



WOMEN STREET ARTISTS IN THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN DISTRICTS OF MADRID

A Netnographic Analysis

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KEYWORDS

Women street artists
Urban periphery
Madrid
Urban regeneration
Instagram
Netnographic analysis
Muralism

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the southern and eastern districts of Madrid, based on the neighbourhood movement that began in 2018, which demanded, among other issues, the recovery and regeneration of degraded urban spaces. A netnographic analysis of Instagram publications identifies artistic interventions by women street artists in these districts, defines the themes and messages they convey, and demonstrates the links and relationships established. Finally, the role of Instagram is analysed, not only as an art gallery but also as a dissemination tool, enabling the visibility of the work of the women urban artists under study.

Received: 07/ 07 /2025

Accepted: 02/ 10 /2025

1. Introduction

The nine districts included in the scope of the *SURES Plan*¹ of the Community of Madrid (Carabanchel, Latina, Moratalaz, Puente de Vallecas, San Blas-Canillejas, Usera, Vicálvaro, Villa de Vallecas and Villaverde) account for almost half of Madrid's population (44.26%), but have alarming vulnerability indicators compared to the rest of the city. The average income in these districts is barely a quarter of that in the ten most affluent districts. The Vulnerability Index, compiled by the Delegated Area for Territorial Coordination, Transparency and Citizen Participation in collaboration with Carlos III University and local social actors, confirms the situation in these districts.

According to the *Manifiesto por el Sur* (2018), inequality in terms of income, infrastructure and opportunities between the north and south of Madrid continues to be a reality, marked by spatial segregation, deindustrialisation and job insecurity. Since the economic crisis of 2007, the southern districts have faced a further deterioration in their social and economic conditions.

El Sur tiene derecho a ser *ciudad*, porque los barrios periféricos no tienen por qué estar configurados subsidiariamente desde ningún centro. Más allá de los proyectos concretos es necesario desarrollar un nuevo relato del Sur, que cubra sus necesidades y atienda a sus realidades. Un posible y distinto futuro para el Sur. Porque aquí, “en las afueras”, no solo vivimos, sino que somos capaces de vivir.² (Assembly for the Neighbourhoods of the South, 2018, p. 3)

This research focuses primarily on section 4 of the manifesto, “Transforming the space of the South: reuse, regeneration, adaptation,” and more specifically on point 38, which states that “(...) es necesario recuperar, regenerar, los espacios urbanos degradados, el espacio público y privado, y rehabilitar aquellos espacios simbólicos que forman parte de la memoria del lugar, cascos y urbanizaciones históricas, activos monumentales, equipamientos...”³ (Assembly for the Southern Neighbourhoods, 2018, p. 12).

Urban art has become a fundamental tool for the regeneration, beautification and revaluation of peripheral neighbourhoods, giving them a unique identity and character that contribute to their revitalisation. This study focuses on the role that different women street artists have played in the aforementioned southern and eastern districts of Madrid. In districts with high levels of social vulnerability, artistic interventions can become a powerful means of collective empowerment and questioning structures of exclusion. According to Remesar (2019), “el concepto Arte Público intenta explicar un conjunto de políticas urbanas, que integran diversas prácticas artísticas en los procesos de *hacer ciudad*”⁴ (p. 7). In this context, the walls and facades of different buildings become canvases that serve not only as a means of expression for artists, but also as an invitation to citizen participation, thus allowing for greater social cohesion. According to Mandel (2007): “el arte como proceso social y comunicacional configura la sensibilidad e imaginarios [de la ciudad], asentando y transmitiendo, entre otros medios, la historia de los que han vivido y han hecho la historia de [la ciudad]”⁵ (p. 38). However, according to Remesar (2019), these artistic interventions only work if they are carried out in accordance with an active policy of regeneration and the fight against exclusion:

¹ Development plan that seeks to reduce imbalances and improve quality of life in the southern and eastern districts of Madrid, promoting their socio-economic development and equity with the rest of the city. Its Standing Committee was established at the end of 2019.

² The South has the right to be a city, because the peripheral neighbourhoods do not have to be configured subsidiarily from any centre. Beyond specific projects, it is necessary to develop a new narrative for the South, one that meets its needs and addresses its realities. A possible and different future for the South. Because here, “on the outskirts”, we not only live, but we are capable of living.

³ “(...) it is necessary to recover and regenerate degraded urban spaces, public and private space, and rehabilitate those symbolic spaces that form part of the memory of the place, historic centres and developments, monumental assets, facilities...”

⁴ “the concept of Public Art attempts to explain a set of urban policies that integrate various artistic practices into the processes of city-building”

⁵ “art as a social and communicational process shapes the sensibility and imaginaries [of the city], establishing and transmitting, among other means, the history of those who have lived and made the history of [the city]”. In this quote, the word “town” has been replaced by “city” to adapt it to the context.

(...) pintar de colores las casas o pintar murales, está bien en sí mismo, pero si no se acompaña de políticas activas, son operaciones de limpieza de cara, de estética superficial, entendida en su sentido peyorativo, que no conducen a la solución de los problemas reales del barrio o distrito en el que se realizan.⁶ (Remesar, 2019, p. 45)

On the other hand, the dissemination and visibility of interventions carried out by female artists is considered essential in order to have female cultural references that help to achieve a greater balance in artistic spaces, with networking and the creation of links through social media being two key pillars in making this possible.

En una sociedad como la española en la que, desde hace generaciones, las mujeres han carecido de referentes culturales femeninos y han sido educadas en la creencia de que la excelencia profesional, artística y, en definitiva, social, estaba siempre en manos masculinas, una sociedad en que la teoría de género ha empezado a tener repercusión ya casi a finales del siglo XX, unida al tardío descubrimiento de grandes artistas, a menudo ha resultado difícil detectar esa desigualdad y buscarle soluciones (...). La ausencia de mujeres referentes desde la educación escolar hasta la universitaria no ha ayudado a replantear esta situación, y solo en los últimos años estamos viendo que la conciencia social sobre la desigualdad de género está planteando una reflexión allí donde ni si quiera se había percibido el problema.⁷ (Pérez Ibáñez, 2020, p. 24)

2. Objectives

The main objectives of this work are:

1. To identify the murals created by different women street artists in the districts of Carabanchel, Latina, Moratalaz, Puente de Vallecas, San Blas-Canillejas, Usera, Vicálvaro, Villa de Vallecas and Villaverde.
2. To define the themes addressed and the messages conveyed through the social network Instagram.
3. To demonstrate the links and relationships established in the different posts analysed.

3. Methodology

The methodology chosen for this research was netnography, as it is particularly suitable for studying public discourse on social networks such as Instagram, as well as social interactions and behaviours developed in digital spaces.

Online searches proved to be a valuable resource for gathering information that would enable the works under study to be located and identified, revealing that most of the artists had active profiles on Instagram. This led to the creation of the profile *Mujeres en la telaraña* (@mujeres.en.la.telarana), enabling more effective monitoring of the works and the establishment of contacts with the artists.

This network of contacts was subsequently translated into a network of locations using the My Maps application, designing a personalised map of the works that facilitates their tracking and subsequent visit. This map compiles the work of 98 women street artists, providing a detailed record of their works, indicating those that have been visited so far and identifying those that can still be visited, those that have not been found for various reasons, and those that have been confirmed to be temporary.

In order to locate the works in the southern and eastern districts of Madrid, the information gathered from various posts on Instagram has been crucial, either thanks to the inclusion of the location in the

⁶ (...) painting houses in bright colours or painting murals is fine in itself, but if it is not accompanied by active policies, these are merely cosmetic operations, superficial aesthetics, understood in their pejorative sense, which do not lead to the solution of the real problems of the neighbourhood or district in which they are carried out

⁷ In a society such as Spain's, where for generations women have lacked female cultural role models and have been educated in the belief that professional, artistic and, ultimately, social excellence was always in male hands, a society in which gender theory began to have an impact almost at the end of the 20th century, coupled with the late discovery of great artists, it has often been difficult to detect this inequality and find solutions to it (...). The absence of female role models from school to university education has not helped to rethink this situation, and only in recent years are we seeing social awareness of gender inequality prompting reflection in areas where the problem had not even been perceived

posts themselves or by consulting the corresponding caption for each one. In addition, consulting other sources such as news items or official websites of associations or entities such as Madrid Street Art Project has been important in obtaining more accurate and descriptive locations, which has facilitated subsequent on-site searches. Official websites of festivals such as Festival Circular⁸, projects such as *Compartiendo Muros*⁹, and digital platforms such as Wallspot¹⁰ have also been consulted.

For this study, of the 98 artists previously selected, 17 were located in the Southern and Eastern Districts: Helen Bur, Amaia Arrazola, Sara Flórez, Brocka, Animalitoland, It's Mancho, Shara Limone, Agus Rúcula, Carola Bagnato, Dúo Amazonas, Inés Jimm, Florencia Durán, Ele Zissou, Sara Velázquez, Iris Simancas, missmsmith, and Sonia Delgado. The districts in which mural interventions by women have been located are Carabanchel, Latina, Moratalaz, Puente de Vallecas, Vicálvaro, and Villaverde¹¹. A total of 19 profiles were analysed¹², choosing to study exclusively works that fall within the technique of muralism from 2015 to 2025. In these 19 profiles, an online observation was carried out, which led to the subsequent collection, selection and storage of data. In total, 42 posts of the previously located works were compiled¹³. From these posts, 620 comments from followers of the selected profiles – hereinafter referred to as followers – and 181 responses from the artists were recorded. In the data collection, different types of content were taken into account, including photographs, videos, texts, hashtags, and other non-textual representations such as emojis.

The communications analysed were asynchronous, and the social interactions under study are public. However, this study maintains anonymity at all times, providing pseudonyms for all persons cited except for the artists, given that the aim is to highlight their role in the field of urban art.

ATLAS.ti software was used to perform the subsequent data analysis, which involved categorising, counting and comparatively analysing the qualitative data previously collected. In this analysis process, inductive coding was performed (Kozinets, 2020, p. 339), organising the codes into different categories to classify emotions, reactions and recurring themes expressed by both urban artists and their followers. Within each category, a distinction was made between textual and non-textual data (emojis), as the interpretation could vary depending on the format used. In addition, other specific groups were generated, including codes related to the copy and hashtags used in the artist's post, as well as the visual elements present in the publication itself, both videos and images. Subsequently, thanks to the visualisation of the data using graphs, column charts and Sankey diagrams, the data was interpreted, taking into account the patterns observed.

4. Results

4.1. Themes and messages conveyed

Following the netnographic analysis of the selected posts, feminism stands out as the main theme identified. Fourteen works closely related to themes linked to the fight against gender violence, the commemoration of 8th March, motherhood, sisterhood and self-knowledge were counted. Some works represent these themes by decision of the artist herself, as is the case with Florencia Durán's mural, which addresses awakening (figure 1). However, it has been verified that several of the pieces located on one of Wallspot's so-called Free Walls were created with themes previously established by the project. One of the themes was related to 8th March and another to the fight against gender violence,

⁸ A project involving artistic interventions in public spaces, preceded by a mediation process with social agents and local residents. Its main purpose is to gain an in-depth understanding of the place and to work on it in a collaborative and respectful manner.

⁹ A programme that aims to accommodate citizen initiatives to improve the urban landscape through various artistic interventions.

¹⁰ Its main objective is to demand access to painting in the street with guarantees, allowing the location of so-called legal walls or Free Walls to make the work of different artists visible.

¹¹ In the other districts, the location of different murals has also been verified, but without any female presence.

¹² In the case of the Amazonas Duo, their profile as artists and the profile they have created for Espacio Amazonas has been analysed. In the case of Sara Velázquez, the profile she herself has created for her *Creatures of Light* project has also been taken into account.

¹³ These can be consulted in the references section.

both on the occasion of the celebration of what is known as Womart JAM¹⁴ :

That's the first sketch I did for the womart jam wall curated by @wallspot_org in commemoration of the 25th November, the day against sexist violence. For the first time, I wanted to represent the matryoshka opened as a tribute to the feminine heritage of our families. Women are located in the center, surrounded by a hexagon that represents creativity and guarded by the creatures of light. (@creatures_of_light, 9th December 2020)

Image 1. Mural by Florencia Durán in collaboration with Dúo Amazonas, alongside several of her works (95 Art Gallery, Carabanchel, 2024)



Source: Own elaboration, 2024

None of the comments made by her followers have been perceived as negative in relation to the works shared. What has been perceived are negative reactions in protest against issues such as gender violence. This encourages dialogue and reflection, while also helping to spread awareness of issues that were previously unknown to many users of the social network: "Gracias por compartir estos hechos de los cuales no se habla lo suficiente. Lo que estás haciendo ayudará a que se les de el reconocimiento que se merecen. ¡Bravo! 🙌" ¹⁵ (AA1.6_follower42, 2024).

However, one of the murals created for Wallspot by artist Shara Limone for 8th March has been met with some rejection from the public outside the virtual community. In the caption of one of her posts, the artist states: "otro 8M recordando que queremos cambiar las cosas. Todavía intentan silenciarnos cuando señalamos privilegios y reclamamos lo que nos pertenece: nuestro espacio, nuestra libertad, nuestra vida" ¹⁶ (@sharalimone, 7 March 2021). When visiting it in January 2025, it was clear that not only had a large part of the mural been removed – which is not entirely worrying as it is a free wall that is usually painted periodically and where graffiti artists also go to leave their mark – but also that some of the quotes the artist chose to include in her work had been crossed out (figure 2). The message that Shara Limone shares in her post makes more sense, since her mural was directly censored by someone who did not want that message to be present in public spaces. Thanks to the images of the wall posted on Instagram in 2021, we can see the phrase that was crossed out: "Lo femenino en el patriarcado no es

¹⁴ Wallspot's JAMs are events where two artists are chosen from among eight to twelve others to create their works on a chosen wall with a specific theme.

¹⁵ "Thank you for sharing these issues that are not talked about enough. What you are doing will help give them the recognition they deserve. Bravo! 🙌" Commentary on the work *Contra el Olvido (Against Oblivion)* by Amaia Arrazola (2024).

¹⁶ "Another 8th March reminding us that we want to change things. They still try to silence us when we point out privileges and claim what belongs to us: our space, our freedom, our life"

lo que las mujeres son sino lo que han construido para ellas, Luce Irigaray”¹⁷ (@sharalimone, 7 March 2021). Among the comments received on that post, there are no negative reactions or discussions on the matter, but rather a great deal of interest, with people even asking about the location of the mural so they can see it in person. Among the hashtags used by the artist is #censorship, an issue that becomes a reality in her own mural, where Luce Irigaray's quote was crossed out.

Image 2. Remains of the mural created by artist Shara Limone for 8M (Moratalaz, 2021)



Source: Own elaboration, 2025

The second theme to highlight is the fight for animal rights. This theme is present in six pieces that were created by different artists invited to participate in one of Wallspot's Free Walls. Despite animal rights being the main theme, feminism is still present in the posts about their works, conveying a message of empowerment and sisterhood among the artists:

Hoy seis mujeres hemos tomado el muro, con spray en mano, para reivindicar el derecho de los animales. Porque cada ser ocupe el espacio que le corresponde, y ni un poquito menos de lo que merece. Gracias @wallspot_org por dar lugar a proyectos como este. Y gracias chicas por este día
 💖 Por más muros codo a codo 💖 @itsmancho @savelga @missmsmith @irisdrawsstuff @elisacalleart.¹⁸ (@sharalimone, 28th December 2020)

Thirteen of the pieces analysed also featured different animals linked to fantasy or animation. In this case, the fight for animal rights does not seem to be the main theme, but the animal motif is significantly predominant. The works of Sara Velázquez and her *creatures of light* or the curious animals of Iris Simancas are clear examples of this: “Spacegoat por fin en un muro! (...) (el trazo! El trazo!) pero 2 semanas después ahí sigue la tía, flotando en el espacio con ese rosa chicle tan 🍷”¹⁹ (@irisdrawsstuff, 19 December 2020).

On the other hand, in several of the works, the human figure—mainly female—takes on a central role. An example of this is the artistic interventions of the Amazonas Duo, where the incorporation of this theme can be seen in the murals created throughout the different muralism seminars they periodically teach at Espacio Amazonas (figure 3). Furthermore, this presence extends to most of the works they have created in other locations, such as the mural that can be found at the 95 Art Gallery, where they have also participated as muralists alongside other artists such as Florencia Durán (figure 1) and Inés Jimm (figure 3).

¹⁷ "The feminine in patriarchy is not what women are but what has been constructed for them, Luce Irigaray"

¹⁸ Today, six women took to the wall, spray cans in hand, to defend animal rights. Because every being deserves their rightful place, and not a bit less than they deserve. Thank you @wallspot_org for making projects like this possible. And thank you, girls, for this day 💖 Here's to more walls, side by side

¹⁹ Spacegoat on a wall at last! (...) (el trazo! El trazo!) But two weeks later, there she is, still floating in space with that bubblegum pink 🍷

Image 3. On the left, mural by Dúo Amazonas at Espacio Amazonas. On the right, mural by Inés Jimm at 95 Art Gallery (Carabanchel, 2024)



Source: Own work, 2024

Also noteworthy is the presence of the elderly (figure 4), the representation of mythological characters, and social criticism, addressing issues such as pollution and the addictive impact of social media, especially on children. Personal stories and feelings are also reflected in several of the works analysed, showing the loss of a loved one, self-knowledge, reflections on migrant women, and the representation of memories and emotions through the wall.

Image 4. *Viejecillos compartiendo historias y recuerdos (Old folks sharing stories and memories)*, by the artist Animalitoland in collaboration with Mr. Alto (Moratalaz, 2015)



Source: Own elaboration, 2025

Another noteworthy aspect is the involvement of the local community on two levels. Firstly, it is involved in the wall selection process, as in the case of the *Compartiendo Muros (Sharing Walls)* programme, where citizens can choose the one they consider most suitable for the assigned location from a range of mural proposals. Secondly, the local community actively participates in the creative process, contributing to the execution of the work. An example of this is the intervention by artist Sara Flórez, who, through her publications, documented the participation of adults and children in the creation of the mural at CEIP Carmen Laforet in Vicálvaro (Figure 5).

Image 5. Details of the wall at CEIP Carmen Laforet, by artist Sara Flórez (Vicálvaro, 2018)



Source: Own elaboration, 2025

The artist Sonia Delgado also participated in *Compartiendo Muros (Sharing Walls)* in San Cristóbal de los Ángeles (Villaverde), publishing the creative process of her intervention on Instagram, with special reference to the so-called *Lideresas de Villaverde* – a group of women over 65 who work to restore the visibility and recognition of the needs and contributions of older women in society. Another of the mural's panels is dedicated to the *Celtibéricas u Olímpicas de Villaverde*, who played Spain's first women's football match in that neighbourhood. Another of the panels also highlights the presence of the *Grupo Cultural del Pino*, which fights to eradicate illiteracy among women. The local community is once again present in the same neighbourhood through Helen Bur's *Los paseantes (The Strollers)*, which depicts several inhabitants of San Cristóbal de los Ángeles in the form of small figures on different façades, thanks to the artist's participation in the Festival Circular 2024 (figure 6).

Image 6. On the right, details of the wall at the old Godella cinema, by artist Sonia Delgado. On the left, one of the 16 pieces that make up *Los paseantes (The Strollers)* by artist Helen Bur (Villaverde, 2018 and 2023).



Source: Own elaboration, 2024 and 2025

4.2. Creative process, influences and contextualisation of the work

Several artists, in addition to capturing the creative process behind their works, reveal their influences, including photographs that inspired them when creating the mural. Amaia Arrazola presents a video showing the day-to-day creation of the mural *Contra el Olvido (Against Oblivion)* (figure 7), demonstrating how the local community interacts with it. It also includes various sketches and explanations of her influences in illustrating each of the characters and elements, explaining what each one represents and the story behind each of the members of the *Sinsombrero*. Through various publications, Amaia Arrazola not only explains the meaning of each of the vignettes that make up this large outdoor comic but also continues to highlight the work of each of the women who bring it to life and colour. Through a kind of photographic archive, she shares images and paintings of each of them in order to preserve their memory.

Image 7. *Contra el Olvido (Against Oblivion)*, by artist Amaia Arrazola (Vallecas, 2024)



Source: Own work, 2025

It's Mancho is another artist who uses her publications to show her influences in works such as *Estampilla mimi*, including a photograph of her cat – to whom she pays tribute through the mural following her recent loss –: “este mural es uno de los mas importantes y significativos para mi aun así el mas difícil para pintar, jamás imagine que esto pasaría tan rápido, esperaba tenerla conmigo muchos años mas 💖 saque fuerzas para ir a pintar este homenaje (...)”²⁰ (@itsmancho, 17th March 2021). The artist Sara Velázquez also presents the previously designed sketches, in which the prominence of geometric compositions can be seen (@creatures_of_light, 24th January 2021). She also includes influences and inspirations when creating works such as the one made for one of Wallspot's Free Walls on animal rights, inviting reflection:

(...) I based my design on a picture I saw some time ago on @natgeoby @jasperdoest. (...) I feel extremely sad when I see any animal abuse, but above all, I would like people to understand that animals are not objects for their entertainment and should never support any shows or businesses based on that. While painting it, I could only have these words in my head: YOUR 5 MINUTES OF FUN ARE THEIR LIFETIME OF SLAVERY. Please think twice about it the next time you see animals in similar situations. (@creatures_of_light, 27th December 2020)

4.2. Reflections and communicative links

Artists also use Instagram as a means of expression, spreading the message of their works, feelings and impressions. Users of the network are invited to share their opinions on both the work displayed and the message conveyed. Such is the case of Agus Rúcula with her work *Derrame*, who indicates in one of her *posts* that, through the event *Crear en la periferia (Creating on the Periphery)*, she explained the process of creating the mural, inviting those present to reflect on what it conveyed to them (figure 8): “Me encanta preguntar a la gente que pasa mientras pinto, qué sensaciones les despierta lo que ven en el mural, de qué sienten que va el relato. Vos que estás leyendo, dale contame qué veeeees?!”²¹(@agusrucula, 27 December 2024). Another post about this work is a clear example of how Instagram can be used to create a dialogue between the artist and users of this social network:

AR1.2_follower1, 2024

Que hermosa¿que planta es? Me da mucha curiosidad

²⁰ “This mural is one of the most important and meaningful to me, yet the most difficult to paint. I never imagined this would happen so quickly. I hoped to have her with me for many more years. 💖 I found the strength to go and paint this tribute” The original spelling of the comments analysed has been retained in order to preserve their authenticity.

²¹ “I love asking people who pass by while I'm painting what feelings the mural evokes in them, what they think the story is about. You who are reading this, come on, tell me what you see?!”

agusrucula

(...) En argentina le decimos Taco de Reina pero se le llama Capuchina tmb si no me equivoco. De flores naranja fuerte. Este año plante unas de semilla y fue un viaje!! Se comen!) (@agusrucula, 26th December 2024).²²

Image 8. Mural *Derrame (Spill)* at a meeting with the artist Agus Rúcula during the event *Crear en la Periferia* (Create in the Periphery) (Carabanchel, 2024)



Source: Own work, 2024

On several occasions, the enthusiasm and gratitude of the local community can be seen in the comments on the posts published when they discover the meaning of the murals they see every day in their neighbourhoods: "Me he acercado a ver tú mural. Es fantástico! Ojalá más piezas así para recordar a las grandes. Muchísimas gracias por hacer esto por Vallecás 😍"²³ (AA1.3_follower4, 2024); "hola @amaiaarrazola he seguido cada día los avances de este trabajo en el muro del Centro Cívico del Pozo, y es maravilloso, muchas gracias por llenar de cultura y color mi barrio, esa es mi biblioteca. Besos 😍"²⁴ (AA1.6_follower2, 2024). It is also clear how this type of artistic intervention has a positive impact on the district or neighbourhood where it is located.

On the other hand, the posts help the online community locate the works they are interested in visiting, asking where exactly they are or even sharing their impressions when they visit them in person, as is the case with Helen Bur's *Los Paseantes* (figure 6): "Tu obra es adictiva, me ha encantado buscarlas"

²² AR1.2_follower1, 2024

How beautiful! What kind of plant is it? I'm very curious.

agusrucula

(...) In Argentina we call it Taco de Reina, but I think it's also called Capuchina. It has bright orange flowers. This year I planted some seeds and it was quite a journey! They're edible! (@agusrucula, 26th December 2024).

²³ "I went to see your mural. It's fantastic! I hope there will be more pieces like this to remember the greats. Thank you so much for doing this for Vallecás 😍 "

²⁴ "Hi @amaiaarrazola, I've been following the progress of this work on the wall of the Pozo Civic Centre every day, and it's wonderful. Thank you so much for filling my neighbourhood with culture and colour. That's my library. Kisses 😍 "

²⁵(HB1.1_follower3, 2023).

The artists express their gratitude to the associations, councils, programmes and projects that have enabled them to create the murals. They not only include them in their hashtags or mention them briefly with a tag but also use the copy of their posts to repeatedly thank them for their help or invitation. The same is true of the artists who have collaborated directly with them, as well as those they have met on collaborative walls or projects that bring together multiple creators simultaneously: "Gracias a @montanashopmadrid y a @wallspot_org por crear este tipo de eventos, donde no solo nos gozamos pintando sino tambien conocer gente linda que comparte tus mismos gustos 🥰" ²⁶ (itsmancho, 26th January 2021). This sisterhood and gratitude can also be seen in other artists such as Carola Bagnato, who directly thanks her colleagues for their work: "(...) creciendo y aprendiendo con amigas, compañeras de oficio, creadoras y pensadoras. Muchas gracias por crear estos espacios @duoamazonas @espacio.amazonas. Gracias @claririval por darme una mano @julieta.lande por la foto" ²⁷ (@carolabagnato, 15th December 2024).

Image 9. *Los patitos en fila (The Ducklings in a Row)*, by artist Carola Bagnato (Carabanchel, 2024)



Source: Own work, 2024

5. Conclusions

Through various mural interventions in public spaces, the urban artists studied have managed to raise awareness of the problems faced by peripheral neighbourhoods and contribute to strengthening their communities, promoting collective identity and local empowerment. The works analysed are not only a means of expression for the artists themselves but also manage to engage in dialogue with public spaces and both local and virtual communities.

It has been demonstrated how murals have been used to convey different local narratives and historical memories, promoting social cohesion and a sense of belonging. In some districts, citizen participation has been encouraged through their involvement in the selection of murals or through an active role in the creative process of the mural itself. In neighbourhoods such as San Cristóbal de los Ángeles in Villaverde, not only can local identity be seen in the themes and subject, but citizens were also involved in the execution of the mural on the perimeter of the old Godella Cinema. In the case of CEIP Carmen Laforet (Vicálvaro), the power of participation in the mural creation process has also been

²⁵ "Your work is addictive, I loved looking for them"

²⁶ "Thanks to @montanashopmadrid and @wallspot_org for creating these kinds of events, where we not only enjoy painting but also meet lovely people who share our tastes 🥰 "

²⁷ "(...) growing and learning with friends, colleagues, creators and thinkers. Thank you so much for creating these spaces @duoamazonas @espacio.amazonas. Thank you @claririval for giving me a hand @julieta.lande for the photo"

demonstrated, with a certain sadness perceived in those who did not arrive in time to contribute alongside the selected artist.

Although several of the murals do not have a historical or identity narrative with respect to the district in which they are located, they address issues that provoke reflection not only among the local community, but also among the virtual community, which has repeatedly expressed its gratitude for the inclusion of this type of mural and message in their neighbourhood.

The impact generated by these artistic practices on the urban and cultural environment of the districts is clearly positive. However, as Remesar (2019) points out, these initiatives need to be part of comprehensive strategies that include investment in education, employment and housing. Urban art has the potential to transform districts with high levels of social vulnerability, but this potential is limited if it is not approached as a comprehensive process that combines not only artistic intervention, but also citizen participation and active urban policies.

On the other hand, in the murals created as part of the *Crear en la periferia (Creating on the Periphery)* event, the participating artists include the experiences and feelings of migrant women as a common thread, facilitating an emotional connection with neighbours who are going through similar experiences.

Urban artists play a prominent role in the fight for gender equality, which is one of the main themes of their work. The representation of animal motifs, autobiographical stories, and different cultural or historical references also allows for a certain identification with the message conveyed, often leading to collective empowerment.

The camaraderie, appreciation and admiration among urban artists can be seen in the posts, comments and images they share on the social network under study. It is worth noting the creation of bonds and links between them, highlighting the need for and importance of networking within this group. Finally, collaborations between female urban artists are considered key to achieving greater visibility for their work within the urban environment, demonstrating constant support among them.

6. Acknowledgements

This text was written within the framework of the R&D project of the National Plan for Knowledge Generation 2022, under the title "Espacios culturales y prácticas artísticas contemporáneas: estrategias y dinámicas de renovación en periferias urbanas"²⁸ (2023-2026- Ref.PID2022-140361NB-I00).

²⁸ 'Cultural spaces and contemporary artistic practices: strategies and dynamics of renewal in urban peripheries'

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