

Artists on the Market

Veranstalter: Forum Kunst und Markt, Berlin

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The speakers at the fourth International Workshop of the Forum Kunst und Markt, held on 14 November 2015 at the Technische Universität Berlin, focused on individual and collective artist initiatives and strategies in exhibiting and marketing their art work. CHRISTIAN HUEMER (Los Angeles) used his opening remarks to discuss the extensive provenance data that are available for researchers at the Getty Provenance Index and described the efforts to integrate all sources (stock books, catalogues, etc.) into one database. The first series of papers, presented in the morning, focused on peripheral market places. TINA KOŠAK (Ljubljana) discussed the art market in seventeenth-century provincial Austria, where journey-men Netherlandish painters would settle temporarily to meet the demand of the local aristocracy and clergy for cabinet-sized still life and genre paintings. SARAH SALOMON (Berlin) presented a paper on the open art market that developed outside of the Academy in Paris during 1770s and 1780s—the *Exposition de la Jeunesse*—which was utilized by a group of women artists to market their work. The women painters, ineligible to join the Academy due to the quota for women artists, presented portrait paintings of such quality that they attracted sustained, if controversial, attention from the press. BARBARA PEZZINI (London) discussed the successful artistic and commercial partnership between an independent British landscape painter, John Linnell, and dealer William Agnew in mid-nineteenth-century Britain. ANDREY SHABANOV (St. Petersburg) shone a new light on the activities of a group of Russian artists—the *Peredvizhniki*—between 1870–1897 and debunked the existing art-historical description of the *Peredvizhniki* as a radical realist movement. He described how the group of artists, formally organized as a partnership, developed a viable business model for traveling group

exhibitions by presenting aesthetically neutral work in all styles and genres. The exhibitions provided each artist with a sufficient independent income at a time of political turmoil and uncertainty in late imperial Russia. Last, MARIE CAMBEFORT-TAVINOR (London), discussed how the venerable institution of the Venice Biennale, through the efforts of the administrator Antonio Fradeletto, helped establish a market for a group of Scottish painters—the Glasgow Boys—in Europe and the United States during the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

In the afternoon, the presentations revolved around the concept of artistic labor and the value assigned by the market. ISABELL SCHMOCK-WIECZORECK (Halle-Wittenberg) described artists' efforts in the German town of Halle to raise their stature by founding the *Künstlerverein auf dem Pflug* in the early twentieth century as well as their later attempts to influence public financing of the arts through the *Hallische Künstlergruppe* in 1923. SILVIA SIMONCELLI (Milan / Lüneburg) analyzed American artist Adrian Piper's 1975 essay „A Proposal for Pricing Works of Art“ within the context of conceptual art practices and the discourse surrounding artistic labor at the time. She posited that Piper's proposal still holds currency today and pointed to a recent survey by the New York-based group W.A.G.E. that revealed that more than 50 percent of artists reported not to have been compensated by museums for the costs incurred in exhibiting their work. MARTIN HARTUNG (Zurich) followed with a close look at Sol LeWitt's production and marketing strategies. He noted that LeWitt found to his annoyance that his certificates and instructions to execute works were absorbed by the market as equally valuable substitutes for realized works, which ultimately led to the transformation of the market for conceptual art. JONATHAN MAHO (Paris) traced the dual exhibition strategy artist Robert Mapplethorpe employed in presenting his challenging and sexually explicit images to the public. Maho argued that by pairing gallery exhibitions of his portraits and stylized images of flowers with exhibitions of his sexually-explicit work in alternative venues, the artist had hoped to ease collectors

towards his challenging work—countering the prevailing belief that Mapplethorpe's exhibitions of his explicit work was an avant-garde strategy to sell mainstream work. The final presentation by ANA LETÍCIA FIALHO and MARTA RAMOS-YZQUIERDO (both São Paulo) described the present-day working conditions of Brazilian artists. Their project is designed to trace the professionalization of Brazilian artists and their relationships to the various markets in which they operate.

The chronological presentation of the papers underlined how artists have always played an active role, and still play, in the marketing and distribution of their work, countering the art historical assumption that artists are passive bystanders once their work enters the market.

Conference Overview:

Evening Lecture: Christian Huemer (Los Angeles): Exploring Art Markets of the Past: Tools and Methods in the Age of Big Data

Bénédicte Savoy und Dorothee Wimmer (Berlin): Welcome and Introduction

Section I: Peripheries and Centres

Moderation: Johannes Nathan
(Zürich/Berlin)

Tina Košak (Ljubljana): Challenges of the Province: Working and 'Marketing' Strategies of Netherlandish Painters in Inner Austria, 1650–1700

Sarah Salomon (Berlin): Kampf ums Publikum. Die Selbstvermarktung junger Malerinnen in Paris am Ende des Ancien Régime

Barbara Pezzini (London): John Linnell and William Agnew: Marketing Landscapes and Nostalgia in Mid-19th Century Britain

Andrey Shabanov (St. Petersburg): The Peredvizhniki: Between a Commercial Partnership and an Art Movement in Late Imperial Russia

Marie Cambefort-Tavinor (London): 'Wonderful Revelation': The Glasgow Boys at the Venice Biennale, 1897–1910

Section II: Labour and Market

Moderation: Stephanie Tasch (Berlin)

Isabell Schmock-Wieczorek (Halle-

Wittenberg): Kunstbegriff und Künstlersein in der Klassischen Moderne. Strategien der Künstler im Kampf um wirtschaftliche Selbstständigkeit und gesellschaftliche Anerkennung

Silvia Simoncelli (Milan / Lüneburg): The Price of Art and the Value of Artistic Labour. A 1975 Proposal by Adrian Piper

Martin Hartung (Zurich): Unter Kontrolle: Sol LeWitt als Akteur auf dem Markt für Konzeptkunst

Jonathan Maho (Paris): An Oeuvre Shaped by the Buyers' Tastes? Robert Mapplethorpe's Selling Strategy and Its Impact on His Work

Ana Letícia Fialho / Marta Ramos-Yzquierdo (São Paulo): Artists as Workers. Labour Conditions in the Brazilian Art Market

Tagungsbericht *Artists on the Market*. 14.11.2015, Berlin, in: H-Soz-Kult 12.01.2016.