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Commercialization and Market Strategies in Contemporary Painting

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ABSTRACT
In the context of the rapid development of globalization and information technology, contemporary painting is not only an expression of art, but also becomes an important product in the commercial market. This study examines in depth how contemporary painting has evolved from a traditional artistic creation to a strategic commercial activity and how this transformation has influenced the role and behavior of artists, collectors, curators, and the general public. We have discovered that the commercialization of contemporary painting is not just about the sale of paintings. It involves many aspects, such as the creation of an artistic brand, curatorial strategies, pricing definitions, and market positioning. In this process, artists must consider market demand, target audience, and the competitive environment, and adjust their creative direction and strategies accordingly. Moreover, the rapid development and diversification of the contemporary art market bring new challenges and opportunities. Artists and curators must be more flexible and innovative to adapt to market changes. For example, the emergence of digital art and virtual reality technologies has allowed artists to create more interactive and immersive works, thus attracting a greater number of viewers and collectors. In summary, commercialization and market strategies in contemporary painting are a field that is both complex and full of opportunities. Artists, curators, and collectors must continue to learn and innovate to maintain a leadership position in this highly competitive market.

KEYWORDS
Commercialization; *Contemporary Painting*; *Globalization*; *Commercial Market*

The 21st century has witnessed rapid changes and advancements in many sectors. One of these sectors, and perhaps one of the most influential, is art. In particular, painting, a medium that has traversed millennia and has represented, interpreted, and challenged society in countless ways.With the rising tide of globalization and the advent of revolutionary information technologies, art has had to face new challenges and opportunities. While in the past painting was primarily seen as a purely artistic expression, today it stands at the crossroads of artistic expression and commercial strategy.

1 Commercialization and Market Strategies in Contemporary Painting

1.1 Context: Advances in globalization and technology

The world is currently undergoing a period of profound change. This transformation is driven by the rapid development of globalization and information technologies.

From the perspective of globalization, there has been an increasing interaction and international cooperation in recent decades. Multinationals, international organizations, and collaborations between nations are growing, leading to an increase in economic, cultural, and social interactions among different nations and regions. The formation of global markets, the expansion of international trade, and cultural exchange among nations are progressively blurring the boundaries between them. This has led to a growing connection between economy and politics, but it has also had profound implications for art, culture, and education.

It should be emphasized that the development of globalization and information technologies has had a profound impact on artistic education as well. More and more art academies and universities are offering international cooperation and exchange programs, allowing students to study and practice in different cultural and technological contexts, thus enriching their future artistic creations with new possibilities and inspirations.

1.2 The impact of commercialization on contemporary painting

With the integration of global markets and the advancement of information technologies, we are experiencing a unique period in which the field of art is undergoing significant transformations. In particular, contemporary painting is no longer solely dedicated to pure artistic creation, but is progressively tending to meet market needs. In this section, we will focus on how commercialization has influenced the forms, contents, and modes of dissemination of contemporary painting.

Numerous scholars have addressed the issue of commercialization in art. In works like 《The Art of the Deal》[1] by Noah Horowitz, the intersection between art and market is explored, highlighting how commercial dynamics have profoundly influenced the creation and distribution of contemporary art.

Another crucial aspect is the influence of art fairs. These events, as described by Sarah Thornton in 《Seven Days in the Art World》[2], are not just showcases for artists, but have become crucial points where trends emerge, investments crystallize, and artists' careers can take off or decline.

Technological innovations have led to a democratization of art. In 《Digital Art》[3]by Christiane Paul, it is analyzed how digital platforms have offered unexpected opportunities for artists, allowing them to reach a global audience without the intermediation of traditional galleries. However, this broader access has also created market saturation, with millions of works easily accessible and shareable, challenging artists to emerge in a sea of content.

But commercialization has not only brought challenges; it has also created new opportunities for art to play a broader social role. As Julian Stallabrass emphasizes in 《Art Incorporated》[4], art as a tool to explore issues of identity and power in a globalized world.

The return to cultural roots, while integrating the innovations of the 21st century, has become a recurring theme. This tension between tradition and innovation, as discussed by Claire Bishop in 《Digital Divide》[5], represents one of the most stimulating challenges for contemporary artists. Artists

must not only navigate the evolving commercial landscape but also respond to the cultural and social pressures of an interconnected world.

In conclusion, while commercialization has undoubtedly transformed the landscape of contemporary art, it has also offered new ways of thinking about and practicing art. Today's artists navigate a delicate balance between personal expression and market needs, seeking to find new and meaningful ways to communicate in an era dominated by technology and commerce.

1.3 *Objectives and main inquiries of the study*

This study aims to reveal how commercialization and market strategies influence contemporary painting in the era of globalization and technological progress. This chapter will focus on the purpose of my research and the main issues to be addressed in the field of contemporary painting, providing a solid foundation for subsequent research.

Before delving into the specific chapters of the research, I believe it is necessary to clarify the context and the issues of the research. I hope to have a clear understanding of contemporary art in the era of globalization and technology, to shed light on the tensions between creativity and commerce, tradition and innovation, and to comprehend this evolving field of art, and also to make my contribution.

2 The Evolution of Commercialization in Contemporary Painting

Art, since its inception, has been closely linked to human emotions, philosophy, culture, and the social context. However, over time, the meaning and value of art are constantly changing, especially in the context of the modern capitalist economy. Contemporary painting, as a fundamental pillar of art, is at the center of this evolution. Commercialization, a concept that seems distant from art, is today closely connected with contemporary painting and inseparable.

As Don Thompson emphasized in the book 《The $12 Million Stuffed Shark》[6], the contemporary art market is not only a place of communication between artists and collectors, but also a platform for capital operations and the visualization of social status.

In the wave of capitalism, the audience will see the true emotions and thoughts of the artist in commercialized works of art. As Julian Stallabrass stated in 《Art Incorporated》[7], commercialization redefines the value of works.

Entering the 21st century, with the development of technology and the Internet, the commercialization of contemporary paintings has also presented new characteristics and challenges. Beech emphasized in the book 《Art and Value》[8]that the contemporary art market has transcended national boundaries and has become a platform for global communication and commerce, which not only promotes the internationalization of contemporary painting but also entails challenges related to cultural differences and competition. I hope that this article can provoke a deep reflection in readers on the issue of the commercialization of contemporary painting and to help the development of the author's personal artistic career. I also hope that the art market continues to develop in a healthy way.

2.1 Transition from traditional art forms to marketable goods

Painting, as one of the oldest art forms in human history, has existed since prehistoric times. This art form is not only a reproduction of the physical environment but also a reflection of the context of the times, social culture, and the emotions of people. This form of art exists not only for decoration and beauty but also serves multiple social, religious, and philosophical functions.

In antiquity, painting primarily had religious functions, historical recording, and cultural transmission. As described by Gombrich in《The Story of Art》[9], the murals of ancient Egypt and the paintings on ancient Greek pottery were often representations of religious rituals or historical events. These works were considered sacred and were not created with a direct economic motivation.

In the Middle Ages, Western painting was predominantly focused on religious themes, such as church stained glass and religious manuscripts. These works were primarily intended for the dissemination and promotion of Christian doctrine, rather than for artistic innovation or market gain.

With the advent of the Renaissance, there was a rediscovery of the cultural heritage of ancient Greece and Rome, and artists began to draw inspiration from precise observations of nature and the human body, producing many historical works. The art market of this period became progressively prosperous, and nobles and wealthy citizens became the main buyers of works of art. Vasari, in《The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects》[10], describes in detail how many artists have gained fame and wealth through their creations.

In the 20th century, with the advent of globalization and the advancement of information technology, the art market further expanded and internationalized. Artists no longer rely solely on traditional exhibitions and museums, but can use digital technology and social media to showcase and sell their works. As Benkler emphasized in《The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom》[11], the spread of digital technology has allowed artists to directly address the global market, overcoming geographical limitations and increasing opportunities for interaction with the audience.

2.2 Various phases and characteristics of commercialization

In today's era, painting is not only a form of artistic expression but must also find its place in a highly commercialized world. From artists to galleries to collectors, everyone is seeking ways to merge art with business strategies to increase visibility and gain a larger market share.

The world of contemporary art is undergoing a phase of rapid change, with an increasing interaction between art and the business world. This interaction has led to a series of collaborations between contemporary artists and brands, which have contributed to expanding the influence of artists and shaping the image of brands. An emblematic example of this trend is represented by the career of the Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan.

A relevant example is represented by the work《La Nona Ora》(The Ninth Hour). he ninth hour therefore corresponds to 3 PM, when Christ is believed to have died on the cross. This work has generated extensive debate and discussions and has placed Cattelan at the center of contemporary art attention.

Figure 1 Maurizio Cattelan, «The Ninth Hour»

[199]9. Lattice, wax, polyester, volcanic rock, fabric, silver pastoral, carpet, glass. Private collection.

Moreover, he created an iconic sculpture,《America》, a toilet made of 18-karat gold, exhibited at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and accessible to the public. This work conveys a strong social commentary, suggesting the false nature of wealth, power, and consumerism.

The marketing of contemporary painting has shifted from traditional to modern, influenced by technological advancements and changes in the socio-economic structure. At every stage, artists, galleries, and other market participants are called to constantly innovate and adapt their strategies to respond to the changing market environment.

Figure 2 Maurizio Cattelan, Installation view, «America»
2016-2017. Gold sculpture. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Photo: Kristopher McKay/Guggenheim.

3 The Use of Commercial Tactics in Modern Painting

Contemporary painting, as an integral part of the artistic field, not only possesses a unique aesthetic value but also represents the creative inspiration and emotional expression of artists. However, in today's highly competitive art market, artists must face many challenges and must reflect on how to emerge in an environment strongly influenced by commerce. Artists are increasingly realizing that it is not enough to create great works; they must also employ business strategies to promote and sell their work.

Contemporary artists who have achieved great success in the art market have managed their personal brands and strategies in the capital market very well and are not only artists but also successful entrepreneurs. Yayoi Kusama, the patriarch of contemporary art, is one of the representative figures. Her works are known for their hallucinogenic qualities, transporting the viewer into an infinite visual universe, integrated into her radiant and brilliant art that is deeply personal, obsessive, and touching.

Kusama's works convey a strong message and a philosophy centered on mental health, love, and peace. This message adds depth to her artistic brand and attracts those who share these values.

Figure 3 Kusama with pumpkin
2010 Courtesy of Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo/Singapore and Victoria Miro Gallery

Figure4 Kusama in her studio in New York, 1960. Courtesy of the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

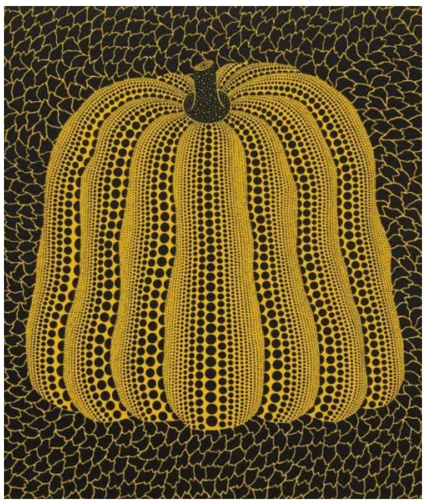


Figure 5 Yayoi Kusama,«Pumpkin», 2018

The integration of digital art and virtual reality (VR) represents a significant advancement and an important trend in the field of contemporary art. This fusion combines digital technology with virtual environments to create new expressions and artistic experiences, triggering revolutionary changes in the field of art. The application of digital technology and virtual reality technology in the creation and exhibition of art offers new experiences and possibilities for artists and the audience. This section will primarily introduce and analyze the context, impact, and future trends of the integration between digital art and virtual reality.

4 The Impact of Market Conditions on Artists and Curators

Art is a creative expressive form that not only pertains to the personal creation of the artist but is also closely linked to the market. Market conditions refer to the relationship between supply and demand, prices, consumption trends, and consumer preferences. Artists and curators play an important role in the art market, and their creations and choices are directly influenced by market conditions. Market conditions play a key role in the world of contemporary art, influencing what

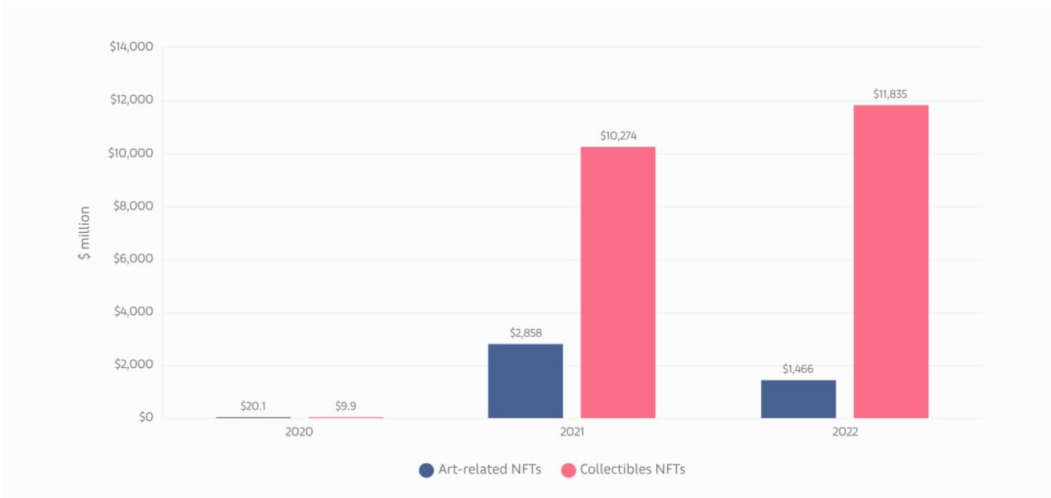
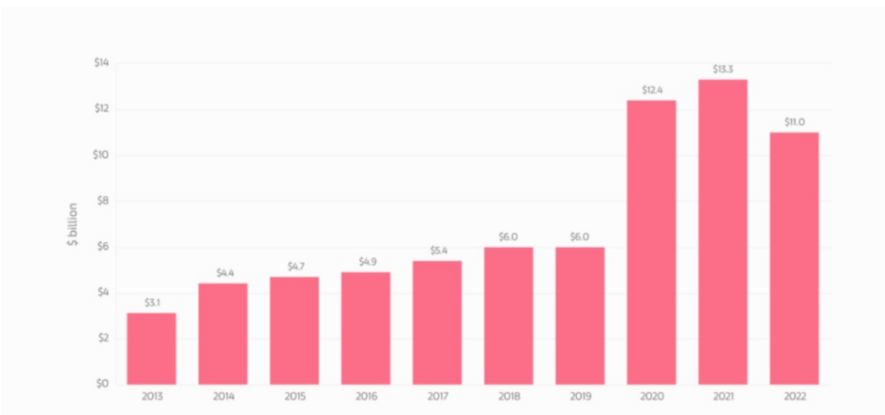


Figure 6 2020-2022 , Annual share of NFT art and collectibles, image source: Art Basel

artists and curators create and present. Globalization and digital developments have completely changed the face of the art market, posing new challenges and opportunities for artists and curators.

The emergence of digital transformation

Digital transformation is one of the main drivers of the current market. With the spread of the Internet, the way consumers interact with brands has changed drastically. The advent of social media, mobile applications, and e-commerce platforms has altered the way products are promoted, sold, and serviced. Data shows that the volume of global e-commerce sales grows every year, providing businesses with a broader market reach.



Graph 4-1 2013-2022, Total online sales of the global art market. Image source: Art Basel

In 2022, as the program of exhibitions, auctions, and art fairs becomes more consistent, collectors begin to participate again in offline activities and sales, and both art dealers and auction houses reflect that the total share of purely online transactions has further decreased.

The art world is in constant evolution, and artists and art curators face new challenges and opportunities. As society, technology, and the artistic landscape change, the traditional roles of artists and curators are undergoing significant transformations. These changes not only reflect social and cultural evolution but are also influenced by digital technologies, globalization, and social issues.

5 Conclusion

Commercialization and market strategies in contemporary painting are a complex and varied issue. Although it may bring some problems and challenges, it also offers many opportunities and room for development for both artists and the art market. Artists must continue to work to create excellent works while keeping an eye on market trends and sales strategies to adapt to a constantly evolving environment. Similarly, the art market must focus on protecting and promoting the value and diversity of art to ensure its sustainability. Only by establishing a good balance between artists, the art market, and the audience can the prosperity and continuous development of contemporary painting be guaranteed.

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