



Lesson 10

The enhancement of the work of art: the details that make a work unique (from packaging to expertise);

1. ARTISTS: THE NEW PRECARIOUS WORKERS

At least three-quarters of artists are unable to sustain the desired standard of living or fear the risks of insecurity in their profession.

This is a common problem, not only in the contemporary art market, but a problem that affects the entire art sector and that is especially evident in times of lower economic prosperity. The data comes from a survey carried out on the medium-high end of the artistic profession and highlights the precariousness of this sector. Sacrifice to art requires economic resources that few can count on. So it happens that teaching art becomes an opportunity to continue one's research, finding time and economic stability in this profession.

2. THE VALUE OF AN ARTWORK

It is necessary, before going into more or less abstract theories, to understand that when it comes to the market, when we talk about the value of artworks, we do not mean the absolute value of a good but rather the value that common opinion attributes to it.

It is difficult to predict the behaviour of common opinion, but sometimes precisely from this unpredictable behaviour it is possible to grasp the key to re-evaluate one's own production.

3. SELLING: QUALITY FIRST

The art market, understood as a whole, moves heavy and slow. It hardly gives notoriety, but if a production has what it takes to emerge, the market will not wait. Nowadays the so high diffusion of technical and informative means obliges the artist to adapt to the quality standards that the market imposes, adopting the best technical and expressive solutions without which he risks putting works in a market already saturated with mediocre works. Creative talent without the support of operators (direct or indirect) will hardly find space and support for a commercial activity in free competition.

4. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO ENHANCE ONE'S WORK?

The revaluation is possible, but it is only the first step to be able to sell a work of art. There are a thousand tricks to improve the commercial techniques, we will point out only some technical suggestions of the artist who can move in his favor, starting from the basic concepts and summarizing some ideas.



1. Idea: to create works that are unique and not reproducible.
 2. Added value: invest the works with added meanings that make them attractive.
 3. Technical skills: develop technical skills.
 4. Research: carry out a programmable and documented research path
 5. Work-picture: to produce important works to be used as a presentation-type
 6. Exhibitions: participate in prestigious exhibitions or have works acquired by a public institution
 7. Sales standards
 8. Diversify production
 9. Personal website
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1. The uniqueness of a work is given by the exceptional combination of non-repeatable factors, such as artistic talent, or historical time, technique or other. A novelty is a good starting point, but when it is no longer an expression of a socio-cultural context capable of stimulating the most innovative artistic research, it has little chance to emerge.
 2. As mentioned by "Pomian in "L'art contemporein et le museè", a work is ready for the museum when it has already circulated among men and is loaded with history, even legend at times, when it will be invested with meanings that will be added to those received from their authors, so as to arouse the curiosity of visitors.
 3. Technical skills are acquired through constant exercise, regular practice of work; the school can support stylistic growth, providing useful technical cues, bringing the artist closer to new forms of expression and stimulating personal growth.
 4. There is no artist who owes his fame to improvisation or to the glory of a moment; the novelty is built with a slow and meticulous research work that is refined over time and relies on the parallel growth of technique and style. In this the School of Art teaches how to plan and document an autonomous research path, which is above all an expression of the artist's personality.
 5. You need to take care of your image, learning how to use images and words to your advantage, selecting images and critical content to use as a business card.
 6. Being invited and participating in important or prestigious exhibitions helps to consolidate the role that the art system pays to him.
 7. It is important to circulate your work, ingeniously producing works suitable for the various market segments, with an adequate standard of recognition.
 8. Diversify production
 9. How many of you have websites?



5. FACTORS AFFECTING THE VALUE OF THE WORK

Technique: oil on canvas or mixed techniques are considered the techniques par excellence, which characterize the most important works. For sculpture: marble (excellence) and bronze. For goldsmithing: today silver; but bronze or brass have excellent performances. It is the workmanship that counts.

Works on paper: worth less than half the work on canvas. Plaster works: it is not perceived as a value. Brass and bronze: silvered and gilded.

Size: the value of a work is not directly proportional to its size. Dimension becomes important when it is synonymous with more complex and committed design compositions.

Circulation: up to 6 works are considered original, they have their own evaluation. In the case of installations the original is considered the project. In the case of body art the photos.

Period: for each artist the works of the most creative phase are the most precious, also in relation to the birth of artistic trends.

Subject: a subject repeated for market needs is devalued because usually the works have a lower quality rate and lose their symbolic value of synthesis of the creative moment.

Publications: works published in monographs or included in history books have more value.

6. THE MARKET: GALLERIES, DEALERS, BROKERS, CRITICS

The structure of the contemporary art market is considerably complex, so there is always talk of various markets, in many ways unrelated to each other. There are different types and levels, due to the different purchasing power of buyers, different geographical realities, different cultural conditions that then influence the type of desire. Usually the merchant works with established artists to consolidate his business, and then reinvest by betting on the launch of new proposals. Among those who deal in art we often find not only gallery owners and mediators but also critics, sometimes real guides who know how to influence the tastes of investors and stimulate new proposals.

7. EXPLOITATION OF AMATEURS

There are many galleries, most of which are unimportant, that operate in second-rate and most amateur artistic production, and live by organizing solo or group exhibitions for a fee, living on the shoulders of amateur artists. On the same level there are some publishing activities that publish collective catalogues and art volumes of any type of work for a fee, since the intent is to collect the largest number of "advertisers". An activity of sure success given the considerable number of amateur artists.



8. COLLECTIONISM

Collecting activity assumes importance on the sociocultural level insofar as it does not end in the pure possession of venial goods. The more culturally significant the object is, the more its economic value is masked.

Picasso used to say: a work of art is worth what a collector is willing to pay for it!

This phrase is still relevant today, but over time the criteria that are constantly used by us professionals in the sector to express an opinion on the economic value of works of art have become increasingly clear. Obviously the criteria come from some specific data, among them: author, technique, year, size, subject, exhibitions, bibliography and provenance. For example, 2 works by the same author can have enormously different evaluations if even some of the data of the works to be evaluated changes. To this is added the careful information on the artist's path, the prices reached by his works at auctions as well as the personal culture and the eye of those who perform the evaluation.

9. ART CRITICISM

Art Criticism, in order to be truly valid and have an impact on the artistic dynamic, must on the one hand be vital, creative and innovative, and therefore partisan, as it is transgressive with respect to officially approved criteria of judgement, but on the other hand it must also be characterized by an adequate ability to define the aesthetic cultural coordinates in a historical perspective. Critical research should accompany and stimulate the artist's path, integrating it and receiving ideas for growth.

Jerry Saltz, the critic from New York magazine:

1. Pleasure is an important form of knowledge
2. Envy will eat you alive; cynicism will devour your work.
3. Cynicism simply thinks it knows the truth; it is Republican in the soul; it believes in certainties, while art believes in paradoxes.
4. You must have doubts. You can look at a Rembrandt and think it's "a little brown"...
5. You and your artist friends must be like vampires roaming the city. And spend all night together
6. You must always be in touch with the artists. If you don't, your work will lose its bite because one day you will wake up and think you know everything.
7. You need an art dealer, a critic, two curators, three to five collectors to be a successful artist. Are you capable of collecting 10 to 15 supporters of your work? You don't need to be part of a big system...
8. Everyone's sincere. Even Jeff Koons. He's really weird and talks like Teletubby, but at the same time he's able to create the Puppy flower that really made me happy. He's like The Beatles.
9. The demons will talk to you until you start working. Then you'll have new demons. Work with them. Work. Just work.
10. Art critics cannot make or undo an artist. Believe me, I have tried...



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