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THE ART-DEALER AND HIS ROLE IN SHAPING THE ART MARKET

Anhelina Sahalovych¹

1. PhD in Economics, Associate professor*Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Fine Arts, UKRAINE***ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6165-2801**

The art market, or the market of art pieces, is well known in contemporary economic science. A central issue remains the financial acceptability of art transactions and the process of monetary valuation of art, which has spanned centuries. Until recently, determining the equilibrium price for artworks was mostly possible through auctions. The argument for this was the complete openness of information about transactions. Similar positions were held by practical market participants, who preferred auctions when purchasing the most expensive art pieces. However, recent statistics indicate that major auction houses and art dealers now share the market almost equally.

Auction trades ensure the public evaluation of artworks at various stages of sale. They provide preliminary estimates available to all participants before the auctions and final prices determined during the bidding process. In contrast, art dealers often conceal the actual price of artworks, using various methods such as the absence of price tags in galleries or non-disclosure agreements.

From a modern perspective, the art market can be structured as follows:

1. Artists who sell their works independently. This is the largest part of the market with high competition, where supply exceeds demand, leading to lower prices.
2. Dealers who sell works through galleries and salons. Here, competition decreases, and prices for artworks can significantly increase.
3. Auctions, considered the pinnacle of the art market, where prices reach the highest levels.

Art dealing is a crucial element of the global cultural industry, playing a significant role in the development and dissemination of art. It creates a connection between artists, collectors, museums, and the public, ensuring cultural exchange and promoting economic growth.

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Historically, art dealers acted as intermediaries between artists and buyers, often playing a decisive role in determining the value of art pieces. Notable art dealers like Paul Durand-Ruel and Leo Castelli not only sold works but also actively supported the careers of artists such as Claude Monet and Jackson Pollock.

Today, art dealers perform various functions:

- Curatorship: Art dealers often organize exhibitions, drawing attention to new talents and supporting established artists.

- Investment: They advise collectors and investors on potentially lucrative acquisitions, fostering the development of the art market.

- Education: Art dealers promote knowledge about art by organizing lectures, seminars, and workshops.

Art dealing has a significant impact on society:

- Spreading cultural values: Thanks to art dealers, art becomes more accessible to a broader audience, enriching cultural life.

- Shaping tastes and trends: Art dealers play a crucial role in shaping trends in the art market and defining cultural preferences.

- Economic impact: They promote economic growth through the development of the art market, including creating new jobs and attracting investments.

Despite their important role, art dealers face numerous challenges:

- Competition: Constant competition in the art market requires art dealers to continually search for new talents and innovative approaches.

- Ethical issues: Art dealers must adhere to high ethical standards, particularly regarding the authenticity of artworks and fair pricing.

- Technological changes: The development of online trading and digital platforms presents new opportunities but also new challenges for dealers.

Art dealing as a socio-economical phenomenon is a vital component of the contemporary cultural environment. It contributes to the development of art, the dissemination of cultural values, and economic growth. Successful art dealers combine commercial skills, aesthetic taste, and a deep understanding of cultural processes, allowing them to make significant contributions to societal development.

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