

**Contribution format:**

Full length paper / Short paper

**Suggested theme:**

Object information as historical source

**Title:**

**ORION Project** – Collections and Art Collectors in Portugal

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**Abstract:**

The ORION is a Digital Art History research-oriented project focused on the study of collections and art collectors in Portugal, supported on a relational database management system. Besides the obvious advantage of organize and systematize an enormous amount of information, promoting its analysis, this database management system was specifically designed to highlight the relationships between data, e.g., linking objects and their owners over time along with collectors and mediators, or works and auctions, just to mention a few. This relational capacity is not only one of the most relevant features of the ORION, but a differentiating quality, one step forward in comparison to other international databases and studies that use digital methodologies.

This paper will discuss the methodologies and the advantages of using ORION in researches related to the history of collecting, art markets and provenance of art objects, an exponential growing field

of studies. In fact, in Portugal, and despite the studies of the last few years, it is the very first time that an approach like this is intended, looking for a systematization of data that paves the way to the emergence of new research question. Furthermore, and because ORION aims to share the data and knowledge with other projects, institutions and researchers, the database uses different international standards, such as data structure (CIDOC – Object Information Categories and Getty - CDWA), controlled vocabulary (ICONLASS classification system, Getty – Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT), Thesaurus of Geographic Names (TGN) and Union List of Artist Names (ULAN)) and communication and exchange of information (CIDOC-CRM).

**Keywords:**

Study of Collections, Database management systems, Documentation standards, Controlled vocabularies, Online Collections

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