

Art with (or without) the art market (Paris, 24 Feb 18)

INHA, Paris

Deadline: Dec 1, 2017

Emeline Jaret, Paris

Symposium: "Art with (or without) the Art Market"

This call for papers will lead to a symposium and a publication as a thematic issue of *Marges, revue d'art contemporain*.

The art market has steadily increased in last decades, up to a point where many observers tend to doubt it could ever go back to its initial state. Contemporary art is at the centre of this phenomenon and seems to be feeding the appetites of investors for whom art value escapes by its very nature the ordinary fluctuations of general economic tendencies. It is however difficult to believe that such values are adorned with magic properties: if there is an art market boom, it is not for purely artistic reasons and it has more to do with a group of factors, the most important being economic speculation. Knowing that money has a central role in the imagination of most people, the question has to be asked whether it is still possible to talk about art without mentioning the vast sums it requires. How does the relation between monetary and aesthetic evaluation function? It is indeed difficult to believe that the art market's recent growth is without consequences on positions within a field of art where income and social positions inequalities are so important. This leads inevitably to questions regarding the relations between aesthetic value and market listings. The hyperbolic development of the contemporary art market has consequences on the postures and the practices of most of players of the field, beginning with the artists themselves. In the past, quite a few used to ostentatiously despise the art market; it was one of the well-known postures of Bohemia. In recent times this situation seems however to have changed: if there is still a large number of poor artists, others choose to stage spectacularly their luxurious way of life and good fortunes. This posturing evokes ancient art history, and at the same time it contradicts largely modernity's puritanical ethos. In any case, one must admit that commercial success is no longer seen as a sign of mediocrity and/or treason by critics, art historians, museum and exhibition curators. Press releases issued by commercial galleries have for example gained a respectability that goes well beyond plain information and everyone strives to spread around their content. Some galleries occupy a central position in the art world, at the same level as the main artistic institutions, and it can be seen in the way major events are programmed (art fairs, retrospective exhibitions). What should one think of this situation: has the market really become the main arbiter of artistic values? Have we reached a point where it becomes unthinkable to oppose a system that does not benefit to all but which continue to attract artists – and up to the neo-liberal economy which strongly increase the values linked to the art world ? Does the market determine the evolution of artistic practices, how and by which ways?

Possible axes of reflexion:

- The effects of the art markets' growth on artistic practices;
- The relation between the market, institutions programming and the elaboration of critical texts...;
- The evolution of the art market in recent decades. Its contemporary condition;
- Different sections of the art market; their creation and recent evolution;
- Practices (by artists, theoreticians, critics or activists) that seek to create alternatives to the art market;
- Economic relations within the art world;
- The question of the pressure made by money and the need of visibility in higher education in art;
- Artistic creation informed by economic topics.

This call for papers will lead to a symposium and a publication as a thematic issue of the art journal *Marges*. Propositions should be sent in the form of an abstract explaining the topic of the paper (800 words maximum), before December 1st, 2017, by email, at the following address: jerome.glicenstein@univ-paris8.fr

Selected propositions (by double blind reviews) will participate in the symposium on February 24th, 2018, at INHA in Paris. The selected texts will have to be transmitted before 15 February (6500 words maximum) and they might be published in *Marges* #28, released in March 2019.

Marges (Presses Universitaires de Vincennes) emphasizes the work of young scholars of fields concerned by themes such as aesthetics, fine arts, theatre and film studies, musicology, sociology, art history, etc.

Reference:

CFP: Art with (or without) the art market (Paris, 24 Feb 18). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 18, 2017 (accessed Dec 17, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/16518>>.