

Representation of Female Artists in Czech Art Museums

Analysis of museums' acquisitions and exhibitions over the years 2009-2018

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Abstract

This master thesis analyses the representation of female artists in Czech art museums over the years 2009-2018. The thesis aims to fill the lack of similar academic research and tries to provide a complex overview of the current situation for female artists in the Czech Republic as well as come up with suggestions on improving the situation. It focuses on purchased female art and female exhibitions of 16 public art museums. The analysed data set consists of information on nearly 500 female artists and 300 female exhibitions. The method used for analysing the data was correlation, linear regression and calculation of percentage. The research found out that from the total purchased acquisitions, only 17% were by female artists, but the overall trend is positive and is growing. From the total amount of short-term exhibitions, only 11% were dedicated to female artists and that 62% of the graduates of art schools in the Czech Republic are women.

Keywords

Female acquisitions, female exhibitions, art museum, gender inequality, Czech art market, quantitative research.

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1 Introduction

Having art work(s) in the collection of a public art museum can help artists to build their careers and be a breaking point for them. Institutional acquisitions can affect their careers by improving their visibility in the art world and increase the market demand and thus the prices of their productions. In 1971, Linda Nochlin, an art historian, published an essay '*Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?*'. She argues that the reason for the lack of good women artists is that girls have almost zero access to quality art education, and since they cannot obtain proper education in art, they also cannot become great artists consequently. Nowadays, in a Euro-American society girls have the same rights to study at art schools as boys do. Despite the right to choose their studies freely, female artists are still overlooked in the art world on an international level. This is surely a reason for discussion as to why has not the situation changed much since Nochlin's revolutionary essay. One of the possible answers may be that women are not as biologically equipped to produce an art work of a same or a better quality as men are. But according to a research by Adams et al. (2017), that studied if men can identify art works that were done by women artists, female art does not exist. The success rate of those men in identifying the gender of the art work was only 50.5%, statistically meaning as random. This implies that gender has no impact on the creation of art, men are not prone to be producing better pieces of art than women. The gender of the artist has no effect on the quality on the final work.

To explain the inequality of representation of women artists, we have to look somewhere else. Linda Nochlin (1971) implies that this problem is rooted in institutions, that they support the imbalance between the genders and in order to solve the problem, rather than to focus on each individual, it is suggested that the change should start on premises of the institutions, within their management. How they tell the story of art history and present it to public should be revised and be more inclusive. Has the narrative changed over the past 50 years? Are art institutions paying more attention to female artists?

According to recent research, the country that seems to be trying to change the course the most is the United States of America. There are visible initiatives that are trying to bring attention towards this topic as well as to solve the problem. The most noticeable recent event that took place under these circumstances was the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA hereinafter). In November 2019, the museum announced that they will be collecting works by female artists only and that women-only exhibitions will be organized in the year 2020 (Ober & Kirkman, 2019). This decision came as a reaction to the research by Artnet News that

found out, that only 11% of the museums' acquisitions in the USA over the last decade were by female artists and only 14% of the exhibitions were dedicated to women artists (Halperin & Burns, 2019). The museums in the USA claim that they are committed to focus on obtaining more art works by women, yet the conditions of equal gender opportunity can still be improved. The BMA itself claims, that they have only 4% of works by female artists in their collection, hence the radical move. It is a reaction to the vague and shallow claims by other museums, which talk about changing the imbalance of male and female artists but in reality have done little about it (Ober & Kirkman, 2019). This is one way of changing the historical canon and it is debatable whether this decision was right or wrong. Yet it is definitely a strong statement and a message to all of the other museums and art institutions not only in the US, but all around the world. This case played an inspirational role for me in choosing a research topic for this thesis.

No research has been done on the matter of imbalance of male and female artists represented by museums in the Czech Republic so far. This thesis aims to fill this void by conducting a study on the representation of female artists in Czech museums of art. The research strives to stir a discussion on such an up-to-date topic that is central in the art world discourse. Topics such as gender equality, gender pay gap, and feminism are still not viewed as relevant and not as important throughout the Czech society. Therefore, they are not given the attention they should receive, hence the lack of academic research regarding the gender disparity within museums and galleries. The approach of Czech society towards these subjects is rather out-dated, since the majority of the society still believes in and stresses out the traditional roles of women. Women are seen as people that should primarily manage the household and bare children. This approach is mostly prevalent in the smaller towns and rural areas of the country; cosmopolitan bigger cities such as Prague or Brno are trying to be progressive and tackle the topic of gender equality more responsibly.

The aim of this thesis is to draw a picture of the current situation in public art institutions in the Czech Republic and find out how they represent female artists, though the first motivation was to include private galleries as well, but the data required for this research would be hard to obtain since privately owned galleries do not display the information about their acquisitions publically. The chosen method for this research is a quantitative research and the data were collected mostly online, in a few cases offline. The Czech Republic has 14 regions, each region has its capital city and its regional museum of art, hence the institutions for the research were chosen respectively to each region, every one of them being a non profit organisation funded either by the state, region or municipality. Thus 14 public art institutions

were included, together with the National Gallery in Prague and one foundation, which is the only privately owned museum of art in the country and holds a strong position on the Czech art market. The research analysed data that were scraped from annual reports from each of the institutions' website or archive throughout the years 2009-2018. The focus of this research was on purchased acquisitions of female artists and short term female exhibitions. Correlation and linear regression analysis were then used for analysing the gathered data as well as a simple percentage formula to calculate the overall representation of female artists.

This master thesis is organized as follows. The first part is dedicated to a theoretical framework, which briefly discusses the topic on representation of female artists and opens up a debate on the current issues within this area. It is followed by a literature review, which surveys recent research in the field of interest of this thesis. It touches topics such as a 'glass ceiling' or gender pay gap. The methodological part along with the actual research that follows right after, being the most important part of the thesis, makes up to two thirds of this work. It focuses on the method of the research, the characteristics of the data set and the analysis of the collected data, followed up by discussion of limitations and possible extensions of the research.

Research objective: *The analysis of representation of female artists in Czech art museums over the years 2009-2018 through their acquisitions and exhibitions.*

2 Theoretical framework

Art historian Linda Nochlin (1971) in her ground-breaking essay '*Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists*' opened up a debate on gender issues in the art world. Up until then women artists have been seriously underrated and overlooked. What exactly was the cause of this? Particularly she argues, that the reason for the lack of women artists is that they were not allowed to study along with their male counterparts and hence did not receive the same education and artistic training as men did that was needed to become a renowned artist. Fifty years later, a lot of Linda Nochlin's views are rather outdated. Women in Western countries have equal rights as men, they are free to choose their field of study and their future occupation. Moreover, they have access to all of the universities and art academies and they have the means to acquire the much needed art education that can help them in becoming great artists. Yet they are still underrepresented and not equally paid as men artists.

So why is that? Nochlin pointed out that: "Thus the question of women's equality-in art as in any other realm-devolves not upon the relative benevolence or ill-will of individual men, nor the self-confidence or abjectness of individual women, but rather on the very nature of institutional structures themselves and the view of reality which they impose on human beings that are part of them" (Nochlin, 1971, p. 6). Probably, it is pointless to blame one or the other, because that only creates more inequality and bigger differences. We need to look at the problem from a more complex view.

Every one of us has certain bias incorporated in them. Pierre Bourdieu came up with the notion of *habitus* (Atkinson, 2019). This phenomenon is inscribed in each of us through the ways that we are brought up. It consists of two systems or schemes: 'system of dispositions' and 'schemes of perception'. The system of dispositions concludes that "we are inclined to act in certain ways" (Atkinson, 2019, p. 11) and the schemes of perception point out that we are disposed to always see an object or a person in a certain way, in other words shadowed with different stereotypes. It is our family, social interactions and institutions that shape these kind of assumptions. Nochlin (1971) draws one of her conclusions to her proposed question as such "[...] art is not a free, autonomous activity of a super-endowed individual, 'influenced' by previous artists, and, more vaguely and superficially, by 'social forces,' but rather, that the total situation of art making, both in terms of the development of the art maker and in the nature and quality of the work of art itself, occur in a social situation, are integral elements of this social structure, and are mediated and determined by specific and definable social institutions, be they art academies, systems of patronage, mythologies of the

divine creator, artist as he-man or social outcast” (p. 11). This calls for a need in institutional change of attitude towards female artists. But what is the right way to do that? Are female artists really so underrepresented as it is currently claimed in the art world?

One of the problems regarding this matter is the limited research on women in art. As Suzanne von Rossenberg (2017) pointed out, “[...] the impact of ‘feminist art’ is not being monitored or evaluated, which makes it impossible to know whether social change is created” (p. 172). The big question is not whether the current global economic situation is able to adjust and create equal conditions for women, but if it won’t oppress the “other” groups on its way to reaching equality (Rossenberg, 2017).

Clearly there was lack of supply of the female artists until the 70s, as there were bad conditions for them to study art and become artists eventually. But today, about 50% of fine arts graduates are female in the US, which shows that women are not less interested in art than men, yet female artworks at auctions still make up less than 4% (Bocart, Gertsberg, & Pownall, 2018). According to Davis (2015), female college graduates still make about 22% less than their male counterparts. There are several opinions that try to explain this phenomenon, such as the male dominance of male auctioneers (Shaw, 2017), which contribute to the uneven monetary distribution between the genders or the still persisting gap in directorship positions in art museums. According to a study by Association of Art Museum Directors by Treviño, Voss, Anagnos, & Wade (2017), female directors of art museums were 43% in 2013, increasing up to 48% three years later. Salary inequality is still persistent. Changing this institutional setting might have positive outcomes not only on female artists’ salaries but on their recognition as well. According to Lisa Phillips, the director of New Museum in New York, part of the cultural bias is that women do not control the same money as men, which contributes to the persisting gender division. As a consequence, the market then undervalues them (Sheets, 2016).

Value of art

Valorisation of art is a difficult process and taste plays its role as well. Public is influenced by what they observe in galleries, museums, and art institutions, and the lack of female artists then has an impact on their point of view and their preferences (Adams, Kräussl, Navone, & Verwijmeren, 2017). Changing the historical narratives might not be the main goal within the art world, but it is more about what stories are the museums and art institutions telling now, that shape the peoples’ points of view, their tastes and preferences. If art institutions continue in this outdated narrative of imbalanced representation, they might

face decrease in their membership programs and in numbers of their visitors because, simply given, art institution's visitors are not only white prominent male, but the crowd of museum-goers is rather heterogenic and want to see more inclusivity. The leaders of these institutions are often reluctant to make such changes. Helen Molesworth, the former chief curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles notices that the institutions suffer from being behind the public in these matters. There is a clue that implementing such changes might increase the number of visitors and bring more members. In 2018 the show of Swedish female artist Hilma af Klint in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in New York increased the membership by 34% and ended up the most attended show in the museum's history (Halperin & Burns, 2019). Changing these narratives could help the marketing strategies of the museums as well, opening doors to different target groups.

New market potential

Female artists formed a new market potential that might be interesting not only for building up collections but also contributing to the art institution's, be it commercial gallery or public art museum, ability in attracting new visitors, members, partners, and sponsors. Being more inclusive can lead to a better media image as well, strengthening the organisation's positive reputation amongst the public. According to a recent study by Sotheby's Mei Moses, there is a whole new market for female artists. They found out that women artists are actually more successful in the auction resale than men artists. In the years 20012 - 2018, the prices for female art rose by 73% whereas the prices for male art increased only by 8%, there is certainly a growing demand for female artists (Cascone, 2019). Some art organisations have already started changing their attitudes, yet some view them as radical or controversial. Prominent American museums, such as Baltimore Museum of Art and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art are part of this new wave. Baltimore Museum takes radical steps and announced that this year (2020) it will purchase only works by female artists. To obtain the financial means to do this, they went to such lengths as selling works by prominent white male artist (Halperin & Burns, 2019). Another example is New York gallery Pen and Brush, that showcases only women artists. According to them, it is a good way to show people, that there are enough good works by women and that the change of the social bias should be and can done through these ways. Some art professionals are being sceptical towards this attitude though, pointing out that this is just "preaching to the converted" (Sheets, 2016) and having potentially no impact on the art world.

So the question remains, whether solo-women shows and purchasing only art works by female artists have the ability to close the gender gap and therefore create better appreciation for female artists or will imposing radical change and quotas on female representation cause gender-oriented view of art and result in moving away from the quality of the artwork itself? The purchases shape the stories that the art institutions tell, but as Halperin and Burns (2019) point out, when preferring one gender over the other, or any group based on other homogeneous characteristics, it might result in a draw back for the curators as well as decrease in the quality of the program.

3 Literature review

Gender equality has been discussed in many sectors in the past years. It is crucial to acknowledge, that it is the Western world, that has been talking about this topic, especially the situation in the art world is discussed mostly in the USA. Western Europe slightly follows, yet the countries of Central and Eastern Europe lack relevant studies that would research gender imbalance in the art sector thoroughly. However, in the Czech Republic, Czech Statistical Office collects every year data on employment and focuses on gender pay gap in the country as well (Czech Statistical Office, 2019). It has to be mentioned that gender pay gap doesn't show the connection with gender discrimination, because the collected data lack the information on what kind of work women execute, what professional education do they possess, and other characteristics that would be relevant in assessing whether gender discrimination is present (Bárová, 2017).

<i>Indicator</i>	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Females										
<i>Average wage</i>	22 414	21 931	22 133	22 496	22 729	23 203	24 094	25 283	27 187	29 627
<i>Median wage</i>	19 797	19 453	19 731	20 042	20 271	20 660	21 461	22 573	24 477	26 678
Males										
<i>Average wage</i>	29 953	27 660	28 431	28 873	29 026	29 721	30 842	32 134	34 293	37 008
<i>Median wage</i>	24 158	23 059	23 533	23 652	23 955	24 670	25 688	26 974	29 006	31 433
Total										
<i>Average wage</i>	26 677	25 116	25 625	26 033	26 211	26 802	27 811	29 061	31 109	33 684
<i>Median wage</i>	22 229	21 453	21 782	21 997	22 266	22 844	23 726	24 934	26 843	29 184
<i>Female average wage as a percentage of male average wage</i>	74,8	79,3	77,8	77,9	78,3	78,1	78,1	78,7	79,3	80,1
<i>Female median wage as a percentage of male median wage</i>	81,9	84,4	83,8	84,7	84,6	83,7	83,5	83,7	84,4	84,9

Figure 1 Structure of Earnings Survey; Source: Czech Statistical Office, 2019

The table above shows average and median wages of female and male workers in the Czech Republic over the year 2009-2018. The numbers are in Czech crowns. We can see, that women still earn less than men, but there is an increase in the percentage. In 2009 female average wage was 74,8 % and median wage 81,9%. Ten years later the average has grown up to 80,1% and the median wage to 84,9%, yet it is obvious that it still has to increase by 20% to reach up to the male average and median wage.

Despite the gender pay gap, a lot of women hold managerial and rarely even leadership positions, but it is still common for them to be unable to advance their careers and move to the absolute top management. The invisible barrier that prevents women from advancing their carrier is called 'glass ceiling'. The term metaphorically expresses the fact, that even though women have the ability to advance to the top management and leadership, they seldom succeed to overcome this invisible barrier (Bárová, 2017).

1) Glass Ceilings in the Art Market (Bocart et al., 2018)

Study by Bocart et al. used a data set consisting of population of Western artists in the years 2000-2017, with over 2.6 million auction sales and found out, that "women are less likely to be traded in the secondary (auction) market. This selection bias may explain the average 4.4% price premium found for female artworks at auction" (Bocart et al., 2018, p. 5). This is likely due to a supply squeeze caused by a small number of female artists located at the top 1% of the market. This study also empirically proved, that: "[...] the superstar effect which is a characteristic of the art market is more prevalent within the group of female artists than within the male segment" (Bocart et al., 2018, p. 32).

2) Diversity of artists in major U.S. museums (Topaz et al., 2019)

This research was done by Topaz et al. and its aim was to analyse the diversity of artists in major museums in United States. The researchers gathered data by scraping online catalogues of 18 museums. They retained the museums' name, artists' name together with a web site link that lead to their entry in the museums' collection. The analysed data set included a sample of 10.000 artists and recorded their gender, ethnicity, geographic origins and birth decades. It included a time span from the early modern period to present. The results showed that 85% of the artist represented by the museums are white, and 87% of the the total amount of artists are men. It has to be pointed out that this study shows only the demographics of the western art world, as all of the other mentioned (Topaz et al., 2019).

3) Is Gender in the eye of the beholder? (Adams et al., 2017)

The study 'Is gender in the eye of the beholder? Identifying cultural attitudes with art auction prices' by Adams, Kräussl, Navone, & Verwijmeren (2017) found out, that the average result for 1.5 million auction transactions between 1970-2013 in 45 countries (the Czech Republic was not included) for 62 442 artists is \$48,212 for men and \$25,262 for women. The study tries to explain this almost 50% difference between the results by

conducting a research on how wealthy men view works by female artists. The participants were asked to guess the artist's gender and their success rate was 50.5%, which is statistically labelled as random. This means, that there is no such thing as a female art. No art has the qualities that could be labelled as prominently female, hence the fact that female artists get paid less cannot be explained by biology, this explanation simply cannot be accepted.

4) The ongoing gender gap in art museums directorships (Trevino et al., 2017)

Aim of this study was to map out the situation in directorships throughout art museums in the U.S. with the focus on gender gap. The data was collected in 2016 from museums throughout the country. The research found out that there are “clear disparities in gender representation depending on budget size” (Treviño, Voss, Anagnos, & Wade, 2017, p. 2). Majority of museums with less than \$15 million are run by female directors, which is the exact opposite of the “richer” museums. This research showed that when budget size increases, female representation decreases proportionately. As for the salaries, women are also at a disadvantage: “female directors tend to have lower salaries than their male counterparts” (Treviño, Voss, Anagnos, & Wade, 2017, p. 2), yet the study also found that some museums with higher average budget have a less salary gap. Out of all of the studied museums, 48% of directors were female, and for each dollar men earn at the museums with bigger budget, women earn 75 cents. At the museums with lower budgets, women earn 98 cents.

5) Museums Claim They're Paying More Attention to Female Artists. That's an Illusion (Halperin & Burns, 2019)

This recent research was carried out by ArtNet in 2019, and it studied acquisitions and exhibitions in 26 prominent American museums over the past decade. The researchers found out, that only 11% of acquisitions were of women artists and only 11% of exhibitions were female. These numbers have been stable for the past decade, they did not increase, but they peaked 10 years ago, which might raise a question, why have not they been increasing. This research showed that the progressive change, that has been talked about in the art world recently, is a myth (Halperin & Burns, 2019).

4 Research

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 The aim of the research

The objective of this study is to fill in the gap in the academic literature on the representation of women artists in museums of art in the Czech Republic. Specifically, the aim of this research is to find out the percentage of female artists in art museums' collections and the percentage of female exhibitions of the chosen museums. This research aims to add to the on-going international discussion on the female representation in the art world and wishes to open the same debate in the Czech Republic. A suggestion on how to improve the current situation will be drawn upon the analysed data, together with the limitations of this research and implications for future studies.

This master thesis research also aims to provide complex view of the gender inequality of art museums by providing data on graduates of art schools.

Research objective: *The analysis of representation of female artists in Czech art museums over the years 2009-2018 through their acquisitions and exhibitions.*

4.1.2 Data set characteristics

The studied data set consists of information on acquisition activities and exhibitions organised by 16 museums of art in the Czech Republic. The data shows information for the years 2009-2018 and is focused primarily on female artists. Given the fact that data on collections are hard to obtain from private galleries, this research encounters public institutions only, since they are obliged to display their collections and acquisitions publicly, usually online. The analysed data will be gathered from art museums that are funded by state, regions or cities, hence are classified as non-profit organisations.¹ The museums were chosen according to their relevance for the Czech art world, as the goal of this research is to describe the situation on Czech art scene as thorough as possible, therefore the research was focused on the national level.

The Czech Republic is divided into 14 regions, including the capital city Prague which functions as a separate region. Each region has its own art museum that exhibits, collects, and

¹ In Czech language, the words 'gallery' and 'museum' are commonly missused and confused for one another. Art museums are normally regarded as galleries, usually bearing the word in their official names as well, e.g. The National Gallery in Prague (which is in fact the national museum of art).

restores works of art, including paintings, graphics, photography, multi-media installations and applied art. The mission of these institutions is also to participate in academic research, provide methodological concepts for research and educate the inhabitants of that region and provide them with accessible culture as it is one of the aims of the cultural policy of the country (Ministry of Culture, 2017). All of the 14 regional museums of fine art were included, namely: Prague City Gallery, Moravian Gallery in Brno, GASK – Gallery of Central Bohemia Region, Regional Gallery Liberec, Gallery of Fine Arts in Ostrava, The Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Králové, Gallery of Modern Art Roudnice nad Labem, Gallery of Western Bohemia in Pilsen, Regional Gallery of Fine Arts in Zlín, Karlovy Vary Art Gallery, East Bohemian Gallery in Pardubice, Vysočina Regional Gallery in Jihlava, Olomouc Museum of Art, South Bohemian Gallery of Mikoláš Aleš, together with the National Gallery in Prague and Museum Kampa in Prague – Foundation of Jan and Meda Mládek. The National Gallery is the most important and biggest art institution in the country, hence it could not have been omitted, and Museum Kampa is the only art foundation with a huge collection of fine art in the Czech Republic and holds a strong position in the art sector in the country.

The data set was divided into two parts – information on acquisitions and on exhibitions. Part of the acquisitions focused solely on purchases, gifts and free transfers from the founder were not taken into account. Purchases are the best way to analyse the institutions' intentions, because it shows how they allocate their funds and thus it can be indicated whether they support more female or male art. Each gallery has its own acquisition committee which submits a purchase proposal. They function as a gatekeeper between the artists and the institution, hence the organisation can be perceived as a gatekeeper between the artists and the public and holds a power in shaping people's opinions and views. Gifts and free transfers from the founder do not show such intentions, because they are usually gifted to the institution from the artists on the account of their own decision, hence art works that were given to the institutions do not really show the intentions of the museum and where they want to invest their finances, i.e. whether they support more female or male artists.

The data in the acquisition part of the data set include: name of the institution, year, name and gender of the director, total number of purchased acquisitions per year, total number of purchased acquisitions by female artists, name of the artist, their birth decades, name of the artwork (if available), number of pieces of the artwork, technique (if available), see appendix. The data set consists of around 500 female artists. The art works were counted by pieces, not by sets or series of art works, yet few disparities might occur, since information on purchases and gifts have not yet been fully digitalized by all of the institutions.

The second part of the data set consists of information on exhibitions, particularly short-term exhibitions. Long-term expositions were not taken into account, hence not included in the data set. The reason for that was that long-term expositions are usually a showcase of the institution's collection and since the museums usually first organize an exhibition and then add the artist/artists to their collection, including the expositions in the dataset would not be relevant for this research. I focused only on the exhibitions that the institutions organized on the premises of their organisation, exhibitions that were carried out by the employees of the respective institution some place else were not taken into account, as well as exhibitions that were organized on the property of the respective museum by another institution were not considered either. In order to prevent confusion and double counting, the exhibitions that were included in the total number of each year were the exhibitions that started in that particular year, e.g. if we look at the studied year 2009, only the exhibitions that started in 2009 were included, not exhibitions that overlapped from the year before and only ended in the beginning of the year 2009.

The data in the exhibition part of the data set include the name of the institution, year, total number of exhibitions per year, number of group exhibitions, number of solo male exhibitions and number of solo female exhibitions per year. Female exhibitions were identified and the name of the artist as well as the name of the exhibition was indicated, together with the name and gender of the curator, see appendix. The data set includes information on almost 300 female exhibitions.

4.1.3 Data collection

The data set consists of two sets of data – acquisitions and exhibitions. The computer program used for recording the data and computing the analysis was Excel. Every year, public institutions in the Czech Republic are obliged to write an annual report on their branch activities and economic situation that took place over the year. Art institutions should include their acquisitions, as it is part of their mission to collect art works. Besides acquisitions, they include the overview of the expositions and exhibitions, as well as other related activities, such as accompanying program etc. The data collection proceeded as follows. From each of the gallery's websites, annual reports were downloaded. The examined subjects were 16 museums in total, in the time period of 10 years, hence 160 annual reports were precisely studied and data on acquisitions and previous exhibitions were scraped off of them. The missing data on exhibitions were collected from the archives on the web sites of the museums. Unfortunately, not all of the annual reports were available and not all of the data could have

been tracked down on the web sites of the institutions, therefore employees, usually the collection managers or PR workers, of the respective museums were contacted to provide the missing data on acquisitions. Despite the nature of the institutions being a public cultural organisation, non-profit, state/regional/municipally funded, some problems occurred when asked about the missing data. Not all of them were willing to provide me with the data for academic purposes, regardless of the fact that they are obliged to be transparent with such data and support academic research. The second problem was that the data was not always digitalized, which slowed down the process of data collecting and the whole research tremendously. In one case, I had to go to the museum's archive by myself and study their acquisition books in their archive. This also indicated how public institutions in the Czech Republic need to change their attitude towards scholars, be more cooperative and open to research and that there is a desperate need for them to catch up with the demands of the digital society that we live in now.

Czech art market overview

The market for art in the Czech Republic has been shaping only in the last 30 years. The former Czechoslovakia has been under the communist regime for almost 40 years, until the Velvet Revolution in 1989, when the country gained freedom and broke ties with the USSR. In 1993 the country split in Czech Republic and Slovakia, establishing two sovereign states. During the communist era, private business was prohibited, hence there were no private art galleries and auction houses, only state museums that had to follow the regime's propaganda. There was no freedom of speech, no freedom of art. The art market during that time has not been much researched yet, but from the available information it can be drawn that there was no gallery system, the artists were forced to sell their art via the Czech Fund of Fine Arts, exports were regulated by Art Centrum. Both were state enterprises. The first auction of art and antiquities was allowed in October 1989 (Skřivánek, 2010).

Auction houses together with system of galleries started forming after 1990. There are currently 20 auction houses in the country, the data on auctions has been gathered by an online platform Artplus.cz since 2003. The gallery system has several hundreds subjects around the country, together with independent exhibition spaces run by curators and kunsthallen. Museums of art are public non-profit institutions; they are evenly scattered throughout the country. Every one of the 14 regions has its own museum of art. The distribution of art institutions can be viewed as de-clustering, in general art is easily accessible in every region of the country, nonetheless, the most important cities for art are

Prague, the capital and Brno, the second largest city. As for the collectors' base, it is growing. There are private collectors as well as corporate and institutional collectors active on the market. Regarding the traditions in art and art expertise, the country has some prominent art schools that date back to the 19th century. State and private schools ensure the supply of artists, curators and art critiques.

State strategic document for ensuring the growth of arts and culture in the Czech Republic is the State Cultural Policy, that is issued for the period of five years (Ministry of Culture, 2017). The art market of the Czech Republic can be regarded as emerged, with the need of overcoming some problems, especially financial and gender inequality.

4.2 Analysis and results

The aim of this research is to analyse the representation of female artists in Czech art museums over the past decade. To get the overall percentage of female representation, as well as of each of the institutions, simple percentage formula expressed by equation: $x/y=p\%$ was used for every data group respectively. To get a complex image of the situation, correlation between acquisitions and exhibitions was analysed by linear regression, which can be expressed by the equation: $y=a*x+b$. This analysis was supplemented by a small research on gender of graduates of art schools in the Czech Republic.

4.2.1 Representation of female artists – acquisitions

To calculate the percentage of represented female artists in museums of art over the years 2009-2018, total number of purchased artworks by female were divided by the total number of purchased artworks and multiplied by 100 to get the whole percentage. The total percentage of art works that were made by female artists bought by public art institutions in the Czech Republic is 17%, which is an interesting number, compared to a study by Halperin & Burns, 2019 that studied acquisitions of 26 museums in USA and found that only 11% of the overall acquisitions were works by women.

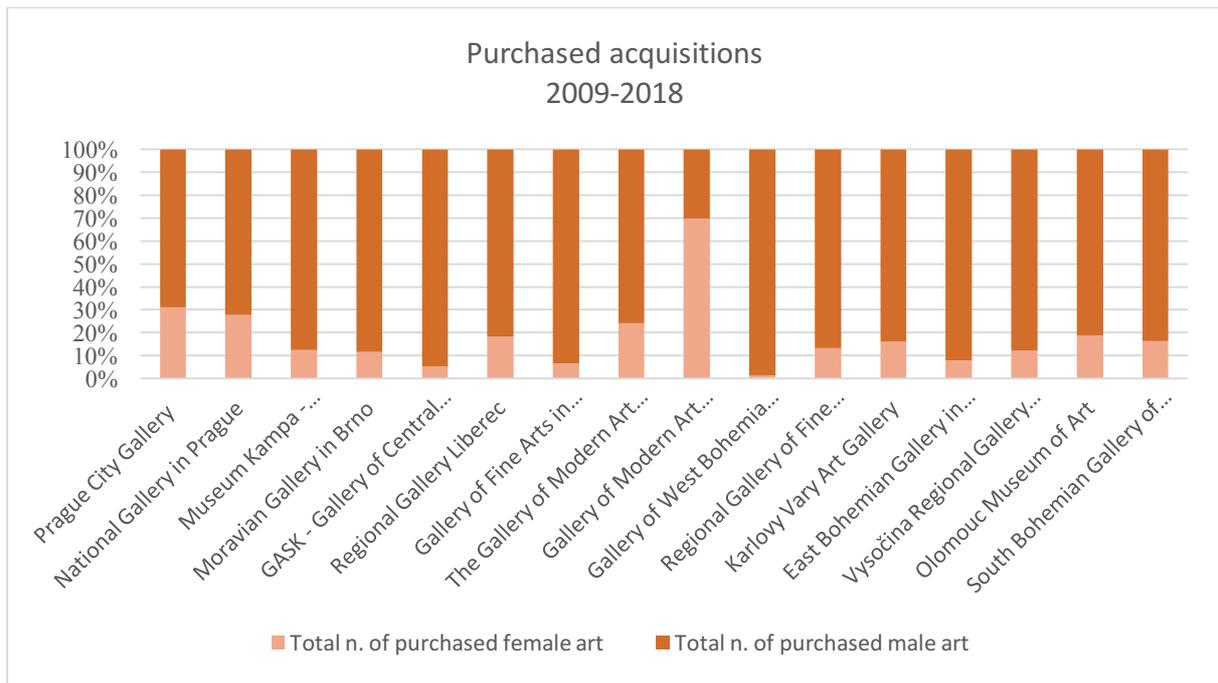


Figure 2 Purchased acquisitions, 2009-2018, Source: author of the thesis

This graph (fig. 2) provides a clearer picture of the overall acquisitions by each of the museums. Percentage of female and male purchases was calculated out of the total number of bought acquisitions and put into a bar chart, which enables comparison between the institutions. The data is not shown in real numbers but they are expressed by % because of the heterogeneity of the museums, e.g. the National Gallery in Prague has much bigger funds and much more income from visitors compared to a smaller regional museum, such as Vysočina Regional Gallery in Jihlava, and therefore their total number of purchases is much bigger than of the smaller regional museums.

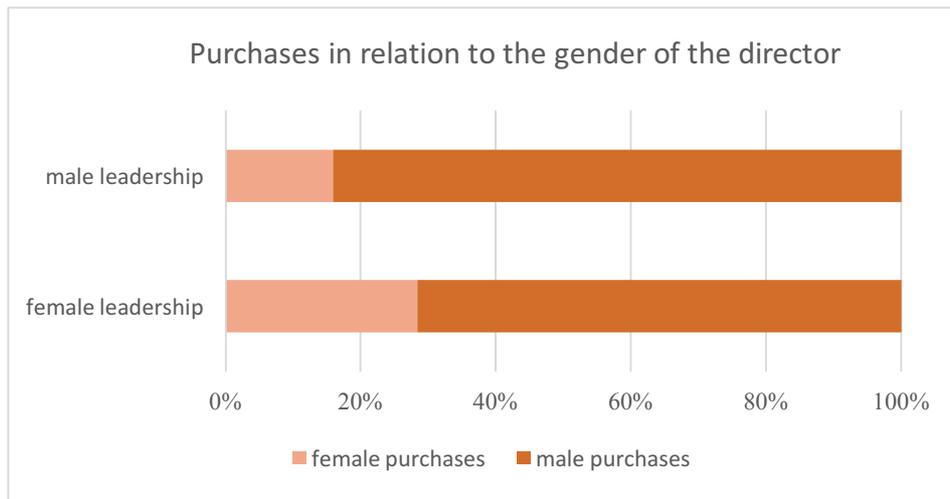


Figure 3 Purchases in relations to the gender of the director; Source: author of the thesis

Another interesting finding is the percentage of total female purchases under different directorships. Gender of every director of all of the 16 museums was identified. The museums were then divided according to the gender of their director and total percentage of each of the two groups were calculated. It was found out that more works by female artists were acquired under women directors compared to male leadership. Female leadership generated 28% purchases of female works of the total purchased acquisitions. Male leadership acquired 16% works by female artists in the monitored years. It is important to mention, that there were only 4 women directors of the total 16 directors of the art museums.

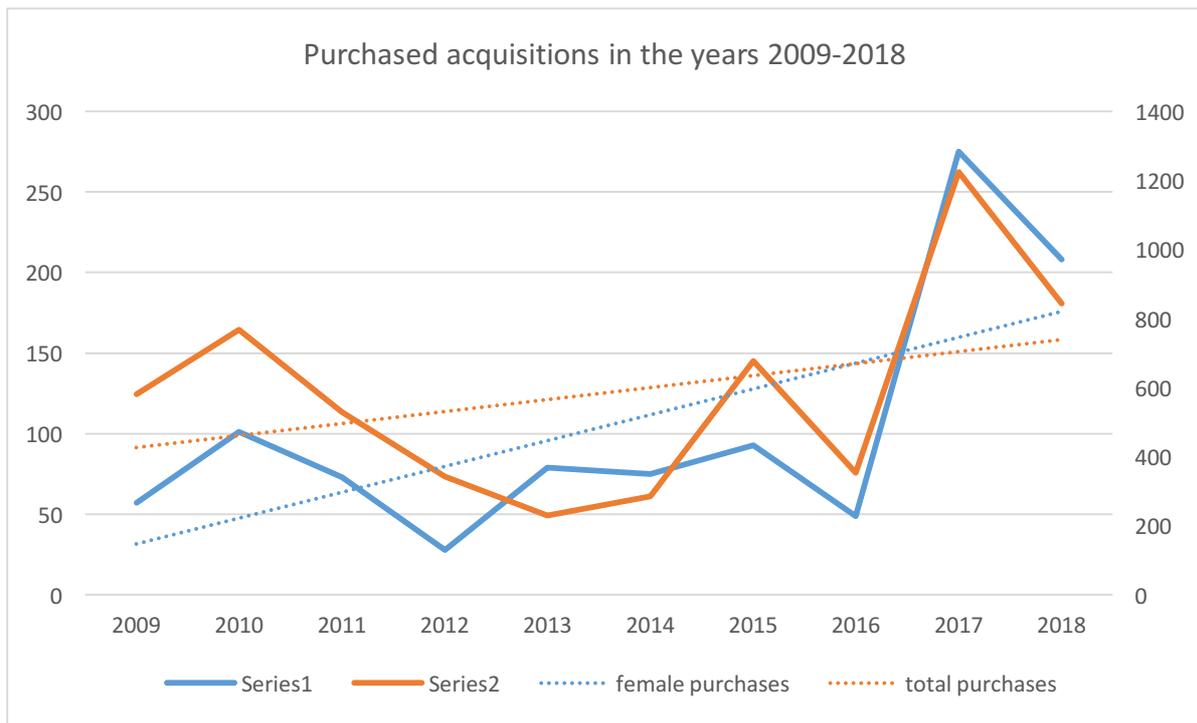


Figure 4 Purchased acquisitions in the years 2009-2018; Source: author of the thesis

To calculate whether the acquisitions of female artists have been either growing, declining or are intact in the last ten years a graphic display was used, see figure 4. Values for female purchases are on the left x axis, values for the total purchases are on the opposite side. The blue line stands for female purchases and the orange for the total purchases. On the y axis are the individual years. The dotted linear lines show the trends for both sets of analysed data. Both are growing, but it can be derived that the trend for female purchases is growing slightly faster, as it intersects with the trend of total purchases in the year 2016. This means that even though both trends are growing, the trend for female purchases is growing faster and bigger as of the year 2016. Figure 5 below shows the growth of female acquisitions in % throughout the studied years.

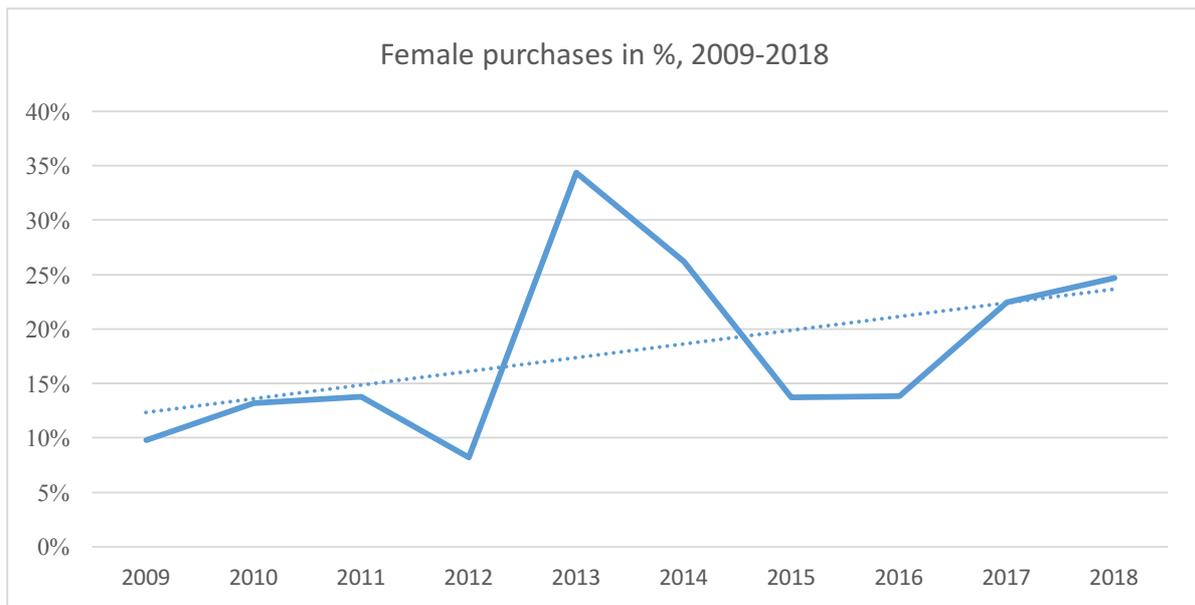


Figure 5 Female purchases in %, 2009-2018; Source: author of the thesis

4.2.2 Representation of female artists – exhibitions

The second part of data set – exhibitions, were sorted out into three categories – group exhibitions, solo male exhibitions and female exhibitions. The aim was to analyse how much space and attention is given to each category by the museums. It was found out that group exhibitions took up to 47% of the overall exhibition program of all of the museums in the years 2009-2018, solo male exhibitions were given 41% of the exhibition program and female exhibitions received only 11%. Figure 6 below depicts graphic visualisation of every institution individually. Some museums organize less female exhibitions than others, but we can say that the proportion of the exhibitions of female artists to group and male exhibitions is rather similar in all of the museums.

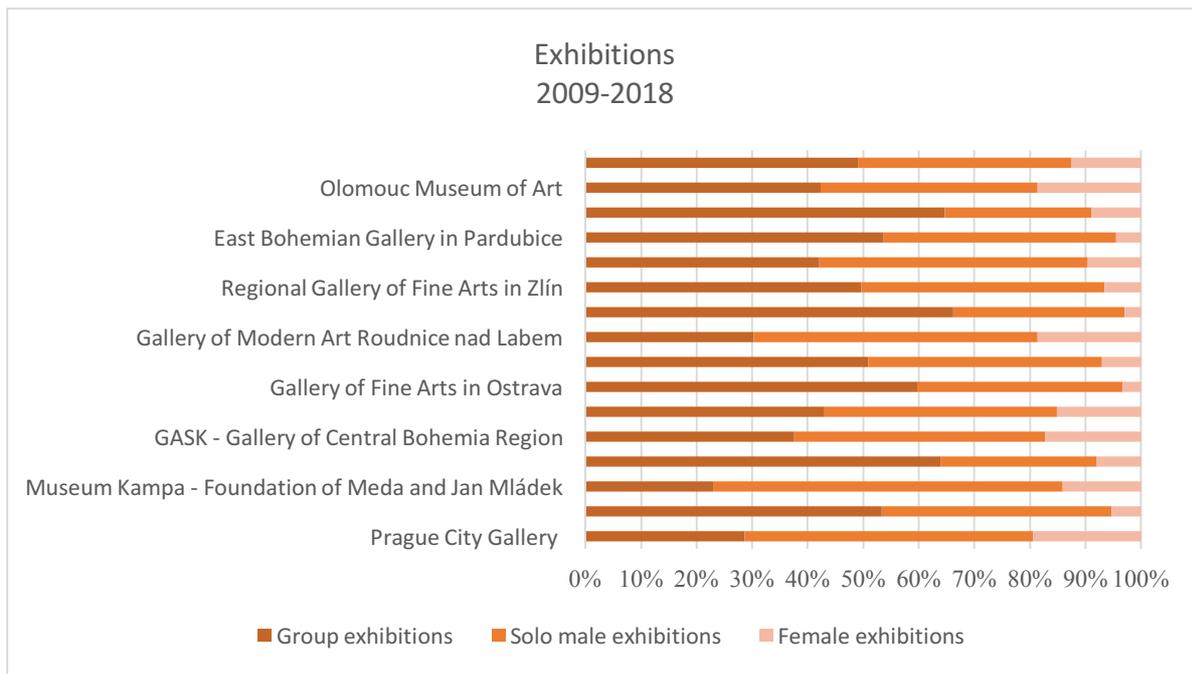


Figure 6 Exhibitions in %, 2009-2018, Source: author of the thesis

4.2.3 Correlation between exhibitions and acquisitions

One of the aims of this research was to investigate any possible correlation between the purchased works by female artists and the exhibitions of female artists. The analysis used to calculate the data was correlation coefficient and linear regression. To calculate the correlation coefficient, the total number of female exhibitions per each museum was grouped together and formed a variable x , group of the total number of female acquisitions per museum on the other hand was assigned as the variable y , and *CORREL* function in Excel was applied on the groups of variables. The correlation coefficient resulted in 0,622773573, which shows medium to relatively strong correlation between acquisitions of female art and exhibitions of female artists, meaning that the more exhibitions by women the institution produces, the more they buy female art. The variables were then formed into a graphic correlation and a linear regression with a trend line was calculated, see figure 7. From the graph we can see that the trend is growing, which confirms the fact that the more female exhibitions are organized, the more female art is bought. It might be, that in the future, institutions that organise more female exhibitions are more likely to buy art by women.

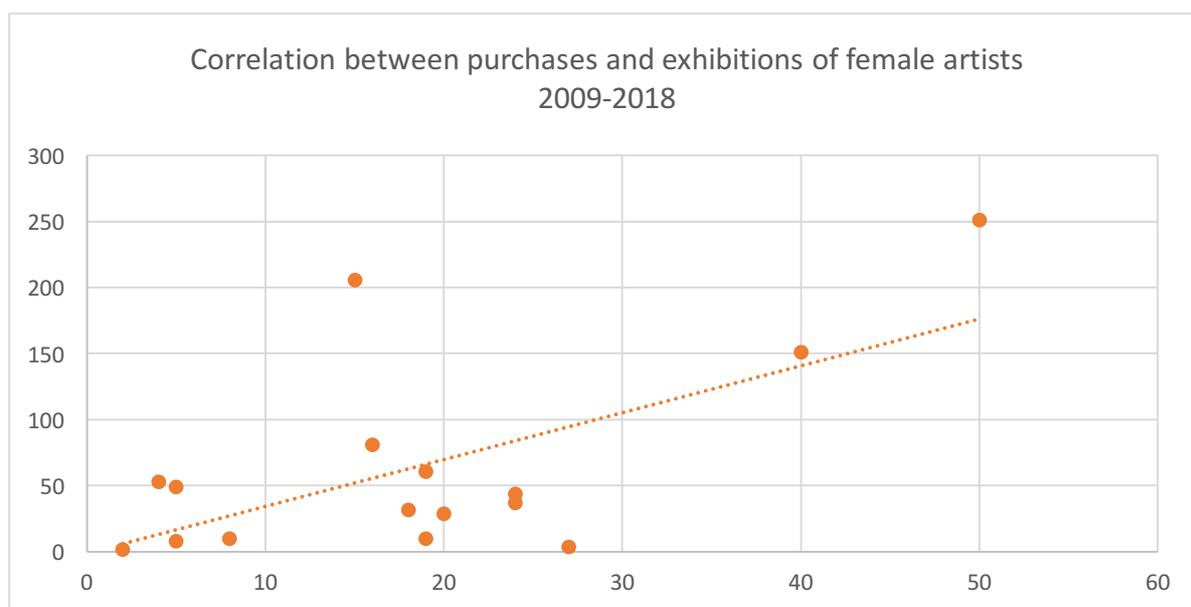


Figure 7 Correlation between purchases and exhibitions of female artists, 2009-2018; Source: author of the thesis

4.2.4 Gender of graduates of art schools

The small percentage of representation of female artists can be explained by the fact, that there simply aren't as many women that would be professional artists as men. I did an additional small research on the gender of graduates of art schools and sorted them out according to gender. The data was scraped from annual reports by Czech Statistical Office. Excel was used to gather and analyse the data. Seven art schools in total were included in the research, which is the equivalent of the total amount of art schools in the Czech Republic. There are two major art schools in the Czech Republic – the Academy of Fine Arts (AVU) and the Academy of Arts, Architecture & Design (UMPRUM), both are situated in Prague. These two institutions focus solely on fine and applied arts, both are public schools with strong history and international recognition and are perceived as elite schools by many people. Then there are 4 faculties of universities – College of Art and Design at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University (UJEP), Faculty of Fine Arts at University of Ostrava (OU Ostrava), Faculty of Fine Arts at Brno University of Technology (VUT Brno), and Faculty of Art and Design at the University of West Bohemia (ZČU Plzeň). The last art school that is part of this research is a new private school that was established in 2014, so the showed data is only from the year 2017 onwards, simply because there were no graduates prior to this year (ČTK, 2013). The data for Faculty of Fine Arts ZČU Plzeň were available only from the year 2014 henceforth, see appendix.

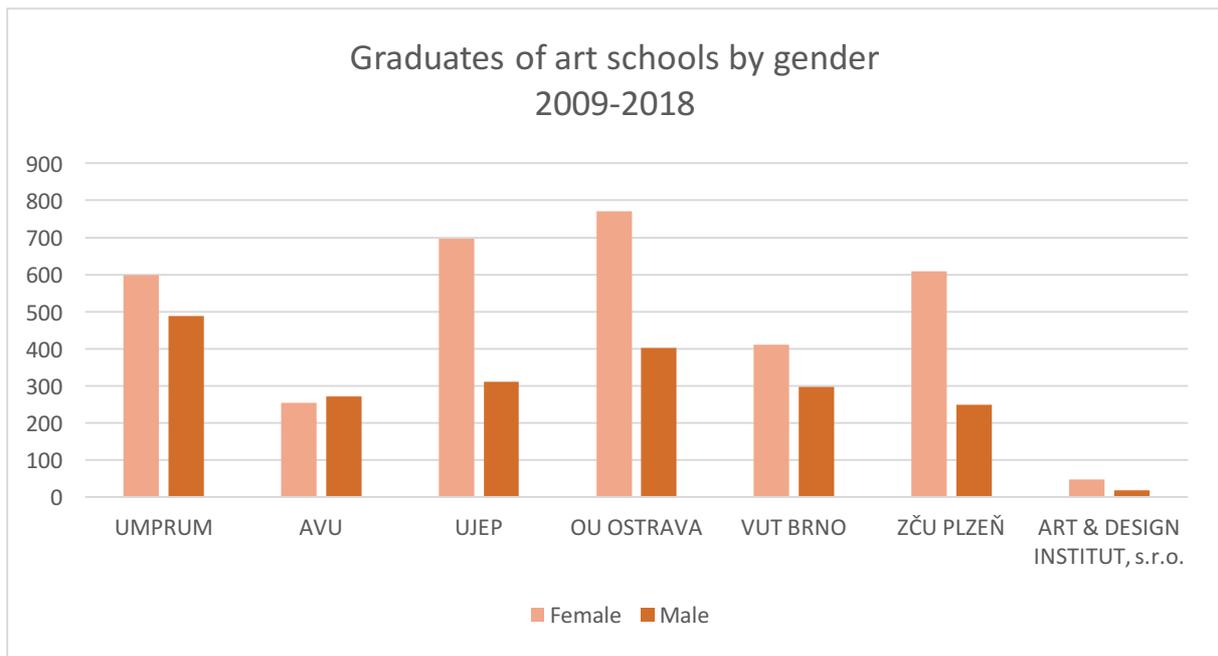


Figure 8 Gender of graduates of art school, 2009-2018; Source: author of the thesis

After counting all of the graduates of each school respectively of their gender, percentage of each of the gender group was calculated. It was found out, that out of the total 5423 graduates, 62% were women and 38% were men. In figure 9 below, the trend of growth is graphically visualised. The trend line of female graduates (blue) is growing faster than that of male graduates (orange). It is interesting to compare this result with the result on acquisitions. We can see that both trends for female artists – the graduates being the new artists and the purchased acquisitions of female art, have been growing over the past decade. Yet when we look at the percentage of female graduates, which is 62%, purchased acquisition being 17%, and exhibition resulting in 11%, the numbers differ greatly and a great disparity occurs between female graduates and female artists.

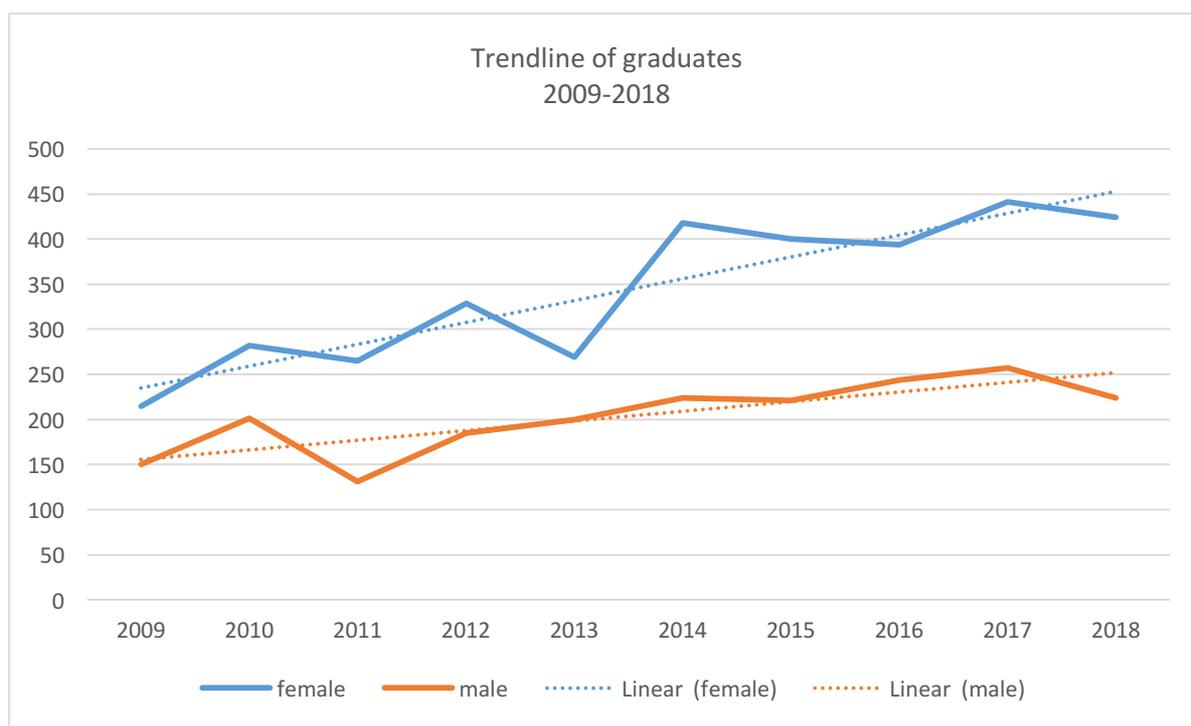


Figure 9 Trend line of graduates, 2009-2018; Source: author of the thesis

4.3 Suggestions for improving current situation

This research has shown a correlation between purchases of female art and exhibitions of female artists. The institutions with a higher amount of female exhibitions have also shown a higher amount of art by women that they bought into their collection, therefore the institution that would organise more exhibitions dedicated solely to female artists, would be more likely to buy more art from female artists. I am suggesting that public institutions in the Czech Republic shift their focus slightly more on female artists and showcase their art more, as this research has shown a clear disparity between the representation of genders. Therefore, they might be more inclined to enhance their collections with the art by female artists. Public art institutions serve as kind of a mirror of the current society, they preserve the art and conserve it for the forthcoming generations, hence I suggest better research of the artists among art school graduates (especially of the 62% female graduates) and focus on the young generation, which creates the aesthetics of the present.

Changing the approach of the exhibition programs would be sign of a modern, open-minded institution, that follows current trends and reacts to social problems in a progressive way. Changing the composition of the exhibitions could be used for marketing and communication campaigns. Cultural institutions in the Czech Republic struggle with the

underfunding from the government, and arts and culture in the Czech Republic is not given even at least 1% of the state budget. There is an ongoing debate on the matter and a lot of ministers of culture have tried to carry through this demand, yet unsuccessfully up to this day. (Kroupa, 2020) The institutions then look for other sources of income, which consist of income from the admission fee, sponsorship or commercial lease of their premises. Showing an active focus in such an up-to-date issue as gender inequality might result in attracting broader audiences, establishing new collaborations, hence generating more money not only for acquisitions.

A different approach to female artists might not only result in a more effective marketing strategy and attracting new patrons, but also creating a better image in the media and society as well. Active communication with the public through PR channels and tools such as media relations, social media communication and thematic and educational accompanying program, especially by tackling important and topics that are discussed in the society can result in an overall improvement of the image of the institution and creating a stronger, more sustainable and inclusive brand.

4.4 Limitations and implications for future research

The biggest limitation of this research are definitely the acquisitions data. Given the fact that not all of them are digitalized, some irregularities might have occurred. This is the first research to map and study the representation of female artists in museums of art in the Czech Republic. I believe that in the upcoming years, the institutions will work on digitalizing the data, so that they are more unified and integrated for prospective students and researchers, who can then work with them on improving the overall image of Czech public institutions.

This research also did not analyse the acquisition policies of the museums, not all of them are oriented on contemporary art, hence a further investigation of art school graduates throughout the history would lay a better picture and be more relevant in relation to those institutions that focus on older art, among which there really were less female artists than there are today.

When conducting this research, I noticed that sometimes more women give their art to the institutions than men do. This matter would be worth investigating further and researching the percentage of female gifts in relation to male gifts to museums and why does one group donate their art more than the other.

In addition to the research of graduates of art schools, it would be interesting to study how many people actually work as professional artists after they finish their art studies.

The last but not least suggestion for future research is to study whether public institutions buy more art from artists for which they organised exhibitions, rather than from the artists for which they have not organise an exhibition yet.

5 Conclusion

This master thesis aimed at analysing the representation of female artists in Czech art museums over the years 2009-2018. To carry out this research a quantitative method was used, the data were collected by scraping off the art museums' annual reports, their web sites or by communicating with their management or curators. The focus of this study were purchased acquisitions by female artists and female short-term exhibitions. The data set contains information on around 500 female artists and almost 300 short-term exhibitions. To analyse the gathered data, correlation and regression analysis was used, together with a simple percentage formula.

The research found that out of all of the purchased acquisitions of the 16 art museums, that were public institutions, only 17% were works by female artists. The results of the analysis of exhibitions have shown, that only 11% of short-term exhibitions were dedicated to female artists. Correlation was calculated and analysed as medium to strong, deriving the result from the correlation coefficient 0,622773573. Linear regression showed, that there is a correlation between the amount of exhibitions and the amount of purchased art by women, which means that the more exhibitions of female art were organized; the more female art was purchased. Interestingly, it was discovered that there were more art works by female artists bought under the leadership of women (28%) compared with the leadership of men (16%). Calculations also showed that the purchases of female art have been increasing over the past decade, and only since the year 2016 have started to grow rapidly more in relations to the total amount of purchases, hence an increase in the upcoming years may be expected. The additional research on gender of graduates from art schools found out, that 62% were women and only 38% were men.

These results raise a question of why is there such a huge disparity between the percentage of female art graduates and female acquisitions and exhibitions. It can be perceived as an indicator of still prevalent gender inequality on the institutional level of art world. Despite the vast majority of art school graduates being women, bigger percentage of art by men is being purchased by public art institutions, which points out that the problem regarding the narrative and storytelling of the art museums is on the institutional level and may be considered as a topic for change. The correlation analysis showed a promising sign of change and a positive shift in the narratives of art institutions in the Czech Republic. Though, if the positive trend lasts throughout the next decade is up to future scholars to investigate. Not having analysed the acquisition strategy of each institution, this research cannot draw a

conclusion regarding this problem and make a statement, because it is unknown if the topic of a balanced representation of the genders was considered while preparing the acquisition strategy or not and the positive growth is just a spontaneous trend.

This research has several limitations. The first and foremost is the fact that the data were not always digitalized, and that might have led to some disparities within the analysed data set. That was the case only with the purchased acquisitions. Since the acquisitions that are bought by the museums are financed from public resources, they have to be displayed publically, usually in an annual report issued by the art institution. In some cases, the exact information on the purchased art work was listed in the report, along with a total number of purchased acquisitions during the particular year. Mostly, it was harder to obtain the data, because they were missing from the reports. Especially information regarding older years, such as 2009-2014, which were as well the most problematic ones to gather data on. If the art museums did not publish this information online, it had to be inquired and a museum worker had to scrape the data from acquisition books from their archive. A lot of the time, differences in method of recording acquisitions were encountered within respective institutions, that also had to have been investigated in order to fix some data or to obtain correct information. The institutions are working on digitalising the data, though, therefore in a couple of years, research of a similar nature as this study could be carried out in an even more accurate manner.

Another limitation that is also an implication for future research is that the acquisition policies of each of the institutions were not researched and taken into consideration. Acquisition policies play an important role in the decision making of the acquisition committee of respective art museums. It functions as a strategy according to which the institutions buy and acquire art works. Not all of the studied art institutions focus solely on modern or contemporary art, but some of them collect also old masters and art works by artists from time periods when women experienced discrimination in obtaining an art education, hence there really was a lack of female artists. Suggestion for future research is to study and analyse acquisition policies of art museums and identify those that focus on modern and contemporary art and focus the research on them. In cases of institutions that have several thematic collections, including the old masters as well as modern and contemporary art, only the additions to the latter collections could be considered.

While collecting data for the purposes of this thesis, it was observed that in many cases more women donated their art to the art museum rather than men. Future research could focus on gifts that were given to the institutions and analyse which of the two genders give

more their art works to public art institutions for free and why. Next implication for future research is conducting an analysis of how many art school graduates really end up working as artists and how many of them change their professions.

Possible extensions of this master thesis could study if the representation of female artists in public art institutions has an impact on auction prices of each of the represented women artist. Through a quantitative research, auction data would be collected throughout the years 2009-2018 and by correlation analysis regression would be calculated, the data on acquisitions being the independent variable x and auction prices of the art works being the dependent variable y , because presumably auction prices maybe depend on the purchases of the art museums.

Next possible extension might be to study if institutions eventually bought art works by exhibited female artists and added them to their collection. And last but not least extension could analyse birth decades of each of the female artists, whose art works were purchased in the years 2009-2018, a trend in purchased acquisitions among female artists could be derived out of this analysis.

Public art institutions should consider proposed suggestions for improvement, which include giving more space to female artists in their exhibition programs, improving their research on young female graduates and helping them with starting their careers via organizing exhibitions of their art, and incorporating gender equality in their communication strategies. Implementing these suggestions can contribute to the improvement of the institutions' positive image in media and within society as well as thus attract broader audiences and visitors and establish new and promising financial cooperation. After taking these steps and changing their acquisition and exhibition strategies into being more inclusive towards female artists, these art museums could help change the institutional narrative, that is inclined more towards male artists and thus shift it towards a more balanced situation.

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7 Appendix

Table 1 Purchased acquisitions; Source: author of the thesis

	Gender of the director	Total n. of purchases	Total n. of purchased female art	Total n. of purchased male art	%
Prague City Gallery	female	487	151	336	31%
National Gallery in Prague	male	742	206	536	28%
Museum Kampa - Foundation of Meda and Jan Mládek	male	648	81	567	13%
Moravian Gallery in Brno	male	523	61	462	12%
GASK - Gallery of Central Bohemia Region	female	77	4	73	5%
Regional Gallery Liberec	male	202	37	165	18%
Gallery of Fine Arts in Ostrava	male	756	49	707	6%
The Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Králové	male	219	53	166	24%
Gallery of Modern Art Roudnice nad Labem	female	63	44	19	70%
Gallery of West Bohemia in Pilsen	male	148	2	146	1%
Regional Gallery of Fine Arts in Zlín	male	75	10	65	13%
Karlovy Vary Art Gallery	male	62	10	52	16%
East Bohemian Gallery in Pardubice	female	101	8	93	8%
Vysočina Regional Gallery in Jihlava	male	265	32	233	12%
Olomouc Museum of Art	male	1332	251	1081	19%
South Bohemian Gallery of Mikoláš Aleš	male	179	29	150	16%
TOTAL:		5879	1028	4851	17%

Table 2 Exhibitions; Source: author of the thesis

	Total n. of exhibitions	Group exhibitions	Solo male exhibitions	Female exhibitions	%
Prague City Gallery	206	59	107	40	19 %
National Gallery in Prague	285	152	118	15	5 %
Museum Kampa - Foundation of Meda and Jan Mládek	113	26	71	16	14 %
Moravian Gallery in Brno	239	153	67	19	8 %
GASK - Gallery of Central Bohemia Region	157	59	71	27	17 %
Regional Gallery Liberec	158	68	66	24	15 %
Gallery of Fine Arts in Ostrava	149	89	55	5	3 %
The Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Králové	57	29	24	4	7 %
Gallery of Modern Art Roudnice nad Labem	129	39	66	24	19 %
Gallery of West Bohemia in Pilsen	68	45	21	2	3 %
Regional Gallery of Fine Arts in Zlín	121	60	53	8	7 %
Karlovy Vary Art Gallery	197	83	95	19	10 %
East Bohemian Gallery in Pardubice	110	59	46	5	5 %
Vysočina Regional Gallery in Jihlava	201	130	53	18	9 %
Olomouc Museum of Art	269	114	105	50	19 %
South Bohemian Gallery of Mikoláš Aleš	159	78	61	20	13 %
TOTAL:	2618	1243	1079	296	
		47%	41%	11%	

Table 3 Gender of graduates; Source: author of the thesis

	UMPRUM		AVU		UJEP		OU Ostrava		VUT Brno		ZČU Plzeň		ART & DESIGN INSTITUT, s.r.o.	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male
2009	34	51	26	15	44	18	62	37	43	35	-	-	-	-
2010	36	47	35	19	73	47	87	46	56	37	-	-	-	-
2011	25	46	19	29	75	24	84	34	31	29	-	-	-	-
2012	44	82	32	30	68	36	94	46	55	27	-	-	-	-
2013	57	57	35	31	80	37	66	42	35	29	-	-	-	-
2014	64	78	23	25	71	28	80	40	49	37	115	32	-	-
2015	56	73	21	30	66	26	64	36	29	23	138	59	-	-
2016	49	63	29	21	79	33	75	43	35	34	121	56	-	-
2017	68	90	23	26	79	44	68	39	39	24	111	49	28	10
2018	55	62	29	29	61	18	90	39	39	22	123	53	20	8
total:	488	598	272	255	696	311	770	402	411	297	608	249	48	18