

Art as Luxury, Luxury as Art (New York, 22–24 Oct 26)

New York, Oct 22–24, 2026

Deadline: May 29, 2026

Masoom Pincha

Markets and the Making of Value.

The International Art Market Studies Association Conference, Sotheby's Institute of Art.

Luxury has long been an important context for art. In sixteenth-century Antwerp, art was a key part of the city's thriving luxury trade; Our Lady's Pand—the first permanent art market in Europe—was one of several panden that served these new industries. In eighteenth-century Paris, marchand-s-merciars such as Edme-François Gersaint sold paintings, drawings, and engravings alongside porcelain, lacquer, jewelry, and shells. At the turn of the twentieth century, the dealer Joseph Duveen not only cultivated in his American industrialist clients a taste for Old Master painting but also promoted European furniture, tapestries, and objets d'art, staging these works in lavish period rooms in his New York gallery to underscore their sumptuousness.

Art has likewise provided a crucial context for luxury. In Belle Époque Paris, Paul Poiret—the designer who arguably created fashion's first modern lifestyle brand—used art to elevate his enterprise, enlisting artists to create textile designs and sponsoring an avant-garde art gallery. "The designer is, by definition, an artist in luxury," he wrote. Today's luxury fashion houses follow Poiret's model, integrating artworks into their retail spaces, establishing their own art foundations, and developing products in collaboration with artists. Eschewing the labels "luxury" and "fashion," they recast themselves as "cultural brands." At the same time, art businesses situate themselves ever-more explicitly within the luxury sphere. In 2019, Sotheby's auction house reorganized into two divisions—fine art and luxury—and in 2021, Christie's revised its website to identify itself as "a world-leading art and luxury business."

The tenth annual TIAMSA conference focuses on the relationship between the art and luxury markets, both historically and in the contemporary moment, examining their points of intersection, their reciprocal influences, and the ways in which each has shaped—and defined itself in relation to—the other.

Proposals may consider (but are not limited to) the following themes:

The evolving definitions of "art" and "luxury" over time, and the shifting status of the applied and decorative arts.

The relative value of art vis-à-vis luxury and the influence of industrialization.

Historical figures and businesses associated with the art market who also dealt in luxury objects.

Historical figures and businesses in luxury fields—such as fashion and jewelry—who aligned themselves with fine art.

Modes of display and sale across art and luxury, historically and today.

Contemporary art businesses that increasingly rely on the sale of luxury objects, or that adopt sales and marketing tactics from the luxury sector.

The conditions that historically led auction houses such as Christie's and Sotheby's to specialize in fine art—and that more recently have driven their expansion into luxury categories.

The “artification” of luxury as a business strategy, from artist-brand collaborations to art-filled retail spaces.

The phenomenon of luxury brands establishing their own art museums, staging pop-up art exhibitions, and transforming their flagship stores into museum-like spaces.

Art museum exhibitions focused on luxury brands, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 1983 Yves Saint Laurent exhibition, the Guggenheim's 2000 Armani show, and the Victoria & Albert Museum's Alexander McQueen, Dior, and Cartier exhibitions.

Luxury's role in expanding the definition of art, including collaborations with artists on NFTs.

How the values of luxury are shaping art and vice-versa.

Please submit an abstract (no more than 300 words) and a short bio by Friday, May 1, 2026, using this form: <https://forms.office.com/r/Husr007JDz>

Successful papers will be notified by May 29, 2026.

For inquiries, please contact: tiamsaconference@sia.edu

We welcome proposals from scholars at all career stages and from a variety of disciplines, including art market studies, luxury studies, art history, economic history, fashion studies, museum studies, cultural sociology, business history, and other related fields.

Reference:

CFP: Art as Luxury, Luxury as Art (New York, 22-24 Oct 26). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 19, 2026 (accessed Apr 15, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/52025>>.