anguish and indignation, with a lot of humor and irony, characteristic of her work. It all began with the author's personal experience, who, with the development of several drawings as a form of therapy, realized that these were not just her thoughts, but common situations that could be relatable to several people (Silva, 2019). Clara makes her mission to be the voice of the community, focusing on themes such as feminism, female sexuality and self-love, she intends to convey the message that all feelings are valid, open the discussion on the patriarchy and how machismo is reflected in society, as well as allowing people to talk without taboos about female sexuality, since she believes that

due to the culture perpetuated by the media and society, it is something much more natural and easier for men to express and talk about (Ferreira, 2019).

Clara Não, due to her work and exposure on social media, can be identified as a national DOL⁵. The artist allies with brands through which she believes she can get a message across to the public. One example is the partnership with Garnier Pure Active through the #sem dramas or #nodrama in English, that Clara described in an interview as follows:

My biggest inspiration was the urgency to build self-confidence. In addition to being a recurrent concern of mine, it is also Garnier's focus in this partnership, which has resulted in high compatibility. In the world we live in, always with social networks almost dictating the rules, our self-esteem is often at risk. The illustrations are meant to remind us that our value is not dictated by other people's opinions, nor limited by the standards of society. (Silva, 2020)

In figure 15 three of the illustrations resulting from this partnership are represented, where one can read, respectively: "last year's pants no longer fit you? the problem is with the pants"; "do you have nearby pimples on your forehead? well, at least they have company!"; "Is she after all not interested? whoever isn't interested, doesn't matter".



⁵ [DOL] "Digital Opinion Leaders are people with a committed community of peers on one or more digital platforms and active on a specific subject or therapeutic area." (*The emergence of Digital opinion leaders*, 2021)



Figure 15 - Illustrations by Clara Não in partnership with the #semDRAMAS campaign of the brand Garnier.

Source: <https://miranda.sapo.pt/pele/artigos/clara-nao-cria-seis-ilustracoes-que-celebram-a-pele-semDRAMAS>

Clara Não was also invited and partnered with the Durex brand, which started two digital projects in 2020 with the aim of bringing together Portuguese public figures to talk openly about sexuality, female pleasure, condoms, among other topics. She was invited to the talkshow broadcast on YouTube Durex Talks, presented by DOL Inês Rochinha (available at <https://www.durex.pt/pages/durex-talks>), as well as to the brand's podcast, Durex Intima, where the presenter Filomena Cautela guide conversations about vaginal health. In fig. 16 another illustration is represented, in partnership with the brand, which Clara shared on her Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/clara.nao/>) as a form of advertising for Durex and her participation in the Durex Talks project, where it is possible to recognize a conversation between illustrated versions of herself and Inês Rochinha.

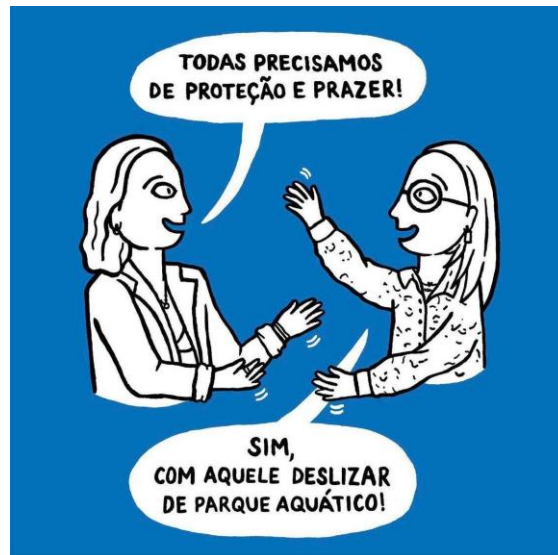


Figure 16- illustration by Clara Não in partnership with the Durex brand, for the Durex Talks project.

Source:

https://www.instagram.com/p/CEKf3VVJNxo/?utm_medium=copy_link&fbclid=IwAR3zuP6axFNvY83dcbi1Vqxclibvtvmj2L5_4ZogAE72cjMuvtzFUS4TfhM

It reads "We all need protection and pleasure! Yes, with that water park slide!" and, in the caption, the artist talks about the importance of condoms and protection, female empowerment and sexual health, once again breaking taboos, with very a explicit and natural use of language, characteristic of her work (Silva, 2020).

In an interview for *Vogue Portugal* magazine, when asked "Do you feel that you are changing the world a little bit with your reflections? What do people say to you?" (Teixeira, 2018), Clara spoke about the impact of her work on the public:

I definitely feel like I'm getting people thinking. Sometimes it's things that people wouldn't otherwise think about, so they're grateful; other times people talk about things I didn't know either, so we all win. Most people identify a lot or share because they recognize themselves or others in that post. There are a lot of people sharing posts on Insta Story. In addition, I receive a lot of really nice, sincere private messages, in which people thank me for the illustrations, and even more for the texts, and where they tell me their personal situations, how the post made them feel better. I am really honored to receive all the affection I have received. It makes me very happy to be able to help. (Silva, 2018)

Her opinion on social media can be considered a bit paradoxical, as she has some criticisms, specifically to Instagram, for becoming a digital place very focused on fame through appearance and filters, although she also admits that if this social network did not exist, her work and message would never have had the exposure it currently has (Silva, 2018).

In conclusion, what makes Clara Não a success story in sharing activist illustrations on digital platforms is a set of several factors analyzed above: raw language, lacking political correctness, making use of profanity and colloquial expressions (Teixeira, 2018) that Portuguese people can identify with, the exploration of current and relatable themes through the junction of drawing and writing (Silva, 2018) and the public expression of opinions about worrying social issues (Silva, 2019).

CHAPTER III – “EU SOU ARTIVISTA” PROJECT

3.1 – Introduction

Eu Sou Artivista is a Portuguese non-profit project that was born from the junction of three premises: Illustration as a means of protest, social networks as tools for raising awareness and the fight in favor of current social causes.

In this sense, the project translates into the use of digital illustration as a means to spread information, draw attention to important topics and motivate the young Portuguese population to engage more in social and political activity.

For this purpose, an online exhibition is organized with small artists, who have developed exclusive illustrations about different social issues. The event is communicated on the project's instagram - @eusouartivista - and through the project's email, with the main target audience being the Portuguese youth group, but not exclusively.

For a better understanding of the artists' insertion in the project, as well as the particular perspective of a guest who dedicates the sharing of her work to social issues and public awareness, an interview was conducted that testifies to the personal opinion and experience of subject 1, Beatriz Almeida, regarding her work as an illustrator and the *habia*ilustrações project, as an invited participant in the project.

3.2 – Objectives

The overall objective of the project is to use the sharing of thematic illustrations through social media to make a difference. Besides the main objective, the elaboration of this project and its subsequent report, aims to further deepen the research on digital illustration and art in the Portuguese digital world, the behavior of Portuguese young people in social networks and their relationship with activism, since the specific case study constitutes a very little explored niche in terms of scientific research.

To achieve the general goal, specific objectives are defined: raise awareness of the various social causes portrayed in the works; give visibility to small artists and activists so that their work is more valued and supported; monetarily support an association that work directly with the issues discussed, through fundraising; further research on activism, social media and young Portuguese people's awareness of social problematics.

3.3 – Methodology

3.3.1 – Platform – online exhibition

The *Eu Sou Artivista* project looks for a solution to address the problems experienced by Portuguese (and world) society due to the limitations imposed by the arrival of the pandemic through the COVID-19 virus, as well as the respective consequences for the national art and culture sector.

Since March 2020, Portugal has suffered two periods of total isolation, forcing the closure of numerous sectors of activity, namely museums. As happened abroad, this was a period in which the watchwords were adaptation and reinventing, making use of the growing popularization of the digital world. People, unable to leave their homes, focused as never before on social media, where culture took the form of Instagram live concerts, virtual exhibitions and online games (Studart, 2020).

The threat of the new coronavirus caused the closure of 90% of museums worldwide, corresponding to 85,000 institutions (*Covid-19 Crisis Closes 90 Percent of Museums Globally, UNESCO Plans for Reopenings*, 2020). The process of closure and consequent extinction of the activity required a quick adaptation to the digital world by the sector, which typically and in general is guided by a more traditional approach (Costa, 2021).

After researching about virtual exhibitions and platforms that provide this type of services, the project creator chose the Emaze website to hold the virtual museum room. Emaze has the following advantages: an intuitive platform, without the need for great technological knowledge or knowledge of the museum sector; a service free of charge for usage; an appealing interface with a visual reproduction of the physical space typically associated with a museum. The works are exhibited on 3D walls, the public is able to move digitally through the virtual room, choosing to move the plane of the exhibited works closer or farther away. In addition, another of the advantages of the online platform is that there is no limit for uploading files, nor for their size, allowing you to use high quality images in the desired number (Farber, 2021).

Figures 17 and 18 are examples of some of the virtual walls of the museum created for the *Eu Sou Artivista* exhibition.

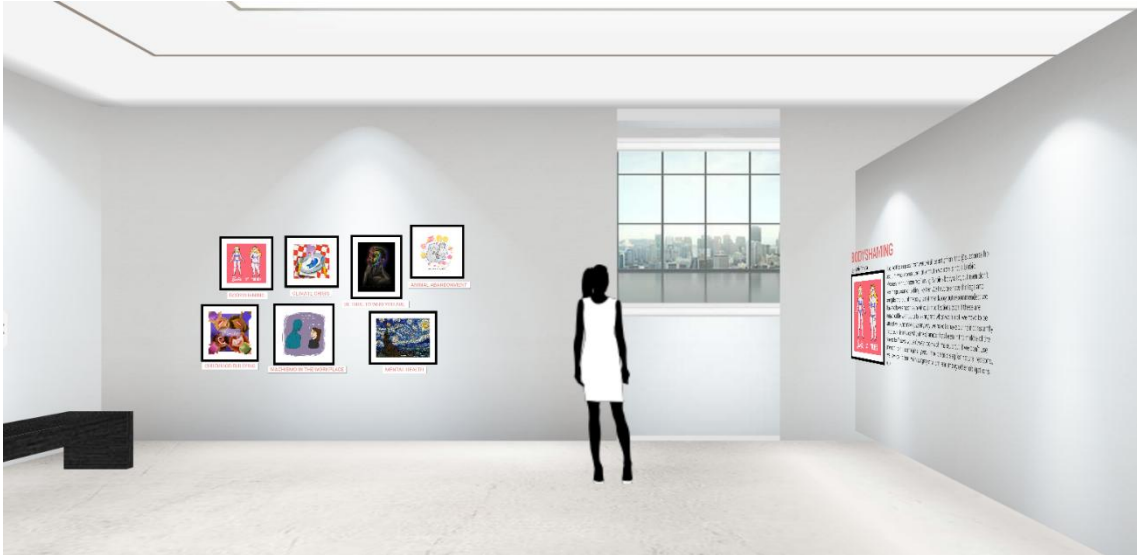


Figure 17- art pieces displayed on the virtual museum walls..

Source: <https://www.emaze.com/@AOQWIQWIT/eu-sou-artivista>



Figure 18- Close up of one of the art works with the respective explanation by the artist.

Source: <https://www.emaze.com/@AOQWIQWIT/eu-sou-artivista>

3.3.2 - Communication and presence on social media

Eu Sou Artivista is a project 100% focused on the digital world, so its communication did not go through the more traditional means of distribution, with the event being publicized exclusively through the social network Instagram, as well as through the email created for the project. Based on an article by Frank M. Waechter, an expert in communication and marketing, the communication plan for Eu Sou Artivista was created in order to fully integrate Instagram, to take advantage of the potential of its reach and proximity to the public. Waechter defends the importance of taking advantage of digital platforms when promoting an event, also explaining the importance of adapting the communication plan to be smartphone friendly, since nearly 80% of attendees use this device to research events (Waechter).

According to the 4gnews website, in 2019 the social network with the highest growth rate in Portugal was instagram, with 4.9 million users nationwide, which make up 61% of the Portuguese who use the internet (Bacelar, 2019). An infographic made available by the Autoridade Nacional das Comunicações shows a comparison between Portugal and the European Union with regard to the use of telecommunications. In the field with

regard to the greatest asymmetries between the two assessed, there is a greater use of social networks in Portugal, which accounts for 63% compared to 56% in the EU (Pinto,2021).

When asked about social media and communication through digital platforms, Beatriz also elected Instagram as her favorite social media platform, mainly due to its variety in ways of sharing content and defends that the digital world is very beneficial to spread awareness to Portuguese young people, alleging that pages like hers reach a lot of people, with weekly frequency of viral posts being shared around Instagram advocating for these themes. (Subject I, Appendix II)

The plan to put into practice in this project consists of the previous organization of posts, using a model of two main images for the dissemination of participants: 1) a carousel post in which the first image is a photograph of the guest, followed by five images of some of their works. The description includes a small presentation of the artist, written by themselves, which tells of his training, his path with art and how the business in the area came about. 2) An image revealing the theme chosen by the artist presented in the immediately preceding post, where some notions about the issue are included in the description. Figures 19 and 20 are examples of both these posts, shared in @eusouartista account in the past:



Figure 19- Post in @eusouartista account present one of the invited artists.

Source: [instagram.com/eusouartista](https://www.instagram.com/eusouartista)



Figure 20- post in @eusouartista account sharing one of the social problematics addressed by an invited artist.

Source: [instagram.com/eusouartista](https://www.instagram.com/eusouartista)

In addition to these two main publications, the plan includes more: 1) the first image shared with the name of the project and its description, informing the audience what it consists of, how it came about, what is the objective and what they can expect from the project. 2) an image containing the transfer data of the Plano i Association, where the description explains the desire to support a cause, the reason for this choice and the work developed by the association.

For the project's research, it was also interesting to understand Subject I's perspective on how much she feels her impact on the people that follow her work, shared through a digital communication platform. Beatriz feels it through messages of appreciation and thanking her since her work allegedly helps her followers, rather than numbers and statistics. She feels motivated to keep going because she knows that somehow her drawings and reflections affect people in a positive way. (Subject 1, Appendix II)

Thus, the project also incorporates this philosophy into Instagram, encouraging messages and comments with feedback for each artist, for the themes to be discussed and for the exhibition in general, in order to spread the message that started the whole idea and that fits together with the perspective of everyone involved in the project's

communication on social networks: the need to alert and raise awareness of current social problems. In order to create a connection with its followers, polls are shared through insta stories where they can vote, after the guest's revelation, on what they think will be the social problematic that he or she will address in their illustration.

3.3.3 - Design elaboration and the importance of color

When creating the graphic line to promote the project on Instagram, there was a need to take into account the content to be shared. Thus, several designs were created for the different information to be given to the project audience. In fig. 21 there are four examples of the design of the following posts: project logo; guest artist presentation with photo and name; illustration in the form of a frame for sharing the guest artist's work, to publicize it to the public of the project; design elaborated to promote the cause the artist chose to illustrate.



Figure 21- some examples of the project's graphic line.

Source: @eusouartvista, templates done by Cátia Correia

After observing fig.25, there is obvious cohesion in the composition of the design at all levels: technique, elements, textures and, above all, colors. Color is a powerful tool for any disclosure, especially when creating a new project or brand. It is necessary to understand color psychology and create a palette that allows the work to have cohesion and consistency through the graphic line. (JUMP) Doing so, the public can identify and relate more to the design and recognize it immediately as work done by that specific project/brand. Creating a strong visual identity is, therefore, a very powerful tool to cause an impact.

In the article “The Colors of Protest”, Giorgia Lombardo showcases the importance of color psychology in protest contexts showcasing the meaning of each color and examples of how it was used in several *Color Revolution* events (Lombardo, 2021). In accordance with this article’s information, the three main theme colors for Eu Sou Artivista were chosen: green, yellow and pink.

Green symbolizes growth and progress – Lombardo gives the example of giving something “the green light” (Lombardo, 2021) – being these two aspects completely in harmony with the project’s goal of bringing awareness and change to important social issues.

Yellow was chosen for being one of the colors that represent happiness and hope. In addition, it also has the power to stimulate the human brain, help decision-making and elaborating critical thoughts about themselves and their surroundings (Lombardo, 2021).

Lastly, pink represents love and femininity (Lombardo, 2021). Given that this project is all about empathy and tolerance towards others and the world, the love aspect of the color pink is fitting. On the other hand, it will also discuss feminist issues and involves all feminist participants, thus the representation of femininity as well.

3.3.4 - Problems addressed in the art pieces

One of the main objectives of the project is to instruct and raise public awareness about various social problems and causes, through the elaboration of illustrated works that

represent, in some way, these same themes. Thus, the artists invited to participate in the exhibition were given the freedom to choose which topic they wanted to address in the drawing. The Eu Sou Artist project opened this option to guests in order to obtain a work that genuinely touches them and which each artist, on a personal level, would dedicate themselves to approaching in a more intimate way.

The project was conceived in the same follow-up to the famous quote by Polish writer Jerzy Kosíński: "The principles of true art is not to portray, but to evoke" (Jerzy Kosinski) from which the creator of *Eu Sou Artivista* derives an inherent need for art to cause feeling, in the one who produces it as well as in the one who receives it.

Beatriz (Subject I), in her work, talks about all kinds of social issues such as feminism, racism, LGBT matters and mental health issues, some of which are portrayed in the project's work. By being a psychology student, she tries to research the facts, correct information and often provides sources for the public to read/search for themselves, bringing attention to the fact that she studies these topics, therefore she is not inventing the information. Nonetheless, the creator of *habiaillustrações* also provides people with personal opinions and perspectives through her illustrations, always aiming and motivating discussion and critical thinking. (Subject 1, Appendix II) These two objectives are common to the project, looking forward to cause some change, spreading information like Beatriz does or even just impacting the receptor with the visual appeal of one of the art pieces, as long as it sparks interest on the topic.

The themes illustrated and dealt with in the process of creating the virtual museum for Eu Sou Artist were the following:

1. *Be True To Who You Are* (on the LGBTQIA+ Community), illustrated by Gonçalo Palha-Martins (Attachment I);
2. *Climate Crisis*, illustrated by Rita Paredes (Attachment II);
3. *Body Shaming*, illustrated by Beatriz Almeida (Attachment III);
4. *Animal Abandonment*, illustrated by Catarina Azevedo (Attachment IV);
5. *Machismo at Work*, illustrated by Beatriz Valério (Attachment V);
6. *Childhood Bullying*, illustrated by Karine Marques (Attachment VI);
7. *Mental Health*, illustrated by Cátia Correia (Attachment VII).

In a more direct or discreet way, all the project's guests used a more personal and intimate perspective to choose the theme they were going to focus on, or else for the

basic idea of their work. For example, subjects II, V and VI used their own life path and respective journeys to develop works of art on themes in which they can be considered protagonists, as they have lived in situations that allow them to talk about them in the first person. (Subjects II, V & VI, Appendix III). Subject II, in turn, was inspired by another post she saw on social media, reinforcing ideas that also touch her on a personal level, being a woman, as well as sharing her personal experience about the ideals of beauty imposed on the female gender and how it impacts her. (Subject II, Appendix III)

According to My Perfect Words blog's List of Common Social Issues Around the World, the 10 most popular social issues are as follows: 1. Covid-19 vaccine; 2. Gay Marriage / Same-Sex Marriage; 3. Gender Identity; 4. Women Empowerment; 5. Hunger and Poverty; 6. Overpopulation; 7. LGBT Adoption Rights; 8. Climate Change; 9. Racism and Religion Discrimination and 10. Health Care Availability (*List of Social Issues - Common Social Issues of 2021*). In this way, it can be considered that, in general, all the participations are dealt with relevant, current themes, consistent with the trends of world topics corresponding to the year of the event's launch, illustrating more or less specific situations that constitute a social issue to be discussed and advocated for.

3.3.5 - Invited Artists

The process behind the choice of guests to participate in the exhibition mostly considered two parameters:

1. Illustrators with little public reach; rising artists; small business owners.
2. Variety in drawing styles, use of colors, textures, and theme approaches.

Criterion No. 1 mentioned above is aimed at the possibility of advertising and promoting the work of artists who need the exposure, the opportunity to participate in a project that can serve as portfolio later on and to engage in the social action that is intended with the creation of the exhibition. The second parameter is related to the will of the project organization to be around variety, to make known to the public different interpretations, opinions, ways of transposing fracturing themes through different shapes, colors, textures, formats and overall approaches and, above all, open a discussion and promote critical thinking.

By combining the two criteria, the project participants are the following artists:

1. The creator of the project, Cátia Correia, illustrator from Porto and student of Intercultural Studies for Business at the Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto.
2. Goncalo Palha-Martins, illustrator and dancer from Lisbon.
3. Rita Paredes, illustrator from Caminha and student at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Porto.
4. Catarina Azevedo, freelance illustrator from Vila Real.
5. Karine Marques, training designer.
6. Beatriz Almeida, illustrator and clinical psychology student at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Porto, from Aveiro.
7. Beatriz Valério, illustrator and animator and student of animated image at the University of UALG - Universidade do Algarve.

The heterogeneity of educational, geographical and professional backgrounds was also a goal to be achieved when choosing the participants. One of the difficulties encountered in the selection and invitation process was the lack of diversity with regard to gender, with women being the dominant ones when it came to researching local Portuguese illustrators when the project was created.

One of the interests of the project is to further explore the connection between illustration and activism, for what it is valuable to also investigate and understand what are the activist illustrators' motivations to create their art and personal projects. For subject I, artists like Clara Não, whose work and career are analyzed in the study case of chapter II, are an inspiration (Subject I, Appendix II). Therefore, the creator of the project was careful to choose artists whose work was also inspiring and captivating.

In conclusion, the choice of participants was taken into account for the importance that everyone would have in the success of the project for the public, in the execution of the illustrations but also in the possibility of further research on the relationship between art, the digital world and activism, objects of little exploration when focusing on the specific Portuguese case.

3.3.6 - Fundraising

The Eu Sou Artist project is directly connected with activism, the discussion about social causes, inequalities, prejudices, etc. Thus, it makes perfect sense that, in addition to the inherent component of awareness through visual and written information, this project should also be allied to a cause, supporting in some way an Association or Institution that fits the project's objectives.

The Plano i Association is chosen one to be supported by this edition of the exhibition of the project. The description on the page about us on your website also summarizes those that are the guidelines and objectives of the project, so it is perfectly suited to the context:

Associação Plano i, based in Porto, is a non-governmental association with IPSS status, which seeks to provide concrete answers to a wide range of current social issues, namely inequality, discrimination, violence, exclusion and poverty. Thus, the Plano i Association presents itself as a collective committed to promoting equality through the dissemination of discourses and the implementation of inclusion practices. Based on different identity belongings, such as gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, sexual orientation and functional diversity, Associação Plano i aims to develop a common social project that values people in what they have to specific: its history, path and culture. ([Associação plano i - O que somos](#))

The project's support is monetary and involves the entire community interested in participating and helping the association. Transfer data are shared, provided via email after acceptance of the invitation, and a publication on instagram @eusouartista is shared with the transferring information needed to send money directly to the institution, in order to encourage the participation of all, to cause a physical and real difference.

3.4 – Results

As this is an unfunded and small-scale project, its quantitative and qualitative results are representative of the scale, provisional and serve only as a suggestion of a possible trend, not as empirical facts for this research. In a first assessment, it is worth noting the impressions of the invited artists that received the invitation, who live in the first-person sharing art through social networks on a daily basis and who, for that same reason, are also recipients of visual and written information. In general, the project was well received by those invited to participate, highlighting the importance of this type of initiative and supporting its purpose and theme. Most of them felt honored and happy to be a part of it (Subjects I, III, IV & VI, Appendix IV).

In terms of tangible statistical results, it is only possible to evaluate the data provided by Instagram, which has a sample of 146 followers. Thus, figure 22 shows the example chosen for the assessment of scope, the first image published in the @eusouartista account, where the project, its context and respective objectives are explained. It is an impartial post, as it does not advertise any of the artists or specific causes, with a total of 267 accounts reached, 105 interactions and 366 total impressions.

Visão geral ⓘ

Contas alcançadas	267
Interações com conteúdos	105
Atividade do perfil	146

Impressões	366
Com origem noutro local	149
Com origem no perfil	124

Figure 22- @eusouartista reach data.

Source: instagram statistics

Other revealing data that Instagram allows access to are the origin and age of the majority of the public that follow the project. Figure 23 contain statistical information from the @eusouartista account, where most of the project's audience was from urban centers such as Porto, Lisbon, Vila Nova de Gaia, Matosinhos and Coimbra. Regarding the age group and, in synchrony with the objective of the project, the vast majority were young people between 18 and 34 years old.



Figure 23- @eusouartista followers' data.

Source: Instagram statistics

It is also interesting to pay attention to the gender of most of the public, an overwhelming percentage of 94.3% are women, with just over 5% male (fig. 24).

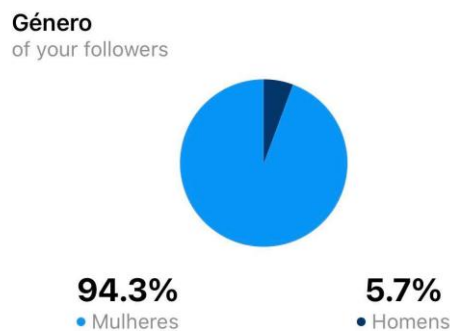


Figure 24- @eusouartista followers' gender data.

Source: Instagram statistics

According to data acquired on google trends, when comparing five search terms related to the themes covered in the project (feminism, LGBT, global warming, mental health and bullying) used in Portugal over the last 12 months, the results are present in the graph of figure 25. The most researched subject is what involves the LGBTQA+ community, reaching its peak in the month of June, possibly because it is the month of LGBT pride, followed by the bullying topic which reached its peak in May. (*Google Trends*)

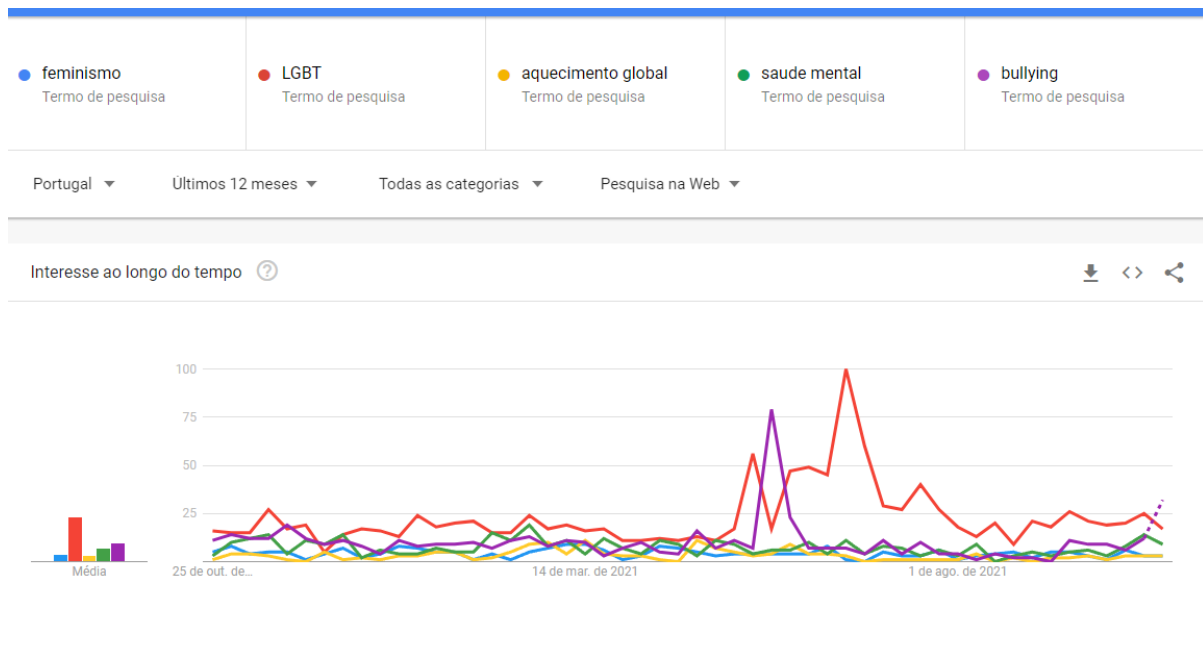


Figure 25- Comparing search for the terms feminismo, LGBT, aquecimento global, saúde mental and bullying in Portugal for the last 12 months.

. Source: Google Trends

3.5 – Discussion

Research work

The elaboration of this project is based on two main objectives: 1) on a practical level, the creation of an exhibition that unites activism and digital illustration. 2) on a more theoretical level, a more thorough research, focusing on the Portuguese scenario, about the digital world and its potentials and/or dangers for the dissemination of intervention art and protest behaviors.

From these premises and, in retrospect, it is possible to conclude a scientific research scenario, about the topic described above, very scarce and poor in relevant information, when it comes to the case of Portugal. The possible case studies, extending the scale to the global, are numerous and objects of several detailed studies. This is the case of the movements referred to in chapter I such as Arab Spring, the #MeToo movement and Black Lives Matter, discussed, evaluated, and researched in various ways and perspectives, where the lack of information is not a reality. In contrast to the international panorama, to be able to assess and discuss the same topic on a Portuguese scale, there is an imminent need to carry out a survey that, unwillingly, inevitably

becomes more superficial, with frequent use of opinion articles, blog posts, news in newspapers and/or interviews taken from the common media.

As seen above, when comparing 2020 data, Portugal is a greater user of social networks than the overall percentage of the European Union, when compared to scale. Nonetheless, the investment in public scientific research, in terms of using them to mobilize the population, demonstrating political discontent or supporting relevant social causes, is not proportional to their use. In this way, it leaves the possibility that in Portugal this type of political action, regarding social networks, is still the object of little interest and investment, when compared to other countries.

Project elaboration

The Eu Sou Artivista project has 146 followers, a sample that more or less corresponds to the initial expectation, assuming that the possibility of going viral on the internet is both frequent and a need for luck, since the apps' algorithm does not provide clear guidelines on how to make a post reach a wider audience without involving monetary investment in the platform's ads. In this way, the residual reach of the project's account was expected, limiting itself to those interested in the topics, friends and followers of the guest artists. In any case, the growth of activist projects on social networks is possible, as can be seen from the case study on the artist Clara Não, so the continuity of evolution and scope of the project is not in question.

It is important to reflect on the notions acquired in the research in this article, which were later put into practice in the launch of the exhibition, exploring concepts such as slacktivism. The initial awareness goals are impossible to quantify other than with the opinions of the participants. It is not possible to guarantee certainties in relation to what was practiced by the project's followers, if there was a real impact on their understanding of each topic, if it fostered a critical spirit or if, on the other hand, it was only a superficial support through simple actions like sharing a story and following an Instagram account. Despite this, the project allowed for the dissemination of small artists and fostered discussion, reflection and sharing among the community of illustrators invited to participate, as shown in their opinions and ideas set out in appendixes II, III and IV.

The data collected in the statistics provided by the Instagram platform, despite being residual and the small sample, can allow for reflection, especially about the target

audience reached. The age group fulfills what was expected and was intended - young people from 18 to 34. However, exploring the gender division can be interesting, namely in the two focus groups of the project - the guests and the recipients. Both at the level of project participants (only 1 man) and the public reached by the account (94.3% women and 5.7% men) the discrepancy are remarkable. Judging by this sample alone, the stereotype that women are more sensitive to both art and social issues seems to be confirmed.

The geographic issue can also be an indicator, with the cities with the greatest reach of the project being Porto, Vila Nova de Gaia, Lisbon, Coimbra and Matosinhos. It would make sense that the artists invited to participate would be the main focus of dissemination of the project, therefore concentrating the spread of the account in the vicinity of their cities. In this case, one would expect percentages (although not very significant) in regions such as Aveiro, Vila Real or Algarve. However, what is constant is that almost all recipients are concentrated in the country's most developed districts - Porto and Lisbon. This indicator may reflect the national centralism, regarding access to information and the use of digital media.

Finally, it is also worth noting the choice of themes and the current situation in the country, where the main issue that devastated Portugal and the world in 2021 was the COVID-19 pandemic, constituting the number 1 problematic mentioned in the list of Common Social Issues of 2021, analyzed in subchapter 3.3.4. When redoing the search on Google Trends, using the 4 most relevant themes from fig.31 and comparing with the COVID research subject for the last 12 months in Portugal, the popularity of the remaining themes discussed in the exhibition becomes negligible, as can be seen in figure 32.

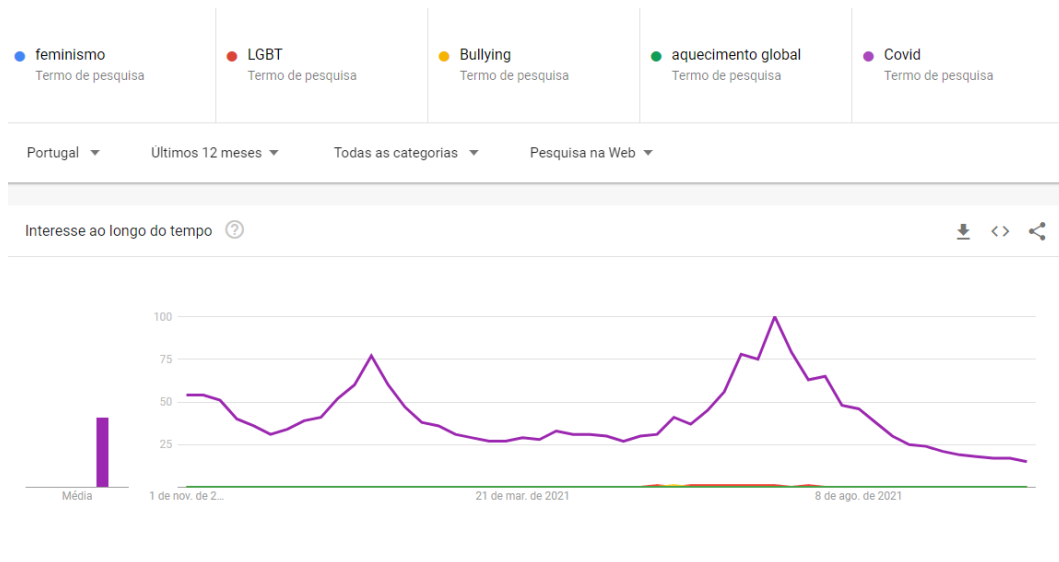


Figure 26- Comparing search for the terms Covid, feminismo, LGBT, aquecimento global and bullying in Portugal for the last 12 months.

Source: Google Trends

Therefore, one may conclude that the COVID-19 pandemic was both a motivation for this project, as well as an obstacle for its success. On the one hand, it constitutes the inspiration for the creation of a 100% digital project, as it boosted the development of virtual museums and exhibitions and concentrated the world population in the consumption of content on the internet, lacking the possibility of a normal routine in the real world. On the other hand, it was also a topic that took some attention away from the other social issues illustrated for the project, since it was the most talked about issue of 2020 and 2021.

This report allows for a deeper analysis and study of the impact that sharing art with an educational purpose on digital platforms can have on Portuguese youth. The introductory literary review reveals the potential of these social networks, presenting the success stories that turned issues of great importance worldwide, such as Feminism and the fight against sexual harassment, the fight against racism and the protest against authoritarian regimes in the Arab world. By focusing on the Portuguese case, it is also possible to assess the impact of the internet on the mobilization of the largest public demonstration to date, since the great revolution of the 25th of April. Nonetheless, it is worth noting the attention needed due to the possible flaws and contradictions that a place of freedom such as the digital one allows. The study of *slacktivism* and its repercussions on actual activist actions is also interesting to reflect on. It is noticeable that, by facilitating protest and discussion, internet also promotes a "lazy" approach on showing interest in social problems, which becomes increasingly easier. In any case, these *slacktivists* do not invalidate the spectrum of possibilities that the virtual world enhances and the advantages it manages to introduce in the fight against inequalities and the public display of opinions and relevant, open discussion.

The *Eu Sou Artivista* project focused on raising awareness, exploring the possibility of a virtual museum, accessible to everyone, in order to expose issues of great socio-political relevance, while also promoting the work of lesser-known artists. Additionally, this combination of concepts naturally boosted the individual research of each one and the consequent combination of all of them in a context of scientific analysis. Through the process of researching for this article, there was an obvious lack of content such as articles, studies and data to support these ideas. Therefore, it is to be expected that, in the future, even more analytical evaluations of these concepts will be established. It is advised to resort to the exploration of different relevant case studies and the distribution of questionnaires that allow a more incisive study of the activist behaviors of Portuguese young people in the networks and the relevance of using illustration as a means of spreading information about current social issues.

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Appendix I – Interview questions

Subject I:

- Question 1 – What motivated you to create the habiaillustrações project?
- Question 2 – Why did you choose instagram social network to share your work?
- Question 3 – What are the themes you cover in your work?
- Question 4 – Do you think the digital world is currently a good tool for raising awareness among portuguese young people?
- Question 5 – Have you been able to feel the impact of your work on the audience that follows you?
- Question 6 – Do you feel that habiaillustrações project is a source of information or a way to help young people to better understand current social problems?

Appendix II – Interview answers

Subject I:

I was inspired by accounts like @clara.nao, that joined art with activism, to create posts that fight for minorities and advocate for social justice causes. I knew that joining my skill with these themes could spark a conversation, and that is my main goal.

Instagram is my favorite social network, despite its many flaws. It has many ways to share my work, from stories to reels to posts, and I like seeing them all together in my profile. However, I am not against sharing it on other platforms, if I feel like it will be a positive impact.

I cover any social justice theme that is relevant or needed at a certain time, ranging from feminism to anti-racism to pro-LGBT themes. I also focus on psychology related issues, like mental health awareness and information about mental illnesses, coping mechanisms, etc.

I definitely think so. You just have to look at the reach that pages of this type have. Every week I see posts going viral advocating for the same topics I talk about, showing that Portuguese people are very much interested in seeing these things discussed.

More than numbers and statistics, I feel the impact when people message me saying my work helped them. When I speak about mental health and someone says they feel less alone, or when I speak about an important social issue and someone says they needed to see that today. That's when I know my work is not for nothing, that I can keep going even if the numbers are not on my side.

I try my best to post correct information, or to provide sources where people can check for themselves. Obviously, my posts will always have my biased opinion, and people can take it or leave it, but I always defend it with facts and with an open mind, so people can decide for themselves if they agree or not. I also always try to mention that I am studying psychology, so people don't think I conjured certain information from thin air.

Appendix III – Artists’ description of each art piece

Subject I

I based myself on a post that went viral recently from the @euaconselho account, which spread the notion that a woman is not a barbie.

The woman feels the pressure of having Barbie's body a lot, but the man doesn't feel the pressure of looking like Ken.

We have to shave the legs and armpits, the rest of the body is not mandatory but recommended; we have to have smooth skin without imperfections even if these are unavoidable; we have to be skinny and when we're not, we have to be attractive to the male gaze anyway; we have to have our hair constantly fixed, even in movies when the character has been in the middle of the forest for 7 days; we can't wear too much makeup but if we don't use men complain, complain anyway; if the breasts sag for natural reasons, we have to lift them, with surgery or a bra; and many other obligations.

You may think: but the woman is not “obliged” to anything! Of course, but do you really think she has free will in these decisions?

You may think “I shave my legs because I want to, not because society says” but the mere idea of a woman shaving her legs is something that comes from the pressure of society.

“I want to be thinner but it's not because society finds it more attractive, I just want to” but if you're healthy, why change? You just want to change because the society you live in finds that body attractive.

But it doesn't matter! Feminism is just that: shave if you want, don't shave if you don't. There is the misconception that to show that we are feminists we do not conform to society's ideals, but it is wrong. Feminism is letting a woman do what she wants! But I argue that she should make you informed and aware of her decision.

So a woman doesn't have to look like Barbie in the picture! But she doesn't have to be like the woman on the left either. Not everyone has every “imperfection” pictured but I can say with certainty that almost every woman should have at least 1. Me? Hairy arms and acne. And you?

Subject II

I chose the LGBTQ+ theme because it is a cause I identify and relate to, hence my final illustration being a self-portrait titled “Be true to who you are” which turns out to be a celebration of my acceptance journey.

Subject III

The theme chosen for this piece was the Climatic Emergency. We literally have the world in our hands, but we live in a mix of lethargy and denial when we are faced with the consequences of our actions. The concept in this illustration arises from the imminent fear of seeing our lives cut short by selfishness and greed. It also springs from the realization that it is counterproductive to plan for a future that, now more than ever, is so uncertain.

Subject IV

The message I try to get across with this illustration is that pets are not toys that are used and then thrown away, the color contrast is intended to convey the message that toys are something that never fades even when abandoned (they are just objects) while the animals are black and white with this abandonment. I was inspired by two dogs that my sister found abandoned in the woods (still homeless for being treated for mange) and two cats that she saved from being drowned by giving them a home. It's so easy to have access to neutering for very affordable or even free prices, why abandoning or killing innocent animals?

Subject V

My Stella was born from a very fragile stage in my life, and in order to pass messages of love, hope, will to live and love to those around us. Much of the initial message on my page is very much linked to the fight against child bullying...which is a message with which i identify, particularly.

Subject VI

This illustration was born from a personal outburst, at a time when I'm going through the last months of my master's degree and the preparation of the final project to be able to finish it and the anxiety, which is already natural to me, increases even more. In this drawing, I intend to share the image of a person who, despite appearing to be normal in

everyday life, is actually drowned in intrusive thoughts caused by anxiety. In this way, the goal is to alert to the importance of mental health and social interaction with some care, since we can never guess what another person is going through internally.

Appendix IV – Artists’ response to project invitation

Subject I

As I already told you, I have every interest in participating! Looks like you did it on purpose for me so well I fit in!

Subject III

I love the idea and feel super privileged to be one of the invited people. I would really like to be a part of it, it has everything to be beautiful.

Subject IV

I thought it was an amazing idea and I gladly accept your invitation! (...) Thank you for trusting me and for getting me involved in this project.

Subject VII

Once again I would like to start by thanking you for the invitation to this amazing project! I feel extremely honored to have the opportunity to participate!

Attachment I – Illustration *Be True to Who You Are*



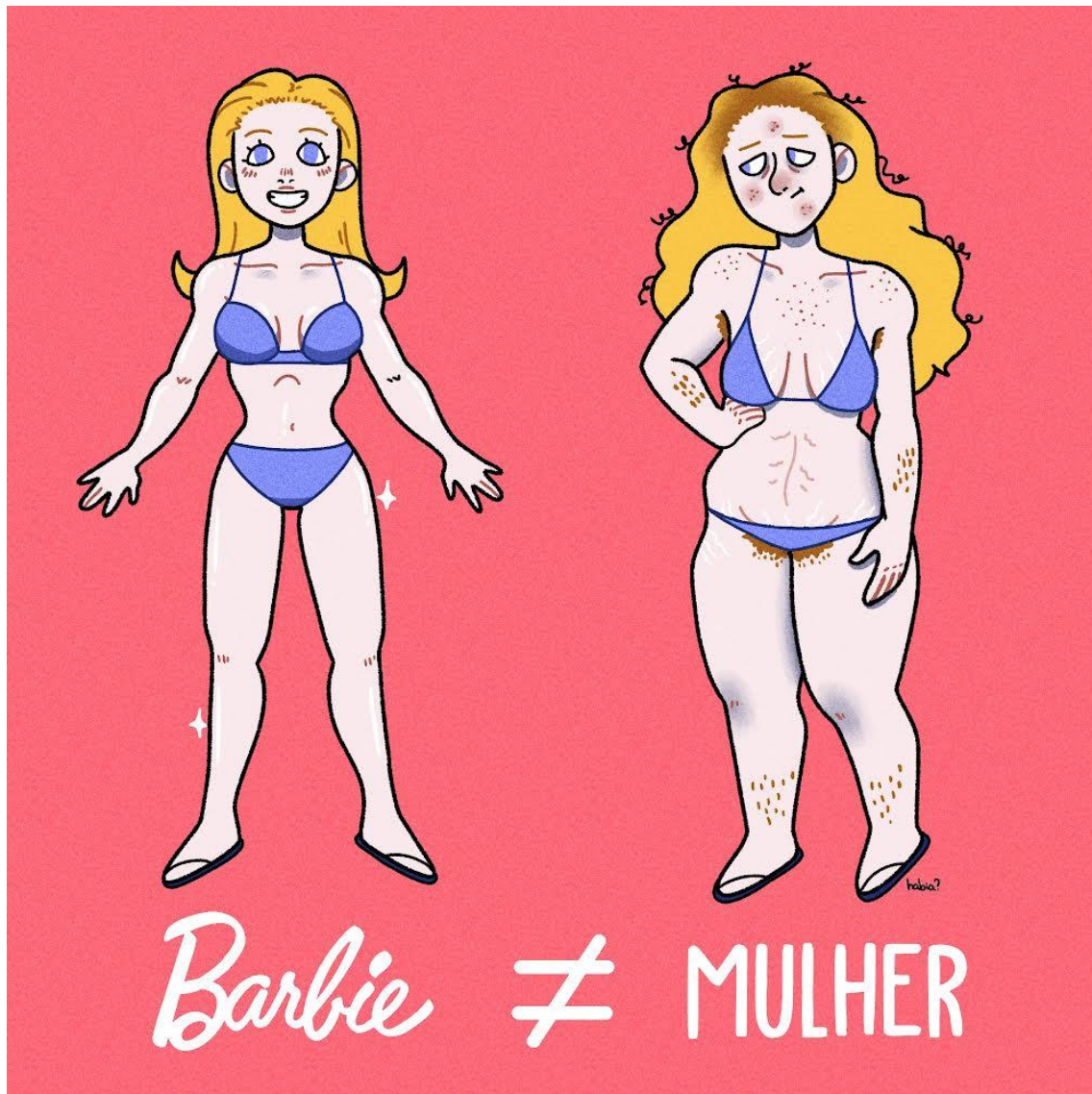
Illustrated by Gonçalo Palha-Martins for *Eu Sou Artivista* project

Attachment II – Illustration *Climate Crisis*



Illustrated by Rita Priscila for *Eu Sou Artivista* Project

Attachment III – Illustration *Body Shaming*



Illustrated by Beatriz Almeida for *Eu Sou Artivista* Project

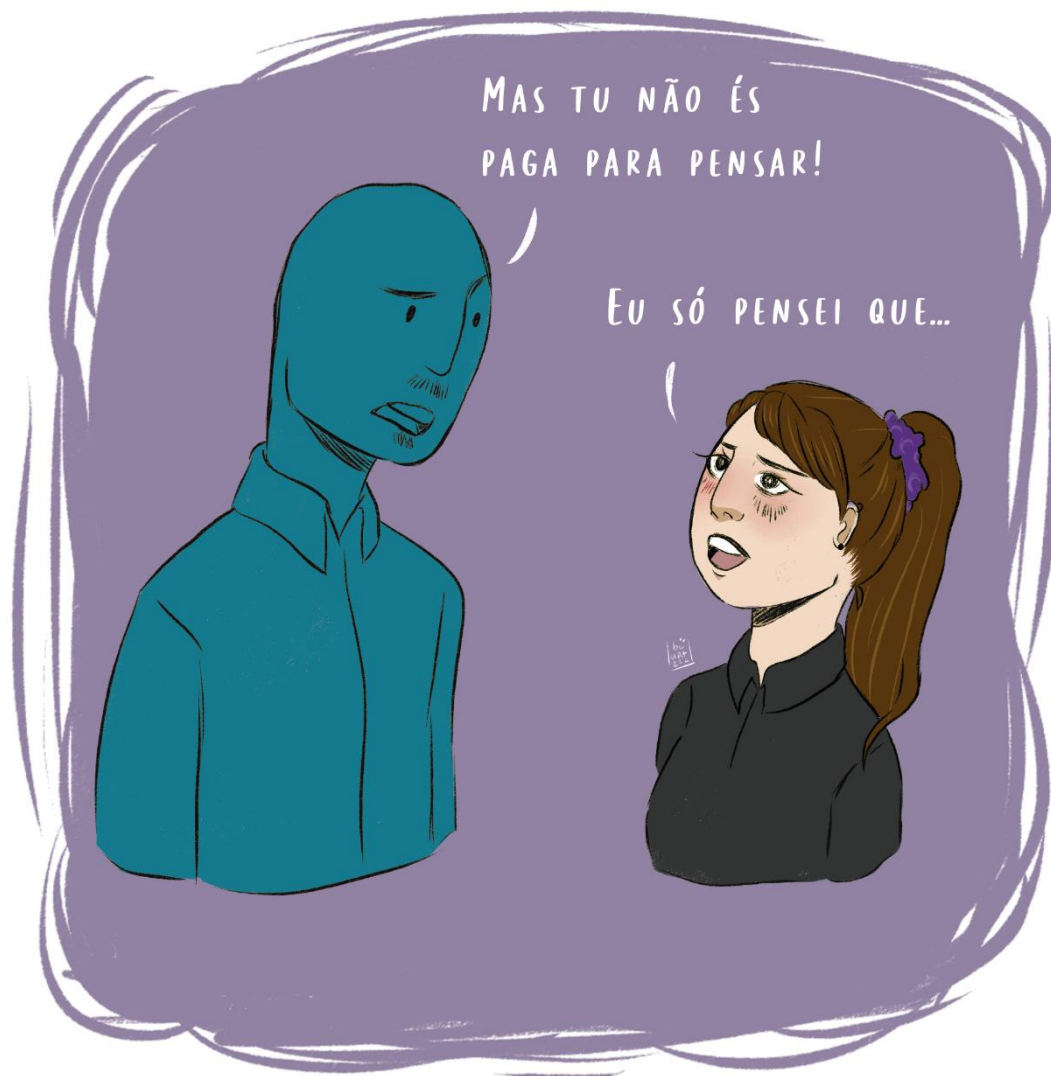
Attachment IV – Illustration *Animal Abandonment*



NÃO SOMOS BRINQUEDOS .

Illustrated by Catarina Azevedo for *Eu Sou Artivista* Project

Attachment V – Illustration *Machismo at work*



Illustrated by Beatriz Valério for *Eu Sou Artivista* Project

Attachment VI – Illustration *Childhood Bullying*



Illustrated by Karine Marques for *Eu Sou Artivista* Project

Attachment VII – Illustration *Mental Health*



Illustrated by Cátia Correia for *Eu Sou Artivista* Project