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MURALISM AND INSTAGRAM: Public Visibility of Women Street Artists in Valencia's Urban Periphery

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ABSTRACT

This study examines mural practices developed by women in Valencia's urban space, with particular attention to interventions located in peripheral areas and their circulation on Instagram. Using a qualitative approach grounded in visual studies and urban culture, it examines how the artists construct their public image through the digital dissemination of murals and how these territories acquire visibility and meaning. The analysis is structured around three levels: the physical mural, its urban geolocation and its representation on the social network. Murals are understood as hybrid images that mediate between physical space and the digital environment.

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1. Introduction

Contemporary muralism has become an important tool for revitalising and resignifying urban environments, strengthening local identity and fostering connections within the communities that inhabit these spaces. At the same time, the expansion of digital platforms has transformed the way these artistic practices are disseminated, enabling a shared experience between the physical space in which the mural is located and the digital space in which it is published.

Through social media, women street artists have access to a virtual art gallery that allows their works to endure over time and to be shared internationally. Alongside these digital actors, institutional actors have also harnessed the benefits of street art by incorporating it into different social and cultural policies, even enabling the urban regeneration of different locations. According to Boscaino (2021), "the phenomenon of street art is characterised by both digital and analogue aspects where different actors intervene to determine a specific component of the value of creativities appearing both on and offline" (p. 11).

Instagram has become a central device for the circulation of contemporary muralism. This social network functions not only as a gallery where different published works can be viewed, but also as a visual archive, a narrative space and a tool for constructing the artists' public image. From a gender perspective, the analysis of muralism in public space acquires an additional dimension. As Beauvoir (1998) observed, gender is a social and cultural construction, since "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (p. 13). This statement makes it possible to understand women's presence in public space as a practice in which historical relations of symbolic inequality have persisted. Muralism by women helps to give them a voice in a historically masculinised space, fostering their visibility as artists beyond their gender.

> Since woman is abstract and empty, she can only authentically assume herself through rebellion: this is the only path open to those who have no possibility of constructing anything; she must overcome the limits of her situation and attempt to open up the paths of the future; resignation is merely capitulation and flight; for woman there is no other way out than to work for her liberation. (Beauvoir, 1998, pp. 428–429)

From the perspective of difference feminism, authors such as Irigaray (2009) and Cixous (1995) have emphasised the need to generate a symbolic order alternative to the androcentric one, in which women can produce meaning from their own experiences, languages and embodied realities (Cixous, 1995; Irigaray, 2009). Within this framework, muralism can be understood as a situated practice of cultural production in which identity, memory and lived experience are articulated. "If we do not invent a language, if we do not find its language, our body will have far too few gestures with which to accompany our history" (Irigaray, 2009, p. 161).

The digital circulation of these artistic practices through social media is also linked to a clear technological dimension. The figure of the *cyborg* proposed by Haraway (1991) is particularly relevant to the analysis of women muralists' presence on Instagram, understood as "a kind of disassembled and reassembled, postmodern collective and personal self. This is the self feminists must code" (Haraway, 1984, p. 18). From this perspective, the mural does not simply exist as a physical intervention, but becomes a hybrid image that circulates, fragments and is resignified on the platform, producing new forms of visibility and narratives of the creative process. According to Haraway, "female *cyborg* stories have the task of recoding communication and intelligence to subvert command and control" (Haraway, 1984, p. 32). The artists' bodies, image technologies and network infrastructures come together in a cyberfeminist practice that transcends the boundaries between the human and the technological, and between the here of the neighbourhood and the there of connected audiences.

This study focuses on the territories of l'Horta Nord and l'Horta Sud, two comarcas in the Valencia metropolitan area that provide a significant context for analysing these artistic practices. L'Horta Nord covers an area of 192 km^2 and has undergone extensive human intervention involving land subdivision, levelling and water diversion. Its municipalities are: Albalat dels Sorells, Alboraya, Albuixech, Alfara del Patriarca, Almàssera, Bonrepòs i Mirambell, Burjassot, Emperador, Foios, Godella, Massalfassar, Massamagrell, Meliana, Moncada, Museros, Paterna, La Pobla de Farnals, Puçol, el Puig de Santa Maria, Rafelbunyol, Rocafort, Tavernes Blanques and Vinalesa. Various territorial analyses indicate that a significant part of the comarca lies in areas at risk of flooding. According to Consorcio Pactem Nord

(2017), "l'Horta is losing a significant amount of agricultural land – through urban development and abandonment – and its quality is also declining as a result of the excessive use of fertilisers and pesticides, which is destroying much of the soil's biology, meaning that its productivity must be maintained artificially" (p. 13).

For its part, l'Horta Sud is one of the most densely populated and industrialised comarcas in Valencia, with a long tradition of socio-community organisation. Studies promoted by organisations such as Fundació Horta Sud highlight the existence of a particularly active civil society, structured around cultural, neighbourhood and educational associations that have played a central role in defending the territory (Fundació Horta Sud, 2019). Its municipalities are: Alaquàs, Albal, Alcàsser, Aldaia, Alfafar, Benetússer, Beniparrell, Catarroja, Lloc Nou de la Corona, Manises, Massanassa, Mislata, Paiporta, Picanya, Picassent, Quart de Poblet, Sedaví, Silla, Torrent and Xirivella. The comarca is regarded as a place of particular symbolic significance, where artistic interventions are connected to the everyday life of local residents and their coexistence.

Both comarcas share a historical and cultural connection with the Huerta de Valencia, a centuries-old agricultural landscape regarded as one of the Mediterranean's most distinctive farming systems. The *Plan de Acción Territorial de la Huerta de València* had already highlighted its heritage, productive and symbolic value, while warning of the threats arising from urbanisation, territorial fragmentation and the climate crisis (Generalitat Valenciana, 2018).

2. Objectives

The general objective of this study is to analyse mural practices developed by women in peripheral municipalities of the Valencia metropolitan area, specifically in l'Horta Nord and l'Horta Sud. Based on this general objective, the following specific objectives are proposed:

- To examine how the urban periphery of l'Horta Nord and l'Horta Sud is represented in the digital circulation of murals on Instagram, with particular attention to geolocation strategies, spatial references in the texts accompanying posts and the visual framing of the urban environment.
- To explore the strategies of self-representation and construction of the public image of women muralists on Instagram, paying particular attention to bodily presence, the visibility of the creative process and the logics of professionalisation associated with the platform.

3. Methodology

The research design is based on the triangulation of three main sources of information: an analysis of the murals under study in their urban locations; a netnographic analysis of the dissemination of these murals on Instagram, as well as of the representation of their creators on this social network; and the conducting of semi-structured interviews with the artists.

The geographical scope of the study encompasses the municipalities of l'Horta Nord and l'Horta Sud in Valencia. These comarcas were selected both because of their territorial significance and because of the substantial presence of women muralists who have intervened in the public spaces of these municipalities. Given the ephemeral nature of urban muralism, the analysis was limited to interventions carried out between 2021 and 2025, establishing a five-year period that makes it possible to ensure the location and documentation of the works. The corpus of analysis comprises:

- 21 women muralists, identified on the basis of interventions carried out in l'Horta Nord and l'Horta Sud (Silvia López, Laura Merayo, Alicia Jordá de Lucas, BTOY, It's Mancho Lluïsa Penella i Pons, Sara Chóliz, Irene Remón, Doa Oa, Anna Repullo Vique, Dyca, Sara Dymz, Galleta Maria, Atena, Rosa Fuster Serquera, Alejandra De La Torre, La Nena Wapa Wapa, Alba Bla, Aleixa la Peixa, Marta Lapeña, Barbi).
- 21 Instagram profiles, corresponding to each of the artists analysed.
- 87 Instagram posts, selected because of their direct relationship with murals produced within the geographical scope of the study.
- 38 murals, located in different municipalities across both comarcas. Specifically, 25 murals were recorded in l'Horta Sud, in Paiporta, Picassent, Catarroja, Torrent, Albal, Benetússer and Alfafar,

while 13 murals were located in l'Horta Nord, in Godella, Rafelbunyol, Burjasot, Puçol and Meliana.

It should be noted that three murals could not be analysed in the digital environment because they had not been posted on Instagram by the artists themselves. These were one mural produced by Alba Bla in Puçol (l'Horta Nord) and two murals produced by Aleixa la Peixa and Marta la Peña in Picassent (l'Horta Sud). These cases were included only in the territorial and contextual analysis, but not in the netnographic analysis relating to the representation of the mural itself.

The netnographic analysis focused on the content published on Instagram by the selected artists, considering both visual and textual elements. Following the methodological proposals of Kozinets (2020), the analysis process was conducted in several stages. In the first stage, the Instagram profiles were systematically observed, recording information on the type of content shared and the relationship between the work, the process and self-representation. In the second stage, an in-depth analysis of the 87 selected posts was carried out, focusing on variables such as the presence or absence of geolocation, spatial references in the text, representation of the urban environment, appearance of the artist's body, documentation of the creative process and mentions of institutions or collaborations.

This analysis combined a descriptive quantitative dimension, which made it possible to identify recurring patterns and the distribution of certain practices – for example, the use of *geotags*, bodily presence or representation of the process – with an interpretative qualitative dimension aimed at understanding the meaning of these decisions in relation to the territorial context and the logics of the platform. An inductive coding process was carried out (Kozinets, 2020, p. 339), with the codes organised into different categories. The main categories included: format, location, visible periphery, shot type, presence of the artist, process shown, type of surface, type of space and bodily presence, among others.

In order to incorporate the perspectives of the artists themselves and explore in greater depth the meanings attributed to their practices, nine semi-structured interviews were conducted with women muralists included in the corpus between 12 and 26 January 2026. The interviews were carried out in different formats according to participant availability: four face-to-face interviews, one *online* interview and four interviews conducted by email and private Instagram messaging, through which queries were clarified and responses expanded asynchronously. The interview guide addressed issues relating to the relationship between muralism and territory, decisions regarding visibility and geolocation, experiences of working in peripheral contexts, the dissemination of works on Instagram and the construction of the public image. The interviews were transcribed in full and analysed qualitatively, and were incorporated into the coding process alongside the netnographic data.

4. Analysis and Results

4.1. Format and Audiovisual Content

Beginning with the formats used in the posts analysed, there is a clear preference for the carousel, which appears in 67.8% of the *posts* examined. The artists predominantly opt for formats that allow them to construct a sequential visual narrative. The use of the carousel facilitates the presentation of the mural from different perspectives, using wide shots, *zooms*, details, the creative process and even specific references to the surrounding environment.

With regard to the content of the posts, the mural-making process features prominently. In 65.5% of cases, the process is shown explicitly, while 34.5% focus exclusively on the final result or on other aspects. Four types of process can also be distinguished, often appearing in combination within the same post through carousel or video formats: execution work (painting the mural, using brushes, rollers or *sprays*); work at height (showing the use of scaffolding, cranes and/or ladders); preparation of the surface (cleaning the wall, priming and/or sketching); and intermediate stages (the unfinished mural with visible layers).

The representation of the process is closely linked to the bodily presence of the artist. In most of the *posts* showing the creative process (approximately two thirds), the artist appears working on the mural, using different types of tools or physically interacting with the wall. The dissemination of the creative process serves not only a documentary function, but also an educational and professional one. The interviews reinforce this interpretation, indicating that showing the process is also a way of explaining muralism to non-specialist audiences and justifying the value of the work undertaken. However, several

of the artists interviewed indicate that much of the research involved in creating a mural remains invisible on the social network:

> There is always a part that gets left out, which for me is very important, and that is the research process, the process of talking to local residents (…) of finding out what is happening there and how you want to approach it (…), all of that comes before the Instagram photo and is never seen. (Lluïsa Penella i Pons, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026)

A total of 78.3% of the posts were published from the artists' own profiles. Instagram therefore functions primarily as a space for professional self-archiving and self-representation. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of these posts include explicit mentions of institutions, projects or local organisations. There are also posts published directly by other profiles but shared by the artists themselves – among these, 8.7% were posted by institutional profiles, including accounts belonging to local councils, cultural projects or organising bodies.

It should also be noted that 78.3% of the posts analysed can be regarded as collaborative in nature, as they include explicit mentions, tags or acknowledgements of institutions, local organisations, neighbourhood associations or cultural projects. This type of post makes visible the collaborative networks that enable mural interventions to take place. Such posts appear more frequently in relation to murals produced in municipalities of l'Horta Sud, where the density of associations and the existence of different cultural projects encourage these collaborative dynamics.

Figure 1. *Participatory mural promoted by local associations and committees in the DANA ground-zero area*



Source: Work by Lluïsa Penella i Pons (Catarroja, 2025). Authors' own photograph, 2026

4.2. Location: Geotags, Copy and Comments

In order to explore the digital representation of territory in greater depth, a specific analysis was conducted of the presence of location information and the ways in which the locations of the works were included in the posts analysed. This analysis considers not only the use of the platform's technical tools – such as geolocation – but also the incorporation of place through the text of the *post* (*copy*), comments and other implicit narrative strategies.

Although all the murals analysed are located in peripheral municipalities of the Valencia metropolitan area, explicit reference to place is selective. The use of precise geolocation (*geotag*) is relatively limited. Of the posts analysed, 24.1% include a precise location associated with the site of the mural; 36.8% use generic or broad *geotags* – for example, the name of the municipality or comarca – and 39.1% do not include any form of geolocation. However, references to territory are more frequent

in the *copy*: 44.8% of the *posts* explicitly mention the specific place where the work is located, while 40.2% mention the municipality. The periphery is therefore represented more through the narrative provided by the artists themselves in the *copy* than through precise geolocation clearly indicating the exact location of the work. It is also worth noting that 46.4% of the posts contain comments explicitly referring to place, whether by the artist herself, tagged institutions or people connected to the municipality. These references usually take the form of acknowledgements, mentions of local organisations or expressions of belonging. Location can therefore be understood as a marker of community recognition, reinforcing the relationship between mural, territory and neighbourhood. In many cases, the absence of *geotags* is compensated for by references in the text or comments. In virtually all the interviews conducted, place is not a secondary element but plays a central role throughout the process. According to Barbi, place:

> is like half of the project and, on many occasions, a fundamental part of it, always because of the people who live with that space. The space has its own connotations, its own meanings… whether it is a village square, whether it is on the outskirts... It will always be a place where people see it every day – people on their way to work, on their way to school. So what you are going to paint is very important, as is taking the surroundings of that wall into account. (Barbi, *personal communication*, 25 January 2026)

Figure 2. *Tribute to Kathrine Switzer*



Source: Work by Barbi (Paiporta, 2021; affected by the DANA). Authors' own photograph, 2026

For her part, Alba Bla frames the context in ethical terms: "I think you have to go and talk (…) engage a little with the surroundings because it is not a *sticker* that you can simply put up and take down" (Alba Bla, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026). For Lluïsa Penella i Pons, meanwhile, place has "all the importance, the primary importance" (Lluïsa Penella i Pons, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026). However, the artist explains that, because these works are located in peripheral areas, it is sometimes difficult to include the precise location through Instagram and, on other occasions, she herself decides whether or not to include the location depending on the nature of the mural she is sharing:

> It is true that, when it comes to adding the exact location, Instagram, because we are talking about peripheral areas, does not have those places registered, so I may not be able to specify it precisely, but I do include the town and then explain it in the description (…). I do try to describe it because, for me, in my case, the work makes no sense without that description" (Lluïsa Penella i Pons, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026).

Figure 3. *You are essential*



Source: Work by Alba Bla (Puçol, 2023). Authors' own photograph, 2026

4.3. Analysis of the Type of Space Intervened

Over 70% of the murals are located on surfaces directly linked to the everyday life of local residents, embedded within ordinary urban fabrics. There is also a clear presence of murals situated in inhabited spaces or areas of transit, implying daily coexistence with the local community and resulting in their integration into the urban landscape.

Figure 4. *The Lady of Ermine*



Source: Work by Rhapsodyca (Godejam 2025, Godella). Authors' own photograph, 2026

With regard to the presence of the peripheral environment, three main patterns were identified: 23% show a clearly visible periphery, with a recognisable urban setting and the presence of buildings, streets

and neighbourhood elements; in 39%, the periphery is partially visible, with fragments of the surroundings, blurred backgrounds and secondary elements; and in 38%, the periphery is not visible, meaning that the mural is isolated and/or shown against a neutral background. It is worth noting that in 77% of the posts, the peripheral environment appears partially or fragmentarily, whereas in 23% of cases it is shown clearly and recognisably. In this sense, the visible periphery is presented as a territory undergoing transformation, which resonates with the statements made by several of the artists interviewed:

> Generally, I prefer to focus more on the work itself, unless it is a very beautiful space, because urban contexts on the periphery tend to be architecturally very neglected (…) what I want to do with these murals is remove that layer of concrete and talk about what used to be there before. Here in Valencia, specifically, almost always, if we remove that layer of concrete, what was there before was agricultural land. So in my murals I talk about what used to be there and, therefore, I do not want to focus too much in the photograph on those buildings surrounding it. (Lluïsa Penella i Pons, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026)

Figure 5. *The orange tree*



Source: Work by Lluïsa Penella i Pons (Torrent, 2024). Authors' own photograph, 2026

Murals located on residential façades and public facilities tend to show the surrounding environment more clearly, whereas those situated on perimeter walls, party walls or in industrial spaces display greater visual fragmentation of the context. The choice to show only fragments of the surroundings or to visually isolate the mural can also be interpreted as a strategy to avoid overexposing the location, particularly in contexts that are sensitive or familiar to the artists. Some muralists express explicit concern about the effects of digital visibility on peripheral spaces, pointing to risks such as touristification:

> The mural is a double-edged sword because of the touristification it can generate (…) I am increasingly aware of that. (…) In very small towns (…) there is no need, you know? I mean, maybe you just indicate the area and let people investigate; there is no need to give the exact location of places because otherwise you end up distorting them as well… it is as though some of the magic is lost, isn't it? (Aleixa la Peixa, *personal communication*, 28 January 2026)

Figure 6. *Mural for Cromàpica 2022, next to the metro tracks*



Source: Work by Aleixa la Peixa and Giova (Picassent, 2022). Authors' own photograph, 2026

Several of the interviews analysed show that the artists regard the mural as an element that can become integrated into the everyday life of the local community or, conversely, form part of what might be understood as cultural consumption through the tourist gaze. Barbi draws a clear contrast: "here in Valencia, in the central neighbourhoods, what we have are tourists. And in the towns, on the periphery, local residents" (Barbi, *personal communication*, 25 January 2026). Other artists, however, stress the importance of situating the work within its territorial context in order to give it meaning. This is the case of Anna Repullo, who explains that "the location is part of the mural itself, in order to contextualise it and understand it" (Anna Repullo, *personal communication*, 27 January 2026), and Laura Merayo, who emphasises the importance of the place where she creates her work:

> it plays a central role in the work itself; my murals usually revolve around the customs, culture and idiosyncrasies of the place where they are created. For me, it is very important to understand the context of the town and its people when creating the mural, so that they can identify with it and it resonates with them more strongly. (Laura Merayo, *personal communication*, 22 January 2026)

Figure 7. *The inner courtyard*



Source: Work by Laura Merayo (Cromàpica 2024, Picassent). Authors' own photograph, 2026

Instagram reinforces this logic by allowing selective framing of space. The artists construct a filtered representation of the periphery through their choice of shots, the exclusion of certain elements of the surroundings or a focus on details of the mural. The posts analysed also show a predominance of close and medium shots over wide shots, which present the mural in its entirety and in relation to its surroundings. Wide shots are used primarily when the aim is to contextualise the mural within the urban space, making it possible to recognise both the work and the building or street in which it is located and thus providing a controlled contextualisation. Medium shots, meanwhile, make it possible to show the mural recognisably while maintaining a visible relationship with its surroundings. Detail shots appear particularly in carousel posts and usually emphasise formal aspects of the mural such as textures, brushstrokes, colours or figures, reducing the visibility of the surrounding environment.

4.4. Construction of the Public Image

With regard to the audiovisual content shared in the posts analysed, 54% depict only the mural, without any human figure. In 43.7%, the artist appears either clearly or occasionally, working on or posing beside the work, while 12 of the 87 posts analysed show a mixed presence, including the artist together with other people. Although the artist's appearance in the shared content constitutes a relevant strategy on Instagram, most posts prioritise the visual centrality of the work, maintaining a balance between personal visibility and the prominence of the mural.

> Generally, I always take the final photograph of the work without appearing in it myself, and if you do see me, it will be in process videos, which I sometimes upload – having a camera recording when it is a small wall that will not take very long and the format allows it. I can make a *timelapse* showing me painting and how the mural gradually takes shape, but I will always appear with my back to the camera. It is not something I refuse to do, but nor is it something I actively seek. (Lluïsa Penella i Pons, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026)

The bodily presence of the artists is linked both to strategies of visibility and professionalisation and to the platform's algorithmic logics, which favour the appearance of bodies and faces. The interviews make it possible to interpret these decisions as responses to Instagram's own visibility logics. Alba Bla notes that posts in which she appears tend to achieve greater reach and describes the platform as a system that "has its own ideology and is making decisions for you, so in the end you are basing your results on the filter of a company that has a policy and decides what is interesting and what is not" (Alba Bla, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026). Barbi, for her part, acknowledges that bodily presence facilitates empathy and recognition: "well, I prefer to appear because that way I get more *likes*, to be honest (…). People empathise when they see you in the photos; that's just how it is" (Barbi, *personal communication*, 25 January 2026).

By contrast, the exclusive presence of local residents is identified in only 3 posts, and that of the technical team in 2, indicating that although the community dimension is relevant in the discourse, it is not always translated visually into the representation of the mural. In these cases, people generally appear as secondary figures, integrated into the surroundings or the production process rather than as protagonists. Although the community has only a very limited presence in the audiovisual material shared, it is fully present in the narrative discourse surrounding the process. This is confirmed in several of the interviews, in which references to the local community recur repeatedly. Recalling her experience as one of the muralists participating in the 2025 Cromàpica Festival in Picassent, Irene Remón explains how local residents themselves conveyed the unequal distribution of cultural initiatives through remarks such as "thank goodness there is a mural here, because they always do them in the centre". She also notes that, in more peripheral areas such as Picassent, the relationship with the community is closer:

> it is as though they are people who are more used to being out in the street, you know? In bars or with their neighbours. I mean, I think they have more community-based relationships. So their relationship with you is also more community-based. They do not see you as working there in isolation; instead, during that time, you become part of the neighbourhood. And I think that says a lot about who they are, how they understand the social construction of the neighbourhood and

how they understand relationships with anyone working in the neighbourhood. (Irene Remón, *personal communication*, 26 January 2026)

Figure 8. *Les flors i el pati*



Source: Work by Irene Remón (Cromàpica 2025, Picassent). Authors' own photograph, 2026

Lluïsa Penella i Pons describes the same phenomenon in terms of the intensity of interaction, noting that the further she moves away from the centre, the more contact she has with local residents. She also explains the importance of residents' accounts of the place in which she is working artistically, regarding them as essential to her work:

> I always try to investigate… to get local residents to tell me about it. And, wherever possible, I look for oral testimonies that have not been institutionalised, that are not part of that universal body of knowledge. I want to give them a voice and also grant them a certain recognition as valuable knowledge. I try to place rural forms of knowledge on the same level as urban or universal forms of knowledge. (Lluïsa Penella i Pons, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026)

4.5. Identity and Authorship

In order to analyse how the artists construct their digital identity on Instagram, a specific analysis was conducted of the 21 profiles included in the corpus, focusing on the real name, alias and displayed name used on the profile. Three distinct strategies were identified: 28.6% use a creative or metaphorical alias – that is, a name that cannot be closely related to their real name – 61.9% opt to use an alias derived from their real name – for example, their full name, a diminutive or a combination including one or two surnames – and 9.5% use an alias combining their real name with an artistic and/or professional reference such as "*art*", "mural" or "illustration", among others. The results therefore indicate that most of the artists prefer to construct their digital identity around an artistic alias – sometimes closely related to their real name and, in other cases, entirely distinct from it – thereby creating a personal brand within the artistic field.

The displayed name on the profile, which is an editable field independent of the alias, tends to correspond to the artist's full name and professional identity. The full real or artistic name appears in 9 profiles (42.9%); the name accompanied by a professional descriptor such as muralist, artist or illustrator appears in 5 profiles (23.8%); the artistic alias without a professional descriptor appears in

6 profiles (28.6%); and in one profile no such name is displayed. A high degree of consistency can therefore be observed between the artist's name, alias and displayed name. The alias functions as a creative brand and distinctive element, the displayed name provides clarity and professionalism, and the profile content reinforces this identity.

With regard to the profile image chosen by each of the artists studied, three main types were identified. In 10 of the 21 profiles analysed, the image corresponds to works created by the artists themselves or to fragments of one of their murals; in 8 profiles, the image shows the artist alongside her mural – with her back to the camera, posing or painting – while portraits or photographs of the artists alone were identified in only 3 of the profiles examined. It should therefore be emphasised that a large proportion of the profiles use images in which no face is visible or in which the artist is only partially visible, sharing visual prominence with the work.

> Ultimately, on Instagram you can create your own artist avatar and be whatever you want to be. You can tell quite a lot about each artist's personality from the content they upload and from how they interact with the platform and the public. (Laura Merayo, *personal communication*, 22 January 2026)

The bio also displays aspects related to profession, identity or territory. In 85% of the profiles, the bio contained an explicit professional self-definition, compared with 15% in which no such definition was identified. A number of recurring professional categories were also observed, with several sometimes combined within the same profile: visual arts; situated practice; *Art & Land*; contextual muralism; artist; muralist; street artist; *woman street artist*; *stencil artist*; *visual poetess*; workshop facilitator; *contemporary urban artivism*; graffiti. In addition, 11 of the 21 profiles include explicit references to territory in their bio, linking the artist's digital identity to the territorial context in which she develops her work. The bio can therefore be understood as a brief professional introduction that situates the artist within professional and cultural networks.

It should also be noted that 16 of the 21 profiles analysed include some form of contact information. A significant majority of the artists therefore use Instagram as an active professional channel, facilitating contact for commissions, collaborations or projects. The presence of contact information in the bio reinforces the interpretation of Instagram as a working tool, rather than merely as a gallery or visual archive.

> I see my Instagram as a kind of open portfolio so that, if someone has mentioned me or come across my name in some way, they can quickly look at what I do without me having to prepare a tedious CV to send them. I see it more as a portfolio than as a form of advertising. (Lluïsa Penella i Pons, *personal communication*, 15 January 2026)

5. Conclusions

The analysis of mural practices developed by women in the municipalities of l'Horta Nord and l'Horta Sud makes it possible to understand contemporary muralism as a situated, hybrid and relational cultural practice positioned between a physical space – the urban environment – and a digital one – through its presence on social media. Throughout the study, it has been shown that the mural is not limited to an aesthetic intervention on a wall, but rather takes shape as a social, territorial and symbolic process whose circulation on Instagram broadens its meanings by exposing it to different perspectives.

The urban periphery is not represented homogeneously, but through different selective strategies of visibility. The location of the mural appears more frequently through textual narratives – in the *copy*, mentions, *hashtags* and comments – than through the platform's geolocation function. This choice reflects both technological limitations – arising from the absence of peripheral spaces from platform location records – and conscious decisions by the artists, linked to ethical concerns about the overexposure of territory, touristification and gentrification.

The murals are predominantly located in everyday environments, removed from monumentality and closely connected to the lives of local residents. This location reinforces the relational nature of muralism, which is constructed in dialogue with the people who inhabit the place and with local memories and identities.

Instagram plays a central role in the construction of the public image of women muralists. The artists use the platform as a visual archive, a professional portfolio and a narrative space in which to explain what they feel and experience throughout the creative process. The partial presence or absence of their bodies does not depend solely on personal strategies, but is often closely related to the algorithmic logics of the social network.

From a feminist perspective, the findings highlight how these practices contribute to generating an alternative symbolic order in public and digital space. Muralism by women acts as a form of occupation and reappropriation of a historically masculinised space, while its circulation on social media enables that presence to extend beyond physical space. In this sense, the figure of the woman muralist can be understood as a hybrid subjectivity in which body, technology and image come together to produce new forms of visibility and narration, in line with the contributions of cyberfeminism. Muralism can therefore be understood not merely as another form of artistic intervention, but as a cultural practice situated between the wall and the screen, where gender, technology and territory are closely interconnected.

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