

# The Prospects of the Arts Promotion in the Context of Limitations and Consequences of Self-Isolation

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**Abstract:** The rapid development of events related to the coronavirus pandemic has led to a crisis not only in the financial sector, but also in the field of art and culture. According to various international organisations, losses for the sphere of culture and art amount to tens of billions of dollars due to the forced quarantine. Museums and philharmonic societies closed and hundreds of concerts were cancelled. The artists faced a problem – to find and involve an audience in their work, contacting them only via the Internet. Many cultural institutions were able to transfer their resources to the digital sphere quite quickly (using digital resources). The relevance of the study is due to the fact that the crisis brought about by the coronavirus pandemic forced representatives of the cultural and artistic sector to look for new forms of functioning and communication with the audience. In this regard, this paper is aimed at identifying the consequences of forced self-isolation on the development of art and creativity of specific cultural figures. The leading method for the study of this subject is the method of analysis, which makes it possible to comprehensively assess the following areas: the activities of Ukrainian and world museums, theatres and philharmonic societies during quarantine, their methods of maintaining communication with the audience; the theme of the work of artists and illustrators during the pandemic, their ways to share their work without the possibility of organising exhibitions and art residences; work of musicians in isolation. One of the main conclusions in this situation was the need to use digital technologies as a platform to demonstrate the results of the creative process. Another important issue remains the search for new funding opportunities for the cultural sector during a crisis, since dependence on the state budget and donors can be unstable.

**Keywords:** Culture, coronavirus pandemic, digital technologies, museums, crisis.

## INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organisation (WHO) officially declared the SARS-CoV-2 outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020 and a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. The WHO has urged countries to adopt strict social distancing and quarantine measures to avoid the spread of the virus and protect public health. Despite scattered international efforts to contain the spread, SARS-CoV2 has spread to 213 countries, causing more than 16.5 million cases of infection since its official identification in Wuhan, China in December 2019 (Coronavirus disease... 2020). The governments of the countries affected by the pandemic had to take emergency measures and impose strict quarantine measures. Global quarantine caused the financial crisis. But, besides this, the restrictions put almost all areas of life in a difficult position.

A period of crisis has also come for the art sphere. Museums and philharmonic societies closed and hundreds of concerts were cancelled. The financial damage suffered by non-profit organisations in charge

of the art sphere forced some of them to close down forever. There was a crisis in this area before. There are enough reasons for this: competition from other forms of entertainment and the media, technological progress, reduced funding from the state and the rise in the cost of artistic labour (Ivey 2005; Woronkiewicz *et al.* 2012). The lucrative “business” of art is dead, at least for now, and it would be good if it hadn't been revived, at least in a banal, consumer-oriented form in recent years.

Obviously, we want people to return to museums, but we also have to offer them something more, invite them into inner life, reflection, meditation. In the terrible but purifying silence under the conditions of quarantine, our audience – the world – is really changing. The coronavirus pandemic has caused cancellations of concerts, musicals, theatrical performances, exhibitions and social events around the world and has forced people to stay locked up at home.

According to the data of the organisation Americans for the Arts (The economic impact ... 2020), the overall losses for the arts and culture in the United States due to the coronavirus pandemic amount to \$ 5.5 billion. The average financial impact on the organisation is US \$ 38,000. In a textual summary of the results of a survey of representatives of cultural institutions and

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independent artists, it is noted that “almost every art organisation has postponed or completely cancelled shows, exhibitions and events”. Lost attendance is estimated at nearly 63 million, with an average loss of 1.000 per organisation (The economic impact... 2020).

Music events around the world are being cancelled, and at the same time, there are many “virtual” and “real” opportunities for musicians of all ages and skills to find creative ways for their music. One such example is the recording of collective works of a virtual ensemble, where several people use video conferencing software to perform one song. Through initiatives like this, we can see the ambition of musicians with different backgrounds and abilities, striving to become part of something bigger, express their ideas through music, and make music relevant for them and others. The aesthetic dimension of music is so often overlooked in education, and yet it is central to its existence (Daubney and Fautley 2020).

Learning music in isolation can be challenging, but it is not an impossible task. It's worth noting that isolation isn't always bad for art. History knows of examples when artists or composers isolated themselves from people of their own free will in order to focus on their work. As F. Celestini (2017) notes, the composer Gustav Mahler built a summer villa in Mayernig in Carinthia in 1900, the hut was completed even before the house. In this hut there was a small piano, and it was located in a deserted meadow. F. Celestini (2017) notes that Gustav Mahler stayed there every summer from 1900 to 1907, with his servants having breakfast before the composer left his room and began his creative process, since Gustav Mahler did not want to see a single person during composing. So, this is how he wrote one of his most famous pieces of work – the Fifth Symphony.

In addition to the difficulties of experiencing the crisis on a psychological level and financial problems, another challenge appeared before the artists – the introduction of quarantine meant that they would have to show special creativity when it comes to finding the viewership. Researchers also pondered the transformation of event formats in creative industries in a structured way. Discussions boiled down to the fact that the most effective option for the survival of the cultural environment in the framework of a pandemic is the transition to digital with minimal losses. It is important to note that cultural figures do not expect to return to the pre-quarantine format of functioning until 2022. This is why it is worth to develop a long-term

program that involves engaging people online, rather than waiting for a meeting with your audience live (Nesterovich 2020).

Forced isolation deprives not so much of the opportunity to engage in creativity, as the opportunity to show the result and share opinions about it. However, in our time, this problem can be solved with the help of new technologies. Many cultural institutions have followed this path. Theatres and philharmonic societies began to conduct live broadcasts of their concerts in halls where there are no spectators. The main task for them was to bring the listener, and more recently, the “viewer” to an opera house or concert hall, so that people feel almost part of a “real” audience in the theatre. Along with new challenges, new solutions appear. The purpose of this study is to investigate how art is developing in Ukraine and in the world under forced self-isolation and to trace the influence of digital technologies on it.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The leading research method is the analysis method, with the help of which the study of the impact of the pandemic on the development of art was divided into several blocks, which contributed to a deeper review of the problem. First of all, the psychological aspects of the impact of forced self-isolation and a pandemic on a person, his need for obtaining new information, were studied, and the work of the psychological direction, in particular the influence of stressful situations on a person's interest in art and the ability to create.

The next step was to analyse the work of various cultural institutions around the world. Thanks to open sources, the work of museums during quarantine has been studied and analysed. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Getty Gallery in Los Angeles, the Paris Louvre and the Khanenko Museum in Kyiv were selected for the study (Verdon 2020). Comparison of the work of these museums with their online audience was conducted. In addition to the work of museums, the work of artists and illustrators during the pandemic was analysed: how they communicate with the audience, what subject they choose for their works, what kind of reaction they get from people.

The analysis of the works of the artist and sculptor from Great Britain A. Gormley (2019), illustrator from Switzerland Rocio Egio (2020), artist Ivan Grabko (Quarantine has changed the world... 2020) and

illustrator Alexander Grekhov (Malyuzhonok 2019) from Ukraine. The project of the art residency “Woven network/Women’s network”, which Ye. Nesterovich (2020) has written about. In order to find out how the pandemic affected the music industry, was conducted an analysis of the work of philharmonic societies, opera houses and orchestras during the quarantine. For research were selected: Brucknerhaus Linz in Austria, Vienna Opera House, Basque National Orchestra in Spain, Berlin Philharmonic, Paris Opera House, Taiwan Philharmonic and National Philharmonic of Ukraine. The author has also analysed the work of musicians and the features of conducting concerts online (One world: Together... 2020).

Possibilities of development and demonstration of art using digital technologies were investigated. In the framework of the study was conducted an analysis and comparison of tools used by cultural institutions and artists during quarantine. It was considered what results were brought by the publication of certain projects and pieces of work in social networks and on other online resources. Based on the results obtained, the impact of the pandemic and self-isolation on the field of art and culture in Ukraine and other countries was determined. Recommendations for a more effective development of this area are presented.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Museums are going through a rather difficult time during the pandemic, as they have lost part of their income due to the shut-down. The lack of visitors and the inability to hold exhibitions forced the administration of many museums to actively enter the digital sphere. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York after March 12 decided to close its doors to visitors until the end of the quarantine. This statement was made by the administration of the museum on the same day (Christiansen 2020). It is planned to allow people to visit the museum again in late summer. During the quarantine, the museum launched a challenge on social networks: Metropolitan employees urged people

to recreate famous art pieces from home and upload these publications under the hashtag #mettwinning. On Instagram, by the middle of summer, there are more than 5300 publications with this hashtag (Table 1).

The Los Angeles Getty Gallery has also recognised the importance of reliable and accessible digital resources for both staff and audiences. It focused on expanding its online presence. Among the initiatives launched by the museum also were the recreation of popular works of art and their publication under the hashtag #betweenartandquarantine. There are more than 45.700 publications under this hashtag on Instagram. Also, the day before the gallery was closed for quarantine, the curators of the museum visited two recently opened exhibitions – “Michelangelo: A Master’s View” and “Painted Prophecy: The Jewish Bible through the Eyes of a Christian” – with their smartphones and made several videos. The “For Michelangelo this” project has resulted in a series of short object-oriented videos. For “Painted Prophecy”, publication of a longer curated tour of the exhibition. Both online projects were very well received according to the museum administration (Potts 2020).

During the quarantine, the Paris Louvre opened several online tours on its website. Among them is a walk along the moat that surrounds the fortress, which was built in 1190 by the French king Philip Augustus to defend Paris from attack from the Seine, and which was turned into a museum only in 1792 after the French Revolution. There, on the Louvre website, we can take a walk through the exposition of Egyptian antiquities and the famous Galerie d’Apollon, dedicated to the Sun King Louis XIV. The management of the museum said that in 71 days, from March 12 to May 22, the Louvre website was visited by more than 10 million users. For comparison: for the whole of 2018 the museum received 10.2 million visitors, in 2019 – 9.6 million. The peak of virtual visits to the museum fell on the first weeks of quarantine, during each of which about 330 thousand people visited the Louvre website. Most of the visitors were foreign “guests” (Reopening of the Musée du Louvre... 2020).

**Table 1: Museum Work During Quarantine**

City	Museum	Project	Result
New York	Metropolitan	#mettwinning challenge	More than 5300 participants
Los Angeles	Getty Gallery	#betweenartandquarantine challenge	More than 45 700 publications with the hashtag
Paris	Louvre	Online tours of the museum	More than 10 million visitors
Kyiv	Khanenko Museum	“The Khanenko’s Stories” podcast	More than 1 000 plays

The Ukrainian National Museum of Art named after Bogdan and Varvara Khanenko has also closed to visitors after the start of the pandemic and the introduction of quarantine measures. The Khanenko Museum launched the #ExhibitionOnQuarantine flash mob for museums that had been preparing for the opening of exhibitions for a long time, but were unable to do so due to quarantine. Museum staff invited colleagues to talk about the exhibits through the prism of safety rules during the pandemic. Another project of the museum during the massive self-isolation regime was the first in Ukraine podcast about museums on the SoundCloud service. The first 7 issues have received over 1000 plays.

In conditions of self-isolation, not only museums, but also artists continued their work in a new format. For them, there is nothing new in communication with the audience via social media. Two of the selected artists and illustrators have a social media profile where they share their work. There are also various sites where they can upload their works. But it should be noted that the subject of the work has changed. Artists have made publications as part of various campaigns encouraging people to stay at home and maintain social distance during the quarantine.

For example, an artist from Switzerland, Rocio Egio (2020), has created several illustrations that show how you can spend your time in quarantine with benefit. The posts were made with the hashtag #coronaretreat. Out of 32 illustrations made by the artist from the beginning of quarantine on March 13 to April 13, 6 are devoted to the topic of the pandemic. The sculptor A. Gormley (2019) shared his works through the White Cube gallery profile on social networks during quarantine. His work has previously been frequently exhibited in museums, both classical and modern. His sculptures and installations are often voluminous, but during the quarantine, the artist focused on more miniature works and materials available. Photos of his work were posted on the White Cube Instagram during the week.

Ukrainian artist Ivan Grabko (Quarantine has changed the world... 2020) found himself in Mexico at the beginning of quarantine. Due to the inability to return home and work in the studio, the artist began to create artwork from scrap materials. The artist used charcoal from a fire for drawings, and for installations he collected objects found on the ocean shore during walks. Ivan Grabko (Quarantine has changed the world... 2020) published his works on his personal Instagram profile. Another Ukrainian illustrator,

Alexander Grekhov (Malyuzhonok 2019) wrote, created several works on the topic of coronavirus during the quarantine. Including in collaboration with the Kyiv Metro. The illustration encourages people to wear masks in the subway. The illustrator publishes his works on his personal profiles on social networks.

Another form of creativity display, which is impossible under conditions of self-isolation, are art residences. However, activists from Ukraine decided to transfer this format online. For this, the Woven network/Women's network project has been created, according to Ye. Nesterovich (2020). This is a six-month virtual art residency of 7 artists from 5 European countries and 3 time zones with a cross-cutting theme of invisible labour and the transformation of a hierarchical digital network into real horizontal lacework.

The project was a reaction to the effects of quarantine, which changed the way artists work. This is an exploration, re-evaluation, and finding new opportunities for creative expression and collaboration between countries, the use of digital tools, materials and remote collaboration practices through joint creative cooperation of three female artists from Ukraine and four more – from Sweden, Scotland, Poland and England. Seven artists from different countries will work in a virtual world, sharing ideas, stories and materials with each other, creating a common media product.

During quarantine, large concert halls, opera houses and philharmonic societies had to suspend work and cancel concerts. However, after a short break, many opened accesses to the archived recordings of their concerts and began to broadcast online concerts in empty halls. So, the Paris Opera House has been conducting similar broadcasts since the first week of quarantine. Performances of the Basque Folk Orchestra did not stop either. The musicians performed in front of the camera for online viewers. All members of the orchestra were at a distance of 2 meters from each other. After the lifting of strict quarantine restrictions on performances at the Vienna Opera House, some spectators were allowed inside: the relatives of the musicians. The maximum number of spectators in the hall should not exceed 100 people (Table 2).

Online streaming of concerts during the quarantine was carried out not only by large musical institutions, but also by individual musicians. Free concerts were

**Table 2: The Work of Orchestras, Theatres and Philharmonic Societies During Quarantine**

Concert hall	Status	Conditions
Brucknerhaus Linz	Concerts resumed	No more than 400 spectators allowed to the hall
Vienna Opera	Concerts and performances resumed	Only relatives of members of the orchestra can attend the concert. The concert lasts no longer than 70 minutes. No more than 100 spectators. All of them must be wearing masks
Basque National Orchestra	Concerts resumed online	Hour-long concerts are streamed online. There are no spectators in the hall. The members of the orchestra are at the distance of 2 meters from each other
Berlin Philharmonic	Concerts resumed online	The concerts are streamed online. There are no spectators in the hall
Paris Opera	Concerts and performances resumed online	The concerts are streamed online. There are no spectators in the hall
National Philharmonic of Ukraine	Concerts resumed	Spectators must wear masks. The concerts are streamed online
Taiwan Philharmonic	Concerts resumed	No more than 450 spectators

held on YouTube channels or in live broadcasts from Instagram and Facebook, to which anyone could connect. Their peculiarity was that the musicians performed songs right from home, thereby supporting the idea that quarantine must be observed. Some of these concerts were organised with the aim of creating a charitable platform that will help people with coronavirus and doctors who work with such patients.

One particular initiative is One world: Together at home (2020). The UN and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have reached out to Global Citizen, the world's largest movement, to reach out to the interested members of the general public seeking to end extreme poverty by 2030. The UN and WHO have asked to support their COVID-19 response by connecting the world with music and inspiring action. Global Citizen has brought together an exceptional group of creators to launch One world: Together at home (2020). This historic cross-platform global event has broadcasted speeches from the world's leading health experts alongside performances by the world's leading artists and comedians (One world: Together... 2020).

Researchers in the field of psychology and the influence of creativity on humans have come to the conclusion that the development of culture can help people overcome the crisis associated with the outbreak of a pandemic, forced self-isolation and the loss of the usual rhythm of life. For example, paintings and illustrations can be great tools for art therapy. The viral moment created a space for introspection. This allows to focus on the flow of life. The best definition of

the creative process is to be creative, to explore own hope and nature (Mukhopadhyay 2020).

After creating visual illustrations, we can explore our image from a safe distance to open up a new perspective that transforms our feelings and attitudes about the crisis. As tangible products, the works of art can also be transferred to others, inviting them to dialogue with author's inner world, discovering personal meanings in it and emotionally linking it as a common human experience; thus, artwork can offer collective healing. Finally, artwork can have a timeless and historical quality, serving as tangible monuments that will forever mark this present moment in our personal and collective history (Shulman and Watkins 2008). Setting up a memorial in times of collective crisis can bring healing (Gupta 2020). But it is worth noting that the transition to digital technology contributes not only to reflection, but also the opportunity to raise a discussion and get a response to the feelings from the situation and from artistic objects.

Research by scientists from the UK and Singapore revealed that the development of art is inseparable from technological progress. Combined practices worked both during the Renaissance and now. The digital age brings nuance to the way art develops and the artist expresses his views. The creative process ultimately consists of inventing new forms, combining them with each other (as well as personal expressions of artists' views, painting styles and design approaches) and experimenting with them through iterative means. Combination and creative work play a key role in the artistic achievement of the Renaissance, thanks to the use of new technologies and materials.

In the digital age, there are similar types of creativity, albeit with even deeper changes. The computational and communication ability of digital technologies in terms of volume, complexity and speed allows creativity to be taken to the next level (Sapsed and Tschang 2014). In the context of this study, we can say that the cultural environment needs digitalisation. In the context of a pandemic and self-isolation, it became clear that communication between representatives of the cultural sector with each other and with other people cannot be effective without the use of the new opportunities provided by digital technologies. It is worth noting that they can not only become part of a creative product, but also serve as a platform for dissemination for artists, given the opportunity to create works, receive a reaction to them, enter into a discussion with the audience and other artists, regardless of the framework, established by cultural institutions and from external funding.

When it comes to funding, it should be recognised that public policy, both through regulation and subsidies, is an important part of a healthy arts sector. However, there are researchers who support more innovative policies, which means looking at new institutional forms, new types of enterprises, new art forms, and new ways of connecting to communities (McDonnell and Tepper 2014). This paper shows that the financial dependence of cultural institutions makes them fragile in times of crisis such as the present. The ability to communicate directly with non-governmental organisations and loyal groups of people, creating an interest in the cultural sector, can give them new opportunities for development.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it can be noted that the development of art cannot be stopped, and the crisis brought by the coronavirus pandemic forced cultural figures to find new forms of functioning and demonstrating the results of the creative process. Digital technologies have become one of the main ways to communicate with the audience. The ability to go online, arrange live broadcasts, post on social media and receive feedback. The experience of Ukrainian and world museums indicates that people's interest in art remains quite strong. To get their attention back, it is necessary to find the right tools.

Another important component for the audience of museums was the opportunity to take part in the creation of certain projects. This is shown by the experience of the challenges launched by the

Metropolitan and Getty Museums on Instagram. The number of participants leaves no doubt – people are ready to take initiative and support museums. The same goes for philharmonic societies and opera houses. Their transition to the digital sphere and communication with people allowed them to maintain loyalty of the audience.

Individual artists and sculptors have also made social networks their main platform. Ukrainian and world artists have become opinion leaders who, with the help of their works on the topic of the pandemic, urged people to be careful and take care of their health. Their work gets a response and spreads quickly on social networks, which makes the results of their work even more effective. All this allows us to conclude that art in the digital age cannot exist separately from them and not be part of the global heritage. The ability to be mobile, transfer information and other resources to the Internet allows the cultural sphere to develop and set new tasks for itself. In addition, it allows cultural institutions to seek new opportunities for an existence independent of the state and donors.

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