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More Than Just Middlemen: The Legacy and Influence of Art Dealers Joseph Duveen,

Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli on Shaping Art Collections

by

Valencia Tong

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The purpose of this study is to examine whether art gallerists are replaceable in the current climate in which the plea for removing the middlemen has been growing. The speed and ease of art transactions through digital platforms provide an alternative to the relationship-based in-person elements of the art world. Before the pandemic, the art market was seen as notoriously opaque, and gallerists have been stereotyped as middlemen who take high commission from art sales. However, art gallerists have played an important role throughout art history, not only buying and selling works of art like traders, but also shaping the art historical narrative by championing important artists. They influence the tastes of major collectors and place art into the most significant museum collections to preserve art for the next generation. Through tracing our roots within the history of art dealing, this thesis focuses on examining the influence and legacy of three different art dealers, Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli, to examine whether gallerists are replaceable or indispensable.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1. Manuela and Iwan Wirth at Hauser & Wirth Somerset; Photograph © Sim Canetty-Clarke; courtesy Hauser & Wirth

Fig. 2. David Maupin and Rachel Lehmann at Lehmann Maupin's New York gallery; courtesy Lehmann Maupin

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digitalization of the art world. In the art market report, “Resilience in the Dealer Sector: A Mid-Year Review 2021,” released by Art Basel and UBS, Dr. Clare McAndrew, founder of Arts Economics, said, “the event-driven market shifted online as businesses closed and events were cancelled, and dealers were forced to review their business models to adapt to new economic realities, which, for many, involved rolling out or significantly intensifying digital strategies in order to maintain sales and communications.”¹

She also noted that “although these efforts helped to reduce the impact, sales still slowed considerably during 2020, falling in value in the art market as a whole by 22% to an estimated \$50.1 billion.”²

Major art fairs, such as Art Basel, have started to adopt online viewing rooms (OVR) and other virtual means to allow collectors to appreciate and purchase art without attending the fair physically. Meanwhile, galleries have reduced staff in order to survive as they allocate more resources to sell art digitally through their websites. Traditionally, gallerists keep a tight lid on prices, which are only available upon request and disclosed

¹ Clare McAndrew, *Resilience in the Dealer Sector: A Mid-Year Review 2021* (Basel: Art Basel, 2021), 22.

² McAndrew, *Resilience in the Dealer Sector*, 22.

to those who have built trust over time, contributing to the image of secrecy and opaqueness of the art market. With the shift in business model to incorporate more digital elements to facilitate sales virtually, price transparency of works of art has increased as the price is listed next to the artwork on the websites to boost sales.

In the Hiscox Online Art Trade Report 2021, Robert Read, Hiscox’s Head of Art and Private Clients, noted the growth of the online art market over the course of the pandemic, “Online sales were \$6.8 billion in the first half of 2021 and could hit \$13.5 billion by the end of this year.”³ Given that some galleries manage to conduct sales online during lockdown amid the COVID-19 pandemic without showing art in a physical space, the unprecedented success in sales volume online gives rise to the existential question of whether digital platforms will pose a threat to or even replace art gallerists.

In order to examine this question, the term “gallerist” must first be defined. When asked what the role of a gallerist is and how the gallery has shaped such definition with what it does, the director of Lehmann Maupin’s Hong Kong outpost, Shasha Tittmann, said in an interview, “a gallerist does the work of connecting artists, and their artwork, with collectors, museums, press through meaningful exhibitions that can contextualize

³ Robert Read, *Hiscox Online Art Trade Report 2021* (London: Hiscox, 2021), 2.

the artwork within the systems of contemporary issues.”⁴ With branches in New York, Hong Kong, Seoul and London, Lehmann Maupin is an example of an international art gallery which has experienced the digital transformation in the art market during the COVID-19 pandemic first-hand. On March 13, 2020, the temporarily closure of their two New York gallery spaces occurred for an extended period when they followed recommendations from the World Health Organization and the New York government.⁵ When gallery staff adopted remote working procedures and foot traffic decreased when the brick-and-mortar spaces were open by appointment only, it became apparent that the usual process of connecting with the art world in-person was disrupted with travel restrictions in place. Gallerists must adapt to the changing climate in the art world in order to survive and thrive.

Various scholars point to the contributions of gallerists, important stakeholders in the art world, throughout art history in a wide range of academic publications. Chapter 1 examines the life of Joseph Duveen to reveal the qualities of this gallerist which made him a central figure in shaping art history and the art market. In her book, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts, 1880-1940*, Charlotte Vignon, curator of

⁴ Shasha Tittmann, interview by author, Hong Kong, July 21, 2021.

⁵ “Temporary Closure in New York — Visit Current Exhibitions Online,” Lehmann Maupin, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.lehmannmaupin.com/news/temporary-closure-in-new-york-visit-current-exhibitions-online>.

Decorative Arts at the Frick Collection in New York, stated that “Joseph Duveen no longer simply assisted his clients in furnishing their homes. He created interiors that encouraged clients to buy the items he wished to sell.”⁶ Vignon’s book is based extensively on the Duveen Brothers archives at the Getty Research Institute, and from the anecdotes of Duveen’s life, she paints the picture of Duveen’s larger-than-life personality in his art dealing practices with influential collectors.

Chapter 2 reveals the influence of Peggy Guggenheim’s patronage for avant-garde artists and her gallery’s role in advocating for their work. In Yale University Press's "Jewish Lives" series, Francine Prose wrote about Peggy Guggenheim’s close relationships with many of the most influential artists known today.⁷

Chapter 3 examines the role of Leo Castelli, another prominent gallerist, whose career began later than that of Joseph Duveen. Unlike Duveen, who primarily worked in the secondary art market, Castelli’s legacy can still be felt in today’s primary art market. In her book *Leo and His Circle: The Life of Leo Castelli*, historian Annie Cohen-Solal’s described that Castelli “was by far the most media-savvy seller of art in the whole world. He adored receiving journalists, peppering them with anecdotes, weaving and reweaving

⁶ Charlotte Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts, 1880-1940* (New York: The Frick Collection in association with D Giles Limited, London, 2019), 58.

⁷ Francine Prose, *Peggy Guggenheim: The Shock of the Modern* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 4.

his personal myth, the myth of the sophisticated European with the effortless Midas touch.”⁸

Since the first three chapters explore the history of the human-centric nature of the art dealing business of gallerists Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli, Chapter 4 analyzes how gallerists in the present build on this tradition while innovating using technology to respond to the current climate of the art world. The relationships they have developed in the art world can determine whether they remain an essential part of the art world ecosystem they are in.

Recently, as the art world relied on online viewing rooms to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, one may wonder if the traditional business model of Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli will gradually become obsolete. In a *New York Times* article, Pogrebin wrote, “galleries are adjusting to this new reality.”⁹ This signifies that a new era has begun, which will change the way that galleries do business.

⁸ Annie Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle: The Life of Leo Castelli* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), xix.

⁹ Robin Pogrebin, “Art Galleries Respond to Virus Outbreak with Online Viewing Rooms,” *New York Times*, March 16, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/arts/design/art-galleries-online-viewing-coronavirus.html>.

Chapter One: Joseph Duveen: Old Masters

The history of collecting and the history of art dealing go hand in hand, and the rise of gallerists can be traced back to how they elevated their role to beyond merely traders of objects. Looking into the history of the art market, the economist and art historian duo of Neil De Marchi and Hans J. van Miegroet noted that “we find the first substantive European evidence for primary markets and the retailing of paintings in 15th-century Florence and Bruges. Resale markets, temporally, followed primary markets with a lag of fifty years or more.”¹⁰ As the interest in amassing objects grew, cabinets of curiosities, known as the *wunderkammer*, played an instrumental part of the history of collecting in the 16th century and the 17th century. Containing artefacts, scientific specimens, as well as works of art, they were the predecessors of museums. Aristocrats in Europe kept various objects in their collections and put them on display in their properties to entertain guests. Later, the increasing interest to circumvent the rigid rules in France led to the emergence of a group of marchand-mercier, which French art critic and philosopher Diderot in his *Encyclopédie* defined as “makers of nothing, sellers of everything.”¹¹

¹⁰ Neil De Marchi and Hans J. Van Miegroet, “The History of Art Markets,” *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture* 1, no. 3 (2006): 72, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1574-0676\(06\)01003-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1574-0676(06)01003-9).

¹¹ Carolyn Sargentson, *Merchants and Luxury Markets: the Marchands-Merciers of Eighteenth-Century Paris* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1996), 1.

Their trading activities not only contributed to the dissemination of antique furniture and works of art in the 18th century in Paris, but also shaped the taste of collectors.

From the mid-19th century onwards, a rising class of wealthy industrialists, mainly concentrated in the United States, decided to imitate European aristocrats by collecting imported art objects from Europe to increase their social status. This phenomenon “necessitated a thorough restructuring of the art market.”¹² Under such circumstances, “Joel, Henry, and Joseph Duveen epitomized these dealers of bric-a-brac turned ‘gentleman’ antique dealers.”¹³ These antique dealers elevated their status beyond sellers of “a mass of odd objects, old things of various kinds, in poor condition.”¹⁴

According to Mary Rozell, art historian and the Global Head of the UBS Art Collection, a gallerist working in the primary market sells “work that is on the market for the first time...work that is usually consigned to the dealer directly from an artist.”¹⁵ Meanwhile, a gallerist working in the secondary market sells “works that have already been sold before.”¹⁶ She explained that gallerists in the secondary market “invest in inventory and try to control the markets of the artists they represent. A good secondary

¹² Charlotte Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts, 1880-1940* (New York: The Frick Collection in association with D Giles Limited, London, 2019), 27.

¹³ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 28.

¹⁴ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 34.

¹⁵ Mary Rozell, *The Art Collector's Handbook: The Definitive Guide to Acquiring and Owning Art* (London: Lund Humphries, 2020), 21.

¹⁶ Rozell, *The Art Collectors' Handbook*, 23.

market dealer will have deep knowledge of the oeuvre of the artists they sell, but also know in which public and private collections works by the artist are held.”¹⁷ Based on the above definition, Joseph Duveen mainly operated in the secondary market.

Joseph Duveen, known as Lord Duveen of Millbank, had an acute sense of current affairs, and built his entire gallery business based on the fact that he “noticed that Europe had a lot of art and America had plenty of money.”¹⁸ When he took over the gallery business of the Duveen Brothers in the 1910s, he “redirected the firm’s activities toward the trade in old master paintings. Within a few years, he became the greatest art dealer of the first half of the twentieth century.”¹⁹ Biographer S. N. Behrman also wrote about the charisma possessed by Joseph Duveen, noting that “Duveen, by amazing energy and audacity, transformed the American taste in art.”²⁰ With galleries located in New York, London and Paris, Joseph Duveen became a successful gallerist, largely due to his business acumen when capitalizing on new opportunities, his strategic creation of an aura of prestige around his brand, and his strong personality when building a network of loyal collectors.

¹⁷ Rozell, *The Art Collectors’ Handbook*, 23.

¹⁸ S. N Behrman, *Duveen* (New York: Random House, 1952), 3.

¹⁹ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 34.

²⁰ S. N Behrman, “The Days of Duveen,” *The New Yorker*, September 22, 1951, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1951/09/29/the-days-of-duveen>.

The strategic positioning of his “Duveen style” antique furniture and artwork as “must-haves” for American millionaires appealed to the demands of the elite clientele.²¹ According to Charlotte Vignon, curator of Decorative Arts at the Frick Collection in New York, the “heyday of what can be called the Duveen style lasted some thirty years, from about 1910, around the time when Joseph Duveen became director of the gallery, until his death in 1939.”²² American millionaires and art collectors could not have built “Duveen style” rooms full of Old Master paintings without Joseph Duveen’s involvement.²³

Joseph Duveen’s awareness of the importance of the location of real estate when establishing his galleries gave him the advantage of entertaining his customers where they were located and placing works of art into significant collections. In New York, Joseph Duveen established his gallery space in the northern section of Fifth Avenue, where collectors built “palatial residences opposite Central Park.”²⁴ In London, Duveen’s alignment with high society was also seen from the gallery’s location in the West End, where the historical ties of this neighborhood with the English cultural elite provided “implications of honesty, competence and prestige.”²⁵ In Paris, his gallery in a townhouse on Place Vendôme allowed him to “receive his American customers in

²¹ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 39.

²² Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 89.

²³ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 58.

²⁴ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 40.

²⁵ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 36.

Paris.”²⁶ The legacy of such a business model can still be seen in the way art gallerists with brick-and-mortar spaces operate in the upcoming centuries.

According to the Duveen Brothers records located in the Getty Research Institute, Joseph Duveen wrote many letters to Pittsburgh steel magnate Henry Clay Frick to convince him to purchase antique furniture to decorate the numerous rooms in properties that he owned, and thus, shaping his taste. For example, Duveen praised the quality of his own inventory when he wrote about his ideas for the installation of objects in one of the rooms in Frick’s properties. “The Boucher room would have been complete and beautiful in every aspect if such furniture had been left in, but it so happened that one or two exquisite furniture came over from Europe at that time of the completion of the room, which were so fine in themselves that I quite thought such a room should have a benefit of them.”²⁷ By using his expertise to shape the tastes and lifestyles of art collectors, art gallerist Joseph Duveen educated collectors and built relationships, so that they became repeated customers beyond one single transaction.

Joseph Duveen was also an expert in manufacturing the image of scarcity and exclusivity for works of art he planned to sell, a tactic that has had far-reaching impact on

²⁶ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 41.

²⁷ Duveen Brothers. *Collectors' Files: Frick, Henry Clay, 1, Ca. 1910-1918* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute: 1910), 107.

how gallerists grow the career of their artists by ensuring that works of art are placed in the right institution or collector's hands. "He was a master at creating desire through insecurity. A new collector coming to Duveen for the first time always got told he couldn't buy from him. Whatever caught his eye was invariably reserved for someone else."²⁸ In his book, *The Joys of Collecting*, J. Paul Getty, the oil tycoon and art collector who founded the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu, California, wrote an anecdote about Joseph Duveen's strategy when he approached Duveen to purchase the 16th-century *Ardabil* Persian carpet. "I first saw the *Ardabil* at an exhibition of Persian art in Paris. I fully shared the feeling of breathless awe it had inspired in James Whistler and countless others. The carpet, with its magnificent pattern, colors and sheen, was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen in my life. I immediately contacted Lord Duveen with a view to purchasing it. He flatly informed me the *Ardabil* was not for sale at any price. Knowing him personally, I realized he meant what he said and with great reluctance abandoned all hope of ever owning the treasure."²⁹ It was only in 1938 that Duveen agreed to sell the *Ardabil* carpet to J. Paul Getty, and in the end, the collector donated it to the Los Angeles County Museum.³⁰

²⁸ Philip Hook, *Rogues' Gallery: A History of Art and its Dealers* (London: Profile Books, 2017), 88.

²⁹ J. Paul Getty, *The Joys of Collecting* (New York: Hawthorne Books, 1965), 60.

³⁰ J. Paul Getty, *The Joys of Collecting*, 60-61.

The fact that Joseph Duveen refused to sell certain works to certain clients illustrated the important distinction between gallerists in the secondary market and auction houses. Although art collectors frequently bought art through auction houses—another main secondary market for art in the form of a public sale open to anyone who registered—the more personal nature of the relationship between the gallerist in the secondary market and the client offered bespoke experiences and discretion to art collectors. Joseph Duveen, as a gallerist in the secondary market, understood and shaped the tastes of collectors. He played a major role in steering collectors towards certain works. “Occasionally, Duveen departed from his routine to help out a valuable customer. If...he was in Paris and Andrew Mellon or Jules Bache was coming there, he would considerably remain a bit longer than usual, to assist Mellon or Bache with his education in art.”³¹

Duveen, as a gallerist, won art collectors over through a tailor-made approach according to their habits and through an active involvement in their personal lives—a close relationship which auction houses could not achieve. Duveen “permitted Bache to store supplies of his favorite cigars in the vaults of the Duveen establishments in London

³¹ Behrman, *Duveen*, 4.

and Paris.”³² When Bache “realized he didn’t have enough cigars to last him for the Atlantic crossing...he made a quick detour to Duveen’s to replenish. Duveen was not in Paris, and Bache was greeted by Bertram Boggis, then Duveen’s chief assistant...Boggis showed him a Van Dyke and told him Duveen had earmarked it for him. Bache was so entranced by the picture that he bought it on the spot...There was no charge for storing the cigars, but the Van Dyke cost him two hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars.”³³

By supplying resources and connections, Joseph Duveen built a lifestyle for his clients so that their lives became inseparable from art. “He got his clients houses, or he provided architects to build them house, and then saw to it that architects planned the interiors with wall space that demanded plenty of pictures. He even selected brides or bridegrooms for some of his clients, and presided over the weddings with avuncular benevolence. These selections had to meet the same refined standard that governed his choice of houses for his clients—a potential receptivity to expensive art.”³⁴ In return, art collectors continued to sustain the lifestyle that Joseph Duveen built through purchasing art according his recommendations.

³² Ibid.

³³ Behrman, *Duveen*, 4-5.

³⁴ Behrman, *Duveen*, 5-6.

Understanding the psychology of collectors was something that Joseph Duveen was adept at as an art gallerist. He addressed their wish to leave a legacy through philanthropy, their need for estate planning, and their desire to be remembered by facilitating the placement of art into museum collections when art collectors donated art to museums. Duveen “saw before most people did that...income taxes and inheritance taxes were going to make it impossible for men of wealth to buy art for themselves or leave collections to their heirs. The public bequest, impervious to taxation, was the way out.”³⁵ Biographer S. N. Behrman explained that, “By earmarking his purchases for museums a collector could afford to buy art; at least, he could let the art pass through his hands on the way to the museums from Duveen. Gifts to museums offered his clients not merely economy but immortality.”³⁶ This is why most of the major museum collections in the United States and beyond contain works of art donated by art collectors with provenance that can be traced back to the Duveens. In other words, Joseph Duveen has shaped museum collections worldwide, where the general public can now access works of art, which were previously in private hands.

³⁵ S. N. Behrman, “The Days of Duveen: The Silent Men,” *The New Yorker*, November 3, 1951, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1951/11/03/the-days-of-duveen-the-silent-men>.

³⁶ Ibid.

When art collectors donated their private collections to museums, art gallerists like Joseph Duveen made this a success, both directly and indirectly. Museums benefited from the donations of private collectors. Examples of Duveen's clients include industrialist Henry Clay Frick (whose collection went to the Frick Collection), Wall Street financier J.P. Morgan (whose collection went to the Morgan Library), oil magnate J. Paul Getty (whose collection went to the J. Paul Getty Museum), businessman John D. Rockefeller (whose collection went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, particularly the Cloisters), newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst (whose collection went to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art), railroad baron Henry Walters (whose collection went to the Walters Art Museum), philanthropist Arabella Huntington (whose collection went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Legion of Honor, the Yale University Art Gallery and the Huntington), thoroughbred horse racing businessman Joseph E. Widener, department store magnate Samuel H. Kress and financier Andrew Mellon (the collections of these three collectors went to the National Gallery of Art).

Given that numerous collectors who purchased art from Duveen donated their art collection to major museums, the most exemplary objects of historical importance were preserved for the next generation. "Between 1880 and 1940, Duveen Brothers helped to cultivate a taste for medieval and Renaissance art in the United States by offering clients

decorative elements that were incorporated into Gothic rooms and also by helping them to form significant collections. Many of these objects now reside in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Frick Collection in New York, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Taft Museum of Art in Cincinnati, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Detroit Institute of Arts.”³⁷

³⁷ Vignon, *Duveen Brothers*, 209-210.

Chapter Two: Peggy Guggenheim: 20th Century

In the 20th century, the center of the art world shifted from Europe to the United States, following World War II. Peggy Guggenheim, an art gallerist who was also an art patron, played a significant role in shaping art history, placing the work of important artists of the era into major collections. Alfred H. Barr Jr., the first director of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), said, “thanks largely to the influx of refugee artists and writers from Europe, New York during the war supplanted occupied Paris as the art center of the Western world. Later, most of the Europeans returned, particularly to France; yet in the postwar world, Paris seems clearly less preeminent and New York remained a contestant partly because of the rise of the most internationally respected group of painters so far produced in the United States. In their development, Peggy Guggenheim, as patron, played an important, in some cases, crucial role.”³⁸

Unlike Joseph Duveen in the previous chapter, who mainly worked in the secondary market, Peggy Guggenheim was a gallerist who was active in the primary market and represented living artists by providing exhibition spaces, resources and connections to grow their careers. As both a gallerist and a patron, she was responsible for their development. Barr explained that “a patron is not simply a collector who gathers works

³⁸ Peggy Guggenheim, *Out of This Century: Confessions of an Art Addict* (New York: Universe Books, 1979), xvii.

of art for his own pleasure or a philanthropist who helps artists or founds a public museum, but a person who feels responsibility toward both art and the artist together and has the means and will to act upon this feeling.”³⁹

Peggy Guggenheim, the niece of mining industrialist Solomon R. Guggenheim, grew up surrounded by art. Her uncle established his namesake museum in New York. Her father, Benjamin Guggenheim, was aboard the Titanic, which tragically sank. Her mother, Florette Seligman, came from the Seligman banking family. Although Peggy Guggenheim had the business acumen to know how to make a profit from art, she preferred to “distinguish herself from her business-oriented relatives and make her mark on the world through collecting and traveling in avant-garde circles.”⁴⁰

When Peggy Guggenheim moved to Europe in the 1920s, she began building relationships with avant-garde artists in Paris and London, including Marcel Duchamp, who she knew through her first husband, Laurence Vail.⁴¹ According to the Guggenheim Museums and Foundation, Peggy Guggenheim “embarked upon her career as an art patron at the age of 39, when she opened her art gallery, Guggenheim Jeune, in London,

³⁹ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, xv.

⁴⁰ “Peggy Guggenheim | The Guggenheim Museums and Foundation,” Guggenheim, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.guggenheim.org/history/peggy-guggenheim>.

⁴¹ “Peggy Guggenheim Collection | The Guggenheim Museums and Foundation,” Guggenheim, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/site/peggy-guggenheim-collection>.

in January 1938.”⁴² Guggenheim Jeune, located on Cork Street in London's Mayfair, was the predecessor of many galleries located in this area and an influential part of London's art scene to this day. For example, the exhibition, *Peggy Guggenheim and London*, in 2019 at Ordovas, a London-based Mayfair gallery in Savile Row founded by Pilar Ordovas, celebrated the legacy of Peggy Guggenheim through showcasing “her parallel collecting interests in Abstraction and Surrealism through a display of works by Jean (Hans) Arp and Yves Tanguy.”⁴³

In her book *The Shock of the Modern*, Francine Prose wrote “though Guggenheim Jeune had transformed the London art scene and enhanced the reputations of many European painters and sculptors, it had never turned a profit. According to Peggy, it lost six thousand dollars during its first year. But Peggy's custom of buying work from every artist she exhibited had helped build her private collection, and by the spring of 1941, she had come to think of herself as something more than a socialite, an heiress, and an art-world hostess.”⁴⁴

Peggy Guggenheim strategically made friends with many artists, who also served as her advisors when she purchased art and connected her to their peers. According to Barr,

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ “Peggy Guggenheim and London - Ordovas,” Ordovas, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.ordovasart.com/exhibition/peggy-guggenheim-and-london/>.

⁴⁴ Francine Prose, *Peggy Guggenheim: The Shock of the Modern* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 18.

Peggy Guggenheim “kept on adding to the collection, ‘buying a picture a day’ with the advice of her friends [Marcel] Duchamp, Howard Putzel and Nellie van Doesburg. She even rented space for a gallery in the Place Vendôme, but meanwhile the cool war turned hot. The Brancusi *Bird in Space* was bought as the Germans were nearing Paris.”⁴⁵

Peggy Guggenheim was an art gallerist who understood the challenges faced by collectors when sourcing art because she was an art patron herself. Since she had an eye for high quality art and knew the location of such works of art, she worked diligently to build personal relationships with artists. For these reasons, she could empathize with collectors who approached her to acquire art. Her network became an asset to provide access to art. Regarding her art acquisition process, she wrote, “for years I had wanted to buy a Brancusi bronze, but had not been able to afford one. Now the moment seemed to have arrived for this great acquisition. I spent months becoming more and more involved with Brancusi before this sale was actually consummated.”⁴⁶

Having experienced the unpredictable reactions of artists as creative individuals, which made it difficult for collectors to communicate with them in the language of commerce, Peggy Guggenheim acted as a bridge between artists and collectors. As such, the advantage of buying art through an art gallerist instead of directly from an artist

⁴⁵ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, xvi.

⁴⁶ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 210.

studio was that an art gallerist could help smoothen the process and reduce the time needed for negotiation between the artist and the collector. Of her experience interacting with Romanian sculptor Constantin Brancusi, she said, “I had known him for sixteen years, but never dreamed I was to get into such complications with him. It was very difficult to talk prices with Brancusi, and if you ever had the courage to do so, you had to expect him to ask you some monstrous sum. I was aware of this and hoped my excessive friendship with him would make things easier. But in spite of all this we ended up in a terrible row, when he asked four thousand dollars for the *Bird in Space*.”⁴⁷

The emotional aspect of art was something that Peggy Guggenheim experienced first-hand. This was an important part of her role as an art gallerist that she had to manage when she developed close bonds with artists. She described the process of her success in finalizing the negotiation with Brancusi for the sculpture *Bird in Space*, “I went to fetch it in my little car to have it packed and shipped away. Tears were streaming down Brancusi’s face, and I was genuinely touched.”⁴⁸

As a gallerist, she understood how to source art when they were more accessible and monitored the market of artists. During wartime, Peggy Guggenheim seized the opportunity whenever she could to build her inventory and her collection. “All winter I

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 211.

went to artists' studios and to art dealers to see what I could buy. Everyone knew that I was in the market for anything I could lay my hands on. They chased after me, and came to my house with pictures. They even brought them to me in bed, in the morning before I was up."⁴⁹ In her autobiography, she described a missed opportunity as "my stupidity in not availing myself of the opportunity of buying *La Terre Labourée*, by Miró, in London in 1939 for fifteen hundred dollars. Now, if it were for sale, it would be worth well over fifty thousand."⁵⁰

During wartime, German artist Max Ernst "fled to the United States with Peggy Guggenheim, whom he married in 1942."⁵¹ In the same year, Peggy Guggenheim opened the Art of This Century gallery in Manhattan, New York City, in 1942, an influential gallery which hosted important exhibitions ranging from abstract expressionist artist Jackson Pollock's exhibition to group shows like *Exhibition by 31 Women*.⁵²

Known for her eccentricity, Peggy Guggenheim was an instrumental figure who put artists on the radar. She attracted media attention from art critics, whose writing about her exhibitions and her roster of artists served as documentation in art history. The New York

⁴⁹ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 210.

⁵⁰ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 317.

⁵¹ "Max Ernst | Artist | Peggy Guggenheim Collection," Peggy Guggenheim Collection, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.guggenheim-venice.it/en/art/artists/max-ernst/>.

⁵² Edward Alden Jewell, "31 Women Artists Show Their Work," *New York Times*, January 6, 1943, 23. <https://www.nytimes.com/1943/01/06/archives/31-women-artists-show-their-work-peggy-guggenheim-museum-offers.html>.

Times art critic Edward Alden Jewell wrote about *Exhibition by 31 Women*, “there are paintings, pieces of sculpture, constructions and other objects less easily lending themselves to classification, which really makes no difference. Nearly everything belongs to realms of surrealism and fantasy, although a few of the items are plain abstractions, and it is surprising how comfortable and even homey a piece of nonobjective art can look in an environment so, as [American modernist writer] Gertrude Stein might put it, ‘so.’”⁵³

Peggy Guggenheim stressed the experimental aspect of her gallery, and shifted the emphasis away from commerce. This has had long-term implications, and art gallerists to this day still use the same approach to focus on nurturing artists’ careers instead of purely monetary motives. In her autobiography, she said, “as it was noncommercial, Art of This Century soon became a center for all avant-garde activities. The young American artists, much inspired by the European abstract and Surrealist artists who had taken refuge in New York, started an entirely new school of painting, which Robert Coates, art critic for *The New Yorker* named Abstract Expressionism.”⁵⁴

Although there was a strong focus on Surrealism in Peggy Guggenheim’s gallery, Prose noted that, “Peggy was neither the first nor the only person to introduce Surrealism to the United States; there had already been shows at the Museum of Modern Art and at

⁵³ Jewell, “31 Women Artists Show Their Work,” 23.

⁵⁴ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 314.

private galleries. But she was very good at making sure that it was talked about by critics and seen by younger artists.”⁵⁵

Peggy Guggenheim was a gallerist who was instrumental in developing the career of artist Jackson Pollock, a major figure in the abstract expressionist movement. “As he required a fixed monthly sum in order to work in peace, I gave him a contract for one year. I promised him a hundred and fifty dollars a month and a settlement at the end of the year, if I sold more than two thousand seven hundred dollars’ worth, allowing one-third to the gallery. If I lost, I was to get pictures in return. Pollock immediately became the central point of Art of This Century.”⁵⁶

Guggenheim was well-connected and her gallery attracted the attention of important institutions. For Jackson Pollock’s first exhibition in 1943, James Johnson Sweeney, then curator for the Museum of Modern Art, who later became the second director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, wrote the introduction of the catalogue. According to Peggy Guggenheim, he “helped a lot to further Pollock’s career.”⁵⁷ This was amplified by art critic Clement Greenberg’s support, who, in Peggy Guggenheim’s words, “came to the fore and championed Pollock as the greatest painter of our time.”⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Prose, *The Shock of the Modern*, 5.

⁵⁶ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 315.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Guggenheim's eye for art of her time shaped the taste of collectors, and to this day, Pollock's *The She-Wolf* is still in MoMA's collection. "Not long after Pollock's first Art of This Century show, the Museum of Modern Art bought a painting, *The She-Wolf*, for six hundred dollars; it had put a reserve on the work before the exhibition began."⁵⁹ Moreover, one of the most important works in the history of American art by Pollock, *Mural* (1943), was commissioned by Peggy Guggenheim, and now it is currently in collection of the University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art.⁶⁰

Peggy Guggenheim took an active role in steering collectors to certain artists to shape their tastes when forming collections. "I worked hard to interest people in [Pollock's] work and never tired doing so, even when it involved dragging in and out his enormous canvases. One day, Mrs. Harry Winston, the famous Detroit collector, came to the gallery to buy a Masson. I persuaded her to buy a Pollock instead."⁶¹

Peggy Guggenheim, as an art gallerist, approached her vocation through her nurturing side. She was not afraid of rolling up her sleeves to promote her artists and she was proud of her accomplishments as a labor of love even during times when the business was not too profitable. For instance, she said, "I always referred to Pollock as

⁵⁹ Prose, *The Shock of the Modern*, 152.

⁶⁰ "Jackson Pollock | University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art," University of Iowa, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://stanleymuseum.uiowa.edu/collections/american-art-1900-1980/jackson-pollock/>.

⁶¹ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 316.

our spiritual offspring.”⁶² She also coined the term “‘war babies,’ as I called the painters I had discovered during the war.”⁶³ She explained, “I had no idea then what Pollock paintings would be worth. I never sold one for more than a thousand dollars and when I left America in 1947, not one gallery would take over my contract. I offered it to them all, and in the end Betty, of the Betty Parsons Gallery, said she would give Pollock a show, but that was all she could do. Pollock himself paid the expenses of it out of one painting Bill Davis bought. All the rest were sent to me, according to the contract, at Venice, where I had gone to live.”⁶⁴

In addition to championing avant-garde works of art, Peggy Guggenheim did not shy away from challenging the preconceived notion of the status quo with art she acquired. After closing her gallery in New York, she displayed the works of art of the artists she championed at her pavilion designed by architect Carlo Scarpa at the Venice Biennale in 1948, generating considerable attention.⁶⁵ The works of art were considered so avant-garde that many misunderstandings occurred. For instance, it was fortunate that art critic Bruno Alfieri “saved a dismantled Calder mobile from being thrown away by

⁶² Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 315.

⁶³ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 363.

⁶⁴ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 316.

⁶⁵ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 327.

the workmen, who thought that it was bits of iron bands which had come off the packing cases.”⁶⁶

Later, Peggy Guggenheim began hosting exhibitions in the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni along the Grand Canal in Venice.⁶⁷ The venue, which served as her residence, would later become a museum. Of artist Marino Marini’s sculpture, *The Angel of the Citadel* (1948), located in Peggy Guggenheim’s courtyard, she wrote, “when the nuns came to be blessed by the Patriarch, who on special holy days, went by my house in a motorboat, I detached the phallus of the horseman and hid it in a drawer. I also did this on certain days when I had to receive stuffy visitors, but occasionally I forgot, and when confronted with this phallus found myself in great embarrassment. The only thing to do in such cases was to ignore it. In Venice a legend spread that I had several phalluses of different sizes, like spare parts, which I used on different occasions.”⁶⁸

Now, the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni is where the Peggy Guggenheim Collection is located, where the works of art she acquired, including those for Art of This Century, are displayed, shaping how generations of art professionals and the general public understand art history.

⁶⁶ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 329.

⁶⁷ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 334.

⁶⁸ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 334-335.

Peggy Guggenheim once said, “I consider it one’s duty to protect the art of one’s time.”⁶⁹ As a result of Peggy Guggenheim’s work as a gallerist who promoted artists and placed their work, major collections worldwide serve as repositories of “what the twentieth century has produced—Picasso, Matisse, Mondrian, Kandinsky, Klee, Léger, Braque, Gris, Ernst, Miró, Brancusi, Arp, Giacometti, Lipchitz, Calder, Pevsner, Moore and Pollock.”⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 329.

⁷⁰ Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, 364.

Chapter Three: Leo Castelli: Postwar and Contemporary

Historian Annie Cohen-Solal commented that “during the sixties, the Castelli Gallery had been affected by—even created by—the great transformations of the American culture and economy. No one had done more than Castelli himself to introduce major new currents into the flow of art history, or to win for the American artist a new stature at home and abroad.”⁷¹ In this chapter, the influence and legacy of art gallerist Leo Castelli will be analyzed to demonstrate how he shaped postwar and contemporary art collections.

Leo Castelli, whose name was Leo Krausz until he changed it to the Italianized version under Mussolini's regime, was born in Trieste, Austria-Hungary.⁷² He worked as an insurance agent and relocated to Bucharest, where he met Ileana Schapira, daughter of the Romanian railroad industrialist Mihai Schapira, and married her in 1933.⁷³ His father-in-law, Mihai Schapira, also served as financial advisor to King Carol II of Romania. After the couple relocated to Paris, Leo Castelli launched the René Drouin Gallery with French interior designer René Drouin in 1939, with the financial support of

⁷¹ Annie Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle: The Life of Leo Castelli* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 386.

⁷² Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 131.

⁷³ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 119-122.

Mihai Schapira, on Place Vendôme between the Ritz Hotel and the Schiaparelli.⁷⁴ The short-lived gallery showed Surrealist art before the war broke out, and in 1941, the Schapira-Castelli family relocated to New York.⁷⁵

By the time Leo Castelli arrived New York from Europe, he was aware of his earlier contemporaries like Peggy Guggenheim, who “having lived most of her life in Europe and opened a gallery in London, arrived in New York in July 1941 with her new husband, Max Ernst.”⁷⁶ Besides visiting the MoMA, where newly arrived Europeans were able to see masterpieces shown in the United States, Leo Castelli reconnected with artists that he had known before who also relocated from Europe to the United States, such as “Tchelitchew, Dalí, Fini, Ernst and Berman.”⁷⁷ Soon, Leo Castelli and his wife both began their studies in Columbia University, where Ileana Schapira met Michael Sonnabend (More than a decade later, in 1959, after Ileana Schapira’s divorce with Leo Castelli, Michael Sonnabend became her second husband before Ileana Sonnabend launched her own gallery).⁷⁸ Meanwhile, after his studies, Leo Castelli started his duties

⁷⁴ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 134.

⁷⁵ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 149.

⁷⁶ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 151.

⁷⁷ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 150-151.

⁷⁸ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 151-152.

in the army, and when he returned in 1946, he was almost forty when he lived in his father-in-law's townhouse and worked for him in his factory.⁷⁹

Unlike art gallerists Joseph Duveen and Peggy Guggenheim, Leo Castelli did not grow up surrounded by art. He actively sought ways to immerse himself in the study of art and educated himself through visiting exhibitions at MoMA, which its director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr. was in charge of.⁸⁰ In 1946, Leo Castelli's donation of an Arshile Gorky drawing from his collection to MoMA marked the beginning of his significant support for the institution and the expansion of his network as he began his career in the art world.⁸¹

Leo Castelli's interpersonal skills as a gallerist allowed him to act as a liaison between multiple parties to place works of art into significant collections while navigating challenges such as legal issues, logistics and securing potential clients. In the 1940s, through the René Drouin Gallery, Leo Castelli represented the estate of abstract artist Wassily Kandinsky after he passed away in Paris, and found a market for him in the United States.⁸² Despite the slow communication back and forth through exchanging letters with Nina Kandinsky, the widow, Leo Castelli's patience paid off. "Castelli gained for the artist's work the visibility that it had lacked and helped the American public

⁷⁹ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 169.

⁸⁰ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 171.

⁸¹ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 175.

⁸² Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 181-186.

discover its importance, alongside Miró and Klee, while repatriating to Europe the financial proceeds of his efforts. Thanks to him, collections of Kandinsky's work would develop at the Baltimore Museum of Art, at MoMA, at the Phillips Collection, at the Sidney Janis Gallery, at the New Gallery, and at the Davlyn Gallery.⁸³ In addition to placing Kandinsky's work into a wide range of private collections, one of Leo Castelli's most important contributions to art history was placing a large volume of Kandinsky's work into the Museum of Non-Objective Painting (currently known as the Guggenheim Museum).⁸⁴ This was made possible because the museum's director, Baroness Hilla Rebay, was an early supporter of Kandinsky's work.⁸⁵

Leo Castelli provided a platform for artists and art professionals to exchange ideas, perform creative explorations and collaborate. Around the time when René Drouin Gallery shut down in Paris, Leo Castelli and his wife, as well as other artists like Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Ad Reinhardt, Jack Tworkov and Robert Rauchenberg, formed "the Club" at 39 East Eighth Street in New York.⁸⁶ This neighborhood is known as Greenwich Village today.⁸⁷ In 1951, the Ninth Street Show, a group exhibition hosted

⁸³ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 191-192.

⁸⁴ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 192.

⁸⁵ "Hilla Rebay | The Guggenheim Museums and Foundation," Guggenheim, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.guggenheim.org/history/hilla-rebay>.

⁸⁶ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 204.

⁸⁷ "Greenwich Village and the Arts – Grey Art Gallery," New York University, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://greyartgallery.nyu.edu/2016/05/greenwich-village-arts/>.

by the Club cemented Leo Castelli's role as a proponent of the development of the arts.

Leo Castelli served as the curator of the exhibition to put the spotlight on artists who were rising stars in the art world in New York. The Club attracted the attention of art critics like Thomas Hess and Clement Greenberg, as well as museum professionals like MoMA director Alfred H. Barr Jr. and curator Dorothy Miller.⁸⁸

Leo Castelli understood the needs of artists and actively fostered artist-dealer relationships. A few years before Leo Castelli set up his own gallery in New York in 1957, he helped set up various exhibitions at the Sidney Janis Gallery, and the Castellis' "residences in Manhattan and East Hampton would become a privileged harbor for artists' mood swings."⁸⁹ Despite the ongoing rivalry between Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, which was visible when they both attended the events that Leo Castelli hosted, Leo Castelli managed to help both of them grow their careers. When artist Jackson Pollock was at a turning point in his career in the early 1950s after Peggy Guggenheim left New York, it became apparent that finding the right fit for the replacement of his gallery representation was important. Since the gallery program varied in each gallery, Jackson Pollock eventually moved from the gallery of Betty Parsons to that of Sidney

⁸⁸ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 211-215.

⁸⁹ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 222-223.

Janis with the help of Leo Castelli.⁹⁰ As such, Leo Castelli was a matchmaker who connected artists with their support systems to help them succeed in navigating the human-centric nature of the art world.

With an astute eye for talent, Leo Castelli discovered relatively unknown artists and propelled them to great heights. When he saw the painting *Green Target* (1955) by Jasper Johns at the Jewish Museum in 1957, he visited the artist's Pearl Street studio, which was located below the studio of Robert Rauschenberg.⁹¹ Since the painting *Green Target* (1955) led to Leo Castelli's discovery of Jasper Johns, this piece has been in MoMA's collection due to its historical significance.⁹² The importance of Jasper Johns as an artist was later documented in the catalogue of his retrospective in MoMA in 1996, "The exhibition opened with work from the mid-1950s: paintings of flags, targets, and numbers that seemingly sounded the death knell for Abstract Expressionism. Although Johns has been hailed as the father of Pop art and Minimalism, the loosely gestural abstractions of 1959-60 and the moodier gray imagery of the fragmented human form in 1961-64 reflect the choice of a different path."⁹³ In 1963, Leo Castelli was eager to promote Jasper Johns, and gave Jasper Johns' bronze *Flag* to President John F. Kennedy

⁹⁰ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 221-222.

⁹¹ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 242-244.

⁹² "Jasper Johns. *Green Target*. 1955 | MoMA," MoMA, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/78401>.

⁹³ "MoMA.org | Interactives | Exhibitions | 1996 | Jasper Johns: a retrospective," MoMA, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/1996/johns/>.

for the White House, even though Castelli's enthusiasm exceeded that of Johns'.⁹⁴ Soon after, Pop artist Robert Rauschenberg was the first American to win the Golden Lion award at the Venice Biennale in 1964, a controversial event that marked the rising importance of American artists.⁹⁵ In 1988, Jasper Johns won the Grand Prize for Painting at the 43rd Venice Biennale, and his exhibition *Jasper Johns: Work Since 1974* at the United States Pavilion, curated by Philadelphia Museum of Art's Mark Rosenthal, received critical acclaim.⁹⁶ As such, Leo Castelli built the careers of emerging artists and gave them exposure in various high profile settings.

As an art gallerist, Leo Castelli contributed to the important art movements in the postwar and contemporary categories. "Over the course of the 1960s Leo played a formative role in launching the careers of many of the most significant artists of the twentieth century including Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenberg, Cy Twombly, Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, Richard Serra, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner. Through his support of these artists Leo likewise

⁹⁴ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 285.

⁹⁵ "Venice Prize Goes To Rauschenberg," *New York Times*, June 20, 1964, <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/06/20/archives/venice-prize-goes-to-rauschenberg-pop-artist-wins-3200-for-best-for.html>.

⁹⁶ "Philadelphia Museum of Art – Exhibitions – Jasper Johns: Work Since 1974," Philadelphia Museum of Art, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.philamuseum.org/exhibitions/1989/577.html>.

helped cultivate and define the movements of Pop, Minimalism, Conceptual Art, and Post-Minimalism.”⁹⁷

Leo Castelli had the awareness of the type of artwork that his artists would like to show and where major trends occurred, and he took action to respond to the opportunities ahead. In the late 1960s, he launched Castelli Warehouse in Harlem to accommodate large-scale works.⁹⁸ There, he showed works by artists such as Giovanni Anselmo, Bill Bollinger, Eva Hesse, Steven Kaltenbach, Bruce Nauman, Alan Saret, Richard Serra, Keith Sonnier, Gilberto Zorio, John Chamberlain, Robert Morris, Salvatore Scarpitta, Jack Krueger, Gary Bower, Ellen Cibula, Richard Kalina, Richard Roth, Mario Yrizarry, Ron Davis, Rafael Ferrer, Keith Sonnier and Donald Judd.⁹⁹

The exploration of different segments of the market to expand his client base was something that Leo Castelli as a gallerist was adept at. After launching Castelli Graphics in 1960 with his second wife, Antoinette Fraisse du Bost, he expanded his gallery to SoHo, a neighborhood where key artistic activities were happening. Historian Annie Cohen-Solal noted that, “On Seventy-seventh Street, he went on showing canvases by his marquee artists, while at Castelli Graphics, with his second wife, Toiny, he developed the

⁹⁷ “About – Castelli Gallery,” Castelli Gallery, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.castelligallery.com/about/leo-castelli>.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ “Exhibitions – Castelli Gallery,” Castelli Gallery, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.castelligallery.com/exhibitions/past/castelli-warehouse-1968-1971>.

lower-end of burgeoning market for photographs, prints, drawings, and posters...in SoHo, spurred on by his first wife and eternal collaborator, Ileana, he probed the new boundaries of experimental art with films, videos, and performances. If, via the satellite galleries, Castelli had changed a basic feature of representation by extending his geographical reach and by offering his first artists greater visibility, so too was he now innovating synergies between emergent and traditional styles of selling art.”¹⁰⁰ By selling unique works of art as well as prints and multiples, Leo Castelli was able to reach both his major collectors who bought art at higher price points and new collectors who preferred accessible pieces. His strategy proved successful, as he was able to nurture a new generation of collectors by ensuring that images of works of art by his roster of artists circulated widely.

Last but not least, Leo Castelli was a gallerist who was generous as a mentor for the next generation of gallerists. Such gallerists include Mary Boone, whose success with her first two artists [Julian] Schnabel and David Salle earned her the name “The New Queen of the Art Scene,” and Larry Gagosian, who started his career selling posters and eventually became known for his mega-gallery.¹⁰¹ In the late 1980s, Jeffrey Deitch, an aspiring art gallerist, “graduated from Harvard Business School, and became a vice

¹⁰⁰ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 400.

¹⁰¹ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 404-407.

president at Citibank, was planning to launch his art business.”¹⁰² After helping Leo Castelli sell the inventory of Castelli Graphics (after the death of Antoinette Castelli) to free up capital for Castelli to operate in tough times, Castelli not only gave Deitch a commission as the start up capital for Deitch’s own business, he also gave the contact list of his gallery to Deitch to provide him the necessary connections to succeed.¹⁰³ Inspired by Leo Castelli, these gallerists continued to promote important artists through their networks and placed art into public and private collections.

Leo Castelli’s legacy continues to enrich the lives of artists, art gallerists, collectors and museum professionals, empowering them to shape art collections. “Leo Castelli’s [third] wife, Barbara Bortuzzo Castelli, and his children, Nina Castelli Sundell and Jean-Christophe Castelli, donated the Leo Castelli Gallery records to the Archives of American Art in 2007.”¹⁰⁴ As such, the documentation of his life and his career becomes accessible. Similar to how Leo Castelli acquired his art education through visiting art exhibitions in museums and galleries, the next generation of art professionals can learn about art through reading about his exhibitions and continue this important work.

¹⁰² Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 428.

¹⁰³ Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle*, 428-429.

¹⁰⁴ “Leo Castelli Gallery Records” Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/leo-castelli-gallery-records-7351/more-information>.

Chapter Four: The Contemporary State of Galleries

This chapter examines how the technological changes in the current condition of the art market affect gallerists of different hierarchies of the art market in the present day. For the purpose of this analysis, art galleries are segmented into top-tier (blue-chip) galleries (annual turnover over US\$10 million), mid-sized galleries (annual turnover US\$500,000 and above) and small galleries (annual turnover under US\$500,000).¹⁰⁵



Fig. 1. Manuela and Iwan Wirth at Hauser & Wirth Somerset. Photo Sim Canetty-Clarke. Courtesy Hauser & Wirth.

The value of the market is one of the factors influencing whether galleries on different rungs of the ladder of the hierarchy in the art market are affected by technology. When galleries had to shut their brick-and-mortar galleries during the COVID-19 pandemic to comply with lockdown policies, they resorted to displaying art through online viewing rooms (OVR). However, the impact of technological changes on top-tier, blue-chip galleries was not as severe because they could shift their resources to

¹⁰⁵ Clare McAndrew, *The Art Market 2021* (Basel: Art Basel, 2021), 52.

strengthen their online presence to continue to generate revenue and provide exposure to their roster of artists worldwide.

Top-tier galleries usually have multiple locations around the world, and they have the resources to promote these artists in prestigious exhibitions in well-regarded cities like New York, London, Paris and Hong Kong. Given the global network of top-tier galleries, top artists who constantly outperform the market will always be inclined to work with top-tier galleries. In addition to the resources and network offered to the artists when top-tier galleries represent them, there is a lifestyle element to the art market. In pre-COVID days, it was not unusual to fly artists and their artwork out to the locations where the exhibitions were hosted, where artists could attend the opening reception of their exhibitions in person and mingle with collectors, curators and critics. Top-tier galleries also have a dedicated press team or external public relations companies to reach the largest amount of people on web or in print. The global network and abundant resources available become top-tier galleries' competitive advantage.

In 2020, top-tier mega-gallery Hauser & Wirth turned the crisis in the art market caused by the COVID-19 pandemic into an opportunity by launching an initiative called ArtLab, the gallery's technology and research division, while equipping artists with the tools to experiment with technology to present their work in new ways. The inaugural

exhibition of this initiative called “HWVR” was an entirely virtual reality exhibition, which aimed to allow the audience to immerse themselves in art without traveling. On the gallery’s website, Iwan Wirth, president and co-founder of Hauser & Wirth, commented that, “many of the best innovations are driven by necessity.”¹⁰⁶

In contrast, small galleries, which represent emerging artists, have struggled financially and have limited exposure to the international art world when they are being cut off during the pandemic. A small gallery surveyed in the Art Basel Art Market Report 2020 stated that, “the ability to plan strategically for the medium to long term and think creatively about innovation is often stifled by the ongoing pressures to simply manage their day-to-day concerns and keep their businesses solvent.”¹⁰⁷ The target audience of small galleries is rather niche, and when they face the pressure of affording the real estate costs of the upkeep of a gallery space when foot traffic dropped to zero and sales decline, they have to layoff staff and scramble to move their exhibitions online. Moreover, they have to strike a balance between managing their operational budget and allocating limited resources to promote their lesser-known emerging artists. The threat of being replaced by counterparts, which possess technological acumen, is real, as many small galleries cannot

¹⁰⁶ “ArtLab: Our New Technology and Research Division,” Hauser & Wirth, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.hauserwirth.com/news/28281-artlab-new-technology-research-division>.

¹⁰⁷ Clare McAndrew, *The Art Market 2020* (Basel: Art Basel, 2021), 120.

weather the storm. “Over the last few years, the surveys have indicated that the growth in sales in the sector has tended to be driven by dealers at the higher end, while smaller and mid-sized galleries have seen mixed results.”¹⁰⁸ The imbalance of resource allocation among different segments in the art market creates the common scenario of larger galleries “poaching” artists from smaller galleries, as it is naturally the interest of artists to work with a gallery which can grow their career by giving them the most support and exposure. The varied level of success of galleries showing art online using digital technology shows that the technological changes during the COVID-19 pandemic pose a threat to small, emerging galleries as the art market increases its reliance on online spaces to continue functioning.

In the Artsy Gallery Insights 2021 Report, Dustyn Kim, chief revenue officer of Artsy noted that “online-only galleries grew significantly in 2020 in response to COVID-19. Galleries that reported operating without a physical location jumped from a steady rate of 15% in 2018 and 2019 to 35% in 2020.”¹⁰⁹ Top-tier and mid-sized galleries have shifted their resources online to find new collectors through online platforms with high traffic like Artsy, Artnet, Ocula, 1stDibs, and the Sotheby’s Gallery Network, while paying subscription fees and commissions associated with such platforms

¹⁰⁸ McAndrew, *The Art Market 2020*, 96.

¹⁰⁹ Dustyn Kim, *Artsy Gallery Insights 2021 Report* (New York: Artsy, 2021), 9.

if applicable. However, it becomes a vicious cycle when small galleries cannot afford to move their resources to build online presence, simultaneously upsetting collectors who cannot access artworks and artists who cannot show their work to collectors. The existential threat is real. Only savvy galleries, which have a digital presence, can survive. Otherwise, they will be replaced by those which possess technological acumen.

In light of the global reach of the Internet, it can be said that technology expands markets. “As galleries move online, they widen their scope...73% of galleries reported that at least half of the collectors they connected with online in 2020 were new to their business.”¹¹⁰ Galleries, no matter their size, have been placing more emphasis on free social media platforms to attract new collectors. The Hiscox Online Art Trade Report 2021 also confirmed that “Instagram remains the most important social media channel for sales.”¹¹¹

However, despite claims that artists and buyers can transact on Instagram without galleries as “middlemen,” Instagram itself still cannot replace gallerists. Since any user can post content onto Instagram, the quality of art circulating on the social media platform is unpredictable because not all artists and works of art have been vetted by galleries. In the primary market, when galleries represent artists, they work to nurture

¹¹⁰ Kim, *Artsy Gallery Insights 2021 Report*, 7.

¹¹¹ Robert Read, *Hiscox Online Art Trade Report 2021* (London: Hiscox, 2021), 5.

artists' career and protect artists' market from being destabilized by speculative buyers.

In the secondary market, galleries serve as gatekeepers who conduct due diligence on the provenance of works of art, preserve their condition and issue certificates of authenticity.

As such, Instagram is only a tool for outreach and cannot replace gallerists.

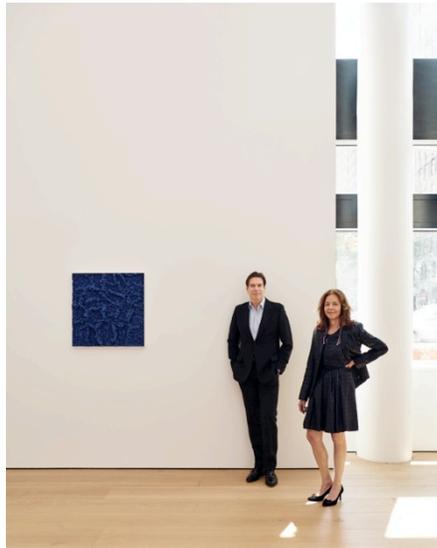


Fig. 2. David Maupin and Rachel Lehmann at Lehmann Maupin's New York gallery.
Courtesy Lehmann Maupin.

Top-tier galleries, in addition to harnessing technology in advantageous ways, have the resources to find alternatives to stand out from their competition. For instance, when travel restrictions and cancellations of art fairs occurred frequently in 2019 to 2021 during the pandemic, which prevented collectors from attending events in person, galleries like Lehmann Maupin adapted by expanding their offerings using technology.

“We embraced the digital realm and adapted with OVRs, AR technology, video walkthroughs, on the digital landscape as fast as we could. The world went on lockdown

and we realized our exhibitions could travel beyond borders. Much of these ideas and strategies were already in the works pre-pandemic, and later throughout the transition, we learned a lot about what works and what doesn't. It is a constant evolution to keep up with new technologies and consumer behavior,” Shasha Tittmann, Lehmann Maupin Hong Kong Director, said in an interview with the author in Hong Kong on July 21, 2021.¹¹²

Keeping up with art collectors is no easy feat. Many people in the art world moved away from crowded city centers during the COVID-19 pandemic to take a break in holiday homes in the Hamptons, Miami, Palm Beach, and Aspen. As Julia Halperin, executive editor and editor of the Artnet Intelligence Report, observed, in 2020, there was a “brief, innocent window of time in early summer when vaccinations were spreading swiftly, restaurants were filling up, and people felt comfortable saying phrases like, ‘post-COVID.’”¹¹³ By that time, the art world has become fatigued from the endless, repeated action of viewing art shown in online viewing rooms on digital screens. As usual, galleries do not miss the opportunity to put art in front of potential customers, no matter online or offline, to build trust to boost sales. When art fair cancellations kept

¹¹² Shasha Tittmann, interview by author, Hong Kong, July 21, 2021.

¹¹³ Julia Halperin and Tim Schneider, *The Artnet Intelligence Report, Fall 2021 Edition* (New York: Artnet, 2021), 3.

happening and it became difficult for collectors to travel physically to inspect artwork at a brick-and-mortar space, mega-galleries set up pop-up gallery spaces there to bring art to collectors.

“Hauser & Wirth has [always] created physical spaces in the locations where our artists and our collectors reside. This is something we have always done. But it’s an even more important step given the impact of events over the last year during which we have sought out new ways to present and sell works of art,” said Iwan Wirth, the president of Hauser & Wirth in an article by *The Art Newspaper*.¹¹⁴ Although technological advancements make online platforms convenient, the trust built between gallerist and collector is irreplaceable. Gallerists try their best to provide personalized experiences to retain their clients.

When buying art online instead of at a brick-and-mortar gallery, the inability for collectors to examine the work in person is a concern. Even though it is more likely for virtual inspection to be acceptable for artworks at lower price points with multiple editions, such as prints, most collectors prefer viewing unique objects, such as paintings, in person. “Of the sales made in the dealer sector in the first half of 2021, the bulk of

¹¹⁴ Daniel Cassady, “Chips are Down: Hauser & Wirth Opens in Monte Carlo,” *The Art Newspaper*, April 16, 2021, <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2021/04/15/chips-are-down-hauser-and-wirth-opens-in-monte-carlo>.

value remained in the more traditional mediums of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper, which accounted for 82% of the value of sales. Prints, multiples, and photography accounted for a further 12% and digital, film, and video art just 1% by value.”¹¹⁵ Since there are different price points for different mediums, there are many markets, not just one single market. For instance, for an established artist like Richard Serra, who is represented by multiple galleries, with mega-gallery Gagosian mainly for his sculptural works and other regional galleries for his works on paper, attributes of different mediums influence value. The threshold of the comfort level for potential customers to buy works of art “sight unseen,” which means looking at a PDF file or an image and buying art without inspecting it in-person, is different across categories. For these reasons, galleries are exploring the hybrid sales model to display art both online and in physical spaces.

Commenting on the categories which perform well in the art world, Thierry Ehrmann, CEO and founder of Artprice by Artmarket.com, said in the Contemporary Art Market Report in 2021, “With the help of strategies offering a large number of works at relatively affordable prices, contemporary creation has withstood this crisis better than any other creative period. Photography and prints have been particularly successful in this new online environment and in 2021, we have seen the sensational arrival of

¹¹⁵ Clare McAndrew, *Resilience in the Dealer Sector: A Mid-Year Review 2021* (Basel: Art Basel, 2021), 56.

completely dematerialized artworks, the famous NFTs.”¹¹⁶ It remains to be seen how art galleries respond to the trend of selling and collecting Non-fungible tokens (NFT), a form of digital art authenticated by blockchain technology, to capitalize on the trend.

According to the Hiscox Online Art Trade Report 2021, “NFT art galleries are no different than traditional galleries but have emerged because traditional art galleries have failed to meet the needs of digital artists and the NFT market. But as more traditional galleries move into NFTs, it is questionable whether more physical NFT galleries will open, or whether the NFT and traditional art world will gradually merge.”¹¹⁷

Technological changes in the current condition of the art market affect gallerists of different hierarchies of the art market in the present day. However, top-tier galleries respond more positively as they have more resources and established networks worldwide to bring art to collectors and capitalize on trends, while mid-sized and small galleries respond less positively as their existence is threatened by the lack of resources to operate in the era of rapid digitalization. Despite the emergence of new business models and new art forms, most collectors still prefer the human touch that galleries offer, proving that it is difficult to replace gallerists entirely.

¹¹⁶ Ehrmann Thierry, *The Contemporary Art Market Report in 2021* (Saint-Romain-au-Mont-d'Or: Artprice, 2021), 4.

¹¹⁷ Read, *Hiscox Online Art Trade Report 2021*, 29.

Conclusion

In the 21st century, whenever artists manage to bypass art gallerists to sell their work for record-breaking prices (often in auction, a public event in the secondary market), the abundant press attention surrounding the newsworthy events prompts people to ask the question of whether the role of the gallerist has become obsolete. However, through the analysis in Chapter 1 to Chapter 4 of the role of gallerists, as well as the close reading of the influence and legacy that gallerists in different eras leave on the art world, it becomes clear that gallerists are more than just “middlemen.”

Although there are examples of artists bypassing the gallery system, they are the exceptions rather than the norm. The art market writer, Georgina Adam, wrote in her book *Big Bucks: The Explosion of the Art Market in the 21st Century*, “The most famous, or even notorious, direct sale took place at Sotheby’s London in 2008, when Damien Hirst bypassed his dealers, Gagosian and White Cube, and consigned 218 works to the auction house.”¹¹⁸ This happened right before the 2008 financial crisis, and the sale generated \$200.7 million.¹¹⁹ Fast-forward to more than a decade later, in 2021, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Christie’s single-lot sale of the artwork of Mike Winkelmann, a

¹¹⁸ Georgina Adam, *Big Bucks: The Explosion of the Art Market in the 21st Century* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2014), 35.

¹¹⁹ “Damien Hirst,” Sotheby’s, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.sothebys.com/en/artists/damien-hirst>.

digital artist named Beeple with no gallery representation, achieved \$69,346,250.¹²⁰ The auction house's website says, "The recent introduction of Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and blockchain technology has enabled collectors and artists alike to verify the rightful owner and authenticity of digital artworks. *EVERYDAYS: THE FIRST 5000 DAYS* will be delivered directly from Beeple to the buyer, accompanied by a unique NFT encrypted with the artist's unforgeable signature and uniquely identified on the blockchain."¹²¹ The art writer, Melanie Gerlis, wrote in *Financial Times*, "The NFT art craze has the feel of a well-marketed fad for a virtual time but its proponents compare the nascent market to that for street art, a phenomenon that was initially dismissed but is now embraced. NFT art is certainly attracting money: at the end of last year, 20 of Beeple's works sold on the specialist platform Nifty for a total of \$3.5m."¹²²

Although these events have made headlines, generating the impression of success that draw the attention of speculators, the financialization of art as commodities to be flipped (bought and resold within a short time) cause artists' markets to be unstable.

Without gallerists to actively monitor and protect artists' markets, artists who bypass gallery representation risk leaving their fate to the hands of speculators and sabotaging

¹²⁰ "Beeple: A Visionary Artist at the Forefront of NFTs," Christie's, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.christies.com/features/Monumental-collage-by-Beeple-is-first-purely-digital-artwork-NFT-to-come-to-auction-11510-7.aspx>.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Melanie Gerlis, "Christie's gets digital with the art world's non-fungible craze," *Financial Times*, February 18, 2021, <https://www.ft.com/content/d7523a73-8aa3-40eb-8b3d-bf27cd2494a0>.

their careers. Since history repeats itself, it is advisable to refer to pivotal moments in art history to contemplate the best practices of growing the careers of artists and shaping art collections without being solely focused on financial gains. Gallerists like Peggy Guggenheim spoke of the disappointing situation of speculation in the late 20th century, “I was thunderstruck, the entire art movement had become an enormous business venture. Only a few persons really cared for paintings...Prices were unheard of. People only bought what was the most expensive, having no faith in everything else. Some bought merely for investment, placing pictures in storage without even seeing them, phoning their gallery every day for the latest quotation, as though they were waiting to sell stock at the most advantageous moment...I do not like art today. I think it has gone to hell, as a result of the financial attitude.”¹²³

Art gallerists understand the needs of collectors, who serve as patrons to support the arts, and this becomes the driving force for motivating collectors to support the careers of artists and the museums of their choice when building collections. In other words, the process of buying and selling art is not merely a transaction; art gallerists are not only traders. According to the TEFAF Art Market Report 2020, “94% of art patrons are primarily driven by their passion for art, followed by 91% who said they ‘believe that art

¹²³ Peggy Guggenheim, *Out of This Century: Confessions of an Art Addict* (New York: Universe Books, 1979), 362-363.

and culture impacts the way we perceive the world around us’ and 85% who said they were motivated by the ‘mission of the arts organization.’ It is worthwhile noting the strong emotional (passion) gratification that art patrons derive from supporting the arts, and although this might appear superficial in the perspective of the broader societal impact of art and culture, the association between art and individual well-being should not be ignored.”¹²⁴

From the beginning of the formation of the art market to the contemporary era, the human-centric nature of the art world has not changed, proving the necessity of the existence of art gallerists. The analysis in Chapter 1 to Chapter 4 shows that renowned art gallerists like Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli, as well as art gallerists from a wide range of top-tier, mid-sized and small galleries, have played a significant role in nurturing human relationships to leave a legacy in the art world.

First, in the primary market, both Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli created platforms for their network of artists to collaborate and foster artistic experimentation. Likewise, in pre-COVID days, contemporary art galleries arranged flights for their artists to attend gallery opening receptions overseas and coordinated shipping of their artworks to art fairs abroad. By providing resources and developing trust with artists, they gained

¹²⁴ Patrick van Maris, *TEFAF Art Market Report 2020* (Maastricht: TEFAF, 2020), 7-8.

access as art gallerists to acquire works of art of the best quality from artists. Although collectors can buy art directly from artists' studios, they face challenges such as difficulties in negotiating with artists, adapting to artists' strong personalities, or competing with other collectors to access the best works. Therefore, from the examples of Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli, who handled the logistics and placements of artists' works, the contributions of art gallerists cannot be ignored. As a result of the presence of art gallerists, artists can concentrate on producing high quality work without distraction while collectors can shorten the time needed to negotiate with artists who are often unfamiliar with the language of commerce.

Moreover, building trust with a vast network of collectors and museum professionals has been something that art gallerists do universally in order to perform their function. In the secondary market, Joseph Duveen provided interior design services to his collectors to shape their lifestyle around works of art he sold. In the primary market, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli presented exhibitions of their network of artists and invited collectors and museum professionals, such as MoMA director Alfred H. Barr Jr., to the opening receptions of their gallery shows. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when travel restrictions were in place and art collectors could not attend art fairs abroad, art galleries like Hauser & Wirth opened outposts where collectors resided, such as the Hamptons.

When collectors donate works of art to museums, art gallerists directly and indirectly shape art collections, the taste of the public who view the works exhibited in museums, as well as the careers of their network of artists. When works of art of artists represented by art gallerists enter prestigious private and public collections, such provenance enhance the value of their art, contributing to the growth of artists' career. Although it can be argued that artists can sell their works directly to collectors or attract the attention of museums by themselves, this takes away valuable time from their main vocation of creating art, lowering the quality of their work. Likewise, it is challenging for collectors or museums to try to acquire art from artists directly. Without an artist's career trajectory of comprehensive exhibitions locally and internationally, which acts as a signal that reputable gallerists and institutions have approved such artist, it is difficult to justify such acquisition. Since the supply of artists and works of art often exceed the demand for high quality work, without galleries as gatekeepers, museums find it difficult to convince the acquisition committee and the Board of Trustees to approve the proposal, especially when funding is involved.

In addition to building relationships with artists, collectors and museums, art gallerists manage media relations either through their dedicated press team or through external public relations companies to attract positive reviews from journalists and art

critics. Such publicity, in trade publications or newspapers with large circulation, serve as documentation to strengthen artists' CVs and bring in new collectors. In the pre-Internet days, Joseph Duveen captured press attention through the lavish lifestyle he created for his clients, and Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli attracted the attention of art critics like Clement Greenberg. Meanwhile, in the contemporary era, art galleries harness the power of technology to distribute information, photos and multimedia content about their artists and their exhibitions through their website, email mailing lists and social media. Social media channels like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and WeChat become essential as galleries expand their presence from the United States and Europe to the Middle East and Asia. Although it can be argued that artists can reach out to media professionals directly, this is challenging as art critics and journalists cannot easily justify why they should provide press coverage to artists who have not been vetted by galleries and institutions. Moreover, without a cohesive brand crafted by galleries and public relations companies, artists risk appearing less professional, and thus jeopardizing their careers. While artists and collectors can transact directly on social media platforms like Instagram, both sides take risks, as they have to arrange the logistics themselves without galleries as intermediary for warranties of authenticity and for proper storage to maintain the condition of works of art.

Lehmann Maupin Gallery's Hong Kong Director, Shasha Tittmann, noted the importance of building relationships and trust in the human-centric art world. "Art tells the human story, by people and for people. The mechanisms of a healthy art ecosystem rely on deep trust built over time in the form of relationships and reputations that require constant nourishment, along with the risks, challenges, and rewards that come with supporting the cause for contemporary art. Intermediaries are integral gatekeepers because in the art industry system, "art" and "industry" are often in conflict. It's a delicate dance that requires humanity, empathy, and integrity in the face of the ever-growing demand we are seeing today."¹²⁵

The legacy of art gallerists like Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli can still be felt today by art gallerists who follow in their footsteps to continue to shape art collections. Of the three gallerists, Tittmann commented, "The visions they had made them trailblazers and pioneers. We owe a lot of culture established today to their efforts in bridging art and collectors across continents—they made art collecting a lifestyle. The amount of travel, and nature of the highly personalized business of gallerists, started with them!"¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Shasha Tittmann, interview by author, Hong Kong, July 21, 2021.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

Given the amount of traveling required to maintain human relationships in pre-COVID days, art gallerists felt pressured to be omnipresent at art fairs around the world, causing the phenomenon called “fair fatigue.” During the COVID-19 pandemic, however, when quarantine policies made it impossible to travel, art gallerists faced another problem: the cancellation of art fairs causing disruption to their business model. Lockdown and social distancing rules implemented by governments in different countries meant that some art galleries had to shut down their brick-and-mortar gallery. Following the traditional art gallery model (of art gallerists like Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli), many contemporary gallerists had opened their gallery spaces in high-end neighborhoods to associate their business with luxury to attract sophisticated collectors. Yet, the rent of such areas were often high, and even when they had no choice but to shut down their physical galleries during the COVID-19 pandemic, they still had to pay rent as usual. With the loss of revenue from reduced foot traffic and travel restrictions, many mid-sized and small galleries went out of business. Due to the change in lifestyle caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, art professionals and collectors began working remotely online. The rise in the digitalization of the art world prompted art gallerists to change the way they do business.

If the COVID-19 pandemic had happened during the lifetime of Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim, and Leo Castelli, then the development of art history would have been very different as there was no Internet. However, all three gallerists experienced disruption brought about by war, and managed to turn crises into opportunities. They found ways to conduct business between the United States and Europe without the help of the Internet, and shaped art collections in different parts of the world. If gallerists in the past managed to survive and thrive during war, a period of global turmoil, then similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic could bring unprecedented opportunities to contemporary gallerists. Success belongs to those who overcome challenges.

Looking back, technological advancements provided many new options to contemporary gallerists. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Internet not only provided a platform to mimic real-world experiences of viewing art through online viewing rooms (OVRs) and video walkthroughs, but also accelerated the development of innovative ways to create, display, and collect art using augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technology. Art gallerists who harnessed the power of technology attracted new collectors online and experimented with new forms of art like NFTs. They were aware of global trends, made possible by the rapid information exchange on the Internet (as opposed to the slow method of exchanging information through letters during the days of

Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli). Some galleries even experimented with blockchain technology and accepted cryptocurrency payments to respond to the demands of a new type of digitally savvy collectors, who were eager to build digital collections of digital art and display their collections virtually.

The best art gallerists have always innovated to discover a new language of art to build important collections. Joseph Duveen placed art into collections through the use of the visual language of European aristocracy for American industrialists, Peggy Guggenheim placed art into collections through championing abstract art, and Leo Castelli placed art into collections through promoting movements such as Pop art. During the COVID-19 pandemic, instead of viewing digital platforms as a threat, art gallerists will thrive if they adopt the same innovative spirit, resilience, and ability to adapt as their successful predecessors. Technology is just a new language which gallerists need to master and promote. The key to success for art gallerists, in order to be irreplaceable, is to foster human relationships through methods appropriate for the present moment.

As such, the legacy and influence of Joseph Duveen, Peggy Guggenheim and Leo Castelli on shaping art collections can be seen in the work of the next generation of gallerists, who strive to be more than just middlemen.

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Appendix 1: Interview Transcript with Shasha Tittmann, Lehmann Maupin Hong

Kong Director

1. What is the role of a gallerist and how has your gallery shaped this definition with the work that you do?

A gallerist does the work of connecting artists, and their artwork, with collectors, museums, press through meaningful exhibitions that can contextualize the artwork within the systems of contemporary issues.

2. In response to the digital transformation accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years, how has your gallery adapted?

We embraced the digital realm and adapted with OVRs, AR technology, video walkthroughs, on the digital landscape as fast as we could. The world went on lockdown and we realized our exhibitions could travel beyond borders. Much of these ideas and strategies were already in the works pre-pandemic, and later throughout the transition, we learned a lot about what works and what doesn't. It is a constant evolution to keep up with new technologies and consumer behavior.

3. Do you think that digital platforms that sell art are a threat or an opportunity?

It's definitely an opportunity, there are so many incredible new ways to digitally experience artwork. Art itself is evolving with these technologies. The digital landscape is moving the art industry towards more transparency and accessibility to new markets and collectors, we have seen tremendous growth first hand with online-initiated sales to first time buyers.

4. Do you think that one day the role of the gallerist will be replaced, such as by technology? What are your views on the notion that "the middleman" can be eliminated? Do you think that this perception is flawed?

I can't see technology replacing the role of a gallerist. Art tells the human story, by people and for people. The mechanisms of a healthy art ecosystem rely on deep trust built over time in the form of relationships and reputations that require constant nourishment, along with the risks, challenges, and rewards that come with supporting the cause for contemporary art. Intermediaries are integral gatekeepers because in the art industry system, "art" and "industry" are often in conflict. It's a delicate dance that requires humanity, empathy, and integrity in the face of the ever-growing demand we are seeing today.

5. What are your views towards gallerists such as Joseph Duveen, Peggy

Guggenheim and Leo Castelli?

The visions they had made them trailblazers and pioneers. We owe a lot of culture established today to their efforts in bridging art and collectors across continents - they made art collecting a lifestyle. The amount of travel, and nature of the highly personalized business of gallerists, started with them!