



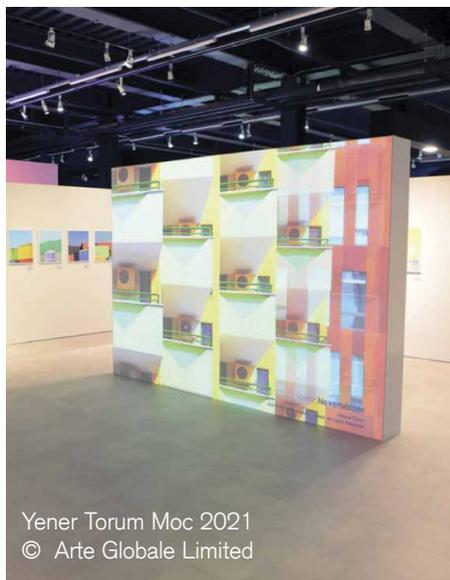
Art, artists' lockdowns and soul's adjustments

When the coronavirus pandemic struck the world more than a year ago, nobody could have imagined what we would experience. Our personal lives, our relationships with our loved ones, families and friends, our professional worlds, colleagues, workplaces, commuting and travelling, all were affected and came to a standstill. Since then we have waited collectively as a global community for the good news, the safe green light to finally tell us: go, meet, touch and enjoy.

I was in New York in March last year and there was a lovely sunny day. I love New York, with its amazing architecture, busy life and contemporary arts. My gallery, ARTE GLOBALE, was participating in one of the fairs during the prestigious Armory Show week when the alarming news cast shadow across our hearths. I remember coming back from a glamorous party at a Chelsea members club, walking in the streets of Manhattan concerned about the future. A few weeks later, New York went into lockdown and I was on a plane to London.

More than a year has passed and so much has changed. Art fairs and exhibitions have been cancelled, artists' studios as well as print and photography labs, galleries and museums had to close or were no

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Yener Torum Moc 2021
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longer reachable.

How has the art world reacted and how have artists managed? Creativity, freedom and exchange are the defining identities of art production: what we have learned, in my opinion, is that those components can certainly not be confined or stopped even by a global pandemic.

My journey as an art dealer has thus far been inspiring. I was fortunate to have set up ARTE GLOBALE as an online gallery back in 2014, pioneering a revolutionary way to view and collect exceptional art and operating internationally.

When the pandemic hit and lockdown was established we were still able to stay open and run the art gallery remotely. From LA to Seoul, the art world was entering the same virtual space, trying to adapt quickly when it became clear this was no longer a case of postponing events for a few weeks. I think the best of the art industries was yet to be seen, in their ability to push forward in interesting times.

Important industry fixtures like Art Basel, the prestigious fair that exhibits many blue-chip galleries, gathered their efforts into the virtual experience. As of today, the fair has been operating online for months, using the now popular ‘ovm’,

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online virtual rooms, as part of the new normal for exhibitions. Inside these virtual rooms, every gallery created their exhibitions and visitors accessed the fair completely online.

We have also participated in successful art fairs this way, using apps and 3D booths. Moreover, museums all around the world are adopting online viewing, online talks and, of course, social media as a way to connect and engage with their audience. For example, in March this year the Louvre launched its online platform featuring the entire collection.

For me, it was important to find ways to make artists as well as art lovers and collectors feel comfortable with the gallery. Artists felt disappointed, especially if their exhibitions or their presence in art fairs were cancelled, so it was vital to help at this time. Art lovers needed to trust the new online virtual way and I am happy to see that so many view and collect art online.

Working from home became the norm, so it was important to create an extended engagement through initiatives dedicated to supporting the artists. Our open helpline has been very active as well as our virtual meetings. For assisting emerging artists worldwide, we have fortified our technologies, as auction houses have done, and developed a dynamic program of shows online.

When possible I encourage artists to keep working, to create with what is available, to gather ideas, to look back at some projects left undone. Georgia Clemson, one of our super talented emerging artists, who lives and works in London, during lockdown completed a beautiful body of work featured in our solo show ‘To capture a cloud’ and at the London Art Fair virtual edition, which was excellent in my view, with many interactive features.

Despite isolation making travel to her studio or laboratory impossible, she managed to continue to work. These works are wonderful. Georgia explained to me that luckily she had access to her archive of test prints and strips that she had made in the

past and she felt she must have kept for a reason, finding a new resonance within them. She has said that all of her work is personal but the works she has made in lockdown are especially dear to her. I think it is very much relevant to how we feel today.

Kevin Graham, another artist in our roster, set up a studio in his house and created astonishing art that mirrors the pandemic crisis. Domenico Ludovico asked the local Tuscan authority for permission to open his studio, which is very remote and isolated, so that he could quarantine there. Domenico worked to create some incredible sculptures while sharing an espresso or two with the *carabinieri* (military guard) guarding the surroundings.

I talked to collectors, museums and institutions to get their reopening schedules. ARTE GLOBALE will showcase Yener Torun at the Museum of Colours in Seoul for the second time. Romano Lotto prepared his shows at the Palazzo Chiericati, a Renaissance palace in Vicenza that was designed by Andrea Palladio. The list is endless. Yoko Ono, to mention one super international contemporary artist, collaborated with the Met for her ‘Dream Together’ project. Artists who produce totally virtual pieces (or ‘nft’, non-fungible tokens) are on the rise, grasping the moment. We have kept and we continue to keep art going.

During lockdown, the connection with the artists has been fantastic, communicating our dreams and ideas for the current situation with each other and the future made our days and weeks more bearable, giving each other hope. I think it is now especially a great time to buy artworks, historically and even more because of how artists everywhere have felt this past year.

My take is that while we slowly get back to experiencing art in person with galleries and artists using hybrid formats, on and offline, the virtual way is here to stay – connecting cultures, art, artists and people 24/7, globally.



Georgia Clemson 'Skyline'
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Georgia Clemson 'I spy'
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