Old Masters Worldwide

Deadline: Feb 1, 2017

Barbara Pezzini

Call for Book Chapters:
A Worldwide Market for Old Masters between the Napoleonic Era and the Great Depression

Edited by:
Susanna Avery-Quash
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We are soliciting chapter abstracts for an edited collection with the provisional title of: A Worldwide Market for Old Masters between the Napoleonic Era and the Great Depression. The volume will be an edited collection of around 15 essays, each of 6-7,000 words plus footnotes with up to 5 illustrations. It is envisaged that the collection will be part of the Oxford University Press series on the History of Collecting, edited by Christina Anderson and Peter Stewart.

This project stems from a panel convened by Susanna Avery-Quash at the conference, 'Creating Markets: Collecting Art', which took place at Christie's in July 2016, as part of Christie's 250th anniversary celebrations. In the light of the positive feedback received at the conference, the editors have decided to broaden scope of the book to include historic studies about the Old Master market in Australia, Africa and Australasia. Consequently we are incorporating additional essays into the book, commissioning these through a call for papers. Authors that have already confirmed their participation are: Julia Armstrong-Totten, Sarah Bakkali, Gail Feigenbaum, Christian Huemer, Agnès Penot, Veronique Powell, and Inge Reist.

Project description:
As a result of the Napoleonic wars, vast numbers of Old Master paintings were released on to the market from public and private collections across mainland Europe. From the 1790s onwards many ended up in London, which joined Paris as a leading centre of the art market. In the course of the 19th century the market for 'old art' expanded, in volume and geographically, witnessing a new worldwide distribution of Old Master paintings. This growth only diminished in the early 1930s, in the wake of the Great Depression.

The book aims to explore for the first time in a comprehensive way the worldwide movement of Old Master paintings by investigating some of the most significant agents, dealers and commercial galleries who flourished during the period and their international networks. We are seeking for contributions that map analytically this expansion and explore the ways in which the pioneering practices of agents and dealers contributed to shape a changing market. We desire, in particular, contributions that make use of new archival resources.

In the light of new primary sources the essays in the book will address some aspects of the following questions: Why, when and how did these dealers (or agents and galleries) come to specialise in selling Old Masters? What shaped their expertise and subsequent practice and how did they operate and diversify? How did they make a name for themselves and what, if anything made them distinctive or innovative? What effect did they have on the art market and on patterns of collecting? How did the international trade contributed to the success (or demise) of their businesses? What was their relationship with established museums? How did they use other means – such as exhibitions, photographs and advertisements – to promote their wares? Finally, what was their relationship with art historiography, art criticism and with a changing art press?

Call for contributions:
We are seeking contributions from scholars of the Old Masters Market 1800-1930 in its broadest sense, with a special interest in business history and/or attention to commercial international connections. The following topics are particularly desired:

• Germany, Italy and other European countries
• Asian, African and Australian countries
• Smaller dealers and alternative networks of circulation
• The firm of Duveen Brothers

Submission requirements:
Please send a 500-word abstract (excluding bibliography) with a title, a 150-word biography, and a short CV and contact info (for each author/co-author) to both Susanna.Avery-Quash@ng-london.org.uk and barbarartpezzini@gmail.com by 1 February 2017.

Deadline for chapter proposals:
1 February 2017
Notification of decisions: by 1 March, 2017

Editorial Structure:
Book editors: Susanna Avery-Quash (Senior Research Curator in the History of Collecting), The National Gallery and Barbara Pezzini (Editor and Index Editor) Visual Resources and The Burlington Magazine.

Reference:

CFP: Old Masters Worldwide. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 8, 2016 (accessed Nov 19, 2026),

<https://arthist.net/archive/14155>.