

## What makes Grid Collective a collective?

**“...the artists making the most interesting experiences [tend] to be collectives”**

**Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst, Superblue cofounder and CEO, quoted in *artnet Intelligence Report Spring 2021***

From the beginning, we decided that we were a collective rather than an art group, but initially, at least, we never fully explored the difference between the two. The [Tate website description](#), that “[a]rtists “working within a collective are united by shared ideologies, aesthetics and, or, political beliefs.”, seems inadequate - after all, probably many art groups consist of artists with similar aesthetic concerns, and even possibly, broadly similar political beliefs.

Perhaps the Tate is suggesting that artists in a collective *actively express* their shared beliefs through their work? The description goes on to state, “Collectives today are about the present and how they can change society in the here and now”, which confirms this interpretation. However, again this seems inadequate - are there not many solo artists for whom the same could be said?

The evolution of Grid Collective since its inception in 2015 shows that, without doing so consciously, we have created our own definition of the term ‘collective’, which minimally implies ‘collaboration’, but in practice seems now, for us at least, to also encompass ‘conceptual’. In all of our collaborations, there has been an underlying agreed element, sometimes abstract (eg, theme), sometimes concrete (eg, type of frame). What is more, we have always included at least one work which we have created together. And finally, the layout of the works has always been the result of a collaborative decision, with *conceptual coherence* a determining factor.

This suggests that what distinguishes a collective from an art group is not the fact of working collaboratively – which both generally do – nor of aiming to express ideological, aesthetic and, or, political beliefs through the work, but the fact that conceptual coherence informs all aspects of the collaboration, from the works themselves, to the titles and the display. This is certainly true for Grid Collective, but we are open to discussion !