

**BARCELONA
SYMPOSIUM 2017**

**TALKING
GALLERIES**

THE INTERNATIONAL
SYMPOSIUM FOR GALLERISTS

TALKING GALLERIES 05

Talking Galleries is an open platform to debate and exchange ideas specific to the art gallery sector. Founded in 2011, it holds an annual symposium in Barcelona and organises conferences worldwide, facilitating the proper space for gallerists to discuss new trends in the art market and share their views and expertise.

Since Talking Galleries first started, the art market has experienced considerable changes. Despite having recovered from the crisis it faced almost a decade ago, many of us think we are at a delicate turning point again. Galleries, auction houses and art dealers are reassessing their models. Today more than ever, we need to share our ideas, coordinate our strategies and take advantage of our common strengths.

This book collects the world-class talks and panels that made up the programme of the 5th Barcelona Symposium, which was held at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) from 16 to 17 January 2017. As readers will see, some of the most relevant matters in today's art gallery management were discussed by leading figures in the field. Whether they comment on the evolution of art fairs, the role of digital strategies, the effect of globalisation on galleries or the transformation of curatorial practices, their insights are extremely enriching for those of us who work in the art gallery sector.

Llucà Homs
Director



TALKING
GALLERIES

#TG2017

Tuesday, Jan 17
12:00-13:30h

New Models in Collaboration:
The Gallery and Auction House Relationship

Susan Dunne Pace Gallery
François Chantala The Thomas Dane Gallery
Martin Klosterfelde Sotheby's
Simon de Pury de Pury de Pury

Moderator
Jeffrey Boloten Sotheby's Institute of Art

Panel Discussion
45min + 45min Q&A

TALKING GALLERIES

THE INTERNATIONAL
SYMPOSIUM FOR GALLERISTS

Georgina Adam
Martin Aguilera
Sabrina Amrani
Elba Benítez
Jeffrey Boloten
François Chantala
Susan Dunne
Jean Frémon
Melanie Gerlis
Carles Guerra
Martin Klosterfelde
Moritz Küng
Simona Malvezzi
Antoon Ott
Simon de Pury
Adriaan Raemdonck
Anthony Reynolds
Jesse Ringham
Thaddaeus Ropac
Lisa Schiff
Adam Sheffer
Victoria Siddall
Jocelyn Wolff

V Barcelona Symposium 2017
Consolidating Gallery Strategies

INTRODUCTION Georgina Adam	9
SESSIONS	
The Global Gallery Thaddeus Ropac	17
The Evolving Fair Situation Elba Benítez, Jean Frémon and Victoria Siddall, with Georgina Adam (moderator)	47
Legal Matters for European Galleries. An Exchange of Ideas and Knowledge Antoon Ott, presented by Adriaan Raemdonck	77
Curated Gallery Programmes Carles Guerra, Anthony Reynolds and Jocelyn Wolff, with Sabrina Amrani (moderator)	97
The Strengths and Benefits of the Mid-Sized Gallery Martin Aguilera, Lisa Schiff and Adam Sheffer, with Melanie Gerlis (moderator)	121
New Models in Collaboration: The Gallery and Auction House Relationship François Chantala, Susan Dunne, Martin Klosterfelde and Simon de Pury, with Jeffrey Boloten (moderator)	151
Architecture for Art. Gallery Spaces. A summary Simona Malvezzi, presented by Moritz Küng	189
Social Media. Analysing Your Investment Jesse Ringham	195



Introduction

By Georgina Adam*

Welcome to the fifth Talking Galleries notebook!

The TG notebooks, produced after each symposium, summarise the presentations, panels and discussions, thus sealing with a permanent record the lively and interactive two days when gallerists and other art market professionals meet to discuss their mutual concerns.

“Consolidating Gallery Strategies” was the theme of the fifth symposium, held in Barcelona at the MACBA auditorium on 16 and 17 January 2017. A record number attended this year’s event, with 205 participants from 25 countries and 28 speakers from Austria, UK, France, Spain, Holland, Belgium, USA, Brazil and Italy.

The keynote speech was given on the first morning by Thaddaeus Ropac, whose “empire” now extends over two galleries in Austria, two in Paris and a magnificent new space opening in London this spring. His theme, fittingly, was “The Global Gallery” and he traced his personal voyage, from opening a small gallery “without any experience,” in Salzburg in the 1980s, to now having big spaces in Paris and soon in London as well as two in his native Austria.

All his business decisions, said Thaddaeus, have been driven by the artists’ needs. That was why he gradually moved to bigger spaces and in different countries. “It’s always important to remember,” he said, “that as a gallery you can do a lot to help the artists, to make the perfect exhibition in the perfect space. But, at the end of the day, it is the artist alone in the studio who creates the masterpiece, and the gallery can’t do that.”

Ropac also spoke of the problems of speculators, and admitted that the gallery maintains black lists to prevent “flipping.” He insisted on the importance of gallery staff—he employs 100—knowing the artists’ work and their exhibitions, and not being just sales people. And while he acknowledged that art fairs are necessary, he was clear that the gallery space is the core of the business. Finally, he underlined the importance

of “believing in your artists” and acknowledging that some may never be successful “in your lifetime”—which does not mean that they will not be acknowledged one day.

The second panel was titled “The Evolving Fair Situation.” It brought together Victoria Siddall, Jean Frémon of Galerie Lelong and Elba Benítez, a gallerist from Madrid. Despite being director of the Frieze fairs, Siddall was clear: art fairs do not replace galleries! “Nothing replicates seeing art in the gallery,” she said.

With the continuing growth of fairs, agreed the panellists, it was necessary for fairs to have a distinct identity, as galleries are more strategic when they choose which to attend. The move towards more curated—and more professional—participation was noted, as was the growing gap between the big galleries and the smaller players.

Another issue discussed was that of transparency in the results, with participants questioning how strong sales really were, despite enthusiastic reports. Siddall said she often does not know herself what the sales achieved at a fair are. However, the results of participating in a fair, she pointed out, are not just monetary, but a way of gaining greater visibility for the artists and for the galleries—“It’s not a failure if your booth is acclaimed, even if you sell nothing!” said Frémon.

“Legal Matters for European Galleries” was the next panel, held in association with the Federation of European Art Galleries Association (F.E.A.G.A.) and featuring the lawyer Antoon Ott. He evoked the issues raised by *droit de suite*, and made recommendations as to how it could be lightened. The complex definition of “art” remains an issue with Value Added Tax, the least uniform levy across Europe, but there are attempts to harmonise this a little more. While the industry continues to professionalise, Ott insisted that progress still needs to be made on the gallery/artist relationship where contracts should be fair to both sides. Finally, he emphasised the importance of associations when dialoguing with governments, the necessity to follow developments and to choose the best moment when attempting to make the industry’s voice heard.

The last panel on the first day, “Curated Gallery Programmes”, brought together Jocelyn Wolff, Anthony Reynolds and Carles Guerra of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies. Here there were two different positions: Wolff,

with a carefully chosen roster of artists who share his values and the existence of a consistent programme and Anthony, whose stable of artists was completely unplanned. Reynolds pointed out his priority, which is the need to distinguish between organising exhibitions and helping an artist’s career: “Never forget the client is the artist—not the collector,” he said.

The second day opened with “The Strengths and Benefits of the Mid-Sized Gallery” with Adam Sheffer, Lisa Schiff and Martin Aguilera. Defined as neither the “mom and pop” store nor the mega-player, the mid-sized space has the advantage of not having a shareholder to answer to, nor the need to function like a large corporation. The mid-sized gallery is more malleable (Aguilera)—and it can pay closer attention to personal contact, both with artists and collectors.

The issue of artists being poached was also discussed, with Sheffer explaining that there can be informal arrangements such as a transitional show in which the smaller gallery has a stake, or the larger gallery might buy inventory. Eventually, however, it is the artist who drives that decision—and this may not necessarily be to the benefit of the mid-sized gallery.

Following that, “New Models in Collaboration: the Gallery and Auction House Relationship” saw Susan Dunne, François Chantala, Martin Klosterfelde and Simon de Pury engage in a lively discussion. The crux of this question is how the auction houses are expanding into gallery territory, with the latest incursion being artists’ estates and foundation management. Can these two sides of the art market find a way of collaborating despite this rising competition? Dunne pointed out that the auction mission is to make a sale—whereas the gallery can take a much longer-term view. They are two different businesses and yet interdependent—for example, dealers use auction prices to justify their own levels. New markets are very aware of auction prices, and this can help artists by raising their profile. The panellists agreed that auction houses define prices, but not markets—the gallery is responsible for the artists’ markets and not just for what may be a one-off price.

In “Architecture for Art. Gallery Spaces” architect Simona Malvezzi showed slides of her work, mainly for museums, and discussed her work with curator Moritz Küng. The emphasis was on how user-friendly the architecture was, notably with the use of in-between functional spaces. The art also was dictating the architecture, with considerable sensitivity to the art.



Closing the symposium was “Social Media. Analysing your Investment” where Jesse Ringham outlined how to build an online strategy. He explained the rapid changes of social media, notably the ability it gives everyone to make and upload films. It’s important to find “stories” to tell the audience, and this can be simple—a short film about an artist or a show, for example, on something like Instagram Live or Facebook 360. But he warned that each platform must be approached differently. Each has a different audience, so the tone, the timing and how to structure content will vary; pre-planning is essential.

In summary, participants left the symposium with a better understanding of many aspects of gallery practice, from practical topics such as taxes and ways of working with auction houses to more intangible ones like curatorial practices. And the chance to network and interact with their colleagues and the speakers in a friendly and informal atmosphere was also an important part of the success of this fifth edition of Talking Galleries.

***Georgina Adam**, Art Market Editor-at-Large for *The Art Newspaper* since 2008 and art market correspondent for the *Financial Times*. Adam has been writing about the art market and the arts in general for 25 years, and also lectures on the market and related subjects at Sotheby’s and Christie’s educational institutes. Now based in London, she has lived in France and Japan; in June 2014 she released the book *Big Bucks: The Explosion of the Art Market in the 21st Century*, which explores the transformation of the modern and contemporary art market in the 21st century.



SESSIONS

Thaddaeus Ropac

In 1983, Thaddaeus Ropac founded his first gallery in Salzburg, where he showed artists such as Joseph Beuys and Andy Warhol as well as younger, then-emerging artists like Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring. Since then, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac has specialised in international contemporary art.

Today, it represents around 60 artists and several renowned estates. The gallery now holds three distinctive venues (two of which are located in the Paris region), operates with a team of 80 employees and organises approximately 30 extensive solo and group exhibitions per year. Since the spring of 2017, the gallery operates a new space located in London, Mayfair at the historical Ely House. The gallery runs its own publishing house and produces catalogues and books to accompany exhibitions, inviting prominent international art historians, curators and writers to contribute. Born in Austria, Thaddaeus Ropac lives between Paris, London, Salzburg and New York.

THE GLOBAL GALLERY

SPEAKER
Thaddaeus Ropac



THE GLOBAL GALLERY

Good morning. Thank you so much for inviting me to speak here in Barcelona to such an esteemed group of colleagues. Please forgive me if I cannot do much more than sell you some old hat opinions and experiences.

Some time ago, I was invited by a major American art academy to speak to its students. On the way there, I was thinking, "I want to speak about how content drives artists." Ten minutes into my speech, I realised I had lost the audience: half of them were on their iPhone; the other half were asleep. And I said, "Well, should I go through this painful experience another 50 minutes?" I decided to stop it. "I guess you expected something else from me," I told them. In a way, it was like a wake-up call. Some young artist said to me, "Actually, yes, we came here to listen and to learn how to become the next Jeff Koons." I said, "OK, you want to speak about the market, you want to speak about the career and about success. So let's do it." I had the attention of all these young artists and it was a lively discussion up to the end.

Seeing that attitude disappointed me a bit. I was thinking: has time changed things so much that the role of the gallery and the art dealer, the role of the adviser, is a totally different one? I was thinking of the good old days, when the relationship between an artist and a gallerist was based on content, on the art itself. But then, wait a minute. Maybe the times have not changed so much, in fact. Recently, I was reading an interesting book about the German Renaissance painter Lucas Cranach. We all know he painted Martin Luther. If somebody had asked me before I read this book how many portraits Cranach painted of Luther, I would have said—I don't know what you think—eight, maybe ten. I remember the one at the National Gallery, in Washington, and the one at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, in Vienna, and the one in Basel. Well, it turns out he painted 500 portraits of Luther. Why? Because he was an incredible genius as an artist, of course, but also as an art dealer.

He was one of the first dealer-artists. He went so far as to ask the Duke of Saxony for the monopoly on the portraits of Luther. And the Duke of Saxony agreed to it. He said, "You are the only one allowed to paint Luther." Albrecht Dürer, who was his contemporary and was dying to paint Luther, was not allowed to. Cranach never allowed Dürer to paint Luther. You might say, "OK, this was all about believing in the reformist movement," and history books have emphasized that idea, writing that Cranach was a great believer in the reformist movement, that he was so close to Luther that he was the only one to feel he wanted a monopoly on his image. But now we have learned more about it. We have found letters, and the book I read reveals this in an interesting manner. He even went out of his way to paint portraits of the enemies of Luther. He was doing the portraits of the Duke of Brandenburg and the Duke of Alba, who were staunchly Catholic. For him, it was a strong business decision. He said, "OK, I want to make a career out of this. I want to make sure that the next generation will still have the income of what I'm doing." So he passed the right to paint Luther's portrait on to his son, Cranach the Younger, and of course to all his workshops. That is how we ended up with the incredible number of 500 portraits, which are in a way dedicated to this great artist.

"WHEN WE TAKE A CAREFUL LOOK AT THE GOOD OLD DAYS, WE SEE THAT THE ROLE OF PROMOTING AN ARTIST, AND USING EVERY CLEVER IDEA ALLOWED TO DO SO, WAS NOT INVENTED IN THE LAST 30 YEARS."

Of course, when we go to museums we don't think about this strategy, we don't think about Cranach's marketing genius. We only think of him as a great artist. We are astounded and overwhelmed when we see these incredible portraits. I haven't really studied this thoroughly, but I guess we could find other examples of artists who became their own art dealer and had great success with it. Actually, talking of Dürer, he was by far not on the same level as Cranach (who clearly had a determination to become his best representative, the best dealer of his own work), but he also became quite clever in promoting his own work. He did a series of etchings, for example, and when some of them didn't sell too well, he made sure there was nothing else available. Then, when

there was nothing available, interest in those etchings grew, and the market started to react. We know very well how these things work. So when we take a careful look at the good old days, we see that the role of promoting an artist, and using every clever idea allowed to do so, was not invented in the last 30 years.

We are always talking about how many things have changed in the last 30 years, and many indeed have. I opened my gallery more than 33 years ago now, and I always say that I have seen the art world move from the ivory tower to the centre of life. Back in the day, there was only a small group of galleries in different cities across Europe: everybody knew each other, and I think Cologne was very important at that time. There were German collectors around the area of Nordrhein-Westphalia. There were the great dealers Paul Maenz and Michael Werner. There was Springer in Berlin, Neuendorf in Hamburg, and of course Friedrich in Munich, who then went to America, where he founded the Dia Art Foundation. So it all boiled down to a handful of gallerists. I should also mention Yvon Lambert and Daniel Templon, who were in Paris, and Anthony d'Offay, Waddington and Annely Juda, who were in London. You could almost name them all on a couple of hands.

The times felt pioneering, because many things were a new experience. Art fairs were beginning. Cologne was the first one, in 1967. In 1969, Joseph Beuys made an installation at the Cologne art fair. It was his famous piece *Das Rudel (The Pack)*, which nowadays we all know from the Kassel Museum. René Block, one of the legendary dealers of the time, sold it for 110,000 Deutschmarks, which is barely €60,000. At the time, it was the highest price ever paid for a piece of contemporary art in Europe. It didn't even make the headlines, though, because art was not there to make headlines. It was noticed, of course. It was a big excitement, I can imagine, but I was not there. This was the atmosphere. This was where I think the German art market started and where Europe was standing.

America was always a bit more advanced. There was, of course, Leo Castelli. I had the great fortune to meet him very early on because he loved opera and music, so he used to come to Salzburg every year at the end of August for a few days, before he went on to Venice with Ileana Sonnabend, his ex-wife and a great gallerist. He came to my small gallery, which I had just opened there. For me, it was like meeting the pope. He spoke about America, about New York and how it was, of

course, ahead of its time. It defined the new century in art marketing. He also talked a few times about having a gallery in Europe. He always spoke about Ileana having this gallery in Paris where she could show Warhol, Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns and Lichtenstein in Europe. He wanted to have his gallery in Germany, because he had started to sell to Peter Ludwig, to Ströher, and others. He had incredible collectors who flew to New York and wanted to buy the whole generation of American artists. Then he thought about doing it differently, and he decided to work very closely with a group of European gallerists. There was Bruno Bischofberger in Zurich, Templon in Paris, and Amelio in Naples. He made sure that his colleagues were happy, that they could get access to some of the great American artists, that they could have exhibitions, that they could have direct access to the studio and develop a relationship with the artists. That way, they could make their own decisions about what the best thing for Naples versus Paris would be. He built a group of colleagues and galleries, which he gave invaluable access to some of the most important artists of the time. America somehow took over. It took the lead after Rauschenberg won the great prize in Venice in 1964.

It was an incredible blessing for me to meet Castelli, because I had just started my first small gallery in Salzburg in 1983. Before that, I wanted to become an artist. I was determined to meet Beuys, so I went to Germany. There, I soon realised that I lacked the talent to make it as an artist, but I insisted on becoming an intern at Beuys' studio, which I managed. I lived in Dusseldorf until he took me to Berlin in 1982. There was this legendary exhibition, *Zeitgeist*, which changed many things in Europe. It was the first time that, between Andy Warhol's work and Joseph Beuys' towering installation at the centre of the Gropius-Bau, a new generation of artists arrived. American painters like Eric Fischl and Francesco Clemente from Italy, but also Georg Baselitz and many others. It was Norman Rosenthal who organised such time-changing exhibition. I was just a little intern there. I would say that I was schlepping the beer. And then Kassel followed, so Beuys took me with him there, where I was able to help with his installations. After that, I decided to go back to Austria to open my own space. I remember very well when I said goodbye to Joseph Beuys. He took me into his room and said, "Well, you worked very hard for me for the last ten months, and I was not able to really pay you. Can I do something for you?" And I said, "Actually, Joseph, yes, there are two things you have to do for me,

please. I'm going back to Austria to open my own gallery, and I would like to open with an exhibition of your work." He said, "Well, OK, that's very ambitious. We'll see about it. What else?" And then I said, "I want to go to America and meet Andy Warhol." He then took a little napkin and wrote, "Dear Andy, please meet this talented young man." That was my ticket to America.

**“THE 80S DID CHANGE SOMETHING.
THEY DID NOT SO MUCH AS REINVENT
THE MODEL, BUT THEY MADE IT COME
OUT INTO THE PUBLIC EYE.”**

I was able to open a gallery without any knowledge, without any experience (I had never worked in a gallery before), only with a lot of enthusiasm and naiveté. I was lucky to go to America, meet Warhol and, through him, meet Basquiat. Thanks to that, I had these very early exhibitions of Basquiat and Haring in Salzburg, in 1983 and 1984. I also met Castelli, who became an incredible mentor. I was one of the gallerists he fed with material from New York. I was able to show Rauschenberg in 1985 in a tiny little gallery in Austria. The space was over a US army shop where they sold American jeans and jackets. We had a room that was hardly a third of the size of this one here, and with a low ceiling. I remember Basquiat once sent me a painting that fit exactly the wall—we measured it and everything was fine—, except I did not realise that he was painting on wood, not on canvas. So we were stuck in the staircase. I almost cried, because I couldn't show such a masterpiece. I went to a local museum in Salzburg and I said, "I work with this incredible artist here and I cannot show this painting, but I have some drawings. Would you please show the painting?" They looked at it and they said, "Well, I think it is not for us." All these experiences, and our totally unprofessional attempt to the business, were part of the times, I think. It was all forgiven.

There was a relationship between the gallery and the artist, but there was hardly a market, so artists forgave you if you were not able to sell. Beuys would not even expect me to sell one of his drawings. He gave me a beautiful drawings exhibition and, when the show was over, I put everything back in his portfolio, took the night train to Dusseldorf and brought it all back to him, sadly. But somehow the 80s had already started to change the market. America, of course, was leading, as was

often the case in this period. Somehow, the art world came out of its ivory tower. It started to have an audience, because up until then gallery openings were family affairs, at least in Europe (maybe not in America, I cannot say for certain). Even in France, I remember we would go to Paris with one of the artists—with Basquiat, for instance, when he was showing at Yvon Lambert—and it was the family who met. There were 25 people at the opening and afterwards we had some bad French food (and let me add I have nothing against French cuisine, it was just modest food). But the 80s did change something. They did not so much as reinvent the model, but they made it come out into the public eye. The media started to be interested in artists, maybe not only in terms of content, but definitely in terms of the market and what artists could do for society. I think it was rather fascinating to go through these different periods of time and see how artists became a really important part of society.

**“REGARDLESS OF ALL THE PLANNING
WE DO THE REALITY IS DIFFERENT.
AND THAT’S FOR A REASON WE ALL
KNOW VERY WELL: WE CANNOT
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In Europe, England was definitely the frontrunner. It invented the Turner Prize, which became a media event and turned artists into media stars. This was something we hadn’t had before. Artists started to give interviews, and they were not only on the culture pages of English newspapers, but also on the *Talk of the Town*. Soon, the media started to write about what artists were doing and thinking. They asked them about their political views, really inviting them to be a force. And galleries were always there to help them achieve their goals.

I think we are here to help artists create their universe, to nurture them and also to protect them. We always get harshly criticised in the industry; not by art critics, but by people who criticise the system and what galleries stand for. It is always said that galleries have an incredible influence, that they are able to create artists. We all know that this is not the truth. We might be able to make other people believe what is great, and we might be able to make other people buy what we think is a great piece of art. But I always say that, regardless of all the planning we do (we can think of incredible ideas, we can think

of a marketing plan, we can put everything on paper, sit with the artists and try to calculate every move so that they step up the career ladder), the reality is different. And that’s for a reason we all know very well: we cannot produce the masterpiece. The masterpiece is still produced by the artist on his own, in his studio, very much alone. It’s the artist who has to come up with thought-provoking ideas; it’s the artist who has to come up with a constant surprise to us. We are the first part of the audience, and artists have to constantly reinvent themselves.

**“NO MATTER WHAT WE CAN
THINK OF TO TURN AN ARTIST
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IT’S THE ARTIST WHO, ALONE IN
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So no matter what we can think of to turn an artist into a star, to have success and to sell for very high prices, at the end of the day it’s the artist who, alone in the studio, can be the game-changer. He or she has to create the masterpiece. But we can do a lot. Marketing ideas have not changed much either. Many things did change, and some because of the media’s influence, but nothing—at least in my view, you might have a totally different opinion—can alter the basic facts: art is created by talented people in their studio on their own. We’re here to help them create their universe, and we have to be careful not to limit their vision, but you cannot do the work for them. It’s an incredible privilege to be close to artists and to help them go their way. We can make mistakes just like we can do the right things. There is no golden way, I think. Everybody has to find their own way.

When I was happy to have the trust of so many great artists, back in the 80s, I realised Salzburg was not the centre of the world and I wanted to move a little bit closer to where I could grow my audience. Not necessarily to sell more art, but at least to have an audience, because in my first galleries I simply didn’t have enough visitors on a daily basis. I was rather successful in creating a new group of collectors, though. Sometimes I say that, if I had been a bit more modest, I would have

just drawn a circle of one mile around my gallery, in Salzburg, and I could have run it within that area, because there are enough collectors there. But I really wanted a bigger audience. I felt one day I was going to see Georg Baselitz. I had my first exhibition with Baselitz in 1984. In 1987, I went to his studio and he showed me some of the works he had prepared for our exhibition. I saw some other works and said, “But Georg, why can’t I have those works? These are the ones I want.” And he replied, “Oh no, no. They’re going to London.” At that moment I understood the message. I thought to myself, “Alright, so there are centres in the world that have a certain privilege in getting the best works.” This made me decide to move.

I was considering what city I should move to. Everybody, especially artists, always said to me, “Salzburg is a suburb. Vienna is great. Go to Vienna or to Berlin.” But I wanted to go to Paris, which was the city of Kahnweiler, Picasso, Max Ernst, Ileana Sonnabend, Rauschenberg and so on. That’s the reason I ended up in Paris. Of course, it was a big step, because I didn’t speak a word of French—in fact, I hardly speak it now. It was an incredible experience. I opened my first gallery, which is still there in the Marais. However, after a couple of years of very successful exhibitions, I felt I was starting to limit the vision of my artists again. Antony Gormley prepared an exhibition for my space in Paris and one sculpture was 4 tonnes. When it arrived, our static engineers said, “We tried to get it into the space, but it was not possible. We tried to put some columns underneath.” In the end, we had to decide (though it was a very difficult decision to make) not to show the sculpture. Of course, the artist was disappointed.

Another time, Anselm Kiefer prepared a painting for me which was 4 x 5 metres. I came to the studio and I said, “Wow, Anselm, this is an amazing painting.” But I knew it would not go through the entrance, so I told him it was too large. He said, “Excuse me, but I have the plan of the gallery. This fits onto the front wall.” And it did, the problem was that it would be impossible to have it go through the entrance. So he cut the painting in two. It was the only way to get it in. And he has done it several times. We later sold it to a German museum and I was invited to be there when they put it on display. An art historian gave a speech in which he tried to explain the big cut in the middle. I was standing there thinking, “Should I say something?” I didn’t. I let the Germans believe the cut was a very important content-driven decision by the artist.

At the end of the day, these experiences made me grow. I decided that, if I had this sort of problems with one more artist, I would find a bigger space. I started to look for it in Paris. First, I thought a really big, 2,000 square metres space would be great. I invited some artists and asked them what kind of space they would like. Of course, you can’t rely on Anselm Kiefer’s opinion for this, because everything I showed him was not big enough for him. In the end, I found an incredible space in the northeast of Paris, in Pantin. In a way, I thought I was just meeting the needs of my artists. The whole idea was described as megalomaniac and excessive, and maybe it is.

**“IT IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT THAT
THE PEOPLE WORKING WITH THE
ARTIST ARE ALSO THE ONES SELLING
THE ARTWORK.”**

I always say there is no need to have large galleries. It’s just a matter of opportunity. I don’t think you need multiple spaces to be a great gallery. I did it over many years. It was almost a natural process. I don’t think it was a “larger than life” kind of move. It just happened, I don’t know how. At any rate, I’m happy to run these spaces. People were very concerned when we opened in Pantin, which is on the Périphérique (not a place where Parisians like to go). When I sent the address to my French collectors, they said, “Excuse me, where is this?” But it became a success. I was hoping to find an audience, maybe not like the one in the Marais, but still. We have just finished another year, and we had more than 20,000 visitors in this space alone. And it’s a trip to go there. There’s nothing else you can do in that area. You just go, see an exhibition and go back to the city. The fact that it worked made me realise that we do have an audience. People really go the extra mile to see a great exhibition.

The reason I’m going to London is that we found a beautiful space on Dover Street. It’s 1,600 square metres over several floors, right in the heart of Mayfair. Again, it’s absolutely not necessary. Sometimes I wake up and I say, “Why did I do it? Why do I need it?” The answer is we don’t need it, but as long as it’s fun and challenging, as long as we can have artists excited about something (a new space, or a new city) I think we can do it. That being said, I think size doesn’t define a great gallery, and I really want to emphasise this here, because the press likes to create

the idea of big galleries with multiple spaces. If somebody had told me ten years ago that I would now be opening a 11,000 square metres space, I would have said, “Wow! That’s absolutely mad and crazy.” And maybe it is, but for us it has become possible (not necessary). That’s really my message: you just do whatever you feel you do best for your artists. I don’t know how galleries ended up in the situation they are in today. In my team, we have 100 people and, again, I don’t think it’s necessary. It’s necessary for the structure I built, but not to run an incredible space. If you were doing 30 exhibitions per year, you would of course need a certain number of people working on them. We need one-third of the people working on content, which means they are doing research and preparing the catalogues (we produce 20 to 25 books and catalogues every year). They work with the artists, so they are artists’ minders. They’re also working with the collectors. I believe very much in pairing those two. Some of my colleagues put sales and artist-minding in different departments. I feel it is incredibly important that the people working with the artist are also the ones selling the artwork. They know the most about the artist; they know the most about the upcoming exhibition.

“I REALLY THINK WE SHOULD NOT DO OUR ENTIRE BUSINESS AT ART FAIRS. I THINK WE SHOULD BELIEVE IN THE GALLERY AND MAKE THE UTMOST EFFORT TO CREATE THE PERFECT SPACE.”

When you go into meetings and the person in charge of the exhibition shares the experience of preparing it (all the problems, the discussions they had with the artist, etc.), that’s when you can learn the most. If these were different people, I think the model would be different. I don’t mean to criticise people who decide to do otherwise, but to me it’s important to be as close to the artists’ studio as possible, and to have the people who really work with them be the ones defending the exhibition. They are the ones involved in placing the works and carefully—together with all the colleagues—decide where each one should go. So I think a gallery is a joint effort, whether it’s small, medium-sized or very large. At the end of the day, it’s all about the artists. My big fear is always to lose the artists’ trust. I always try to spend as much time as possible with them, which is not easy. Sometimes I come to work in the morning, I see the schedule of the day and there is just one

meeting after another. And then I say, “Well, which of today’s meetings are closer to the work?” Because I always make it a rule for myself not to let a day go by without talking, working and being creative about art. I think that is what running a gallery really needs, and we all know this very well. Things, after all, have not changed so much in that sense.

Today we have social media. We have Instagram, and we are all very proud of our accounts. It amuses me when I open mine in the morning, because I see a picture and I learn from my own account (somebody manages it for me, obviously) how things are going. I checked it this morning and I said, “Ah, OK, this is the next opening. Oh, this I don’t like.” Then I call and try to have things changed. But that doesn’t really change our business, as far as I see it. We can discuss it, maybe you have a different opinion.

At the end of the day, the Internet doesn’t sell art. I would just like to put this idea out there so that we can eventually discuss it. I still very much believe in the gallery spaces. And, please forgive me Victoria, I really think we should not do our entire business at art fairs. I think we should believe in the gallery and make the utmost effort to create the perfect space. We think about the floor, the wall space, the height, the light. Everything has to be perfect. And we do it with the artists, carefully thinking about every exhibition. It’s all planned, the artists have the model in their studio, and then they deliver works of art for this particular space. I think we have to invite the core of our collectors and our audience into the gallery.

“ART FAIRS ARE WONDERFUL, I PARTICIPATE IN MANY OF THEM AND DO GOOD BUSINESS THERE. BUT I ALWAYS SAY 75% OF OUR ACTIVITY AND BUSINESS HAS TO BE IN THE GALLERY.”

Art fairs are wonderful, I participate in many of them and do good business there. But I always say 75% of our activity and business has to be in the gallery. We cannot have art fairs take over. Art fairs are here to connect. It’s incredibly efficient to go to London, or New York, or Miami, or Hong Kong, and to connect to the local art community. It would be impossible to work as efficiently as we do if we did not have art fairs. So they are incredibly important, but we should not forget

that the original idea is the gallery, and it is the gallery space that defines our work. This is what the artist is closest to.

Of course, many artists produce art for art fairs, but I think the main thought of an artist is still the gallery space. That's something we should nurture, really putting it in the centre of our activity. We should make sure that our audience doesn't get lazy and just asks about the next art fair we're participating in because they want to meet there and to look at the art there. Sometimes I refuse to send a work to an art fair and I insist that the collector come to Paris, to London or to Salzburg to see the art, because nothing can take away the atmosphere of a gallery space.

**“HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE THAT WE
DON'T LOSE OUR AUDIENCE TO A KIND
OF WORLD CIRCUS OF ART FAIRS
AND EVENTS? HOW CAN WE BRING
COLLECTORS BACK TO OUR SPACE?”**

In my opinion, this should be more present in our thinking and our discussions. How can we make sure that we don't lose our audience to a kind of world circus of art fairs and events? How can we bring collectors back to our space? It must be difficult if you're not in one of the centres of the world, but my Salzburg experience is not so bad. It's a very small town and you have to really make sure that people are able to go there. Try to create an event that makes people feel like they can't miss out on it, because you're offering an experience with the artist in person, in a space that is totally defined for it. If it's a unique experience, you can make people move. We have also learned that this is part of the incredible 21st century. People travel faster and they are more willing to do so than ever before. So I think, as much as we should use the art fairs and any other great art event around the world, we should make sure that we keep the soul, the core of our business, in our gallery spaces. I think time should not take this incredibly precious good from us.

Thank you very much.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUESTIONS (C/Q) FROM THE AUDIENCE

Georgina Adam (G.A.) Thank you so much for the extremely interesting description of how you went from being a small intern at Beuys' studio to becoming the mega gallerist you are today. We're now going to have some questions from the audience, but I would like to start with one of my own, which is a little bit oriented because I come from the United Kingdom. Just before you decided to move to London, the vote came for Brexit. I just wondered, what was your reaction to that?

Thaddaeus Ropac (T.R.) Of course, I was shocked and sad about the British deciding to leave Europe. I'm staunchly European, not because I was born in Austria but because I believe in the European idea. The good thing is that, in the art world, we live in our own continent, anyway. I think the art world has left aside the notion of borders, and I'm excited to go to London. I did not doubt for a second. I also think that, businesswise, there will not be much change, because London is the quintessential art town in Europe. In any case, I'm very sad that we are going into a situation where London is not attracted to the idea of a united Europe.

G.A. Thank you very much, Thaddaeus. We now welcome questions from the audience.

Q. Hearing your whole story was amazing. I've been in the art world for a long time. I work as an art adviser and I actually did not know your background, so I loved hearing about it. I also agree with you about art fairs. I love them for a certain purpose, but not for clients that are building collections. My question is: when you have a hundred people working for you and you run all these spaces around the world, surely your insurance, shipping and all of these things start to become a massive overhead. How do you balance maintaining connoisseurship? How do you look for artists purely out of love, let's say, just like you did when Beuys gave you a show of drawings that didn't sell? Does that approach shift now, when you feel obligated to work with artists who are going to sell a lot? Do you feel like your overhead dictates any part of your business?

T.R. Well, it's a good question. Of course, I always fear that size changes the way you give yourself enough time to look at art. Today we have people in our team who do that work. Naturally, we discuss everything

together. We have scouts that travel around. I always say that it's very important for a gallery never to lose contact with the next generation of artists, and I always make it a rule for us to introduce a new artist—new means really new—to our programme, to our collectors, at least every two years. When you have a gallery for more than 30 years, you develop a big group of artists that you work with, so you cannot constantly introduce new ones, because then by now you would have 150 artists to represent. With the over 60 artists we are working with, we already have a lot to do.

But, for instance, we will now open in London with four exhibitions, because the building is rather large, and one of them is by a young British artist. His name is Oliver Beer, and he has made an incredible career in a very short time. He just had a show for young artists at the Centre Pompidou, in Paris. We followed him from the very beginning. Somebody pointed him out to me at the Biennale de Lyon in France, about four years ago. I went there, I saw his work, I met him and we started to work together. We already had a show in Paris, and he will now be one of the really important shows for our first London opening. So, of course, we try to be as close to art production as possible to see what artists are doing today. Sadly, I cannot spend that much time going to studios. I do it as much as I can, but I think I have great people in my team who are out there to bring back their ideas and their contact with artists. That way, we make sure we don't lose touch with what's really new. But it's a big fear, as I think you know. I always fear that this is my mid-life crisis, that I lose my feeling for the next generations and I never get it back.

Q. Thank you, Thaddaeus. My question is a bit of a follow-on to the previous one. I agree with you when you say that, at the end of the day, what we need is for the artists to be at work, on their own, in the studio. Isn't it possibly one of the problems that there's never going to be enough masterpieces, or masterful artists, to meet the demand that has grown around the world? Do you think the situation forces us to change the notion of masterpiece? Where do you think we're going in order to fill the walls with enough masterpieces?

T.R. That's a tricky question. I agree with your first point. I think the interest in art has become tremendous, which explains the very high prices. There are so many collectors joining the market that artists don't grow in the same capacity as their collectors and demand nowadays. One of the reactions—and we can discuss if it's a good one—is that

artists are now paid incredible amounts for outstanding works. We are working with a young Rumanian artist, Adrian Ghenie, with whom the situation is incredibly unhealthy and complicated. I always say he's an artist producing for the next 40 years hopefully—he's in his 30s now. People at auctions are willing to pay \$10 million for a painting by him. So how do we handle this as a gallery? How do we make sure that we're selling to the right places? Of course, we believe museums are always the one place where this type of art has the best chance to stay and to grow. But the extraordinary increase in prices is one of the reactions. The market is enormous, and masterpieces don't just grow on trees. It's true that there are many more artists today than in previous times, but they are still not that many, or at least not enough to fill the demand. In all honesty, I don't have an answer on how to handle this in the future. If high prices are the only answer we can offer, then it's a very simple one, and maybe we will have to think about more complex solutions.

Q. I would like to pick up on what you were talking about in terms of the art fairs not being the only place to do business and to show the art, and how we need to take people back to the gallery. What are some successful models that you're seeing with, say, emerging gallerists, who might even be ten years into their careers but simply cannot afford the spaces in the big city centres? They have the concepts, 30 years ago they could have absolutely put on a programme. What do they do today? What have you seen to work successfully? Thank you.

T.R. Also a difficult question, because it's easy to say that, if you're in Paris or London and you have interesting artists, people will find you. I think art fairs alone are not the answer. It's not about going to every art fair possible to find your way. I was in a committee in Austria, in Vienna, regarding Eastern European galleries trying to come into the market. Vienna is a gate to Europe and established an art fair specialising, which I also think was a very good idea because when Vienna was trying to create an art fair, they also came to us and said "We need you," I said to them "You don't need me on this, because you don't need another art fair where you have the same galleries with the same artists like you find in every other place. But if you try to create a place where you concentrate on a very specific region and give these galleries a gateway to a bigger audience." But it's not the answer to your question

Art fairs are definitely important, and not only the very large ones, where everybody wants to participate. I really believe in the smaller ones, and Vienna is an excellent example, because it's a big success.

Take Adrian Ghenie, the artist I just spoke about. He was first noticed in the West during the Vienna art fair. The gallery from Rumania showed his work there and had him discovered. So regional exhibitions and art fairs do have a very important role. For a new gallery, I guess they are still one of the key platforms. But I guess it must be difficult, because back in the 1980s, when I started, it already was. Today we have so many more small places. Back then, the art market was defined in a few cities, and when you came from an obscure place, like I did, it was almost interesting. “Oh my God, he’s from Salzburg. Where is that?”

“I SEE HOW SOME IRRESPONSIBLE COLLECTORS BUY A PIECE OF ART AND THEN PUT IT INTO AUCTION WITHIN ONE OR TWO YEARS... THIS PERSON CANNOT PURCHASE ANOTHER PIECE OF ART FROM US.”

Today, this doesn’t happen anymore, because there are so many of these small places. Everything is on the map, which is good, because in the 80s we only defined the art market in America and Europe. Europe meant ten cities and America meant New York, essentially; everything else was ignored. There was hardly anything in Latin America. Asia, of course, didn’t exist. Today we added every corner of the planet to our awareness. So, in a way, it’s an incredible time to be looking for artists. I remember when we were in Paris and we started to look at artists in Iran. I sent somebody from our team and I said, “Go to Teheran and you will find your way, because I feel something might come out of it.” We met some very interesting artists and, since then, we are working with two artists from Teheran in our programme. We added every possible corner, even places that are very difficult to access for political reasons. It was not easy to get art out of Iran, for example. Some of the artists had terrible problems trying to go back, because they got noticed in Paris more than they wished in their own country. You always have to be careful about places where artists have political limitations and it is not easy for them to get away with their views. We invited them to Paris thinking we did the best for them, but then afterwards we realised how much trouble they had in their own country. Each situation is different. I am sure it’s very difficult for a new gallery to get artists to the big stage, to the awareness, and it takes many steps. I think we’re also spoilt today, expecting everything to be very fast. Back then—and I

don’t want to constantly talk about the past—we allowed ourselves a bit more time, we understood it was a long process for the artists, for the gallery and for the development of a career. It didn’t need to be immediate. Today, a young artist comes out of college and begins his career in the art world. If they’re not successful within three years, you think they’re a failure. We have to change those expectations. That kind of pressure is unrealistic and unhealthy.

Q. I come from Teheran, Iran. I know the two Iranian artists with whom you work and I appreciate what you do, really. I’m very glad that I’m here listening to your speech. I was wondering, since you explained a bit your experience in Salzburg, what are your strategies to find new collectors and to build new audiences?

“THE KEY TO FINDING NEW COLLECTORS IS TO BUILD A NETWORK OF CONNOISSEURS, NOT INVESTORS.”

T.R. That’s a very important question. The key to finding new collectors is to build a network of connoisseurs, not investors. I think the situation with investors is really new. Or maybe we could find another Renaissance painter who had investors trying to resell the work. But I think, all in all, it’s a phenomenon of the last 15 years, when art really became a commodity and it was bought simply to be resold for a profit within a limited period of time. 30 years ago this was not an issue, because making an immediate profit through art was not possible. You invested in an incredible piece of culture and, if you had an eye for it, then over a long period of time the artist would become appreciated and important. Collectors really allowed themselves that time. The gallerists opened a world to them and invited them into this world: they bought something believing in what the gallery tried to tell them. Today, we have to make a distinction. There are people that come to you at the gallery, or at an art fair, and they might be very enthusiastic, but you almost smell the investor in them—and we have a good gut feeling for this. Of course, they might become more sophisticated, in which case it would be more difficult to identify them. But if you spend time with people who are interested in acquiring art, you can learn to detect their motivation.

Our aim—and I think today we have gathered here an incredible group of colleagues—should be to nurture the connoisseur, nurture the

people who are really interested in the content of the work, in starting a relationship with the gallery and the artists, people with a long-term interest. We have to place the works. I always use this word, I don't say "selling." I always say within my team, "We are placing art; the artists trust us with their most valuable good. We're not just here to sell a piece of art; we are here to place it; we need to find a place for this piece of art." I think this is one of the great challenges of the future: to build connoisseurship and collectors who believe in the cultural content. Of course, we cannot be naive: we cannot expect people to spend a lot of money (I don't know, €500,000) and just believe in the cultural value of the piece. In a way, we are responsible for the monetary value of it, so we cannot have people believe they spent large amounts of money and then, if it's gone, well, they believed in a great cultural idea. I think we have a responsibility with the money spent, but not with the investment and not with the *survalue*. We are not responsible of whether they can make a profit. When collectors call after two years to say that they bought a painting whose value has not increased, I always reply, "Did I guarantee that to you?" We are not here to guarantee a profit.

**"THIS IS ONE OF THE GREAT
CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE: TO BUILD
CONNOISSEURSHIP AND COLLECTORS WHO
BELIEVE IN THE CULTURAL CONTENT."**

Q. May I ask you a little bit more? Practically, how do you build this?

T.R. Well, I have to say I am not a missionary. I have not tried to turn an investor into a collector, because I'm not sure it's worth it. Instead, we try to build collectors out of the front grounds and to be very careful that we sell to the right places. Within our team, we talk about this a lot. We try to find ways to increase the interest of being a collector and not becoming an investor. People always talk about black lists, and I have to say they do exist. They have to exist, I'm sorry. I say this very openly. When I see how some irresponsible collectors buy a piece of art and then put it into auction within one or two years... I'm sorry, but this person cannot purchase another piece of art from us. I say this very openly. I know I'm not allowed... Of course, art fairs make things move so fast that you have less time to screen buyers. You stand at the opening in Basel and you are bombarded by a group of people who just run to your space and want to buy. We have to keep ourselves from

doing business at this speed. People say it's very bad manners that we send out our artworks to certain collectors before we open an art fair, but we do it. We make sure that the works we show already have a certain filter, and we know more or less to whom we want to sell. We don't just stand at an art fair and wait for the first person who walks up to us to buy a piece of art. Within my team, I don't allow this.

Q. I find that very interesting, because I was mentored many years ago by Mary Boone, who very much followed the Castelli model. I remember when you opened your gallery you did this extraordinary exhibition called *The Silent Baroque*. It had a very sumptuous catalogue, and it was really a museum-quality exhibition. One thing that struck me about it is how well you in particular collaborated with so many different galleries around the world, coordinating everything with the artists and with other dealers, to put the show together. Everyone was very welcome to be a part of the success of the exhibition. My question is: in a time of mega galleries, when people are trying to assume total control of an artist's career, do you think it's possible to have the same kind of collaborative exhibition, and to do it as successfully as you did back then?

T.R. I think it is possible, but it is probably easier among the younger generations of colleagues. I don't know if we would be able to do something like this now. I don't know if it's our aim either, I have to admit. But it should be possible when younger galleries get together and make a joint effort. Things have not changed so much. You can see that when younger galleries create new art fairs, like in New York, and they're really gallery-driven, so they work by invitation, which I like. I like the idea that colleagues get together and say, "You know what? We don't really like this model, let's do our own. And let's only invite people we like, people who are part of a certain vision." It exists today as much as it did back then. But of course, if you grow during many years, you stay with your artists and you have a strong competition, I think it becomes a little bit less appealing. Or maybe it's appealing, but I don't even think about it that much. I think you just do your programme, you represent your artists, you work for the estates and it's a different work, that's true. But I like the idea. It's a great model for younger galleries.

Q. I just wanted to ask you for some advice. Working as an adviser, I have had my company now for 15 years. I started with a group of collectors who started from scratch, and we built amazing collections.

Over this period of time, the art world has grown immensely. Collectors have filled their walls, their storage is full, and they want to keep acquiring new pieces. Now we're at this point where we need to sell some things in order to keep moving. Part of the problem is also the supply in terms of placement and reselling. Back then, you would buy one or two things every few years and you had them for your entire life, but now if you become a collector and you want to keep engaged in it, how do you keep buying without selling?

“WE CANNOT MAKE OUR COLLECTORS FEEL THAT WHATEVER THEY BUY, THEY CAN NEVER SELL IT, BECAUSE THAT IS DETRIMENTAL TO EVERYBODY.”

T.R. I would not say that I am totally against selling. It's exactly like you described it: we sit down with collectors that we have worked with for many years, and they have grown away from certain artists, they have changed the direction of their collection, so sometimes it's necessary to sell works. I'm not at all against that. I think otherwise we do not have a chance to correct, we don't have a chance to change. But those are different motivations, they only speak about the motivation of a sale. If you're talking about collectors really nurtured by you and by the art world, collectors who really have their own vision and have followed artists over many years (maybe because they are even on the boards of museums), then those are our ideal collectors, those are the ones who ought to have the right to sell some works.

What we want to avoid is the mere investor, somebody who just jumps onto the art world to make a profit within a short period of time. It's a big difference. But I'm not against selling. I have my own collection and I'm very ambitious with it. I sometimes need to sell a piece to replace it by more important work I can find. That's actually a very important aspect of a collection: it has to be lively. You cannot be stuck. We cannot make our collectors feel that whatever they buy, they can never sell it, because that is detrimental to everybody. Selling can be an important part of making a collection, and we have to be there to help collectors go through that process.

Q. Hello, Thaddaeus. First of all, thanks a lot for this motivational and inspiring keynote. I live in Barcelona and, about two and a half years ago, I started an artists' residency and a gallery space together with my

brother and a partner. Our business model is based on two things: first we grow a collection on the artists that we have, and then we function as a normal gallery space. I think that, since the beginning, we have more or less managed to establish quite a high standard for the artists-in-residence programme. We work together with the Artist Pension Trust. We also try to get local talent but, at the end of the day, we struggle because we don't have enough collectors. Maybe it's a typical problem for Barcelona. Maybe the problem, as you say, is that we need to have more patience. So I would also like to ask for advice. Do we need to move somewhere else? Do we maybe need to get a different type of artist, mid-career artists or more established artists? Or do we maybe need to have an internship with Baselitz and get the same sort of luck you got with Beuys? Our intention is to continue. How can we get motivated to carry on?

T.R. Well, you have to believe in your artists, so I think changing them is definitely no solution. I don't know your programme, but it sounds very exciting. If you believe in your artists and you think they are part of your vision, then maybe you just need some more patience. I do not know much about Barcelona. I had the most incredible day yesterday, but I hadn't been here since the museum opened, I must admit. When I heard that was in 1995, I couldn't believe I had ignored such a great city for so long. But Barcelona seems to be a very driving place; it seems to have an infrastructure, galleries, great museums and art spaces. So maybe patience is part of the solution; in general, I think young gallerists lack patience. Don't forget that you have to hang in there. Of course, if you are able to widen the horizon and to add some artists, that might improve things. I don't know how many artists you represent and how many of them are local. If you work with international artists, invite them to come and open up a dialogue, spread the news that you have an artist who lives in Paris, or an artist from Germany. This alone might start a dialogue with a different group of collectors. Sometimes, when you bring in another artist, just because they are from another city or another country, they bring their own group of collectors, followers, critics, curators and people from abroad, who then start to notice your work. It's not only about selling; selling is a consequence of other great decisions.

You have to get noticed, not only by the local or national community, but also by the international scene, and the art world is the best place to make those connections because, as I said, we live on our own

continent, and Germany is as close to Barcelona as it is to Paris. This was something I profited from a lot when I started. The 80s, as glorious as they sound today, were difficult. During the first ten years of my career, I was always thinking that if only I could make it for another two months, then things might work out. I always needed these two more months. I was planning and thinking to survive another two months, even when I opened Paris. I was hardly 30 and I had this beautiful space in the Marais. Suddenly, the art market went into a big depression in 91. I had just over-extended myself, and I said, "Oh, my God, this two-month thing will never stop!"

Q. Thank you for your speech. I'm an independent curator from Serbia. I would like to link two things that you spoke about: one of them is the East European galleries in Vienna, which is a gateway for this region; and the other one has to do with building connoisseurs instead of investors. I would just like to ask you, what would be a model for building connoisseurs about this region? I find it very challenging. Among other reasons, because not a lot of people know the history of East European art. We've seen some big exhibitions, such as *Promises of the Past* at the Centre Pompidou, where East European art shows tend to focus on the 70s and 80s, with Marina Abramović and the avant-garde, but they usually don't include a lot of the current situation. I was in Art Basel Miami Beach, where there was a project by a Serbian artist living in Chicago that involved the candies that we had coming from Croatia during Yugoslavia, which were basically the only type of candy you could buy at the time. Of course, during communism you don't have a wide array of products like you do during capitalism, and it's enough to watch the film *Good Bye, Lenin!* to know this. But the gallery that was explaining the project to me was shocked when I told them this. So, if at an art fair like Art Basel Miami Beach there is a gallerist telling me about the work of a Serbian artist living in Chicago and he doesn't know such a key and basic fact, I don't know how we're building this connoisseurship through the galleries... Thank you.

T.R. This is of course a very challenging question. There are many regions that we feel disconnected from, although I think we have gone a long way in the last couple of years. But it is a very ambitious master plan to embrace the entire world and to see how this one continent, the art world, really grows together. I think the Eastern Europe region is a very good example, because when the Iron Curtain fell, it was really a world on its own, it was totally disconnected. I'm not very often in

Vienna, it's not a city I'm very connected with, but I feel Vienna did a very good job not only at opening the art fair to Eastern galleries, but also at doing a lot of get-togethers, colloquies and meetings like this one here open to Rumania, Bulgaria and Serbia.

By pure chance, I was invited to some panels at the art fair there and I spoke to many colleagues from these countries. When I started to go to Cluj, in Rumania, which was an enclave of interesting artists, they didn't know how to run a gallery or to promote the artists, they were totally disconnected. Of course, Cluj is maybe the biggest success we have had, because some of the artists became very well-known. It's also a wonderful model. Somehow, despite being a very far-away place in Rumania, it had an incredibly determined group of artists, curators and one or two galleries that wanted to make their work known. And they tell these amazing stories about how they rented a small truck to show their work for the first time in Vienna. It was a joint effort between the curators, the artists and the gallerists. They all went to Vienna in the same truck, which even broke down and had to get fixed. They just wanted to put themselves on the map, and they succeeded.

“AT THE MOMENT, THE ART WORLD IS WELCOMING EVERY POSSIBLE CORNER OF THE PLANET. THERE'S EVEN A SORT OF CURIOSITY: THE MORE OBSCURE A PLACE MIGHT SOUND, THE MORE INTERESTING IT WILL BE.”

Maybe many other places in Eastern Europe tried just like they did and didn't succeed, but I still think it's an incredible example. I love that joint effort. It was really the artists themselves: they were putting their works onto the wall, and even building the walls themselves, because they didn't want to spend money on that. In a way, I think the gate is wide open. At the moment, the art world is welcoming every possible corner of the planet. There's even a sort of curiosity: the more obscure a place might sound, the more interesting it will be. The situation has never been more open than today. Joint efforts in certain areas are a great example. I am surprised that there are not more books written about the success of Cluj as a model, and how it started with a handful of people: critics, curators, gallerists and artists. It was not just somebody who had the idea to have a gallery, to believe in some local artists and take them to Vienna. It was very content-driven. When I met

the critic of the local Cluj newspaper—and this was some years ago, when I first travelled there, not now when we all talk about it—I was amazed by how sophisticated these people were. They showed me a publication they had started in 2005, long before we even knew how to spell Cluj. I think that is an example of how it all could work, especially in Eastern Europe.

G.A. While the audience is mulling their questions, I have another one for you. What about America? Would you ever move to extend your gallery?

T.R. I very much believe in natural growth. For me, London was a big step, and I'm very happy that we took it. I have no further plans.

G.A. Is that a promise?

T.R. It's not a promise, it's just realistic.

Q. Thank you for your speech. Listening to you, it seems that if you make the link between a good artist and a collector, things will work. But maybe (probably) you also know good artists who are not getting proper recognition. So there must be something else. What are other factors that go into making an artist really recognised by curators? I personally know artists who I appreciate but are not as recognised as I think they should be. So, what's the secret?

T.R. Good question. You know, Leo Castelli always said to me, "Artists, as good as they are, they don't automatically have the recognition, even if a Leo Castelli is behind it." And he always gave me an example of his own. He believed in a German artist: her name was Hanne Darboven, she was very conceptual. Castelli showed her work for 40 years. He never could get her the recognition he thought she deserved. In my own experience, I worked with an American artist named Elaine Sturtevant. She more or less invented appropriation in an interesting way. We did several exhibitions in Paris and in Salzburg. We were not able to make her recognised. She passed away a couple of years ago. Now her work is selling for millions at auction. She has a retrospective at MoMA, unfortunately she is not alive to see it. There is no explanation for this, but it's absolutely real: you can be a powerful gallery, you can be the most important critic and curator (Hans-Ulrich Obrist will always speak about this), but recognition is not only up to. Obrist said to me that there are certain artists he believes in one hundred per cent, but he's not able to make them recognised by curators, gallerists and

the art world in general. He still believes in them, though. We have to believe in artists. Nobody would have kept me from showing Elaine Sturtevant. We did 12 exhibitions; ten of them were total failures in terms of recognition and sales. But today she is in an incredible position. Unfortunately, she passed away before things turned around, but it was coming, so at the end of her life she more or less knew that she had established herself in the art world. There is no explanation for these cases, but they happen. We just have to stick to our beliefs.

**“YOU CAN BE A POWERFUL GALLERY,
YOU CAN BE THE MOST IMPORTANT
CRITIC AND CURATOR, BUT RECOGNITION
IS NOT ONLY UP TO.”**

Q. I run a gallery in Bucharest together with my partner. I wanted to ask you about the growing inequalities in the art market, which are obvious to anyone. Basically, a rather small number of artists represent a large part of sales in value now (if not the vast majority). Also, how do you see artists precisely like Adrian Ghenie? He is very successful at auction houses, but many people think he doesn't have such a good career, let's say, institutionally. How would you address that?

T.R. Well, I have to mostly disagree with that, of course. You will be hearing very shortly about a very important tour of museum exhibitions of Adrian Ghenie. We're just working on it at the moment. I think he's one of the most gifted painters of our time. Of course, he's one of the artists I work with, so you would think, "Right, he has to say that." Well, I do believe it. What to me is very upsetting about Adrian's situation is that a pressure has been put on him absolutely against his will: he is not a career person; he absolutely did not want this situation. As his gallerists, we did not want it either. It's a situation we almost cannot control. I think in my 33 years in this business, I have never experienced a case like Adrian Ghenie's, which went so out of control. We have a waiting list of 200 people, which we don't take seriously, because we know exactly where we're selling every painting he gives us at the moment. I always say, "Don't worry, he will paint for another 40 years. With such pressure on him already, how can his career evolve?" We can only hope for a soft landing. And this brings us back to Lisa's question: we do not have enough of these incredible, outstanding artists, and therefore the market's reaction is to lose control, because the number of collectors moving into the market is so large that this is one of the

ways to regulate the situation. I think it's the wrong way. We do not have a better answer. Even we, who are really working closely with the artists, don't have a better way to control it. The only way for us to control the situation now is to be restrictive with any painting that leaves the studio, making sure that it goes into the right hands. But I do not believe that somebody like Adrian takes money away from other artists. I totally disagree with the idea that the massive amounts of money spent on his art take away from somebody else. I think the market is growing so fast, there are so many participants, that the fact that so much money is spent on one artist on the secondary market doesn't restrict other artists.

“THE MARKET IS GROWING SO FAST, THERE ARE SO MANY PARTICIPANTS, THAT THE FACT THAT SO MUCH MONEY IS SPENT ON ONE ARTIST ON THE SECONDARY MARKET DOESN'T RESTRICT OTHER ARTISTS.”

Q. I was just wondering if you could comment a bit more on the relationship between galleries and art fairs. The way I see it, the gallery is a space where artists have their exhibitions every so often, and then fairs are a way to extend that work and make it international, maybe even to show pieces that couldn't be shown at the gallery. That way, you put them on a more international level. I just wanted you to comment on that. Why do you feel that it's more important to focus on the gallery?

T.R. I'm glad you ask, because I don't want to be misunderstood here. I think art fairs are very important, but they're important to connect: to connect people, to exchange information, to sell art, of course. But they don't replace the exhibitions. Sometimes, when I speak to young colleagues, I have the feeling that art fairs are becoming so important that they are starting to replace the exhibitions and the gallery space. And this I'm fiercely against, because I think the gallery situation is the one that we create for an artist. We put every effort into our gallery space: we think about every detail, everything has to be absolutely perfect. At an art fair, we accept imperfections, because a fair cannot give you the perfect space. They have crappy floors and walls. They cannot replace the space in the gallery, I'm sorry. And what about the artists? Do they think of an art fair when they're working on a piece? I

hope not! They think of the gallery situation.

“THE ART FAIR IS A WONDERFUL PLACE TO MAKE YOUR GALLERY AND YOUR ARTISTS KNOWN. BUT IT'S AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION, AND WE SHOULD TREAT IT THIS WAY.”

In my 30 years of experience, I go to an artist's studio and I'm always proud when I see the model of my different galleries. And when the artist says, “I'm doing a painting in this size.” They think about this for a year, and then every time they visit the gallery, they change and say, “No, I will put this here.” So, can you imagine all the thought an artist puts into a space? We cannot ignore that. It's a privilege for us that an artist concentrates to produce art for our specific gallery space. I love it when I see this. The art fair is a wonderful place to make your gallery and your artists known. But it's an exchange of information, and we should treat it this way. We should do our best, we should make the best booths possible, we should seek the best conditions possible for our artists in an art fair, but it does not replace an exhibition and it does not replace a gallery.

G.A. Well, I think that's a wonderful way to finish. How many art fairs do you do per year?

T.R. We do the major ones. I think seven or eight.

G.A. So you are committed.

T.R. I love them. Please don't get me wrong.

G.A. I'd like to thank Thaddaeus for coming and giving us such an interesting talk, and I'd also like to thank you all for your excellent questions.

Georgina Adam

Art Market Editor-at-Large for *The Art Newspaper* since 2008 and art market correspondent for the *Financial Times*. Adam has been writing about the art market and the arts in general for 25 years, and also lectures on the market and related subjects at Sotheby's and Christie's educational institutes.

Now based in London, she has lived in France and Japan; in June 2014 she released the book *Big Bucks: The Explosion of the Art Market in the 21st Century*, which explores the transformation of the modern and contemporary art market in the 21st century.

Elba Benítez

Since 1990, Galería Elba Benítez (Madrid) has freely embraced the diverse and ever-changing facets of contemporary art. The gallery exhibits artists working with a wide range of media—installation, sculpture, video, photography, painting, performance and collective action. It also seeks to explore channels of artistic expression formed by the interplay of art with other disciplines, such as architecture, film, tourism, urban planning and the production of projects for public spaces. The gallery has participated in fairs such as Frieze London/ New York, Artbo, Art Basel Miami Beach, ARCO Madrid, and SP-Arte.

Jean Frémon

Jean Frémon is a French writer and gallerist born in 1946. He is the CEO of Galerie Lelong in Paris and New York. Since 1969, he has published a number of works of fiction as well as essays on art, many of which have been translated into English and Spanish. In 1981, along with Jacques Dupin and Daniel Lelong, Jean Frémon founded Galerie Lelong in Paris, and then opened the New York gallery in 1985. Some of the artists with whom he has closely collaborated include Antoni Tàpies, Louise Bourgeois, Jannis Kounellis, David Hockney, Jaume Plensa and Etel Adnan.

Victoria Siddall

Victoria Siddall has been Director of all three Frieze fairs since November 2014—Frieze London, Frieze New York and Frieze Masters. She has been with the company since 2004. Victoria was responsible for the launch of Frieze Masters in 2012. This groundbreaking fair brings together works of art from throughout history under one roof and gives a unique, contemporary perspective on historical art. Prior to Frieze, Victoria worked at Christie's in London from 2000 to 2004. Siddall is also Chair of the board of trustees for Studio Voltaire, London.

THE EVOLVING FAIR SITUATION

SPEAKERS

**Elba Benítez, Jean Frémon,
Victoria Siddall**

MODERATOR

Georgina Adam

Monday 10
12:00-13:30h

The Evolving Fair Situation

Victoria Siddall Frieze
Jean Frémon Galerie Lelong
Elba Benítez Galería Elba Benítez

Moderator
Georgina Adam
Financial Times and The Art Newspaper

Panel Discussion
45min + 45min Q&A



THE EVOLVING FAIR SITUATION

Georgina Adam (G.A.) Just to set the scene, before we enter into a discussion about the various issues that are raised by the title of our conversation, I'd like to start with one question to each of our panellists, which will be more or less the same one. I'm going to start by asking Victoria how she sees the whole fair landscape. What are the changes that you've seen in the last year or so?

Victoria Siddall (V.S.) Thanks, Georgina. I'm the Victoria that everyone has been apologising to. And I wanted to say to Thaddaeus, firstly, that I have a great stand at Frieze New York for you: it's at the back, by the toilets. I'm just kidding. I actually wanted to say that I agree with the points you made. Art fairs are not a replacement for galleries and they should never be seen as such. Nothing replicates the experience of seeing an exhibition in a gallery. Ideally, art fairs would be for people to go and discover artists that they may not have seen before, galleries from parts of the world that they haven't had the opportunity to visit, and also just to see many people and many works of art under the same roof. Art fairs should be there to support galleries and not to replace them. I think that's a really important point to make. So, thank you for making it. It's a good reminder to all of us.

**“ART FAIRS ARE NOT A
REPLACEMENT FOR GALLERIES
AND THEY SHOULD NEVER BE SEEN
AS SUCH. NOTHING REPLICATES
THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING AN
EXHIBITION IN A GALLERY.”**

However, art fairs do serve a purpose and it's not just about business. As I said, I think it's also about seeing all these people under one roof and seeing all this art. You can't beat seeing art in person, and you can't beat talking to people in person either. Seeing and discovering works of art and having that dialogue and debate with colleagues, with curators, with collectors, with galleries and with artists is something that happens very effectively and efficiently at art fairs.

It's undeniable that there are more fairs than there have ever been. Somebody told me two years ago that they had calculated there were around 280 fairs in the world. I think there are more now, which has had consequences for fairs as well: there's a need for us to be more unique and to have a really distinct identity. It's something that Frieze has, I think, partly through the cities that we're in—in London and New York—and also in the curated contents and our roots in an art magazine. Our distinctiveness derives from things like Frieze Masters, which I started. It has quite a specific concept of presenting a contemporary view of historical art. If a fair doesn't have a distinctive identity, it's going to be very hard for it to survive. Thaddaeus mentioned Independent, a fair started by a group of likeminded galleries coming together. Something like that, again, has a really clear identity, which is really important now that art fairs are proliferating.

“GALLERIES ARE ALSO BECOMING MORE AND MORE STRATEGIC ABOUT THE FAIRS THAT THEY CHOOSE TO DO. THEY'RE NOT JUST DOING EVERYTHING THEY DID THE YEAR BEFORE AGAIN AND AGAIN.”

I think galleries are also becoming more and more strategic about the fairs that they choose to do. They're not just doing everything they did the year before again and again. They're really questioning the reason for them to be at each particular fair. They're looking at the net return in terms of what they've sold, who they've met and how it has benefited their artists—if they are happy in that context. So they're asking those questions, which is making us work harder, and that's a good thing. I also hear a lot from galleries about the importance of curators attending a fair. The curatorial presence is becoming increasingly important for galleries when they're choosing which fairs to do, so it's something we

work hard on. We try to bring museum groups and curators to the fair each year and to have things like curated projects, talks and so on.

An interesting development that I have noticed in the last couple of years is this global versus local when it comes to fairs. Some fairs are extremely global, and I would put Frieze in that category, partly because of the cities that they're in. They attract collectors from all over the world: from Asia, from Latin America and the Middle East, and of course from Europe and America. That is obviously a very efficient model for a gallery to meet all of those people under one roof. But then there is also a different model. Last week, I was in San Francisco for the FOG art fair, which is very small—only 40 galleries—and there were no collectors or curators from overseas. The galleries that were doing it were there to meet the curators and the collectors from San Francisco. So that has an appeal as well, and a gallery might choose to do both of those for very different reasons.

“THE CURATORIAL PRESENCE IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FOR GALLERIES WHEN THEY'RE CHOOSING WHICH FAIRS TO DO.”

G.A. Elba, how many fairs a year do you do? How many are you planning this year? And the same question: what changes have you seen recently?

Elba Benítez (E.B.) This year I will do six fairs, but I have done eight a year sometimes, enough to see what the changes have been. I can summarise it in four new situations I have observed. The first one is that there is a tendency for galleries to abandon the white cube situation at fairs in favour of a more red carpet presentation. It's the moment to make a *mise-en-scène*, a theatrical presentation, and I have seen this at Frieze in London among quite a sizeable group of galleries. Another change is that there are more curated programmes offered by the fairs, which means that they would like to include not only new galleries, but also established ones that have not participated. This is a way to attract them and to offer this kind of programme to new clientele. In addition, over the last year, ephemeral art has acquired an important place at fairs. While it has not replaced the object, it at least has more visibility and greater prominence. Last but not least, art fairs

are a good reflection of what is going on in the economy, and you can see that the gap between wealthy galleries and more modest ones is growing. I think business and profit are much more concentrated in a few groups of galleries than it was in previous years.

G.A. Jean, how many art fairs does Lelong do in a year?

Jean Frémon (J.F.) I don't know exactly, but probably eight or nine, most years, since we have two branches—one in Paris and one in New York. We used to be in Zurich as well, but we closed a few years ago. I don't go to all of the fairs. We can separate and do more of them by sending different teams. There have been many changes, not in very recent years or this last year, but over the last 30 or 40 years. As Thaddaeus mentioned, for instance, Cologne used to be a very important art fair, but not any more, really. It has faded. Chicago was a very important fair and somehow it also disappeared. So there are cycles. I would not, however, say that Art Basel has suffered cycles, either in Miami or Basel. The difference is probably that in the last 10 to 15 years, everything has been thought about more seriously and profoundly by the fair organisers and by the galleries. The issue has become more important and everybody prepares things more carefully.

“WE ALSO NEED TO TAKE THINGS TO PLACES WHERE WE THINK THEY WILL NOT WORK OR MAY NOT WORK, BECAUSE WE NEED TO TRY. IT'S TOO EASY TO TAKE WHAT YOU KNOW YOU WILL SELL. THAT'S NOT THE REAL ISSUE.”

G.A. So there has been an increase in professionalisation.

J.F. I think so. We certainly think much more than before about what we should take to a particular place. We discuss why or why not, and not just on the grounds that it will work. We also need to take things to places where we think they will not work or may not work, because we need to try. It's too easy to take what you know you will sell. That's not the real issue. It's more important to know how to promote other artists in new places. There's another issue that I've found interesting in relation to what an art fair brings to a gallery: it's the opportunity to look at your programme in a different way. In a gallery, you usually do one-person

shows; in an art fair you may do one-person shows, but rarely. You select from your programme. We all know that there are artists who you love but who are very hard to install with others. They just don't work together and it ruins the booth. So we have to find ways—maybe we'll work on the architecture of the booth, for example—to make it work. As I said, it's a way to look at your own programme in a different way. This does not happen with galleries that have a very strict aesthetic, but that is not our case, and it is not the case of Thaddaeus either.

G.A. I'd like to ask a question regarding something Elba said: are we moving towards a sort of corporatisation with the groups? Frieze has three fairs now. So does Basel, as we know. MCH, which is the parent company of Basel, is forming a group of regional fairs, so that's another group. Elba said that one of the things that she has noticed is a sort of polarisation, a gap between the very big galleries and the smaller galleries. Perhaps you could comment on the groups, Victoria, and we could discuss the issue and what it means.

V.S. I think Elba's point is really important. It's more significant for the galleries than for the fairs. There certainly is a polarisation between the biggest galleries, which have branches all over the world, and the smallest galleries, who are young and are just starting with one space. For them, a bad month or a bad fair can have a significant impact on the future of their business. A fair like Frieze has both types of galleries under one roof. So a question we think about a lot is, how do we make it work for both of them? How do we make it balanced for both Gagosian and a young gallery from the Lower East Side?

“THERE CERTAINLY IS A POLARISATION BETWEEN THE BIGGEST GALLERIES, WHICH HAVE BRANCHES ALL OVER THE WORLD, AND THE SMALLEST GALLERIES. FOR THEM, A BAD MONTH OR A BAD FAIR CAN HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF THEIR BUSINESS.”

I can give you an example of how we try to address this. Fairs generally charge per square metre for a booth. We do the same but, for example, at Frieze New York we have the Frame section, which is for young galleries under eight years old who are making a solo presentation,

of just one artist. For them, the booth price per square metre is 50% less than for the big galleries. You have to implement those kinds of measures to support galleries at that stage in their development.

We need to keep reminding ourselves that they are the galleries of the future, the big galleries of the future, and so if they're not able to be part of the system, if they're not able to participate in fairs at that stage, then they may never grow. I think about polarisation a lot in terms of the galleries, less so in relation to the fairs because, as you say, there are two fair groups with three fairs each and then lots of other big fairs and smaller fairs. To me, the polarisation doesn't seem quite as pronounced among the fairs as it does with the galleries.

G.A. Is this polarisation a trend, though? Do you think other big groups will form?

V.S. Even Independent has a fair in Brussels, so in a way they are a group too. Or something like NADA does more than one art fair. So there are fairs for young galleries that are very different from a group like Frieze or Basel, but they are still doing more than one art fair. Untitled is another example. They had a fair last week in San Francisco and they were also in Miami and New York. There is an efficiency to it, I suppose. I would say as a fair director that every fair that I do, I learn something new; so doing three a year for me is more helpful than doing just one, because I'm hoping it's going better every time. You're learning more about galleries, you're having a more regular check-in about how things are going with the galleries, with the collectors, with the fairs and so on. So yes, I think doing more of them helps us improve.

E.B. I have a question connected with the corporatisation of not only galleries but also fairs. What is the significance of Frieze's new partnership with WME, the Hollywood agency? Will it have an impact on the fair?

V.S. My short answer is no. But as a longer answer, Frieze was unique in the past for being one of the few big fairs that was not owned by a big company. The Basel fairs are owned by MCH, a big events company. FIAC is owned by Reed Expositions, another big company. So Frieze, being owned just by two people who started with an art magazine, was actually really unusual. And what we have found is that we were in a more difficult situation than the rest in terms of our resources and our

ability to grow, in terms of things like digital or whatever it was that we wanted to do for galleries.

The WME-IMG relationship is a partnership, essentially, and they've made an investment. So they don't fully own Frieze, they don't control it. Matthew and Amanda, who founded it, still have total control over the company. They're not really interested in getting involved in the day-to-day running of it, but they can help us with things like sponsorship. They actually sponsored the Tate Fund at Frieze London this year, enabling the Tate to come and buy works at the fair before anyone else came in. And they're helping us increase our sponsorship revenue, which helps us. For example, at Frieze New York, we've just reduced the cost of participation for galleries: we've made the rent less expensive, we've made all the extras, like walls, floors and lights, less expensive. That's what we were hoping for and what's now beginning to happen. In an ideal world, the only difference the galleries should see in the partnership with Frieze is that sort of cost reduction benefits, rather than anything else. Corporatisation is something we are definitely staying far away from.

G.A. And Jean, would you like to add something to the debate about the polarisation of galleries?

J.F. There is clearly a concentration, yes. It's obvious at every level, not only between fairs, but between galleries and a smaller number of artists as well. I don't know if it is an effect of communication and the Internet, it's possible. But there is always room for a new artist, and they always come out of nowhere. You don't know in advance. So we have to deal with it. There is a concentration, that's clear. I can imagine that, for an art fair as well as for a gallery, in order to be efficient you have to reach a critical size; being visible is a matter of scale at some point.

G.A. One of the criticisms is having to participate in too many art fairs, which puts a huge amount of pressure—financially and in terms of manpower, time and attention—on galleries, because there is this feeling that you have to be seen, whether it's at Frieze or Basel. Is this pressure growing? Is it problematic for galleries, or can you step away?

E.B. I think it's more problematic for some galleries than for others. The fairs need a group of galleries, and of course they have to do their job, but also it's a guarantee for the fair. A huge amount of galleries are under a lot of pressure, not only to present a strong proposal for their booth, but also because they have to be in an international event to compensate for the limits of their national market, as in the case of Spain. The artists also put a lot of pressure on them. They want visibility. Even the clients like to see the galleries at the best fair of the moment, because it's a guarantee of professionalism.

J.F. I think there is a pressure, yes. It's crucial for galleries to be accepted into a fair. It's crucial to be in a good spot. You certainly feel the pressure of the committees. I must say, we don't feel totally free. We always think that the committees are expecting something. Of course they're expecting for us to be the best. But what does that mean? It means that we have to cope with their expectations, we have to understand them and then to cope with them. It means that it's harder to try something different, to try something new, to take risks. We don't take risks. This is part of the concentration: we take fewer risks, because it's too dangerous.

“A HUGE AMOUNT OF GALLERIES ARE UNDER A LOT OF PRESSURE, NOT ONLY TO PRESENT A STRONG PROPOSAL FOR THEIR BOOTH, BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO BE IN AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT TO COMPENSATE FOR THE LIMITS OF THEIR NATIONAL MARKET, AS IN THE CASE OF SPAIN.”

V.S. But you don't take risks because you think that's not what the fair and the committees want to see, or because it's too much risk for your business?

J.F. In my case, there's no risk for the business. There's no financial pressure. We make money on each fair. So there's no pressure in that respect. I understand it may happen for other galleries, but it's not our case. We would be able to take more risks. I would love to do it.

V.S. It's interesting to hear that because I feel like we have always tried to encourage galleries to take risks with their presentation in terms of

doing something that's less commercially formulaic, something that's less safe, because the fair becomes more interesting if galleries take risks.

“IT MAY BE IRRESPONSIBLE OF US TO PUT PRESSURE ON GALLERIES TO TAKE RISKS WITH THEIR PRESENTATION BECAUSE IF IT DOESN'T SELL, IT'S A SIGNIFICANT LOSS.”

J.F. Of course, but as always, it's a risk... Either you succeed or you fail.

V.S. I feel that it may be irresponsible of us to put pressure on galleries to take risks with their presentation because if it doesn't sell, it's a significant loss. That's why we always try to balance out how much we should encourage risk-taking.

J.F. Again, I'd like to point out that, at least in my case, the problem is not whether we sell or not. I don't call it a failure if we don't sell. I'm happy to take that risk. What I'm anxious about is taking a risk and people saying, “We don't like what you did.”

E.B. I think Frieze is one of the fairs where galleries take the most risks. And most of the galleries that do it are the young ones.

V.S. Yes.

E.B. Of course, it's a real risk, but also modest galleries have a chance to be successful. They need this kind of good luck.

V.S. I mentioned earlier the importance of a curatorial presence at fairs and the importance of galleries showing their artists at their best to curators, which then leads to museum shows. Often that comes out of more ambitious, risky presentations. If something is quite commercial and formulaic, it might be less interesting for curators to pick up on. And I think you're right, Elba: a lot of galleries at Frieze do more risky presentations, and I think it's partly a response to the curatorial presence there and the feeling that that's where their artists are going to be noticed. At least for me, it makes the fair a much more interesting experience. But again, it's key to find a balance. I wouldn't want to push

a young gallery into taking a risk if I felt that they might then lose a lot of money, because it could be very significant to them. So it's a tricky situation.

“IF A GALLERY IS REPRESENTING ARTISTS AND THE ONLY PLACE WHERE THEY’RE REALLY SHOWING THEM IS AT ART FAIRS, THERE’S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THAT SYSTEM.”

G.A. I'd like to move on to the issue of galleries that don't have a plate glass window on the ground floor and who, as a result, may not be accepted into art fairs. This is very much the trend: so many galleries have had to close because the foot traffic in galleries is reducing all the time. Somebody here was just saying to me that there are fewer and fewer people who go into galleries. So why keep an expensive gallery when you're doing six or eight fairs a year? Do you think there will be a move towards fairs accepting dealers who don't have much in the way of a real-world presence?

V.S. I think it would be a bit of a dangerous path to go down, on the grounds of Thaddaeus' point about the importance of gallery exhibitions. I would separate this into two conversations. Talking about contemporary art, if a gallery is representing artists and the only place where they're really showing them is at art fairs, there's something wrong with that system. They need to be doing great exhibitions of those artists in their galleries. It's about exhibition-making.

I totally sympathise with this situation of rents being high. In the earlier days of Frieze, we had galleries like kurimanzutto, from Mexico City, that didn't have a space. They were itinerant and did exhibitions in different places before they opened their current gallery. We had Hotel Gallery from London, which no longer exists. Their gallery was their spare room. You don't need a plate glass, ground floor in Mayfair as long as there is somewhere where you're making exhibitions and showing your artists in the context that they have chosen. With contemporary galleries, if their only existence was to do art fairs, there would be a problem with that system, and that would be something we would need to address and figure out why we were getting to that point.

However, my background was previously in Frieze Masters, and in the secondary market there are many galleries that don't have a real-world presence because they're not representing artists, they're showing secondary market work. They're more like dealers, and it's less necessary for them to have a bricks-and-mortar space; many of them just have an office. The interesting thing I found was the perception that you can create a gallery by doing fairs, and this applies to contemporary galleries as well. Your gallery could be the spare bedroom of your apartment, but if you take a decent-sized stand at a few art fairs, people will just think you've got a big gallery somewhere. Sometimes I've visited cities and gone to see people in their gallery and thought, "Wow! That's not what I expected at all", because you've got used to seeing them in different parts of the world. So yes, I would say that in the secondary market there's a different situation and it's much less necessary to have that real-world presence, as you call it.

“IF YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS THE AGENT OF SOMEONE WHO IS CREATING CONTEMPORARY CULTURE, YOU HAVE TO BE ATTACHED TO A COMMUNITY, YOU HAVE TO TRY TO INFLUENCE THAT COMMUNITY AND THEIR VISUAL EDUCATION.”

E.B. I would like to add something about the real-world gallery. I completely agree with Thaddaeus Ropac about having a gallery that you create, and creating its identity is only possible if you have a real-world gallery. If you think of yourself as the agent of someone who is creating contemporary culture, you have to be attached to a community, you have to try to influence that community and their visual education. Also, if you work with artists who are in the first stage of their careers, they need a place to give them visibility. Perhaps it's their first step before they go to an institution or to other places. I think it's more necessary than ever, but I don't believe it has to be a big space: it needs to be in keeping with your own image, your own identity, the neighbourhood you have chosen, the kind of space you want to offer. The Internet, and the computerised world we are living in, are very good tools for us. They will completely transform what we have already built, but I think there are some issues that will remain.

G.A. My next question is for the gallerists. What changes would you like

to see in the fair landscape? What would make life easier for you as far as working with fairs and choosing which to attend?

“WHAT I MISS IS MORE TRANSPARENCY ABOUT THE FINANCIAL RESULTS OF THE FAIRS, AND NOT BECAUSE I AM CURIOUS. (...) I THINK THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION THAT COULD GIVE YOU AN OVERVIEW OF HOW THE VALUE OF ART AND THE ECONOMY ARE MOVING.”

E.B. I agree with you that there has been a great professionalisation of fairs and galleries. What I miss is more transparency about the financial results of the fairs, and not because I am curious. Of course, after the opening day of a fair you always read, “Big sales here and there...” You can read that on ARTnews and all these digital online newspapers. But I think this is important information that could give you an overview of how the value of art and the economy are moving. When is it concentrated? What kinds of works are sold at art fairs? I have an idea, but it is an intuition: I think that the big sales and the big numbers are always made by paintings. So it is interesting to see how our clients behave.

V.S. You mean transparency in terms of what people are buying at any given moment and what’s actually selling at the fairs...

E.B. Sometimes there are contradictions between the official news and what you have around you, the area where you or your neighbours are.

V.S. Elba, I would be fascinated to see that as well. I often don’t know, because the galleries are not obliged to tell me what they’re selling. Some galleries are very open and they’ll say, “We’ve done really well, we’ve sold everything.” Some people say that every time and you think, “Is that always true?” And then some will just say “Fine” every time I ask them. And “fine” could mean we’ve sold everything or nothing. We send a survey to all galleries and we ask them to tell us how many works they sold, for what value and whether they’re seeing works selling in this or that price bracket. We get around a 50% return rate on the surveys, not everybody answers that question. So it’s very difficult to build up that picture. The way fairs have been set up is we basically

rent the space to galleries and then it’s their business. It’s private, it’s something they can share if they want to, but there’s no obligation. I agree with you, it would be great to have that full transparency, but it’s not that we’re holding any information back. We don’t have it either.

J.F. I’m sure selling is not the only criterion. For instance, I have a precise example in mind from Frieze. Two or three years ago, I don’t remember exactly when, I remember Mnuchin Gallery from New York did a fantastic exhibition of David Smith. It was beautiful. They didn’t sell anything, they told me. But I remember that show. It was great.

“NOT SELLING CAN BE A FAILURE, BUT NOT IF YOU PUT TOGETHER AN EXHIBITION THAT IS ACCLAIMED AND CONSIDERED BEAUTIFUL.”

V.S. It made a statement.

J.F. It was extremely well done. OK, they didn’t sell. Fine. They didn’t die. Is it a failure? Not selling can be a failure, but not if you put together an exhibition that is acclaimed and considered beautiful. They succeeded in that sense.

V.S. And then last year at Frieze Masters they did a group stand of different works and they sold very well. Again, it comes back to risk-taking. With the David Smith show, they took a risk; they didn’t sell, but they did something memorable. This year, they did a group stand and they did much better commercially, but you might not remember what it was.

J.F. Balance.

V.S. There’s always a benefit to doing something like that if you can afford it.

J.F. What comes out of your presentation is important, not only in terms of sales. It gives an image for one year to an audience, it’s more important than sales.

G.A. But you have to be able to support it. Mnuchin Gallery has huge resources behind it. It’s very tough for a small gallery to invest a lot in a fair and then bring everything back home.

J.F. I agree, that's obvious. You have to make it work, one way or another.

E.B. You are talking to someone who thinks that sales are not the only important thing in a gallery's activity. But I can tell you that 90% of the galleries that go to fairs don't have this vision, they want to sell. This is an important issue, if not the most important one.

J.F. We all want to sell, but in my case I want to sell the most difficult, not the easiest. We go to a fair to convince people, to sell what is hard to sell.

V.S. And I think there's another step to that, which is—and I hear this regularly—that at fairs galleries want to sell to new clients, not to their existing clients. If there are new people that they've never met before, who've never been inside their gallery, it makes the trip to the fair very worthwhile, because they might continue to work with that person for the next ten years.

**“WE ALL WANT TO SELL, BUT IN MY CASE
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G.A. I've got one last question for all of you. Can you give me predictions about how you think the fair landscape will evolve? We've seen this explosion of fairs. Will we see fewer from now on? Will we see more of a split between the big groups and the more local ones?

V.S. Coming back to what I was saying at the beginning, I think fairs are going to have to work harder and make sure that the galleries, when they're looking at what they do in a year, can absolutely justify going to that particular fair. And that means compensating not only the costs of exhibiting, but also the fact that all of their staff are there, it means not being in the gallery for a week, it means maybe being away from your family for a week... It has to be worth that investment. So how we keep improving the fairs for galleries is something we're thinking about all the time.

In London, we brought back the Tate Fund this year, as I mentioned, and also a new fund with the Contemporary Art Society. We have stand prizes for galleries that do ambitious presentations and take risks. We are making Frieze New York four days long instead of five, so galleries are out of their space for less time and with the same results, making it less expensive. All these things make it much cheaper for young galleries and give them very specific support. It didn't use to be quite such hard work, to be honest.

When there were far fewer fairs, Frieze was just a very obvious choice. But now there are many more to choose from, so we have to really make the effort, really make sure things are working for galleries. And that's good, that's the way it should be. It should be competitive for us as well as for the galleries who want to be in it. Healthy competition is a good thing. I also think the diversity of work that you see at fairs is something that we've seen through the interest in Frieze Masters from a contemporary audience as well as a historical art audience. Actually, this year at Frieze New York we are introducing more 20th-century art galleries, and a couple of tribal art galleries as well, to contextualise contemporary art, to make it a more diverse and interesting experience and to add new layers of discovery for the people who attend the fair.

**“THERE IS CERTAINLY ROOM FOR SMALLER,
SPECIALISED ART FAIRS, WHICH WOULD
NOT COMPETE WITH BUT COMPLEMENT THE
BIGGER ONES.”**

J.F. I think that the concentration might go on, but on the other hand there might be a place for niche fairs. For instance, there is already a fair that specialises in African art. This may increase. Things keep evolving. And there is certainly room for smaller, specialised art fairs, which would not compete with but complement the bigger ones. I think we will see that more and more.

E.B. Yes, I agree, but I think that there is such a large offer of general contemporary art fairs today that some will eventually disappear.

J.F. Yes. Probably.

G.A. Well, we've seen one or two disappear. Some are coming back as

well. They always say they're going to come back, but when they close you never know if it's for good or not.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUESTIONS (C/Q) FROM THE AUDIENCE

C. I just wanted to comment a little bit and maybe get feedback. I work as an art advisor in the contemporary art fair scene, which has really exploded. I hate and love fairs at the same time. They're great because I can say hi to people, do business and keep relations up. But from a collecting point of view, it's really hard to attend these fairs with collectors and advise them correctly on the spot. I don't like to buy things with them at fairs. We always do, so I make lots of money there, but we have much richer experiences when we go to galleries, which we do less and less. I think part of the problem is the saturation level of fairs, auctions, openings, and galleries that have ten outposts. As someone whose job used to be to know every single thing that was happening globally in the art world, I now literally cannot do that, even with the staff of people helping me. I feel like my job has now become about narrowing it down as much as I possibly can. And I find my clients burned out and a little depressed, not excited. That is really scary to see, and even I feel that way sometimes. There is a huge surplus, and I'm just wondering if you have any thoughts on that.

“EVERY YEAR THE FAIRS BECOME MORE GLOBAL, BOTH IN TERMS OF THE GALLERIES THAT ARE PARTICIPATING AND THE PEOPLE THAT ARE VISITING. I CAN'T HELP BUT SEE THIS AS A POSITIVE THING.”

V.S. I would say that, in one sense, you're right that the art world continues to grow, but it's partly because it grows globally as well and in different parts of the world. The gallery that won the Stand Prize at Frieze London this year was from Guatemala. It's the first time we've had a gallery from Guatemala in the fair and they did an amazing presentation. But it does continue to grow. Every year the fairs become more global, both in terms of the galleries that are participating and the people that are visiting. I can't help but see this as a positive thing. There is more art in the world, there is more art in different parts of the world and we're getting to see it. It's amazing.

I take your point, though, that to try and get your head around all of that is impossible. I think that our jobs as fair directors, as art advisers, as gallery owners or as anybody who's working with a collector—curators do this too, of course, and so do art magazine editors—is just to edit it. It's our job to be looking at art all the time, figuring out what's good and presenting that for you so that you in turn can present it to your clients and make sure that they're not seeing too much of what's not good, because that's when it does get overwhelming and depressing. And fairs are part of that. It's an edit of the many hundreds of galleries that apply to be in a fair. We're cutting it down to the ones that we think are good right now. So, yes it's an overwhelming amount of information, but I feel that without these kinds of edited structures—without art magazines, galleries, fairs and museums doing that work—it could be even more overwhelming.

Q. I'm the Executive Director of the Art Dealers Association. We have a fair in New York, as you know. This is going to be the 29th year we organise it, and I guess you could call it a boutique fair. Here's what I worry about, and I wonder what you think about it: somebody said fairs go in cycles. I think that's true. And I think that we saw it this year in Basel and in Miami, for a lot of reasons. There was fair fatigue, there was unease, worry. There were all kinds of issues. The American presidential election certainly affected it. But I think what happened was it gained a reputation—and for once I'm not apologising to you, Victoria—as a party place, a frenzy, and serious people and a lot of collectors were just tired and didn't want to go. What the challenge is and what I'm curious about is how we deal with that. You run the risk of same old, same old. You mentioned taking risks.

Our fair is only open to our members, so we're not international, we're national, and we have limited space. But nevertheless, how do we make it fresh every year? How do we cope with fatigue, with that feeling of “seen it, done it, been there”? How many dinners can I go to? How many parties can I go to? How many unique kinds of attention-getting exhibitionism can there be at a fair? When do we get down to the serious business of connoisseurship and the opportunity to really have that experience? I'm curious what you think about that.

J.F. I love the ADAA fair. It's a wonderful place. It's an excellent example of a different kind of fair that works perfectly. I think it's a very good combination. It doesn't look like any other fair: it's completely different: it's small, people like it, it's convenient, it's in the middle of the city, it's easy to access and the level of quality is excellent, although you accept—I don't know exactly—but more or less all members.

C. I wish it were that easy. My life would be easier. Members have to apply to our fair and we have a fair committee that scrutinises the proposals. The committee's decisions are very much based on the proposals themselves, which can't be same old, same old. Occasionally some people feel that they can just say, "The best of my gallery," and more and more we say, "We're awfully sorry, but that's not acceptable." It is a struggle to maintain freshness, intimacy and the possibility to speak with the dealers themselves and to understand what you're looking at, which is really key.

V.S. I think the point you're making is quite similar to the art advisor's in a way: it's about people feeling burned out by seeing too many things and all of the froth that goes on around it as well. And I think perhaps the danger is encouraging everybody to try to see everything, because it does become too much. Something that would help the situation is that there are more and more galleries opening all the time, and as a result there are more and more fairs, and there are more and more artists at work.

The number of collectors needs to grow at the same pace, otherwise you're asking the same small pool of collectors to visit more galleries and more fairs, to buy more art. That is something we think about a lot and I'm not sure we've cracked the formula for it, but there are a lot of people in the world with money who don't buy art yet. It would help if there were more collectors emerging at the same pace so that there wasn't this kind of pressure on everybody to go to every fair and go to every gallery and see every artist. And then you have the connoisseurship, I guess.

Q. I'm from Johannesburg. You mentioned Touria El Glauoi, and I thank her and 1:54 for drawing attention to artists from Africa, but we do have an art fair that has been going for maybe ten years in Johannesburg, Joburg Art Fair, and then the Cape Town Art Fair. When we look around, we find that the Armory last year had a focus on Africa. I'm

interested to know whether you would go that way, even though there is 1:54 in London. What do you think of fairs ringfencing artists or art galleries from Africa and focusing on that? Is that something you'd be looking at?

V.S. Focusing on one part of the world is not something we have ever done at Frieze, but we have always tried to bring as many parts of the world into the fair as possible and give them all the same platform. Michael Stevenson and the Goodman Gallery from South Africa have been in the fairs for some time. October Gallery is joining Frieze New York this year as well. They have done the African art fair for a while. That kind of global diversity is really important in the fair, but we try to spread it evenly rather than highlighting one area each time. This is a different approach, but I hope it gives a more balanced profile to each part of the world every year. It is really interesting. The fact that there's an entire continent that's only represented by two or three galleries in a major fair is unusual in itself, so the more we're seeing of that, the better.

Q. I have a question for Victoria. We were talking about the growth of the market and the growth of the participants because what was interesting in Thaddaeus Ropac's speech is that while some things have changed over the years, most things have not, especially for people who have been around for a little while: you feel that, essentially, the scene hasn't changed as much as one might think. And I feel that the art world is still infinitesimally small. We are all part of a travelling circus that moves to a different place every day. We meet the same people everywhere. We are a small microcosm that moves from place to place. My question is, do you have information on how many individual collectors or buyers buy in a year at Frieze? How many different buyers do you have? I was told that last year at Sotheby's there were only 25,000 different purchasers across all 88 categories.

For a company like Sotheby's or Christie's, which dominate the public side of the market, you would think that the number of individual players was much bigger. So we see that in fact, at the end of the day, it's an infinitesimally small number of people who make the market. And then of course, as we all know, if you look at the top of the pyramid of the auction houses, the ones who make all the difference in terms of your success and profitability are a very, very small number indeed.

V.S. I think that's a very good point. You're right. I was making a similar point when discussing the ADAA. There need to be more collectors, ideally. Something the auction houses actively work on all the time is generating new buyers, especially in places like China, where there seems to be that potential for growth. We do measure the attendance of collectors: we have, as you know, VIP cards that people receive. We scan them, so we know who's visiting, where they're from and so on. Every year we get more VIPs coming to our fair. There are new ones every year, but I don't know whether the number is growing in proportion to the rate of growth of galleries and fairs. And that nurturing and education of collectors or people who are not yet collectors to step up and begin is necessary.

We've recently relaunched something in London called Frieze Academy, which consists of different educational strands. Some of them are more academic, about art criticism and so on, but we have one that's specifically about collecting. It's aimed at encouraging people who might be thinking about it, but don't know quite where to start, to actually make that step and start buying art. As you say, without that group of people growing as well, there's nothing to underpin it all. The more collectors there are, the better.

G.A. How many people are on your VIP list?

V.S. Many, many thousands. It has been built up over many years. Most of them come from the galleries themselves, who nominate VIPs, but also from sponsors, museum groups... So it's a big list. There's no way we would get everybody we invite coming to the fair. It's actually a small proportion of that. So you have to know maybe 10,000 people to get 5,000 people or whatever it is. You need to invite an awful lot of people to get a good attendance.

Q. I am a gallerist from Istanbul. I wanted to ask about the discount you give to galleries that are eight years old or younger. I always feel that being a five-year-old gallery in London or New York versus some other part of the world is quite different. I find it very challenging, because every time I look at fairs, either I'm too old for them or they're very expensive. So I wanted to get your opinion on this.

V.S. Frieze New York is the next fair coming up. We have the Frame section for galleries under eight years old to do solo exhibitions. It's

50% less expensive per square metre than the main section. Then we have the Focus section, which for galleries under 12 years old and is 30% less expensive than the main section. They can show whatever they want and it's integrated into the fair. And then lastly there's the main section. So we have these rungs that galleries can step up, essentially. Our aim is to make it possible for any gallery to reach the main section; we want everybody to have the potential to be part of the main section and be competing on the same level.

I know that, for some people, coming from the young section to the main section can still be too much of a jump. It's a difficult transition to address. We have these three layers. How much further can we go? And then when people apply for the main section, there are different sizes of stand, which radically affects the price. We try to make it as easy as possible for everyone, but I realise it's not a perfect structure. If there are things that we can improve to help people at different stages of their career, I'd be totally open to hearing them.

“IN BIENNALES LIKE THE ONE IN VENICE, YOU SEE THAT THE POWER OF TRADE IS ENTERING THE EVENT, WHICH WAS ONLY SUPPOSED TO BE A CURATED EVENT.”

Q. I have one comment and one question. I very much agree that we need to develop the collector base, and that's something that can only really happen at the gallery level. Just in terms of marketing, from your perspective, I know that a lot of my collectors are not interested in being called VIPs. It's not something that fascinates them, so this whole VIP aspect is not of interest. But that might be different for other people. With regard to my question, in addition to an evolving fair situation that we've had in the last 10 years or more, what we have also seen is an evolving biennale situation. There seems to be more and more of them. As a gallerist, I'm very interested in biennales and I work very hard to get my artists into them. I don't know if it's something that you think about, as someone who's involved in art fairs. What is the relationship between art fairs, biennales and galleries?

J.F. You're totally right, this leads to another point, which we've seen also in many art fairs, where there is more and more of an incentive to curate the presentation from outside the gallery, using independent curators.

Art fairs are commercial venues, but the curating side is entering that. And the opposite is also true: in biennales like the one in Venice, you see that the power of trade is entering the event, which was only supposed to be a curated event. So the two forces are mixing. I don't think I like either of those two new developments, but they are a reality.

V.S. I heard from a gallery during the last Venice Biennale that they were really excited when their artist was invited to participate, but they were then asked to pay 100% of the production costs of the work and 100% of the shipping costs. So the pressure to sell the work is there. But obviously there is a really clear distinction between biennales and fairs: one is curated by curators; the other is a selection of galleries who will then show what they want and it's very transparently work for sale, whereas I think with biennales, it is something different. It's a very different experience and I personally love visiting them as well.

I think the funding situation of biennales means that a lot of it is then passed back to galleries and inevitably then a commercial aspect has to come into it. It's very difficult to avoid that, because the costs have to be covered. And about the term *VIP*: I hate it too. I wish someone would come up with something better. We're actually doing away with the VIP room at Frieze this year, because I just think the idea of a VIP room and the name of it is slightly unappealing, so we're using it for talks instead.

“THERE IS A REALLY CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN BIENNALES AND FAIRS: ONE IS CURATED BY CURATORS; THE OTHER IS A SELECTION OF GALLERIES WHO WILL THEN SHOW WHAT THEY WANT.”

Q. I am from Germany. I have a very small gallery in Regensburg, which is even smaller than Salzburg. It's in Lower Bavaria and nobody knows it. I totally agree with you: there are far too many art fairs coming out. We are bombarded with applications and requests asking us to apply for this and that art fair. I find it extremely difficult to choose because, on the one hand, we have the pressure to be at the places where the big fairs are, but we cannot afford to go to the big fairs yet because I have a very small gallery, so the budget is very limited. I have a question for the gallerists firstly: would you recommend that I attend small fairs

or would you say, “No, wait until you're able to do a big and important fair”? I also have a question for Victoria: with regard to the selection of galleries that participate in Frieze, would you tell the gallery, “Look, you participated in this bad fair, so you're not considered suitable to participate in ours?”

V.S. It's a good question. With regard to the earlier part of your question, I think a really important action for galleries is supporting your local fair. It sounds as if where you're from, there may not be a fair there specifically, but nearby. When Frieze London started, there were a lot of London galleries for whom, for many years, that was the only fair they could do. That was their home fair. Being part of your home fair is important, and showing support to the city that you're in and building up your local collector base. I think that's the most obvious first thing to do in many ways. And for some people, they think, “Well, why should I do a fair in my city? I know the collectors there, I should go somewhere else.” But I do think it's really, really important to be in your local fair.

“BEING PART OF YOUR HOME FAIR IS IMPORTANT, AND SHOWING SUPPORT TO THE CITY THAT YOU'RE IN AND BUILDING UP YOUR LOCAL COLLECTOR BASE.”

In terms of the second part of your question, I don't think a selection committee would ever make a judgement on a gallery based on whether they attended their local fair. I think that's something that is totally understood and encouraged. If they're in the fair and they're doing a great stand, I would say that what selection committees are mainly looking at—and I've sat through many, many selection committee meetings—is the gallery programme. We're not that interested in what other fairs people do. It's interesting to see what other fairs they choose to do, but it's not going to be the decision-maker. It's much more about the artists they're showing and the programme itself. That should be the absolute focus for a young gallery, I would say. Focus on your programme because that's what people will judge you by more than anything else.

J.F. If you do a good presentation among a number of others that are not so good, it's not a bad way to be seen. I think that's definitely the way to start.

E.B. My own policy is to go to the best and the good ones, meaning not only the major ones but also LISTE, Independent, etc. There are other good fairs for young galleries. But the first thing I recommend is what you say, Victoria: go to your local or national fair. In Germany, you have Cologne. It's a good fair. You can have a lot of possibilities if you mount a good booth. And then think about jumping to another fair.

C. I want to go back to WME, which made the brilliant move of getting involved with Frieze. WME has veered a little bit from just being an agency and a media group. They own all of the fashion weeks. And the reason why the partnership with Frieze works for WME, as far as I understand, is that they see verticality in Frieze as a company. I've noticed that, besides collectors, some of the people who attend the fair are never going to buy art. They might, but for the most part they're just going because they want to have the experience of the art fair. I'm just wondering whether WME sees that as a place where they're monetising and are worrying less about creating new collectors. Could you comment on that and what you see as the future of that?

**“THIS IS THE THING IN LONDON AND
NEW YORK: THE TWO CITIES ARE FULL
OF PEOPLE WHO COULD BE BUYING ART
BUT ARE NOT YET DOING SO.”**

V.S. I think the key thing you said there is that people come. They might come for the restaurants, for the architecture or for the experience, and maybe they will buy. And this is the thing in London and New York: the two cities are full of people who could be buying art but are not yet doing so. And if the restaurants is what gets them to Frieze New York, that's fine by me as long as they're coming. They're starting to think about it, they are feeling more comfortable in that world, they're looking at more art and they're meeting more galleries. And maybe coming to Frieze gets them going to Chelsea or to the Lower East Side or to Brooklyn or wherever and visiting galleries and meeting gallerists in their spaces. They're seeing more art. It's all good. I think the experience of the fair has to be really positive for everybody, it

has to be positive for the top collectors who need somewhere good to have lunch, otherwise they're going to leave and not come back, and it also has to be good for the people who are just coming for a day out but who may then become part of the travelling circus, as you beautifully put it.

Q. I'm Susan Mumford, founder of the Association of Women Art Dealers. My question is twofold, and I'm afraid it's somewhat directed at you, Victoria. One is that I've seen a response by many gallerists, perhaps in their first 10 years particularly, who are developing multiple brands so that they can get into fairs that are more prestigious. It's also the only way for them to viably reduce risk, be able to take that risk of doing some of the more prestigious fairs. I'm interested in your take on that approach, which we do see. One gallerist who I personally know says that they would like to be the first gallery to exhibit at Frieze who also shows at the Affordable Art Fair.

V.S. To answer your second question first, if they apply, they'd be judged on their programme, and if they are good enough to get into Frieze, they would get in. It's that simple. As I said before, we're not really looking at what other art fairs people do. What they're doing as a gallery with their programme is much more important. On the first question, I haven't come across people setting up different strands of their gallery to get into fairs. I'm not sure why they would need to, but I would be curious to know more about it. But again, if the entity that they were applying with had a great gallery programme, that's what they're going to be judged on. There's no issue with what else they're also doing on the side, I guess, as long as there's not a conflict of interest.

Q. Thaddaeus mentioned the group from Cluj that was a common initiative of many people, and this is something that's been happening in East Europe. In response to the lack of galleries and the lack of a market, people tend to get together and try to collaborate. I know that there was an artist-run space that got to the Vienna art fair like this. So let's say they actually found the funds through a private donor to apply to the youngest section. Would that be a possibility for them? Or would they have to be a gallery? Could an artists' organisation manage to make it and then from there get exposure and maybe actually get a gallery to represent them?

V.S. We have had situations like this before. I think when Vitamin Space—originally from Beijing—first joined the fair, they were not a commercial gallery, but they were doing extremely interesting things. They had a programme of exhibitions and they were working closely with artists, so they mimicked the gallery structure. Frieze was the first fair they ever did, and they did that for a few years in London before trying anything else. So, it's not unheard of, and especially in a part of the world where, if there are no commercial galleries, this is the most interesting thing, then we'd still be interested in representing it. I should say we do have stands for non-profit galleries in the fairs as well. We give free booths to non-profit galleries from the cities that we're in. And actually, we initially gave Vitamin free space in the fair. That's how they came into Frieze in the first place. So it's not unprecedented.

Antoon Ott

Antoon Ott studied Art History and Law at Leyden University in The Netherlands. After his years as director of the Foundation NedArt, in 2005 he started Artilaw, a consulting firm giving advice about matters relating to art, culture and law to public authorities, ministries, foundations, museums, equity funds and private individuals. He specialises in the art and antiques market and advises the F.E.A.G.A. on legal matters. He collaborates regularly on the F.E.A.G.A. newsletter and sits on the board of several cultural institutions. He has written several publications on art and is currently working on the biography of a famous Dutch collector.

Adriaan Raemdonck

Adriaan Raemdonck opened his gallery De Zwarte Panter in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1968, while still a student at the art academy. He organised several exhibitions, such as those dedicated to Wilfredo Lam, Jan Cox, Fred Bervoets, Jan Vanriet and Dr. Hugo Heyrman. He collaborated with Iris Clert, a Parisian avant-garde gallerist, and is also a publisher. De Zwarte Panter is the oldest gallery for contemporary art in Flanders.

He is the president of the Belgian Modern and Contemporary Art Galleries (BUP) and the F.E.A.G.A. He takes care of the regular F.E.A.G.A. newsletters, providing essential news to all its members. Adriaan

Raemdonck has received several awards in recognition of his broad area of interests and his activities in various cultural fields, among them literature, music and film.

LEGAL MATTERS FOR EUROPEAN GALLERIES. AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND KNOWLEDGE

SPEAKER
Antoon Ott

PRESENTER
Adriaan Raemdonck



LEGAL MATTERS FOR EUROPEAN GALLERIES. AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND KNOWLEDGE

Adriaan Raemdonck (A.R.) Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, allow me in the first place to thank the director of Talking Galleries 2017, Lluçia Homs, and the collaborators for their hospitality towards the Federation of European Art Galleries Association—F.E.A.G.A., in short. This is the fifth year that I have had the opportunity to participate in these symposiums, so I can testify that Talking Galleries has continued to maintain its profile as the leading international platform for gallerists, stimulating the debate and exchange of the new trends specific to the art gallery sector. This symposium brings together key art world figures of the highest level to discuss gallery strategies. The publication edited afterwards collect the contents of the lectures and discussions and consolidate Talking Galleries as a defining event in the practice of gallerism in the international art market. This is the first time that F.E.A.G.A. has been invited to play a direct role in this workshop.

I'd like to begin by briefly introducing F.E.A.G.A. to you. The Federation of European Art Galleries Association is a unique assembly that represents the political interests of over a thousand modern and contemporary art galleries in Europe. In this capacity, it is active in European policymaking in Brussels, lobbying for issues such as *droit de suite*, resale right, and the reduced VAT rate for cultural transactions. F.E.A.G.A. has also pioneered an initiative to promote public interest in the profession of gallery management, and has created the European Gallery Awards to that end. These awards were created 13 years ago to honour outstanding and/or innovating European galleries. Since then, the awards make the work and effort of galleries more visible and their importance for art more appreciated. The president of the

F.E.A.G.A. Art Gallery Award jury is our inspiring colleague and friend from Vienna Ernst Hilger. The awards are presented yearly at the start of Art Basel, one of the most beautiful, prestigious and innovative art fairs in the world.

For F.E.A.G.A., it's important to think about the future of our exciting profession. We have to be alert to the changes taking place in our globalised society. The changes in values, the ups and downs of the economic cycle, technological progress, the Internet and the rise of new economic poles all pose new challenges. New interaction and spaces affect the art system and the agents involved. We must anticipate these new realities. F.E.A.G.A. will plan a strategy to address the most urgent challenges affecting gallerists, among them resale right, copy reforms, fiscal programmes, VAT and a code of conduct. In the future, we will also open a discussion in Europe to make art tax-deductible. Furthermore, F.E.A.G.A. wants to enlighten the general public as to what is involved in the management of a gallery, especially when it comes to supporting artists and building a market for their work. Gallerists are the only professional market-makers for young artists.

F.E.A.G.A. has also issued an artist-gallery guide. We are now working to update the guide in a digital form. In this publication, attention will be drawn to the gallery-artist relationship. The book will also include a very practical part dealing with the contracts between galleries and artists. Important elements of such contracts will be clarified in a language that you can understand without being a lawyer. This is a very important matter for gallerists and artists. Karine Verloren van Themaat, our dedicated secretary-general, is always at your disposal to answer all your questions concerning our organisation, and she will put you in contact with the different fields we work on. Thanks to our excellent lawyer, Antoon Ott of Artilaw, F.E.A.G.A. issues regular short updates in a newsletter on the state of affairs with regard to all juridical problems and questions of our sector.

I thank you for your attention and I wish you an interactive workshop and an inspiring symposium. Don't hesitate to participate and ask questions. I give the word to Antoon Ott.

Antoon Ott (A.O.) Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I would like to introduce myself briefly. As the son of a Dutch art dealer, I have been interested in art and the art market for as long as I can remember. After completing my studies in Law and Art History, I became director of NedArt, a Dutch umbrella organisation which defended the interests of the art world. In 2002 I started my own company, Artilaw, in which I combine my expertise in both art history and law. I advise dealers, collectors, gallery owners, artists, museums, governments and foundations on subjects at the intersection between art and the law. In 2009, F.E.A.G.A. engaged me to assist them in helping to reduce the negative aspects of *droit de suite*, and I have been involved in the activities of the federation ever since.

**“ONE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTIC
OF THE ART MARKET IS THAT IT
TRANSCENDS BORDERS, SOMETHING
THAT CAN MAKE THE LEGAL ASPECTS
OF THE BUSINESS VERY COMPLICATED.”**

My experience over the last 15 years has been that the world is becoming increasingly legalistic, whether we like it or not. A typical example is that contracts—in all fields—have become much longer. In 1980, a typical loan contract with a museum would have fit on one page; nowadays, a six-page contract would be more common. Compared with sectors such as medicine or the steel industry, the art sector is tiny. This means that sometimes the measures and laws implemented, even if they may be positive across the board, can be extremely disadvantageous for the small art sector. For the most part, this is not deliberate. People are often unaware of how such measures might impact the art world. A good example of this is the efforts to combat the poaching of elephants for their ivory. No right-thinking person would oppose a law to put a stop to the trade in ivory. There are, however, many antique ivory objects, and the trade in these has no influence whatsoever on the welfare of elephants. Despite this, it has become very difficult to deal in such objects in places such as New York. Compared to the world of natural and environmental protection, the art sector is little more than a sliver, and it can be extremely difficult to bring its priorities to attention within the bigger picture.

One essential characteristic of the art market is that it transcends borders, something that can make the legal aspects of the business very complicated. Think, for example, of the financial consequences of cross-border trading: import and export licences may be necessary before international transport can be arranged, for instance, not to mention insurance. When it comes to legal responsibility, there are cultural differences in each country and continent, and the consequences of damage, errors and suchlike incidents could be significantly greater in the United States than they would be in Europe, for instance.

Because of the limited size of the art sector compared to other sectors, and considering the trend towards a more legalistic world, there is one essential word for the effective protection of the art market's interests. That word is "collaboration." Galleries must work together to protect these interests within their own countries. A more collaborative atmosphere will ensure the promotion of shared expertise and quality. The formation of a group or society also ensures a clear point of contact for the outside world, something governments find particularly useful. Many of you are probably thinking now: "But surely we have had such associations and societies for a long time." Of course, but in the rising markets—Eastern Europe among others—the level of organisation is significantly lower and there is still much to do in this regard.

“GALLERIES MUST WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT THESE INTERESTS WITHIN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES. A MORE COLLABORATIVE ATMOSPHERE WILL ENSURE THE PROMOTION OF SHARED EXPERTISE AND QUALITY.”

Collaboration is also important at an international level. The exchange of knowledge, keeping each other up to date with relevant developments: all this is extremely important. Aside from that, just like national governments, international organisations such as the European Union much prefer to have a clear point of contact with whom to deal. I have been talking about collaboration in the vertical—between galleries—but collaboration in the horizontal sense is also necessary. By that I mean we should foster the involvement of other branches of the art market, such as auction houses, trade fairs, etc.

I now want to examine a number of subjects more closely with you. These are primarily legal aspects that have arisen in the last few years, particularly within the European Union. I will begin each subject with a short introduction, after which I would like to hear your reactions and questions. I would also welcome suggestions from you, because these issues can subsequently be raised on the F.E.A.G.A. agenda. I have formulated propositions for each subject. They are not too subtle, so they will hopefully stimulate you to respond and ask questions.

“THERE ARE VARIOUS OBJECTIONS IN THE ART MARKET TO THE *DROIT DE SUITE*. STATISTICS SHOW THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE RESALE RIGHTS GOES TO ONLY A FEW HEIRS, WITH LIVING ARTISTS RECEIVING JUST A SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY.”

The first issue I'd like to bring up is a very popular one: resale right, or *droit de suite*. Most of you will already know what this refers to, but I will explain it briefly for those who might not be familiar with the concept. *Droit de suite* is a French invention dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. It involves a levy that is collected so that artists and those benefitting from their estates may profit from the increase in value of their artworks. It was also thought that *droit de suite* would foster artistic creativity. A percentage of the sale price is retained each time the artwork is traded apart from the first time it is sold. This must then be paid to a collecting agency, which in turn pays the artist or their heirs.

There are various objections in the art market to the *droit de suite*. Statistics show that the vast majority of the resale rights goes to only a few heirs, with living artists receiving just a small amount of money. In Europe, *droit de suite* is levied on each transaction above a threshold amount. This means that it makes no difference whether or not an artwork has increased in value; the artist profits even if their work is worth less than it previously was. *Droit de suite* operates within the EU and also in a very small number of other countries, but the international art market as a whole is far from being a level playing field in this case.

Now that I have briefly presented the situation, I hope to get some questions in response.

Q. Why doesn't the United States have resale royalties?

A.O. That's a good question. They are not in place in the United States because there has always been a strong lobby against them. They existed in California, for instance, but there was a lawsuit and they were cut, which is how the situation remains. That means that it's more attractive to sell an artwork there than in Europe.

“WHEN THE ARTWORK IS SOLD FOR A PROFIT, THERE'S AN EXPECTATION THAT THE ARTIST ALSO SHOULD BENEFIT FROM IT, BUT WHAT ABOUT WHEN THE VALUE OF THE ARTWORK GOES DOWN?”

C. At ADAA, we've been very active on *droit de suite* coming to the United States, and what you said about California is true. It was very unenforceable except for very high profile sales and it was reduced because it's against inter-state commerce. However, they're trying to resurrect it again; it requires constant vigilance. What our association found out is that the only people who really got rich were the collecting agencies. They took 68% of the percentage that was supposedly going to the artist. 68%, which is outrageous! We've fought it and we'll continue to fight it. We are looking for a law that is fair and equitable and that involves living artists, instead of just five very wealthy dead artists' estates.

A.O. The last point you make is interesting. I know from figures that in France, for instance, around 90% of the money goes to eight or nine families of dead artists.

Q. I'm afraid to say this out loud—I don't want people throwing things at me—but I've always been really strongly against *droit de suite*. I think when an artist produces something and sells it, that property passes on to somebody else. When the artwork is sold for a profit, there's an expectation that the artist also should benefit from it, but what about when the value of the artwork goes down? What about

when something needs conservation or something else happens? I feel that it's really unjust.

A.O. I can add one figure to that point: it's not something that is often in the news, but 97-98% of objects decrease in value. So your argument is very strong.

C. I'm an art lawyer too, based in Berlin. To add to this percentage issue, I think the British collecting societies take 15% of the proceeds. I think the problem with *droit de suite* is that it actually only serves the wealthy artists. For the other artists, it just creates a lot of bureaucracy, and for the galleries it works like an additional tax, because they can avoid it, at least in Germany and I think in other countries, by a lump sum payment to the tax that's paid together with other taxes. It just increases the costs. Plus, it's bad for competition, because if you sell something at auction in Switzerland, they don't have this and they fight it. I think the main issue is that it's just in favour of important artists like Gerhard Richter, who benefits a lot. But one must also say that it's limited: the amount is limited to a maximum amount of €12,500 per sale. All in all, it's just a lot of bureaucracy. And your second point would create even more bureaucracy, because then one wouldn't even have to figure out what the price of the work was at a certain time in the past.

“THE PROBLEM WITH DROIT DE SUITE IS THAT IT ACTUALLY ONLY SERVES THE WEALTHY ARTISTS.”

A.O. A more general question I received beforehand by email is, “What happens to the art world when Brexit happens?” First of all, I was very honoured that that question was asked because it assumes that I can look into the future. I cannot, but it is still interesting to think about possible scenarios. Great Britain was one of the major lobbying countries against *droit de suite*, so you could say that it's one of the things they want to get rid of if Brexit is worked out. I know that they are working on it, and it could be a kind of compromise that they only apply to living artists. Because it's a very important art market, it would create an interesting situation with the rest of the European Union. When any buyer in the world makes a purchase in a country where there is no *droit de suite*, it doesn't apply.

Q. So *droit de suite* is country-based and not related to artists?

A.O. It is both. It is country-based, but it also applies to artists from the European Union. So when a painting by a French artist is sold in London, it applies. When we sell an American artist who has lived in France for 30 years, it also applies. Asian art, on other hand, doesn't apply.

C. I'm very pleased that you have raised this issue, because I live in Germany and I have a gallery there. We pay to the Bild-Kunst and the Künstlersozialkasse. It doesn't matter which country the artist comes from; we need to pay the state. So it's really confusing when you buy and you sell and whether it's in Bild-Kunst and it's really in Europe. It's chaotic, because some galleries in England and France don't know about this. When I explain this to collectors in England or Spain, they say, "We don't do that here," but I need to pay to the Bild-Kunst and the Künstlersozialkasse. And sometimes they reply, "But we don't need to do that." So there is a big difference in the payments. I think it's very important that if it applies to Europe, it should apply everywhere.

“COLLECTING AGENCIES HAVE A LOT OF MONEY TO LOBBY, AND GUESS WHO'S FINANCING THAT? YOU ALL DO. THAT'S A VERY STRANGE SITUATION.”

A.O. In the end, it is a problem that affects us all. I think that is how we should look at it. It's very difficult to attack that in every country and also difficult to say to one country, "You should be more active in collecting *droit de suite*." It should be seen as a European problem that needs to be solved.

Q. There are a lot of gallery owners and people from associations of galleries here, and we're all against this situation. What could we as a collective do to fight against it?

A.O. There are several things. What differs is that in one country you are obliged to pay a particular collecting agency, whereas elsewhere how you pay is free. What you could do then in that situation is make your own arrangements with the artists whose works you've sold, because in the end it is money that has to be taken by or through the

artist, it's not money that you have to pay out of your own pocket. That's important. In general, you have to choose your moment. I think that next year or the year after, there will be a new review by the European Commission. There was a potential moment last year, but with the German government in favour and the French government at that moment in favour, it was impossible to get rid of *droit de suite* as a whole. So we have to wait for two years. There will be a review then, and we have to put our arguments forward. The members of F.E.A.G.A. write, we share views, and we can use that information to send to the European Commission. Then you have the strongest arguments possible. But in the end, changing it is still a political decision. You must not forget the collecting agencies have a lot of money to lobby, and guess who's financing that? You all do. That's a very strange situation. It's also easier to lobby for the poor artists than for what they see as the rich gallerists. That is very difficult.

C. What you say about lobbying is true. In the United States, it's extremely expensive to hire a lobbyist. When you do, things happen at the last minute in Congress. So if you are not there literally at midnight, something can go into a bill and that's the end of your chance. I personally feel that the artists' rights community does not protect artists. In fact, I think they're detrimental. They take a huge amount of money. That whole notion has to be dealt with, and it's unfair, because they make it sound as if they're protecting artists and they're not.

A.O. That's a very good point. I can tell how the situation is in the European Union: there is a new regulation that will oblige collecting agencies to give more figures. They have to be more transparent. That means that for the first time, artists can see, "Hey, that's a lot of money which is not going to me." That gives us a new argument we can use. We know that the European Commission isn't at all happy with collecting agencies. Step by step, it takes time, but that will be a good move.

C. It would be also important for us to be in touch with you, because we can use your example in our cases in the United States. The thing about the artists' rights agencies is that, in the end, they're protecting themselves. If you want to photograph something and promote a not-for-profit even in the most innocent way, they make the process so difficult and charge so much that you virtually give up. It's detrimental to the artist's career; it is not positive. It's a situation that I think requires some effort.

A.O. Let's move on to a subject you will all be very happy with, I think. VAT is very complicated, and I don't propose to go into it in detail; I shall just elaborate on a couple of the main points. VAT can affect the business of a gallery in a number of ways. First, there is the VAT that the artists themselves must deal with. In most countries, the lower tariff is applied so that VAT will actually, from a government's viewpoint, stimulate the arts. This then raises the question of whether or not something is in fact art, and the answer to that varies from country to country. In France, for example, video art does not fall under the category of art for the purposes of VAT. The gallery itself will have to deal with VAT in a number of ways, particularly with regard to sales, of course. This may have implications for those selling at foreign art fairs, for example, especially when they are outside the European Union. If a gallery imports an artwork from outside the EU, import-VAT must be deducted. The tariffs are different in the various countries of the European Union, so it is cheaper to import from some countries than others. Altogether, it is fair to say that within the EU, VAT is actually one of the least uniform regulations. There is a high tariff and a low tariff, and which of these an article falls under varies from country to country. On top of that, the tariffs are not the same in every country. For a market that transcends borders, such as the art market, this can make things very difficult. On the basis of this, here are a couple of propositions for you.

**“THERE IS A NEW REGULATION THAT
WILL OBLIGE COLLECTING AGENCIES TO
GIVE MORE FIGURES. THEY HAVE TO BE
MORE TRANSPARENT.”**

Q. I'm just wondering if there's ever been an attempt to make VAT the same across the European Union.

A.O. There were many attempts, but this is one of the parts of law making where every country has to agree, so it's impossible.

Q. I come from Budapest, where VAT is 27%, and I just wanted to talk a little bit about this. It's very difficult for Hungarian galleries to sell in a normal way, let's say, and let's be honest and admit that some galleries are sometimes forced to sell without any invoice because the collectors are not willing to pay this very high VAT.

A.O. Your example of the 27% on art is very interesting. With F.E.A.G.A., we have supported submitting reports to the Hungarian government to explain why they should use the lower level. One of the clearest arguments is that, if they were to lower the tariff, I am convinced they would receive more money. That's the easiest argument you can use.

C. We have done a lot of lobbying activities over the last five or six years without any success. So if F.E.A.G.A. could help or if you have any proposals for joint lobbying, maybe in Brussels, that would be great.

A.O. Brussels wouldn't help. That game has to be played in Hungary. Just like I said before, choose your chances and there will be a moment when there is a government that agrees with your arguments. Then you can have the change. We have to be patient, you have to wait until you have the good chance and then you have to act.

C. I had heard that if Brexit happened, then English galleries would have to find a partner in Europe, so there was something on the table about dealing with a different VAT structure because of Brexit. I wondered if you knew anything about it.

A.O. These discussions are at a very early stage, so I can't say anything clear about it. They are talking about everything. Of course, taxes will be a very important issue, but also a very difficult one. I don't know what the outcome will be.

C. The European Union is a single market. Let us imagine a situation: a certain person, a gallery, let's say, imports from a non-European country, usually China, although it could be the United States or Switzerland, just to mention the important ones. Once it has entered the European market, it has the legal entity to circulate all over the European Union. That, in practice, means that you can choose the country you import through.

A.O. Of course. In the Netherlands, they changed the import VAT from the low level of VAT to the high level—it went from 6 to 21%—and during that year, there was hardly any VAT collected by the government. So they changed it because everyone imported via London. The figures were very clear. My next subject is the protection of culture and the effect of laws for the protection of culture on the trade in modern and contemporary art. The protection of our cultural heritage is, of course, important. To this end, within the European Union, we have the

directive on the return of cultural goods unlawfully removed from the territory of a member state and a regulation that covers the granting of licences for the export of cultural goods from the European Union. Nothing new or and nothing shocking there, then, at least not when it comes to modern and contemporary art. But following the deplorable developments with regard to the cultural heritage in the Middle East area, a new trend has become apparent. Legislation in this area is becoming increasingly strict, even for art that has nothing to do with illicit trafficking. A clear example of this can be found in Germany, where the Act for the Protection of Cultural Property has come into force. There are strict rules governing exports, and import rules have also been introduced. The directive, which I mentioned earlier, has also been amended. For example, in the old version, only paintings that were 50 years old or more and had a value of over €100,000 were affected. These thresholds no longer appear, meaning that modern and contemporary paintings will now also fall under the directive. In short, more and more art is becoming subject to protective laws and regulations.

C. We all know the Italian sales that occur in London all the time. They are the result of the Italian national heritage protection law whereby everything that is over 50 years old is subject to this very dodgy law. Nobody really knows what it means. That's why all the Arte Povera was exported and sold in London. In Germany, we have a similar law: it covers every export within the EU union, which is new. Previously, it only affected exports outside the EU. Now, if a collector in Munich wants to ship a painting that is more than 75 years old and the value is over €300,000 and he wants to send it to his summer house in Salzburg, he needs a permit. There is no regard for privacy and personal freedom. Lots of estates exported huge amounts of works just before the introduction of this new law. So it leads to the opposite of what it is really meant to be. And one could also ask very fundamentally whether this national heritage protection is something that is appropriate for our times at all.

A.O. Thank you for your contribution. I can add to that. The European Union at this very moment is doing a survey because they have a plan to introduce an import licence for every country in the European Union. We have export licences now, but they also want to have import licences. That can all affect you in the European Union, with the possible

exception of the UK. The trend is that legislation is becoming stricter and stricter. This started with other subjects, but it's increasingly starting to affect modern and contemporary. Germany has taken a step in this direction and now they want to have the rest of the European Union follow suit. When the European Union has taken that step, they can talk with other countries outside the European Union to encourage them to do the same. So it is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

My next subject, the issue of the relationship between the gallery and the artist, is also very important. The basis of most galleries is their stable of artists. Sometimes the relationship between a gallery and an artist is a temporary one: perhaps they simply don't suit each other, or the artist either fails to break into the market or enjoys great success and decides to transfer to another gallery. There are also many examples where a relationship of trust develops and lasts for a lifetime. As in other areas, the effect of the law has increased here as well. Where previously a relationship might have been less pressured and verbal agreements worked well, this is sadly no longer the case, and such a relationship can sometimes become very complicated. It is therefore very important that the contractual relationship between the gallery and the artist is clearly defined from the outset. What can the artist expect from the gallery? A certain number of exhibitions, for instance? Promotional campaigns, yes, but how many? On the other hand, what can the gallery expect from the artist? A certain number of works each year? The attendance of the artist in the gallery and at fairs and events? These are the sort of arrangements that must be set out clearly in order to minimise misunderstandings and avoid conflicts. As Mr. Raemdonck has already said, F.E.A.G.A. will be producing a publication later this year that will examine a number of aspects of the contract between the gallery and the artist in more detail.

C. In a previous edition of Talking Galleries, we discussed the issue of contracts. You'll be very interested to know that very, very few galleries have contracts.

C. I think everybody has contracts related to specific works when you're paying for the production or investing in an exhibition or in a production. But then a general contract with an artist, I find it very difficult.

A.O. Of course. But some here have commented that it depends on the artist. So it's not the gallery that wants the contract, but rather the artist.

C. I was just saying I think it's more artist-driven than gallery-driven. Specific artists won't ask for contracts, and there isn't an umbrella contract with each artist, I believe, in most galleries.

A.O. And is it so that the artists who want a contract are the most difficult to deal with?

C. Not really, because they set out what they want from the very beginning, so you are fully aware of it when you take them on. In fact, it's easy: you just adhere to the initial outline.

A.O. Well, less law is better, and this is also true in this case. But I have had difficult situations turn up on my desk in which agreements were not written down, or were very old, and there was a huge gap between the parties' expectations.

C. Based on your experience, what's your take on the differing relevance of short-term consignment contracts and longer-term working agreements? I think when people here contract, they only think about the long-term relationships that tie an artist, but what we have found with many contemporary dealers is that they might collaborate with artists, take some to fairs and do exhibitions, but on a consignment basis. And then we do see some artists demanding contracts as well.

A.O. It depends on the situation, to be honest. There are galleries with very long-term collaborations, where there has been a basis in a contract and, even though it was done a long time ago, it still works fine. You can have very specific contracts for two or three years, or just for one year, even for one exhibition. It depends. What can give rise to difficulties is an exhibition that was not done in a way the artist wanted.

Q. Last year at Talking Galleries, we had one panellist who discussed the idea of an agency that would work between galleries and artists, taking care of all the artist's legal issues, such as his resident's permit, his contracts, etc. The agency would obviously take a percentage. What's your stand on this?

A.O. I wouldn't propose that. The relationship between the gallery and the artist must be dealt with between the two. If you put a lawyer in the middle, it will be more difficult. It will be more legalistic, which is not good. What would be good is that art academies devoted more attention to legal issues and how to start a business. I do that sometimes and it's very nice, because it's completely outside artists' usual experience. They can't remember the detail, of course, but they know something about the subject and that's enough. It means they also know when they have to ask questions and they know, "Oh, this is difficult subject. I have to do more about it." That's good. Art academies should do more in that respect.

**“THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE
GALLERY AND THE ARTIST MUST BE
DEALT WITH BETWEEN THE TWO. IF YOU
PUT A LAWYER IN THE MIDDLE, IT WILL
BE MORE DIFFICULT.”**

C. I'm from Paris. I'm vice president of the French Committee of Galleries, Comité Professionnel de Galeries d'Art. Last year we worked on a new code of conduct. We discussed it with F.E.A.G.A.. Of course, the document is only intended for galleries, but it talks about relationships with artists and public collections, and also about relations between galleries. I think we all know that we need to go further on these professional matters. We have worked with a lot of galleries, young and old. We know it's been harder for older galleries to go back to starting contracts, because they have been working with their artists for many years, whereas we see that the youngest galleries start to have contracts more readily. I think it's a collective matter that we all have to work on together, because it's going to be the future. I think maybe we could have more information about what's going on in the United States: we know they use contracts a lot more than we do in Europe. And we talked a lot with a series of galleries to hear their opinions and experience, and to share experiences. We produced this code because we are working on new contract models. Of course, it's going to be really difficult to cover every different case, but we all need to share this information.

A.O. Absolutely. First of all, you should take a look at the website. This project has been very well thought through. It is in French and English. It is really, really good. I would maybe add a second important point: there are the big, very professional galleries and then there are the less professional, smaller galleries. Maybe the problems are more frequent in this latter segment. But there are a lot of these smaller galleries, so the work you have done is very useful.

To finish, let us consider the role of the gallery when an artist dies. The gallery can still have an important role to play after the death of an artist. It is often the gallery that announces the death of an artist to the world and acts as an official spokesperson to relieve the family of this task. These are the immediate, practical aspects, but the role may extend much further. Sometimes the gallery also fulfils the function of executor for the estate of the deceased. Part of this estate can be in the form of unsold works, whether held by the gallery or at the artist's home or studio. How should these be dealt with? Should they be sold? If so, should this be done all at once or extended over a longer period in order to maintain pricing levels? Or would it be better if some pieces were given to museums to promote the name and fame of the artist? In the case of more famous artists, a foundation is often set up to promote the interests of the artist and their work in the longer term. And there are usually sufficient funds or stocks of saleable works available for the financial support of such an organisation. But for less successful artists—and they are obviously the majority—this is frequently not the case. The same questions nevertheless remain. How can the work of the artist be kept current on the market? What is the situation with regard to copyright, for instance? All of these questions have legal aspects. It is possible for a gallery to establish guidelines for many of these questions before the death of an artist and, if possible, agreements should also be made with the family and other parties.

Sabrina Amrani

Sabrina Amrani (Paris, 1980) inaugurated the eponymous gallery in 2011 in Madrid, where she lives and works since 2008. Her programme focuses on artists from the Global South dealing with socio-political, socio-cultural and economic issues. She is a former industrial business and people strategist and, until 2009, she developed projects in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and America. Amrani is President of Arte_Madrid, the association of gallerists of Madrid, of which she has been a board member since 2014.

Carles Guerra

Carles Guerra is Director of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies, in Barcelona, since 2015. From 2009 to 2011 he was Director of La Virreina Centre de la Imatge, in Barcelona, and Chief Curator at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) from 2011 to 2013. His work and research investigate the dialogical aspects of artistic practice and the cultural policies of Post-Fordism. Among the exhibitions that he has curated are *Antiphotjournalism* (2010), *A Monument to Radical Instants* (2011), *Phantom Home. Ahlam Shibli* (2013), and *Art & Language Uncompleted. The Philippe Méaille Collection* (2014).

Anthony Reynolds

Anthony Reynolds established the eponymous gallery in London in 1985. Over a period of 30 years, the gallery has concentrated on the work of true independents of all generations and has a reputation for the discovery of exceptional artists and the development of their careers over the long term. There is no stylistic or generational thread running through the programme but strong elements of surprise, independence offering both aesthetic and intellectual stimulation. Since 2015, Anthony Reynolds Gallery has no fixed address; exhibitions take place in other galleries internationally.

Jocelyn Wolff

Jocelyn Wolff is founder and director of the Galerie Jocelyn Wolff in Paris. At its beginnings, the gallery focused on the new German and Austrian art scene, presenting the first exhibitions by Clemens von Wedemeyer, Christoph Weber, Hans Schabus and Ulrich Polster in France. The gallery programme highlights the legacy of conceptual and minimal art, and introduces the work of important historical artists such as Franz Erhard Walther or Miriam Cahn. Initially located in a small space in Belleville, in East Paris, in 2006 the gallery moved to a new space in the same neighbourhood, in the Rue Julien-Lacroix.

CURATED GALLERY PROGRAMMES

SPEAKERS

**Carles Guerra, Anthony Reynolds,
Jocelyn Wolff**

MODERATOR

Sabrina Amrani



CURATED GALLERY PROGRAMMES

Sabrina Amrani (S.A.) Hello, good afternoon. First of all, thank you very much for the invitation. It is a real pleasure for me to take part in Talking Galleries, which in my opinion is one of the best initiatives in the art world in Spain. I hope we'll have a fruitful conversation and a fruitful round of questions about curated gallery programmes. With me today we have Jocelyn Wolff, from the eponymous gallery in Paris; Anthony Reynolds, a gallerist from London who started out in 1982 and opened his first gallery in 1985; and Carles Guerra, currently the curator of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies. As for myself, I am a gallerist from Madrid. My gallery is only five years old, which I think is worth mentioning, because curated gallery programmes depend very much on one's experience in the art world.

My first question to all of you is, within your own context, what does it mean to curate? What does it mean to be a curator? I will start with Carles Guerra, who is the legitimate, official curator on this panel.

Carles Guerra (C.G.) Well, I think you just pointed out one of the problems, actually: we look at institutions as the legitimate reference to define what curating practises should be, even though the fact of the matter is that curating has expanded and gone beyond its natural space. Nowadays, one can even speak about curating one's apartment, for instance. So curating actually pervades every single sphere where there is art, and sometimes even spheres where there isn't. As a curator, I always like to focus on the innovative aspects, on being scientifically coherent and daring. But the truth is that, when we look at the actual situation of institutions in

relation to the gallery system, today galleries can do bigger, better and faster than institutions, So, in a way, we institutions are being left behind. If we look outside, we can find plenty of alternative initiatives that work with considerable freedom, agility and flexibility. And if we look at the actual infrastructure of institutions, in Barcelona there are commercial stores and fashion stores opening in the most beautiful landmark properties, spaces where years ago one would have fantasised that institutions should be placed. As of today, institutions have to reinvent what curating means. I'm not saying this is bad. It's quite an inspiring situation in which we must reinvent what the role of the institution is going to be and what curators should be doing.

“TODAY GALLERIES CAN DO BIGGER, BETTER AND FASTER THAN INSTITUTIONS.”

S.A. So you are saying that, at some point, the gallery system integrated the curatorial aspect of institutions.

C.G. It is not about mimicking or even stealing the procedures of institutions. It is about a rapid cycle of appropriation, which we witness nowadays in the world of fashion as well. When something appears on the streets, already the next day it will be massively industrialised and globally distributed. That is the current logic of narration; it's quite a fast cycle. A few years ago, it would have taken a decade, or at least several years, to adopt an experimental practice or a more disinterested curatorial procedure, but now these forms of innovation are rapidly translated into commercial spaces and even into private spaces, which sometimes can be as big as an institution.

“THERE'S CURATING EXHIBITIONS, WHICH EVERYONE DOES IN COMMERCIAL GALLERIES OR INSTITUTIONS. AND THERE'S CURATING THE ARTIST AND THEIR CAREER, BECAUSE REALLY THE JOB OF THE GALLERY IS TO START WITH THE ARTIST AND WITH THE WORK, NOT WITH THE EXHIBITION.”

S.A. Anthony Reynolds, maybe you can add something to that. How have you seen curating practices enter the gallery system?

Anthony Reynolds (A.R.) There are two different aspects: there's curating exhibitions, which everyone does in commercial galleries or institutions. And there's curating the artist and their career, because really the job of the gallery is to start with the artist and with the work, not with the exhibition. And you have to devise the best way, the best context, the best space and the best clientele for that artist's work.

S.A. Jocelyn, would you like to add something?

Jocelyn Wolff (J.W.) Think about a gallery programme, which is made up of the artists you are working with plus the ones you are actively showing. If you see galleries as political parties of the aesthetic realm—which is a field where aesthetic ideas are debated through artworks, through performance or even through the words of the artist and the actors—, then it follows that the artists you represent also defend ideas, aesthetic ideas. In that sense, a gallery embodies a sort of political programme. I'm a little bit concerned about the fact that you cannot just put everything together into a gallery programme. What I observe is that the mega-galleries nowadays are all very successful because of what they call the programme; but it's actually just a way to cover all the segments of the market. Whatever you might be interested in, they have it: the best, the worst, the old...

“A GALLERY EMBODIES A SORT OF POLITICAL PROGRAMME. I'M A LITTLE BIT CONCERNED ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU CANNOT JUST PUT EVERYTHING TOGETHER INTO A GALLERY PROGRAMME.”

In my reading of art, there are lots of contradictions. For me, you cannot work with an artist who promotes a certain idea and then work with another artist who defends exactly the opposite. You can do it, but not without losing your coherence. I see galleries like Marian Goodman as a role model. Another new, very successful gallery that also has a very coherent approach is kurimanzutto, which is a mega-gallery but with a programme, and they don't show opposing artists.

I think the key is the artist himself. If they want to be represented by a political party which is pro-Brexit and anti-Brexit at the same time, or which is super capitalist and super socialist at the same time, and if that doesn't bother them, then I think there is a problem on the artists' side: many of them don't care anymore about this coherence or about seeing their work appear in a promotional context with totally opposite positions.

S.A. So, are we talking about this kind of stereotype: the curated gallery programme versus the commercial gallery programme?

“FIRST WE NEED TO SHARE A COMMON VISION, A COMMON LANGUAGE AND COMMON AESTHETIC VALUES, AND THEN WE CAN WORK TOGETHER.”

J.W. It is not a stereotype that some galleries establish a coherent aesthetic programme. For me it's a fact, not a stereotype. And the fact that some absolutely fascinating galleries don't care about this coherence is not a stereotype either. I think some of the best shows you see in galleries like Hauser & Wirth are absolutely extraordinary exhibitions that I would love to be able to do, but they show all kinds of art and there seems to be no programme behind it. In fact, the key to their success seems to be that very absence of programme.

A.R. So would you say that you have a very particular direction for your programme and that you look for artists who fit into it?

J.W. That's not exactly how it is. I think that some artists are the opposite of each other, and I would not like to work with artists who offer contradicting readings of the world in which they evolve. For instance, this morning we had a very interesting talk by Thaddaeus Ropac from Paris and Salzburg, but his entire vision is based on ideas that are totally different to mine. I don't have his romanticism, I don't think that the artist is purely an individual genius alone in a studio, and the artists I work with don't feel that way either. They don't feel that it's a solitary adventure in the studio that needs to be brought into the world. They don't speak about masterpieces, it's not in our vocabulary. I would be really shocked to hear an artist tell me, “Oh, this is my masterpiece.” That very notion has no place in my reading of art.

So first we need to share a common vision, a common language and common aesthetic values, and then we can work together. I'm very dependent on their vision and I very much listen to my own artists' advice in order to build my programme. If an artist says, “No, you cannot show that, it's so reactionary,” I would ask them why, and if they are convincing, I would maybe consider not to work with an artist that I was interested in at first sight.

A.R. I find that I have built my stable of artists, such as it is, by surprise. I never planned to pick this or that artist: they just came at me out of left field and I couldn't ignore them. So one ends up with 20 or 25 artists—I can't remember how many I represent—each of whose careers you've got to deal with in their own terms, but at the same time you're trying to make some sense of why they're with you.

J.W. I totally agree. For me, it's an organic process. You start working with some artists and you grow from there. But, of course, it's an open discussion. I discuss possible new artists with the ones I already work with.

“THERE IS A MUCH MORE TRANSVERSAL CIRCULATION OF CAPITAL AND POSSIBILITIES, THE LINE THAT USED TO DIVIDE INSTITUTIONS AND GALLERIES LOOKS RATHER BLURRY NOWADAYS.”

S.A. So there is a different “strategy”, a different “line” or a different “thread”, let's say, that each gallerist decides to follow. Do you think a gallery should adopt a curated programme? And if so, what would the benefits and the disadvantages be?

C.G. Personally, I don't think there is a choice. Nobody can really think about a programme that has not been well thought-out, supported with discourse, and somehow advocated. It would be naive to just present the raw and the real to clients. On the other hand, I think there is another aspect that we are probably overlooking: if galleries are penetrating into institutions it's because we need their collaboration, financially and logistically. So the issue here is not whether to be curatorial or not, but to acknowledge that there is a much more transversal circulation of capital and possibilities, and that the line that

used to divide institutions and galleries looks rather blurry nowadays. In the past, it was taboo to say this as an institution, at least here in Spain, where most of them were heavily subsidised. The institution was the sacred sphere where market interests would not enter or contaminate. Today that is no longer possible. In the current scenario, we have to co-operate and try to do things the best we can given the conditions. This does not mean being unethical or operating with a vested interest: it is the reality.

“IF GALLERIES ARE PENETRATING INTO INSTITUTIONS IT’S BECAUSE WE NEED THEIR COLLABORATION, FINANCIALLY AND LOGISTICALLY.”

S.A. Anthony, Carles was talking about transversality and how institutions and galleries are permeable and work together. You have a gallery and, very recently, you decided to have no space. Can you tell us more about how you operate?

A.R. I do everything that a gallery does, but I don’t have my own space. I collaborate with other galleries and use theirs. They host me, or I’m in residence. It’s very much a collaborative venture. I started without a gallery, so I’m in a similar situation now. For three or four years, in the early 1980s, I worked with artists and organised shows in other spaces. In fact, I did the first ever extramural Venice Biennale exhibitions, so I was responsible for a lot of unfortunate things since. That was in 1982. Over a period of 32 years, I had a gallery and three physical spaces, but eventually I decided to change the model, to collaborate more with my colleagues and try to think about the advantages of curating work in different spaces and different contexts—different programmatic, social, geographical or client contexts. This meant I could think about meeting the needs of each particular artist in terms of choosing the best position, the best location and the best presentation of their work. So it’s part of curating their careers, and I think we should always get back to that: it’s a long-term, continuous job of curating as a gallery. I also think that everyone gets the client wrong: the client is the artist, not the collector; the collector might be the facilitator; and maybe the gallerist is the entrepreneur. But the artist is the client.

S.A. You say that now you can explore more than before the advantages of curating, the advantages for your gallery and your artists of working in other spaces and collaborating with others.

“EVERYONE GETS THE CLIENT WRONG: THE CLIENT IS THE ARTIST, NOT THE COLLECTOR; THE COLLECTOR MIGHT BE THE FACILITATOR; AND MAYBE THE GALLERIST IS THE ENTREPRENEUR.”

A.R. It’s good fun too. I’ve only been doing this for 18 months, but I have done five shows: one in Brussels, one in Zurich, one in Barcelona and two in London. I’ve got one coming in Berlin, one coming in Paris, one coming in Amsterdam, and maybe another one in Teheran. It’s not about popping up in a random empty space; it’s about collaborating with another gallery. I talk to the gallery concerned, I consider what the most interesting interjection into their programme would be, and then I discuss what the best choices would be for the artist I have in mind. So, for example, I did the show in Barcelona—a collaboration with àngels. To my knowledge, they had never shown a painter. I said I thought they should, and we brought in a fantastic painter, a 57-year-old from north Vermont. The show went extremely well, they had institutional and private sales. I think what it did, and what this venture does in general, is create an event, which is something one needs to take advantage of. One can create something that the normal clientele at both galleries is not used to, so they’re intrigued, and it stimulates the audience in general. A curator essentially selects work, takes care of it and makes it available for interpretation, rather than necessarily interpreting it himself. He should just make the interpretation available. And that’s what needs to be done with artists throughout their whole career.

J.W. In my case, it’s really a process. My very first artist was Clemens von Wedemeyer. When I approached him, he was still a student at the Art Faculty in Leipzig. And he said, “OK, I would love to participate in your gallery programme. Who are the other artists?” I had to reply, “Hah, you are the first.” You have to start somewhere and then, through constant conversation, you nurture your artists. You also change, you evolve some of the art, you grow, you develop a vision or you change your mind—luckily you change your mind—, and then you also start to see art a little bit more through their eyes. That’s how I started to work with all

the subsequent artists, because they were very important references for my generation of artists. I was working with Prinz Gholam, and through him I started to work with Franz Erhard Walther. They both are very much into the relationship between performance and sculpture, which is now a key aspect of my programme.

“IT SHOULD BE VERY MUCH ABOUT THE FAMILY OF IDEAS THAT YOU FEEL CONNECTED TO. DO THE ARTISTS YOU ARE WORKING WITH SHARE SIMILAR VALUES? IF SO, CAN YOU DEVELOP A VOICE AS A GROUP, AS A FAMILY?”

But I'm just speaking about the way I did it. What I love about the art world—because I don't want to be misunderstood—is its plurality. I think it's very important to have all kinds of voices. I'm not telling anyone to just follow my model. There are plenty of models, but I'm very attached to this one. Marian Goodman was a role model, and there are several other galleries I could mention, among them Chantal Crousel. Another gallerist I liked very much was Barbara Weiss, who passed away recently. For me, hers was a really great example of a gallery that maintains a certain coherence in the artists it works with. I also care about gender. I think it's very important to support female artists; right at the beginning of my programme, I could not imagine having a gallery with mostly men. And it's also because of such values that I am able to have very interesting conversations with feminist artists such as Miriam Cahn, because we share these values. So it's a conversation between the gallerist and all the artists who are part of the programme.

For me it's very precious, but I'm not saying that this kind of gallery necessarily does better exhibitions or represents better artists. Ultimately, I think it should be very much about the family of ideas that you feel connected to. Do the artists you are working with share similar values? If so, can you develop a voice as a group, as a family? That is something I really care about, and Barbara's was one of these amazing galleries that developed a very specific voice. I think it will be greatly missed, and it's very rare. For me she was a role model.

S.A. I agree with you on the ideas you just outlined and also about the experience of building a programme. I believe in intuition as well, and each one of us has followed theirs to give voice to a certain group of artists, to a certain aesthetic or to whatever it is you decide to defend. I have only been a gallerist for five years. My experience is that I decided to work with a certain kind of artist and, at some point, I felt a pressure from the market, and I also had doubts. Carles, you talked about the financial tensions and how they can limit your work. Is it something that you have experienced in your career, Anthony? How does this tension affect your ability to defend and stay true to what you believe in?

A.R. I think that the confusion between the public and private sectors has got a bit out of hand. But public money isn't there, so I understand why. I've heard some pretty horrific things said about an artist. I've heard senior curators at an institution saying, “There's no way we'll be able to show this artist without the backing of a certain gallery.” Unfortunately, institutions tend to think that all galleries can be tapped. Some do have the money and some others don't. But one shouldn't favour the ones that do in order to establish an institutional programme. Sometimes it gets a bit too close that way.

“FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF AN INSTITUTION, YOU ALSO WANT THE GALLERY TO BE PART OF THE INNOVATION, BRINGING NEW ARTISTS.”

C.G. We need to imagine a more co-operative way of working. In Spain, at least, the responsibilities and remits of galleries and institutions used to be very clearly separated, but that is no longer the case. I think that it's for the better, it's not something to complain about, but it does change behaviour, both for galleries and for institutions. Jocelyn was advocating for coherence in the overall programme of a gallery. I agree with him. When you see those galleries doing well, they are doing their job, they are taking care, they are really building up this nice package. But in the end, that sort of coherence becomes very much the sign of a brand, of an identity, and all the different artists get somehow subsumed. I'm not saying that's bad.

Things happen in a cycle, over time, so we must also look at the effect of things over time, not just at first sight. Over time, those galleries

come across as not being so emotive; they stick to the old values, to the old folk and the old friends. They become almost a family. So in today's context, it looks like the gallery is missing the point by trying not to renew the whole stable—and the good galleries are those that have succeeded in keeping some artists from past years while also inviting new artists to the team, etc. But from the point of view of an institution, you also want the gallery to be part of the innovation, bringing new artists and trying to see what happens when a new artist is paired up with the old ones, what happens to that cohesiveness, that coherence. How do you approach new times? What I really like about your new practice, Anthony, is that you seem to be hybridising with other gallerists.

A.R. Absolutely.

C.G. You're working not just with a gallery and an artist, but with the whole system itself.

A.R. That's the plan.

S.A. Earlier today, it was said that our industry is becoming more and more professionalised and that, in the case of mega-galleries, tasks, positions or functions are increasingly divided. Some galleries actually integrate a curator, and hence the gallerist is not in charge of curating, as he or she would be in a smaller gallery.

J.W. If you start to operate thousands of square metres, you are necessarily further removed from the studio and you cannot organize that many exhibitions for you to personally curate. To me, it's very important for the gallerist to remain an artistic director, but with this increasing professionalisation, we are seeing a division of labour. In this case, the curatorial aspect could be hived off just like any other function that was done by two or three people. Marian Goodman was a very big gallery in the early 1980s and she had about 20 people. That would now be a medium-sized gallery.

As scales have changed, a division of labour has developed. And when this impacts what you might consider the very heart of a gallery's identity—the programme—then the gallery becomes something else. As an analogy, let us look at the publishing field. Now all the independent publishers are part of bigger houses. That doesn't mean

that they have lost their independence, but it's still not the same thing to be Gallimard and Flammarion. Plus, I think there is a cultural impoverishment whenever you lose lots of independent voices. The cinema in Hollywood is a typical example. Most of the films produced are not really interesting, and it would be a tragedy if independent cinema were to disappear. I really care about diversity. I don't mind having Walmart galleries as long as you have the *épicerie fine* next to it doing its own thing. But it becomes problematic when the *épicerie fine* becomes a shelf, just an element of the Walmart. And this is actually what's happening lately. So I'm a little bit worried about it.

“AS SCALES HAVE CHANGED, A DIVISION OF LABOUR HAS DEVELOPED. AND WHEN THIS IMPACTS WHAT YOU MIGHT CONSIDER THE VERY HEART OF A GALLERY'S IDENTITY—THE PROGRAMME—THEN THE GALLERY BECOMES SOMETHING ELSE.”

C.G. The idea of maintaining diversity and heterogeneous forms of presentation in the art world is a good point, but there is also a natural tendency to fuse and blur the dividing lines.

J.W. Yes, but it could be regulated, like many other things. For instance, Paris is one of the few cities in the world that still has lots of independent bookshops everywhere, just because of a law on the single price for books implemented by Jack Lang. Of course, this law was shocking for the hardcore capitalist who does not believe in regulation. Because of it, independent bookshops and big chains offer books at the same price. That is regulation, clever regulation. Would you rather have a city like New York, where there are almost no independent bookshops? I don't want to live in a city with no bookshops and no cafés. Is this what we want? And the same applies to galleries. Do you want to go to Paris and find three galleries, or would you rather find 200? You don't need to visit the 200, but it's important that you can choose. This can be lost very fast, and it could also be regulated very easily.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUESTIONS (C/Q) FROM THE AUDIENCE

C. “Regulation” is a very dangerous word, probably not so much in Europe, but definitely in the United States. Not because regulation interferes with commerce or anything like that, but because of the rule of unintended consequences. I worked in government and I had to lobby government, so I know how it works. Lawmakers make regulations and rules about industries they don’t really know about. They think they’re doing the right thing; I myself tried to do the right thing, and with the best of intentions, but I completely messed it up because laws can be interpreted, changed and worked around. And they’re there permanently. It’s so hard to get rid of a law. What happens is you have to legislate over the existing laws.

C.G. But you have very important anti-trust laws in the States, don’t you?

C. But anti-trust laws govern real competition between huge industries. In the art world, most of the industries have been individual dealers. That is not happening anymore. I completely agree with you, and I understand the issue, but the last place that you want to go to in America, certainly in New York City, is the legislature, because they have really no understanding of the way business is done in our industry, they really don’t.

J.W. You know, for me, the legislature in this matter is the artist. The ultimate, the only regulation is the artist. They are perfectly free to say, “I’m interested in this gallery because it promotes this kind of vision,” or to say, “I absolutely don’t care.” Regulation doesn’t necessarily have to come from the government. You always have it, in one way or another. I really think that it’s part of the artists’ role and responsibility to determine and shape their ecosystem. That’s what I’m talking about.

C. I completely agree with you on that. However, it is not what we’ve seen in the last 15 to 20 years. What we’ve seen is some galleries offering a great deal of money to artists who feel that, in the end, that’s what they want. We’ve seen it over and over again. It has happened, and it has affected medium-sized and small galleries that have developed an artist’s career. I’m neither pro nor against it, but I don’t share this romantic idea of the artist who is interested only in principle, in the work and the politics. I think that Europe, the one I grew up in, is gone,

frankly. And what I see more and more, I’m sorry to say, are artist-entrepreneurs.

J.W. There were always some who were.

C. That may be, but at least in my experience, it’s more prevalent than when I started.

S.A. I think each gallery, or rather each gallerist, chooses the kind of artist they want to work with. I have always felt that this conversation is framed on two extreme poles: it’s always the market, or financial pressure, versus something more ideal or romantic. However, I don’t feel that either my practice as a gallerist or the relationship I aim to have with my artist are romantic.

C.G. I would also be against regulation because of the tendency to homogenise and to ignore the heterogeneity of the different agents in the art world and other cultural fields. Yes, I am in favour of some kind of protective measures, because we do have a perception of art as a cultural production that is not just born as an enterprise. Sometimes, it is born out of very meagre conditions, out of precariousness. And what we then see is how those practices, and their content, are appropriated by more robust economies. So we do need to have different economies within the art world. I’m not saying that we have to maintain precarious forms of production, but at least we have to allow them to survive and to have a life of their own so that they can become part of something else in the future. I would agree with Jocelyn: you have to try to provide for different scales of cultural production in relation to the market, and not just imagine one way of doing business.

Q. I come from the European Cultural Centre in Venice. We have a lot of educational programmes there. I wanted to link our discussion to the need to create a new public and to educate the community so that, in the future, galleries can still exist and make money. And I wanted to ask you, when you’re thinking of the programme, what’s the priority: the gallery’s identity or the clients? Do you try to attract them? Is the need to reach out to a new public even on the agenda? Or is it not a priority at all?

A.R. Well, it’s definitely a priority to expand the audience for your artists, not just to fit the artist into the community that already exists.

I'm interested in expanding audiences, absolutely. I think it's part of my responsibility as a gallery.

C.G. For an institution, I think the priority is not only to increase the number of visitors or audiences, but also to identify different expectations in the community and to actually diversify as much as you can the implied homogeneity behind what we usually refer to as "audience." That is an important task.

**"IT'S DEFINITELY A PRIORITY TO EXPAND
THE AUDIENCE FOR YOUR ARTISTS,
NOT JUST TO FIT THE ARTIST INTO THE
COMMUNITY THAT ALREADY EXISTS."**

J.W. In addition to that, I think it is very important to address an audience that is sensitive to artistic research. If it does not exist, we have to build it. For me, the gallery is really a space where artistic experiments take place, because it's just the room after the studio. And artists are very interested in meeting with a specific audience, because they also need to address the work to someone: the artwork doesn't exist without an audience. For me, the gallery is the best way to work with important artists to deliver a certain quality of audience. I really draw a distinction between people who consume art very fast, without a certain sensibility for research, and people who love research. And I think it's the same for a curator: you don't necessarily need to know that the show was seen by hundreds of thousands of people, but you care about certain professionals who are sensitive to certain aspects of your curatorial proposal. I see artists and curators as cultural producers that are sensitive to this very audience.

C.G. We say "the public", or "the audience", and it's a very basic idea. But the challenge is to turn this public into co-operators of some sort, into collaborators. That is the real shift.

C. I wanted to get back to the competition between institutions and galleries in regards to curating. It seems to me that that's not where the conflict takes place. It's more of a programming issue. Your competition is over programming, and a gallery is often much better equipped. The attention economy can compete with the market economy in many ways, and that's where we overlap, not so much at the curatorial

aspect. The institution has to protect and take care of a collection, and galleries have to take care of the artists. But there's this whole other level that we're working on together or at odds with each other. I think it's a mistake to see curating as the conflict area.

C.G. In a way, I agree with you because I also think that the gallery is much more agile, flexible and keen to define new trends and bring them into the attention economy, as you said. But on the other hand, I still think that curating is a very pervasive behaviour. It is everywhere. It's not like you can decide whether to have a curated gallery or not – you will do it by any means possible because you want to defend your artists, you want to support them discursively, you want to curate a certain cohesiveness out of a stable so that the identity evoked is more consistent.

**"I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO
ADDRESS AN AUDIENCE THAT IS
SENSITIVE TO ARTISTIC RESEARCH. IF IT
DOES NOT EXIST, WE HAVE TO BUILD IT."**

C. I just wanted to comment on what Jocelyn said about curating and curating a stable. I think the nature of a gallery is that you curate it organically. You don't set out to curate your programme—it happens in a very natural and organic way. And artists that you gravitate towards bring in other artists. My generation certainly didn't get into the art world to make money. It wasn't like that: you got into it for the love of art. There are very large galleries who pay curators hundreds of thousands of dollars to come into their gallery and put on a show, and they pay an architect to design that show. If we were not curators, we'd just be salesmen. I think it's an organic process and it's the nature of wanting to own a gallery, work in a gallery and be part of an artist's formation and the maintenance of their career.

S.A. I agree with you on the organic aspect of building your programme.

J.W. But that's not the reality. Let's look at things a little bit more accurately. You have many galleries whose programme is aimed at covering all the segments of the market. One cannot deny that these segments exist; that would be a very idealistic perspective. I grew my programme organically, but not all galleries do, and I'm fine with that.

However, we have to stop saying that it's always the case. Whenever money is being made in a new country, suddenly you have an artist from that country in a gallery's programme. We are among friends here; we have to discuss things honestly, and it's not true that it's always organic.

S.A. I think that if we go back to the early days, taking the example of Thaddaeus Ropac, who was here this morning, it was very much organic back then.

J.W. It was not organic. Warhol in the early 1980s was already an absolute star. I really think that, in the old days, people were also thinking in terms of marketing strategies. You had very successful artists like Picasso and Bernard Buffet in the 50s; they were even more famous than Koons today. I think Bernard Buffet is a good example: he was even more well known by the average person on the streets in Germany, for instance, than Koons is nowadays. Let's not always be fair to these old times, which were actually quite different to what we're describing so far. If we look at Africa: now you have lots of new wealth there, which is also why you have new art fairs and collectors, especially collectors from the Western world. A community of collectors emerges in Africa with the intention of reselling these artists to them later on.

**“CURATING IS A VERY PERVASIVE
BEHAVIOUR. IT IS EVERYWHERE. IT'S
NOT LIKE YOU CAN DECIDE WHETHER
TO HAVE A CURATED GALLERY OR NOT.”**

S.A. Let's not generalise, especially in the case of Africa. I do believe that there are some people that would like to take advantage of the situation because of their training or due to the financial interests. Still, I have to say this would only be a very small number of people. On the other hand, there is also more of a socio-political motivation, maybe for the younger generation. For some, working with African artists, North African artists or Middle Eastern artists might be a trend, but for me, there is a personal motivation and a reason, those are my roots, that's where I am from.

J.W. For you, yes.

S.A. Touria El Glaoui, who founded the African fair 1:54, is more or less my age, I believe, and if I'm not mistaken she is the daughter of a very famous painter. There is the need to provide room for her father; to give room and visibility to her roots, her culture and her generation. People are gradually getting to know my programme in Madrid, but when I opened in 2011, I just showed North African and Middle Eastern artists. I also show artists from Islamic countries like Pakistan, so I'm in front of an audience that is really not... I won't say "ready", because it's not the proper word, but it's something like that. I don't like to generalise, but I really believe that there is good in every decision and that not everything is driven by the market or by money in this world. Maybe I am naive.

Q. I'm going to merge two things again: one is educating new audiences and new collectors; the other is the gallery as an example to institutions. I worked in a cultural centre in Serbia for three years, and we had a wide programme, ranging from philosophical debates to performances, theatre and music. I very much liked the interdisciplinary nature of it. Perhaps we can go back to the Soviet avant-garde idea that art should be everywhere, or maybe, as Jocelyn was saying before, art should be a union of voices. It might sound a bit utopian, but you could use this perspective to build new audiences. You can have artists in the gallery that are trying to explain an ideology, but then one night you also have a rock band that has lyrics along the same lines. Another day, you invite a novelist, because the person who likes literature doesn't necessarily like art; then you have people that like all aspects of culture. Maybe these models—which try to approach audiences from different areas—already exist. I'm not aware of many of them, though. I very much enjoyed all the philosophical debates that were taking place, for example, in Angels' gallery. I know that some are already doing it, but how can a gallery space become even more of a cultural centre? How can it delve not just into art, but also into other industries that are interrelated to a certain topic or a certain ideology?

J.W. I think it depends on where you are. If you are in Paris, you already have so much cultural competition and so many places that you cannot really develop a model. I think if you have a gallery in a place where there is a lack of intellectual debate, the gallery can take on many different roles, fill that void and build an audience; but if you are in a place where there are already very active universities and a plurality of institutions with different visions, then the gallery might not be able to do this.

I never considered that I had to publish, for instance. I come from the publishing sector and I'm very attached to the idea of publishing, but I don't necessarily think that it's the role of the gallery to publish for every show. I think it's much better to support independent publishing houses whenever they do a project with an artist you are working with. I don't think that everything should always be integrated into or dealt with from the gallery. You can also be a very silent partner with many people you care about; you don't need to constantly bring everything back to the gallery. Again, it really depends on where you are.

“IF YOU HAVE A GALLERY IN A PLACE WHERE THERE IS A LACK OF INTELLECTUAL DEBATE, THE GALLERY CAN TAKE ON MANY DIFFERENT ROLES, FILL THAT VOID AND BUILD AN AUDIENCE.”

I've never been to Serbia, but I imagine it to be totally different. I'm very interested in Eastern Europe and I'm very aware of the fact that it is not as if nothing happened before 1989. There was always a vibrant culture, in communist times as well, and it was not necessarily less interesting than what was taking place elsewhere. Artists were already communicating it and the world was already very globalised in terms of art. But for sure, you have some areas where there is a need, where galleries can contribute in a very efficient way and really be the centre of cultural life.

C.G. I agree with Jocelyn, it does depend on where you are. But again, going back to the idea of galleries doing lectures and other activities, I think there is a real need. Otherwise, the object is just a raw material. If you want it to be a commodity with a certain surplus value, you really have to work on it, and you would be naive not to do so. That is the beauty of art: objects are objects, but those that are placed in certain contexts of discussion become more valuable, more interesting and more appealing. This is also worthwhile for an institution. I have to work to integrate the institution into the city's economy. It's not something I can leave aside or ignore; I really have to rebuild how the institution operates in the urban economy. It's not just an accident that we are placed in the middle of Barcelona, which is a massively touristic city, increasingly threatened by all these luxury stores that one day will probably have art presented in a much more lavish way than we are

capable of in our institutions. This is part of the game, and we'd better be realistic about it.

C. I loved what the young lady from Serbia said. But we heard this morning that the art world is still infinitesimally small despite globalisation. If we don't make an effort to widen it, who else will? That's why I love your idea of having rock concerts, literature readings, book launches and so on and mixing it all up. Whenever you do, you gain new people, you go beyond the small constituency of insiders who will always be there. In the past, in the auction world we tried to do pop concerts and lectures. I remember inviting Jeff Koons at the time of La Cicciolina to give a lecture at Sotheby's. One lady was so shocked to see these big images of La Cicciolina on the screen that she walked out and slammed the door. I said, "Oh my god! We've alienated a very important client forever." Well, the next day she called up and she said, "I'm deeply shocked that Sotheby's should condone something like that. I'm even more deeply shocked that *you* should condone something like that. But, listen, I have a painting that I want you to come and look at." She then consigned that painting to Sotheby's. Quite frankly, had she not been shocked, she would never have had the idea of doing it. So there are many different ways of bringing people in. When you do a direct sale, very often it backfires, because it's clear that you're just trying to sell and you're trying to push something on. But if you show that you care about culture in the wider sense and you do things that are not directly related to selling, very often the impact on selling will be much greater.

S.A. Of course galleries are still the place to talk about art and to bring people together. Many gallerists work very hard to have visitors, which is not easy, as previously discussed. In addition, it requires more than time. I sometimes do an event—in fact we organise a lot of talks in collaboration with art centres—but not necessarily in the gallery. From a practical standpoint, however, I'm not sure we can all manage to do that, and I think Jocelyn said it very well: it depends on where you are.

A.R. I think it does depend on where you are, to a certain extent, but I still feel that there were more serious discussions 25 years ago than there are now. I don't know whether that's because it's become the norm, and so one doesn't get as interested or excited about the opportunities that arise now. Like the rest of the art world, there is so much to choose from, the interest is spread so much thinner than

before. I don't think it was just that I was more idealistic back then, but I was definitely much more involved with philosophy, art, music and all kinds of things around the art world, despite how small it was. Perhaps because it was so small, it forced itself out more.

S.A. Could it also be related to how much time you had?

A.R. I suppose so, I don't know. There are so many opportunities now to engage with people in places like London, Paris or Barcelona.

C.G. But I get the feeling that there's not just one art world now. We sometimes have this fantasy that there's one single world. There are many different views of what art history is. If you go to China, art history is completely different to what you may understand here in Europe or even in the States. So, in a way, our world has become more relativized and more unstable, which probably makes it all the more fun as well.

J.W. But do you think, for instance, that art publications were better 20 or 30 years ago than they are now? I don't think so. I think we are living in a fantastic time in terms of publishing and art magazines. To my knowledge—I look at all the publications, because I also work with older artists—quality is not declining, and neither is the discourse about art.

A.R. No.

C.G. The art world has never been as closely connected to other spheres—business, urban planning, etc.—as it is nowadays.

J.W. I see an incredible quality in publishing, and there are many fantastic artist books today. We live in a very precious moment in terms of artistic production. I think the market is a kind of chamber where you can hear an echo of what is going on in artistic research, but it has different criteria. The gallery is directly linked to this vibrant research that is taking place right now. The elements that artists invent nowadays may or may not find an echo in the market, it depends. Sometimes they don't produce anything material, and I also support that type of artists. I know that their market may be very hard to build, but I don't care, I still work with them.

C.G. I think that nowadays the art world has a great impact on other spheres of life, as I said—lifestyle, architecture, etc. But the problem is that the revenue of that impact in financial terms is very rarely seen. At least, that is what we complain about here in Barcelona. This is a city driven by a few artistic icons such as Miró, Picasso and so on. But the revenue of the service-oriented economy, which is partly founded on the attractiveness of those artistic icons, does not really pay back to the source. On a larger scale, this is quite dramatic, because we have not been able to defend our relevance in the current economy. I would argue this happens on an urban scale. There is no clear relationship between what is obtained through the service economy—which, as I said, is very much founded on a series of attractive icons, such as *Modernisme* and other, very broad ideas—and the art sector, even though it attracts people. If you look at how much money goes back to the sources of cultural production in the city, it's very little. There is no clear accountability for that.

C. I think we are here together because we have respect for the past and we believe in the future. I am sure that right now there are a lot of young people—young artists, gallerists, collectors, art directors and museum curators—working very hard for the future. A gallery has many tools; it is not just limited to the artists. Sometimes I try to work with artists, to paint with them, to do something with them. It's more than just selling them. And I think that is the research for the future too, because there's no real answer about our job. I think it's very important that the system—the government, the ministries and so on—give chances to the art world, because it's one of the most important things. We need it. And I think this is the perfect platform. Bravo!

Martin Aguilera

Martin Aguilera began his professional career in art at Galeria Graça Brandão and Estate of Lygia Pape, in Lisbon. Later, he was assistant to the owners at Cheim & Read in New York. In 2015, he joined Mendes Wood DM in São Paulo as the Head of Sales, where he has specifically worked to introduce Brazilian contemporary art to significant collections in Asia, Europe and the United States. Recently, Aguilera relocated to New York to run the gallery's new project space. In 2017, Mendes Wood DM will open its third space in Brussels.

Melanie Gerlis

Melanie Gerlis became the weekly art market columnist for the *Financial Times* in September 2016. She was previously Art Market Editor at *The Art Newspaper*, reporting on auctions, art fairs and market news globally since 2007. Before entering the art world, Gerlis worked for ten years at Finsbury, a strategic communications and investor relations firm, advising investment banks, hedge funds and other financial services clients in the City of London.

Her book *Art as an Investment? A Survey of Comparative Assets* was published by Lund Humphries in 2014.

Lisa Schiff

One of the leading and internationally recognised art advisors, Lisa Schiff has over a decade of experience building private collections and foundations. As the founder and Principal of SFA Art Advisory, she has offices in New York, Los Angeles, Portland and London. Schiff is ABD on her PhD in Art History from the Graduate Center, CUNY. She holds an MA in Art History from the University of Miami, Florida. She is the co-founder of VIA Art, a non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting artistic production, thought leadership, and public engagement.

Adam Sheffer

Since 2003, Adam Sheffer has been Partner and Sales Director at Cheim & Read in New York, where he has expanded the gallery's scope of representation, adding artists such as Ghada Amer, Chantal Joffe, Tal R and Sean Scully. Prior to Cheim & Read, Sheffer was Director at the Robert Miller and Mary Boone galleries, where he began his career as assistant to the owner in 1994. In 2014, he was named a benefactor of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, where he first encountered art during his childhood in Boston. In September 2015, he was elected President of the Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA).

THE STRENGTHS AND BENEFITS OF THE MID-SIZED GALLERY

SPEAKERS

**Martin Aguilera, Lisa Schiff,
Adam Sheffer**

MODERATOR

Melanie Gerlis



Adam Sheffer Cheim & Read
Lisa Schiff Schiff Fine Art
Martin Aguilera Mendes Wood Gallery

Moderator
Melanie Gerlis
Financial Times and The Art Newspaper

Panel Discussion
45min + 45min Q&A

THE STRENGTHS AND BENEFITS OF THE MID-SIZED GALLERY

Melanie Gerlis (M.G.) Thank you everyone for coming here today to listen to such a knowledgeable group of panellists, who flew in from New York to talk to us about the strengths and benefits of being a mid-sized gallery. And thank you Adam, Lisa and Martin. Just before we get into the meat of it, I thought it might be helpful for us to define what we mean by mid-sized. As far as I'm concerned, mid-sized would include everything in between a tiny, emerging gallery and a mega-gallery. Is that something you all would agree with?

Martin, Adam and Lisa Yes.

M.G. Good. We can further debate this as we go along. Generally, I think we have had people here at Talking Galleries explaining that mid-sized doesn't necessarily mean you have only one outpost. Mendes Wood and Cheim and Read, you both define yourselves as mid-sized, but you don't have a staff of a hundred, as Thaddaeus Ropac has, for example. The first question to each of you is, what do you see as the benefits of being a mid-sized gallery?

Adam Sheffer (A.S.) Well, thank you Melanie, and thanks to Talking Galleries for having me again this year. It's an interesting question. When we were arranging this panel and deciding what we were going to call it, the idea of mid-sized sounded like a rental car option more than an actual classification of a kind of gallery. I just don't think it's something that you can put parameters on. But when it comes down to saying what the benefits of a mid-sized gallery are, well, for me it has to do with the fact that they are personal, privately owned businesses, at least for the vast majority of us.

The direct benefit of that is that you don't have to answer to a board of directors, you don't have to answer to shareholders, and you don't have to function like a large corporation, the way an auction house, for instance, might have to. So a lot of the decisions you make, whether they are intellectual, emotional or financial, are yours and your group's. I think that is the benefit of something that is relatively contained: there are never too many decision-makers involved.

M.G. And how might that benefit the artist, for example?

A.S. I think in our business, regardless of the size of the gallery, it's all based on personal relationships. My colleague Susan Dunne, who is our vice president at the Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA) and president at the Pace Gallery, asked a question yesterday and used the word "organic." I think so many of the relationships that happen are precisely that: organic. Although she's not on the panel, I'd like to point to Susan again as an example of somebody who works at a large, incredibly prestigious gallery. She's been there for almost 30 years. Her connection to some of the most significant artists of the 20th century is based on a long-standing personal and business relationship. If she were to leave these roles, I think we would be looking at a lot of divorces. That's basically how we look at it.

**“IN OUR BUSINESS, REGARDLESS
OF THE SIZE OF THE GALLERY,
IT'S ALL BASED ON PERSONAL
RELATIONSHIPS.”**

M.G. What would you say to that, Martin? What are the strengths of being neither huge nor tiny?

Martin Aguilera (M.A.) I think it allows us to be very malleable and flexible. Thaddaeus mentioned something very significant yesterday about his ability to work with other galleries and what that would mean. For a young gallery like us, being only 6 years old, a lot of the expansion and growth happens as a result of these relationships with galleries that are either younger than us or significantly older than us. The space that we just opened in New York, for example, is actually in collaboration with Michael Werner gallery, which is quite odd, but also quite interesting in the way that we pair artists. We have an Afro-Brazilian artist in her 70s right next to a Picabia from the 1930s. Trying

to analyse what that means is very interesting. We also work with galleries that are significantly younger. We invite them to come to São Paulo to do shows.

M.G. And are the galleries you collaborate with all overseas?

M.A. For the most part, yes, although we also have strong relationships with all the galleries in São Paulo. There's a much more communal atmosphere there than in places like New York.

M.G. Lisa, when you buy from a mid-sized gallery, what are the advantages as a client? Although actually, as Anthony said yesterday, artists are the clients, not collectors or advisors.

**“IT'S NOT SO MUCH ABOUT THE BENEFIT
OF A SMALL OR MID-SIZED GALLERY, BUT
RATHER ABOUT THE DOWNSIDE OF A
MEGA-GALLERY.”**

Lisa Schiff (L.S.) If I can back up for a second, I'd like to say that, for me, the key to a mid-sized gallery is graduating into it, which is really hard. Going from a baby gallery to where Mendes Wood is now, getting past that hump, is very difficult. You need to have at least a handful of artists who are moving at the same pace. What happens a lot with emerging galleries is that there might be one artist who ends up taking off, and then he or she feels like they are holding the gallery together. And they are. If that artist leaves, the gallery falls apart. So to keep your whole stable on the same path is very difficult. When it happens, it's like Cheam and Read, John and Howard, and Adam now. Just to make it to that space, and then to keep going, to keep reinventing yourself, I think is very hard. I went to São Paulo to see Mendes Wood, to get an idea of what they've created and how they got there. I look at people like Carol Greene and Sadie Coles and I know I can trust them. I feel really confident that these dealers are going to go to the mat for their artists. They are going to fight so hard for all of them. When I'm buying something for one of my clients, I feel some comfort in that, whereas with a big gallery I don't. So it's not so much about the benefit of a small or mid-sized gallery, but rather about the downside of a mega-gallery. That is the issue, for me.

M.G. Please expand, what is the downside of a mega-gallery?

L.S. There are many. It's interesting, because people really talk about the mega-gallery as a brand. By the way, I love mega-galleries and I buy from them regularly. I want to clarify that. I actually think Larry Gagosian is unbelievable. We can make fun of him all day long, but the shows he puts on are incredible. Still, the problems happen on the inside, when you have a hundred employees. When Thaddaeus told his story about working with Beuys, bringing those works on paper and having that show... that doesn't happen anymore. Who is doing that inside the gallery now? There are probably 10 people in charge of bringing artists in that he probably doesn't understand or relate to. I love Thaddaeus' gallery, I do, but it has now become something else. There's an artist in David Zwirner's stable that I was a bit bothered to see there, I was really disappointed that they had taken him on. I thought, "This is not a David Zwirner artist."

M.G. Does his name begin and end with "o"?

L.S. Yes. I'm sure it wasn't his choice, so there's a loss of the vision happening. Two other problems arise. I'll just mention them briefly. It becomes really problematic when the sale staff are competing with each other, and the Gagosian is a perfect example.

M.G. That's the way they are incentivised.

L.S. They have to be. When you get that big, your bottom line is your number one priority. That's the question I was trying to get Thaddaeus to answer, how do you keep connoisseurship and quality when you have to be thinking of every cent, when money has to be the number one thing to keep it going? Some big galleries manage to do it. Pace has a great programme, and overall David Zwirner does too. But that is the tricky thing; that is the challenge. And there's another thing I wanted to point out: when you divide your sale staff up, which means they're fighting with each other, the second I walk through the door into a big gallery, someone calls me and I am now "owned" by that person, whether I want to be or not. That person may not have access to artists that I really want to buy; the other sales person does. And my client might have better access to that person. It's really complicated and problematic.

M.G. It reminds me of investment banks and relationship managers, where it all gets a bit jealous, too.

A.S. I just wanted to chime in for a second—no pun intended. Somebody said a word that I think is crucial to this conversation and what I think is the strength of a mid-sized gallery: it's the notion of brand. I don't think the brand of any gallery should be more well known or more significant than the artists that they show. One of the galleries that I really respect, for example, has done a wonderful job at making this leap from being an emerging, more experimental gallery. It went through some serious changes of space and personnel and it evolved with the artists, focusing on them to the point that, with very few exceptions (which are artists who need phenomenal amounts of production), they all stayed with the gallery.

**"I DON'T THINK THE BRAND OF ANY
GALLERY SHOULD BE MORE WELL KNOWN
OR MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN THE ARTISTS
THAT THEY SHOW."**

M.G. Can you name names?

A.S. I'd like to name the artist, actually, because she is somebody that I deeply respect. Her name is Kara Walker, and I think she is one of the great artists of the second half of the 20th century. She is a recipient of the MacArthur Genius Award. She could show in any gallery she wants, in any city in the world. And I believe that she stays with her gallery because they function in a capacity that suits her needs. However, there was another artist who showed there and gained a great deal of fame along with his accomplishment. He needed to be in a much more high production value situation, so he jumped to a mega-gallery. He's now certainly a big star and a great artist, but I think people will always look at him differently from how they look at Kara Walker, because there is a kind of purity and integrity in her decision to maintain this loyalty. Jenny Holzer's case is very similar. She's an artist that we have worked with for decades. She has expanded her programme and we have done collaborative shows with mega-galleries, younger galleries and all sorts of projects. But the loyalty is very much inherent in their culture as artists, and I think that's why they choose to work with mid-sized galleries.

L.S. Until Larry Gagosian comes with a \$10 million check.

M.G. I was thinking about Brice Marden, who has just moved from Matthew Marks to Gagosian, even though Matthew Marks is not exactly a small, home-owned gallery.

A.S. It's a very, very prestigious gallery with wonderful artists.

M.G. I'd love to talk about the benefits all day, but there are obviously some downsides to being mid-sized. One of them is that mega-galleries can just come in and poach your artists.

A.S. I don't know, I'm not Brice Marden's psychiatrist, but maybe he had some needs that simply could not be met by the structure of his present situation.

M.G. Such as?

A.S. Say he wanted somebody to support his prices at auction, an area where, notoriously, he has been wildly uneven. He's had \$10 million results, but he's also gone continuously unsold in evening sales. Maybe, as they said in *The New York Times*, at 78 he felt that time was running out and that he needed to think about his legacy. Maybe he needs a different kind of dealer to handle different sorts of issues.

L.S. Or maybe he needs money.

A.S. Maybe, but I don't think it was because he was unhappy with anything Matthew did. Brice was very commendable towards Matthew in print. After all, Matthew did an outstanding job; Brice had a massive show at the MoMA. So I don't know what his needs are, but maybe the decision is not necessarily related to the size of the gallery as much as to what he needed, what his dealer could offer. I don't know.

M.G. Although even when it comes to supporting prices at auction, if you're a big gallery you have more money. Martin, would you like to address some of the things that are not strengths and benefits?

M.A. Well, being able to meet the needs of our artists is a serious concern for us, of course. We are probably one of the youngest galleries in São Paulo. Over the course of six years we have expanded our space about six times, and we're actually about to add another outpost. But

this is all in São Paulo, while many of our artists have the necessity, based on geographical location, to show abroad. Art fairs have been very helpful with that—we're very grateful to Victoria. They have been an incredible platform for us to show artists who would otherwise go unnoticed. That's part of the reason why we decided to open a space in New York: not only to create a venue for our artists, but also to pair them up with historically significant figures, to trace some lineages and see where their work is coming from. That's also why we're opening in Brussels.

M.G. Why we did you choose Brussels?

M.A. Brussels became very important in terms of having a place in the centre of Europe where we can invite curators or artists to do a show (not only those we represent, but also some from other programmes). We have spent the last five years encouraging writers and curators to come to Brazil, even financing that endeavour, and we realised that we could divert those resources (and I know resources will be a conversation point) into something that is more of a long-term solution to issues like geographic location, time or distance, the more practical things.

**“PEOPLE ARE MOVING BEYOND
THE SCOPE OF THE WHITE CUBE.
PEOPLE HAVE LARGER CONCERNS
THAN JUST WHAT LOOKS GOOD
ON WALLS.”**

M.G. That's quite interesting. You hear a lot of talk about the gallery model, and the idea of opening places in many cities and being very expansive, maybe being outdated. There seem to be a lot of mid-sized galleries that are considering alternatives to having a physical space and doing 8 to 10 fairs a year while the space that you pay rent for is empty. What do you think of some of these alternatives?

M.A. I think it's a generational thing. When you address the pitfalls of a larger gallery, you see that people are moving beyond the scope of the white cube. People have larger concerns than just what looks good on walls. For example, in São Paulo, we recently received major funding to create vertical gardens all over the city. It's the second largest vertical

garden city in the world. They hang on the sides of buildings, and a lot of artists, particularly on our programme, have taken on these projects to address issues of pollution—bear in mind that in São Paulo there are signs that indicate how good the air is every single day. We also encourage younger artists to not just work in Brazil. We are launching a residency programme in our space in Brussels as well. So I think alternative models possibly have to do with moving beyond the concept of a white space. I think people, including our collectors, are very concerned about issues like the environment or poverty (there's a tremendous gap in Brazil, as you know, between the rich and the poor).

“ALTERNATIVE MODELS POSSIBLY HAVE TO DO WITH MOVING BEYOND THE CONCEPT OF A WHITE SPACE. PEOPLE, INCLUDING OUR COLLECTORS, ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT ISSUES LIKE THE ENVIRONMENT OR POVERTY.”

M.G. Lisa and Adam, do you see any viable alternatives to a mid-sized gallery?

L.S. Although I love Mendes Wood, I feel like you're expanding fast, too fast. I think it's easy to do that, and it's tempting. It's hard not to have 20 galleries all over the world. It's hard to just stay focused in your city, focusing on your artists. There are so many pressures on a gallery. One of them is, “Will we lose our artists? Will Anselm Kiefer or Antony Gormley want to bring their works to me? Let me open another gallery by the airport where I can put the biggest paintings and sculptures ever.” That's amazing, but it's also dangerous. Where does it end? It just keeps going on and on. It's part of this “too-much-ness.” I want to focus.

M.G. Doesn't it go back to the problem that, even though it's lovely to be a local gallery, the world we live in is not very local anymore? There used to be a strength in just being in Munich with your artists, whereas now the value of that has been somewhat reduced, because the scene is so international.

L.S. Yesterday, Elba said she thought the local fairs are going to disappear. I actually think they are going to get more powerful. I think local is going to become much more interesting. It's the idea of

farm-to-table: I want a farm-to-table gallery, please. As things get so overwhelming, it's more interesting to just focus a little bit.

M.G. Would you agree, Adam?

A.S. I agree, yes. The beauty of having a privately owned gallery is that you can make decisions and make the project grow in the way you want it to. What I found over a number of years is that some of the best galleries, whether they be large or small, are run by people who have a relationship to art and are inherently creative in one way or another. Some people, like myself, are frustrated archaeologists, or artists, or musicians. Whatever it is, they look at the world creatively. They didn't even get into this career to make money. Jocelyn said something that was really interesting: this idea of remaining loyal to your core values. One of the things that we do in the gallery, which is very important for us as a single-venue gallery (we're mid-sized by standards, but our artists are quite large in their reputations) is to look for trends that go across our artists. Not just so that things hang beautifully together, but also because, that way, people understand the message.

“LOCAL IS GOING TO BECOME MUCH MORE INTERESTING. IT'S THE IDEA OF FARM-TO-TABLE: I WANT A FARM-TO-TABLE GALLERY, PLEASE.”

I have to give a lot of credit to Victoria and the art fair system: we are admitted to the great art fairs because our artists are so strong and their level of accomplishment is so high. We take advantage of that opportunity and we make sure that every art fair booth has been very carefully curated and programmed. Sometimes we are trying to send a message across, sometimes there's a theme or subject. Maybe we're talking about artists whose creativity has to do with pairings, or maybe we show women artists from the 70s and 80s, something that we're very much about. So we use the art fair platform as our second space. If you do that, it never looks redundant, it never looks like you're just offering the pieces from the permanent collection that haven't sold. You can imagine what our living rooms look like, this is very much an extension of us as people. Art fairs complement what we do. It is like having a second space. We just don't have to have a permanent lease to it.

M.G. But there is a cost, really, to doing fairs, which is not just taking your stuff out there, but housing it, etc. Also, what's happening back at the gallery? I think it's lovely to be on the side of the angels and say, "We didn't mean to sell, we just want to show, etc."

A.S. Oh, I'm definitely not on that side.

"WE USE THE ART FAIR PLATFORM AS OUR SECOND SPACE. IF YOU DO THAT, IT NEVER LOOKS REDUNDANT, IT NEVER LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE JUST OFFERING THE PIECES FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION THAT HAVEN'T SOLD."

M.G. And how do you balance?

A.S. You need to have a very effective group of people who have a relationship with the artist, who are articulate enough to describe their sincere take on why that artwork is something incredibly important that was put out into the world, and why there is potentially an upside to the value of that work that is consistent with an appreciation of that artist's career and a market response to that. I think both perspectives go hand in hand. If I saw it differently, I probably would be working in a not-for-profit. Sometimes I feel like I'm in a "no-profit", but that's different.

L.S. When I'm bringing a client to galleries or fairs, most of the time I know the people I want to talk to there. We all travel around the world. I can get Adam directly, and I don't want to meet with someone else. If you have ten outposts around the world, there are sales staff that make the situation different. Thaddaeus said that he wanted the people who are in charge of the artists selling the work, but, at a fair? I can tell you that 90% of the people that approach me are selling widgets to me, because that is all they know about the artist. They just need to crack a sale and make a commission. So there is a danger in expanding to a certain degree.

M.G. Well, it is a fair, though. It is a trade event.

L.S. Of course, and you can even walk into a gallery and have the same experience. But you really need to be able to talk to someone reliable.

Part of my job is doing that as well. I very much rely on my relations with the top people, who are close to the artists and can help me navigate through all of this. I cannot just rely on a sales person. I'm sure it's also hard to find good staff when you're a big gallery. It's not easy to find really good people who are at your level.

"I VERY MUCH RELY ON MY RELATIONS WITH THE TOP PEOPLE, WHO ARE CLOSE TO THE ARTISTS AND CAN HELP ME NAVIGATE THROUGH ALL OF THIS. I CANNOT JUST RELY ON A SALES PERSON."

A.S. I think there has been a "dumb-downness" to selling art in some people's minds. That's what Lisa is talking about. It's very easy to hire a really attractive, good-looking person, dress them in Prada clothes, put them in a booth, give them a few good taglines, tell them about a show that's happening at the Pompidou and "randify" the situation so you can just push the sale down somebody's throat using a lot of art speak, taglines, etc. I don't think that's the way things should happen. I think the benefit of small galleries is that there is more of a discussion among the people who work there. There is a greater understanding and a greater intellectual appreciation of the work and the group of artists that is being shown. More time is spent understanding it, reading about it, going to the artists' studio, etc. Everybody in our gallery has been to Sean Scully's studio multiple times.

M.G. You are on the side of the angels! But there is also a business reality. Sometimes, someone in Prada can actually sell something pretty quickly for you, and that helps fund the rest of the machine.

A.S. Sure, but if somebody in Prada can understand the fabric better, and can tell you how it's going to wear over time, why you should buy a 50 instead of a 52, or if you're between two sizes why you should choose one instead of the other, and if you're happy with that expertise, you're going to buy everything at Prada. That's the business model that we are interested in.

M.A. I find it difficult for mid-sized galleries to emulate the idea of a mega-gallery, just from a practical standpoint.

M.G. We talk about galleries going from emerging to mid-sized and then to mega-gallery, as if it was a natural progression, as if everyone should aim at going through that process.

M.A. I think that has been the current assumption, but I don't necessarily think it's sustainable—as Lisa Cooley said. Think about the amount of art fairs that a gallery trying to reach top-tier status has to go to. Last year we did 12 art fairs, and that drove everyone insane. There is not enough artwork to keep up with the demand. You have to be very selective.

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M.G. And besides that, how many shows did you have in your space?

M.A. We had about three shows happening at the same time in São Paulo. I'm sure there are a lot of gallerists here asking themselves how many fairs they should be participating in. We cut back on 5 fairs this year, and it's also to help the artists, because I don't want them to be producing for a fair.

M.G. But that's also slightly a high-class problem, I think. They'll be some galleries that just want to get on to that circuit, even if they eventually discover it's unsustainable. Because one way to go from being emerging to being a brand, or to being accepted and respected, is through the fairs where you show your art. So, going back to alternative models, is there a system that can work better for a small gallery that is not yet on that circuit?

M.A. I think that there is, for sure.

M.G. And what is it?

A.S. I think we have seen it before, but many people today have lost sight of it. Thaddaeus talked about it yesterday. I'll give you an example. We are extremely fortunate to work with Lynda Benglis, who is a great

artist. She came to us around the year 2000, when we had just moved to a new space. She had ended a long relationship with the gallery that had showed her for years, because they didn't like the direction of her recent work, and it was not selling, etc. We knew inherently that hers was important work and that she was an important, groundbreaking artist. So we started working with Lynda. We've been working together for many years now, and it got to the point where, after a few very significant museum shows and a favourable market response, there was a lot of international interest from the so-called mega-galleries in showing Lynda. We reached the conclusion that she is best served through collaboration, so we are very happily in a many-year-marriage with Thomas Dane, a great gallery in the United Kingdom, which has served Lynda's work incredibly in the UK and Western Europe.

Thaddaeus was talking about the Leo Castelli model: being able to have relationships with galleries around the world and not being threatened by the larger fish or the fact that you are going to lose your artists. Ours is a very amicable relationship. Lynda is benefitting tremendously from it, and we speak very transparently and cooperatively. Not every gallery has this kind of relationships, but ideally this sense of collaboration can work, and it has worked. I've seen it in New York, too, where some emerging, very promising galleries—which will potentially become members of the Art Dealers Association of America—are doing collaborative shows with our more accomplished members. Michele Maccarone, one of the members, who is one of the more innovative and avant-garde galleries in America—if not the world—, did several shows in collaboration with Cheam and Read, DC Moore, David Zwirner, etc. That has really allowed her to enhance her reputation and her gallery's programme to the point that she could make a very big leap.

L.S. I think there's power in the artist's decision too. Take somebody like Carol Bove, who went to David Zwirner but at the same time stayed with Michele.

M.G. We were talking about Cecily Brown this morning. She decided to come out of the mega-gallery system.

L.S. Yes, that can actually happen too.

M.G. As we were saying yesterday, the decision rests with the artist. Regulation also has to come from the artist, there has to be demand

for something. Going back to the idea of collaboration, at the moment there is something in London called Condo, where about 50 rather small galleries have invited another 20 from other countries to show in their space, in January, which is a quiet month. It sort of has the efficiency of a fair, because you can tick lots off, you can get to see many things. Do you like gallery weekends?

“YOU GET SUCH A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE VISITING A GALLERY. I HAVE LESS AND LESS TIME TO DO IT, BUT EVERY TIME I DO, I HAVE A CONVERSATION, I LEARN SOMETHING AND I FIND A WORK OF ART THAT I WAS NOT LOOKING FOR.”

L.S. When they're done correctly, I actually prefer them to fairs. Berlin is a great example of a fair that for some reason just doesn't work, whereas gallery weekend is fantastic. You get such a different experience visiting a gallery. I have less and less time to do it, but every time I do, I have a conversation, I learn something and I find a work of art that I was not looking for. I always tell myself I need to go more often. You sit down with someone, you have a conversation, and all of a sudden a painting comes out of the back room that's not going to a fair, you just stumbled upon it. I've had my best experiences that way.

M.A. In Brazil, collaboration is especially important. As you may know, the country has one of the highest import taxes for artwork, so it's almost impossible to ship work in. What we did very early on was to invite galleries. We've had Herald Street, the Modern Institute, Supportico Lopez, and I was recently talking to Leo Xu about having Chinese artists in São Paulo. It's so important for that scene, because Brazil has such a long, strong modernist tradition, and there are a lot of great collectors and a lot of enthusiasm for contemporary art. We see it in the architecture, in design, in people's homes. But otherwise you would never be able to see this work.

M.G. Because of the costs of shipping it in?

M.A. Exactly. So we invite artists to come to São Paulo and produce there. They spend two or three months and they get to know the scene very intimately. I don't know any other programmes in Latin America

that actively shows as many foreign artists in their country as we do.

M.G. Can I just ask you about the future? There's a whole panel later on social media, but for small galleries looking ahead, what can they do to harness and—keeping costs down—stay loyal, strong and open? What would you advise?

“INSTAGRAM IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL, I CANNOT EMPHASISE THAT ENOUGH. WE HAVE BEEN VERY ACTIVE ON INSTAGRAM. ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU LIVE IN A PLACE LIKE BRAZIL, IT IS THE ONLY PLACE WHERE PEOPLE SEE THE WORK, BEYOND FAIRS.”

M.A. I would encourage them to find galleries that they can work with, both emerging galleries and galleries above them. I'm doing a show later this year with Sonia Gomes in New York that's not only going to have our space in the Upper East Side, but also David Lewis in the Lower East Side. Having that kind of synergy happen is vital. Instagram is an important tool, I cannot emphasise that enough. We have been very active on Instagram. Especially when you live in a place like Brazil, which is very far away, it is the only place where people see the work, beyond fairs.

M.G. And have you made sales?

M.A. Oh, yes. Easily. Direct Messages is one of the best tools I've ever had. It happens all the time.

M.G. It's quite interesting that everyone is very loyal to the physical space, like Thaddeus said yesterday. However, a couple of years ago people were talking about the end of the gallery system.

L.S. It's funny. I think it's healthy to imagine the radical future, and I always think, will art advisors be needed? Will galleries exist? For a long time, I thought galleries would disappear. Now that there are so many, I think they are a filter that we desperately need. Sometimes artists will approach me to work directly with them and, unless they are David Hammons or Richard Prince, who is now on his own, I'm not interested. I only want to work with galleries I trust. There are so many

things that need to happen for an artist, and I can't accomplish that, it's not my job. But I don't want to work with an artist who is not in business with a gallery, which should really take care of them and make sure they are going along the right lines. If I were an emerging gallery, I would just focus on my artists. I would do everything I could to make sure that they grew, that I was editing them, that they were getting looked up by curators, and getting into group shows. I wouldn't be so worried about scale.

**“IF I WERE AN EMERGING GALLERY,
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M.G. But are there enough artists?

L.S. There are too many artists. The question is, are there good artists? It really was interesting to hear Thaddaeus talk about that. When an artist is successful, there has been a collaborative effort. Most of the time, someone is helping them to be seen in the right way, to contextualize their work, to talk about the split in the Kiefer (which was hilarious), to present them to the world. Most of the time, artists have to be focused on producing. For some of them, presenting themselves to the world is part of the job, but for most of them it's not. I actually really look to the dealers. They are my secret source. And I try to keep up, which Thaddaeus mentioned too.

M.G. He also said he had this fear of getting out of touch with tomorrow's art.

L.S. Well, I still listen to disco music, so I'm terrified that I buy the disco music of art. I've worked tirelessly not to fall into that. I have three criteria when I buy art. Number one, it has to be visually and/or conceptually compelling. Number two, it has to be historically relevant. Number three, the artist has to be strategically positioned. But historical relevance for new art is hard to tell, because we are living the moment. I love that game, it's very fun to play.

M.G. And what do you mean by strategically positioned? That they show in a gallery that you admire?

L.S. I want to get behind an artist who I believe is going to go the full distance, so I need to believe in their dealer. Take Carol Greene. Sadie Claws is really fantastic, and Carol is sort of emerging as the Sadie of our generation. She is the hardest-working person I have met. She will do anything for her artists. That kind of devotion for me is key. So I ask her, “Who are you looking at right now? Who are you going to put on your group show? Are you going to take that artist on?”

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A.S. I think that's a really good point. To put it bluntly, and to quote the great RuPaul, “You better work.” I think the idea of this business being a carriage trade where you can sit in your gallery like a parking lot attendant, and wait for people to come in and buy things, or wait for a curator to walk in and pick up a magazine and see what somebody else wrote about something before you decide... that's not how it works. It's the same thing with collectors: sure, it can take a lot of money, but it takes time!

To be an art dealer takes so much time. That's not to say that we don't take time off or lie on a beach or go skiing. It's just about having a constant curiosity. It's about never getting bored. When you're sitting on an ivory tower, go to galleries on the Lower East Side on a Sunday afternoon. You have to ask yourself, “What is it that I don't get, and why?” Maybe you need to talk to somebody. “Why do I see this artist in every group show? They're at the Whitney Biennial. I just read that such and such museums are looking at doing a project with them, but I don't get it. What am I missing?” It's the same thing with cultivating collectors. You have famous people coming into your gallery, they're well known, they're in the art news, top 200, and yet they've never bought anything from you. If you're going to São Paulo, call them up! Call the office, try to get a coffee with them. That's exactly what someone like Carol Greene does.

M.G. Some dealers are shutting in city centres to open different, off-the-beaten-track markets. Maybe this goes back to the idea of farm-to-table. Will that make people excited again? You said yesterday, Lisa, “I’m tired of it all!”

L.S. I couldn’t care less if a gallery is opening in Brussels. I’m more interested in São Paulo, but not everybody has the luxury of travelling there, so it’s great that the Belgian community can get a little bit of that. I just went to China and did tons of studio visits, met Leo Xu, and bought two pieces by two different Chinese artists for a client in Miami. But I met him, so I understood. I can’t understand from a fair. I never would have bought those pieces from a fair. I wouldn’t even have looked at the gallery. I can’t contextualize an artist or understand what they’re about from an art fair.

A.S. Talking Galleries had this extraordinary panel in Seoul in the fall, as part of Gallery Weekend Korea. I was fortunate enough to be asked to participate in it. I thought, “Oh, God, just what I needed! It’s auction week, we’re opening an important show, and suddenly I need to fly to Korea, be on a panel and fly back.” It jarred my schedule quite a bit, but I’m really glad I went. Why? It was a great experience to meet dealers and so on, but the biggest benefit is that now I understand Park Seo Bo, Lee Ufan and Kim Whanki better. These are artists who are revered, whose markets are starting to compete with the level of the Americans.

In Seoul, you can go to the Leeum Samsung Museum and see Kim Whanki hanging next to Agnes Martin. It absolutely works on a visual level. You understand more what the work is about through your own vocabulary. You understand why people are paying £5 million for a painting. That is doing work so that you can get a better sense of the art. Go to studios, meet artists. Is there something here that relates to our programme and would expand it? It’s much better to do that than to let the market determine what you show.

M.G. But are you doing that work because collectors won’t do it?

A.S. Look, I think there are people like the Rubells, who are constantly on planes going all over the world to look at things because they are genuinely interested. They have accumulated an extraordinary collection that is now worth a lot of money. But, frankly, money is not

really why they did it. They are an obsessive pair, and they will go to the end of the Earth to see things. There are very good collectors all over the world who are not doing it for speculation, they are doing it because it’s their activity. They have made a life in art.

M.G. But what about collectors who have a job?

A.S. That’s the beauty of the art fair, too. They are not collecting art the way the Havemeyers did, this is not a leisure-class activity. They are making and spending their money at the same time. They live in a sped-up world, and they are making decisions—many of them according to financial markets—on a split second, so you have to get accustomed to their vocabulary and speed as part of our business model. Again, you can’t sit in a gallery like a parking lot attendant. You have to go to a fair, you have to learn to be articulate enough about an artist’s work so that you can meet with people, talk for half an hour about what you are showing, make them understand the work and your passion. Whether they buy it at that moment or not doesn’t matter. Maybe they will buy it later on. They get it, they feel connected to that Scully, or whatever there might be in that booth.

M.A. I think we also have to make a distinction between expansion and investment in a community. I’m thinking of Gavin Brown, who recently went to Harlem. I think one of the most important events he intended in the last few months were the debate parties that he hosted in the gallery during the US presidential debates. He had about 200 people coming, not only from Harlem but also from all over Manhattan and the rest of the metropolitan area. And it made the gallery the centre of the community.

M.G. I’d like to open it up for questions in a second. Do you have any final remarks to wrap up? I think it’s great to hear about the strengths of being a mid-sized gallery; we hear a lot about the problems. As you were saying, you need to work it.

L.S. I think the tension—and this is one of the reasons I got into art—happens when aesthetic value and monetary value rub up against each other. That is the real trick. When you expand to a certain point, even when you gradually turn into a mid-sized gallery, the money side gets more important. But you have to balance it with other important things. That is the trick, I think.

M.G. That defines the art market. The words “art” and “market” say it all. This is what we are in. I think you are completely right. Are there any questions?

CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUESTIONS (C/Q) FROM THE AUDIENCE

Susan Dunne: I just want to add something. I know we are talking about mid-sized galleries, but I think it’s important to remember that the mission of the gallery at any size (emerging, mid-sized or mega-gallery) is to move around the world. We have to go to art fairs, but we have to get people into the gallery. Without galleries, the art system would not exist. Think of collectors like the Havemeyers, people who actually built great collections. One can’t become a connoisseur by going to art fairs and seeing one of everything. They have to see an artist in context. They have to see 15 paintings, train their eye, train their mind, etc.

“WE HAVE TO GO TO ART FAIRS, BUT WE HAVE TO GET PEOPLE INTO THE GALLERY. WITHOUT GALLERIES, THE ART SYSTEM WOULD NOT EXIST. ONE CAN’T BECOME A CONNOISSEUR BY GOING TO ART FAIRS AND SEEING ONE OF EVERYTHING.”

M.G. It’s a start, though, isn’t it?

Susan Dunne: Sure, art fairs are crucial, and we all have to participate, but the main platform to get people to understand the artist and the work in depth (and to follow a career) is the gallery. Otherwise, people are seeing one of this and one of that, and their level of connoisseurship is saying, “Oh, I like the one in Switzerland better than the one in Miami.”

A.S. I think that’s an extremely good point. I know that all of us who work in galleries have this situation where, if people see one thing and they haven’t seen it in context, if they haven’t seen the breadth of work, when the artist changes, it’s very hard to bring people along for the ride and make them understand where all the artist’s intentions and the content is coming from.

M.G. What if they just want something nice above their sofa?

A.S. That’s lovely too, and I hope they are nice people and they pay quick. There’s a reality to that too. But if you see it in greater context, you get an idea of what the artist is all about, not just that one piece. You become more open to understanding and maybe you end up collecting in depth, which would be a nice thing.

Georgina Adam: What is interesting is how you particularly, Mendes Wood, have managed to grow. How many employees do you have now?

M.A. About 25.

Georgina Adam: Can you tell us a bit more about how you achieved that?

M.A. Well, on a personal note, I can say that, since I started at the gallery, I’ve been on the plane once every month, travelling for at least a week and a half to several destinations. Between three partners and three directors we travel to various points in the world: we’ve been to Senegal, we’ve been all over Europe, etc. And that’s part of what Adam and Lisa were mentioning about Carol Greene: there’s a constant stream of information and we have to communicate it to a lot of people all the time. That’s the first part. The second part is really making an investment to bring people to Brazil, especially independent writers and curators. We made a huge investment in that very early on, which is why now most shows related to Brazil are somehow related to us. The Rubells had 12 artists on their last show of Brazilian art, and eight or nine of them were from our programme.

L.S. But are you going to lose that now? When I went to São Paulo, three years ago, I met with the two main owners, Pedro Mendes and Matthew Wood. I contacted them and they basically met me at the airport. I was amazed by how many people were at the gallery, especially young people. It’s like a community space. I felt like there was a Zeitgeist around the gallery. I could see Márcia Fortes, who’s amazing too, paying close attention and thinking, “OK, I’m going to collaborate with them.” What I’m wondering is, if I go now, is anyone there to greet me?

M.A. That's a very good question. I'm usually flying back and forth between São Paulo and New York, and so are my colleagues. There are six of us now directing the gallery. Between the six of us we spend most of our time in São Paulo.

L.S. And it is such a big city that the art scene over there is huge, it is overwhelming. You need somebody to help you navigate through it. It's one of the things I love about the art world. You have an instant family anywhere, and instant access to the most incredible things. It's really just picking up the phone and asking for a little help. Kurimanzutto has done the same in Mexico.

M.A. One of our first artists was a Brazilian by the name of Paulo Nazareth. He comes from the inside of the country, from a very impoverished background, and a lot of his work has a strong social context and mission behind it. All the proceeds of the sales go back to the community that he's from, where he's able to provide running water, for example. So there is something about it that is very attractive to the average Brazilian who, say, would never visit a gallery. We have people who do their homework in our gardens. That is an important leap for us. A lot of our collectors, especially new ones, who didn't visit Fortes Vilaça or Luisa Strina, have come of age with Mendes Wood. We're actually growing with our artists as well as with our collectors.

M.G. And how would you replicate that if your programme isn't based on an interesting country? Does this go back to having a niche?

L.S. I think Gavin does it. I was thinking, "Why don't we have that in New York or in Los Angeles?" Although there are so many galleries, museums and artists that there isn't just one person who stands out that way. But Gavin manages to create home dinners in New York. His house, which also functions like a gallery, happens to be next to his gallery in Harlem. One of his artists, Rirkrit Tiravanija, cooked us dinner one night, and it was like a work of art.

A.S. And Gavin himself started as an artist. He showed at 303.

M.G. Any more questions?

Victoria Siddall: In the football world, if a small team nurtures a young player and then a bigger team wants to buy him, they must pay a

transfer fee. So the small team that has nurtured the player receives a benefit, which helps it grow and potentially become a bigger team. Nothing like this exists in the gallery world. I see an increasing number of small or mid-sized galleries nurture the artist (from the beginning, they discovered them, which takes an enormous amount of talent), but then the big gallery takes the artist and the small gallery gets nothing in return. I wondered if anyone could conceive of a system where the small galleries would get a reward when the big ones poached their artists.

A.S. That's a really good question because it can exist, and it does, but not in formal way. It's informal. If an artist leaves an emerging gallery, sometimes they are paid for their archives. Sometimes the larger gallery will offer to buy inventory. Sometimes there can be an arrangement of remuneration to ease that transition.

L.S. Most of the time it's dramatic and ugly.

A.S. Sometimes you can do a transitional show by which the original gallery, the younger gallery, will have a financial stake in the sales of the larger gallery.

M.G. But the problem with it being informal is that some people will do it and a lot of people won't.

L.S. I think the best-case scenario is basically when an artist shares the work, like Carol Bove with Michele MacCarone. Or Rudolf Stingel, who still gives Paula Cooper works of art, although he's with Gagosian now.

A.S. Even in a personal break-up, how do you do it? It's personal, it's organic...

M.G. Yes, but it is monetized!

Susan Dunne: It's artist-driven, that's really how it is. We can't have a uniform procedure. We had an artist come to us from a really good mid-sized gallery, whose owner is a good friend of mine. The artist said, "It's time for me to join Pace Gallery." And I said, "Let's sit down, call this person together, and offer to show together." The gallerist agreed, but the artist said no. So it's really driven by the artist, sometimes they leave because they want something else, and that's really hard to bridge.

L.S. I just wanted to mention one model that I keep thinking of, which is the gallery that decides to be a feeder, like Canada Gallery. I don't know that they decided it, but it organically evolved that way. In New York, they are basically known for launching amazing painters, and then they all leave, it's expected now. They launched Joe Bradley, for example.

M.G. How do they make that work? Do they keep work back, so that when the big gallery creates a market, they've got three paintings of the artists?

L.S. Maybe they don't make a lot of money. I don't know how they are doing, but they have been around for a long time. They are actually showing Elizabeth Murray right now, a Pace artist who is much older. They are an interesting model.

A.S. Angela Westwater is doing a show of Katherine Bradford, quite an accomplished artist who, in the last 3 or 4 years, through Canada's assistance, has got the recognition she deserves. Now Canada shows her. Sperone Westwater is doing a great exhibition, with some of the best work of her life. She is a hero among a lot of younger artists. So they're working together to launch Bradford and help her get the accolades that she deserves.

Q: Good morning. Susan Mumford here, founder of the Association of Women Art Dealers. I would like to pick up on something that Lisa said. Having spoken with quite a few of the attendees yesterday, and since we are talking about the leap from emerging to mid-sized, I think some people here won't have that community that you were talking about. You can fly somewhere and discover the local scene because of your contacts, and that's brilliant, I can do that as well, but for those people who are at the conference and don't yet have that network, what are the recommendations? How can they be on that trajectory?

L.S. If you are a gallerist, focus on your artists and your local community. Build a network of collectors there, make them part of your family, and then expand from there. Then again, I'm not a gallerist, and I will say it right now: I think it is the hardest work in the world.

Q: What about advisors?

L.S. Somebody said the artist is the client for the gallery. One thing that

can be tricky for an advisor is to think, who is my client? Is it the gallery or the purchaser? Sometimes you get a little confused, because you want to get something, so you try to please the gallery. But remember: your client is your client. So I would recommend advisors to always be true to the client, even though we need to get to know the gallerists that are meaningful to us and talk to them.

**“IF YOU ARE A GALLERIST, FOCUS ON YOUR
ARTISTS AND YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.
BUILD A NETWORK OF COLLECTORS
THERE, MAKE THEM PART OF YOUR FAMILY,
AND THEN EXPAND FROM THERE.”**

A.S. I was just going to say that travelling and reaching out, going beyond your comfort zone, is key. I'll give you a very local example. We're here for a very short period of time—a wonderful experience—, so I'm not going to make it to the Sagrada Familia or the Mies van Rohe Pavilion, but last year Lorena invited me to come and see the space. Lorena is a wonderful advisor and collector. She's done some very good business with the gallery, but we didn't really know each other. I went to see her space and I understood her vision. She has incredible taste. The breadth of what she does, and the way she looks at collections, is wonderful. I took an hour out of a very condensed period to get in a taxi, in a city I didn't know, to go to a place on a street I couldn't even pronounce, to meet somebody that I'd met at art fairs a couple of times. And there I realised how serious she is about what she does, and I could see the context in which what we are selling is being seen. Now I feel much more professionally connected to her and to the city of Barcelona, because I know someone personally here who works with similar standards.

L.S. To that point, physical presence is very important. Put your email down. It's so easy to write emails all day. Get on the phone and physically be with people. I use social media a lot, but nothing can replace actually meeting someone.

M.G. And Martin, do you also feel closer to people who come to your gallery?

M.A. Of course, no question about it. And don't underestimate our ability to make time. Sometimes people find it quite annoying that we take a very long time to respond to things, but when they come to the gallery in São Paulo, they stay there with us for hours, it's not just a "hi and bye" meeting.

A.S. That's another interesting point about the benefits of a mid-sized gallery. It's about a dialogue, a relationship. A lot of people send blank emails via some art website and just say, "Yeah, I like this piece. How much is it?" We have a policy in our gallery where we answer every single one of those emails, but I would say 90% of the times we do not even get a response. Justine Birbil, director of Michael Werner, is shaking her head in agreement. It's our responsibility to interact, but in order to keep that dialogue going we need some sort of indication. I think people feel that, on the other end of an email, they can just disappear or reply, "OK, I can't afford it, I don't care." So when we get a response, even if it's just, "Thank you, thinking about it," it's different. More than likely, the next time someone emails me and says, "I emailed you about that," things will work out much better.

Jeffrey Boloten: Talking about the artist food chain issue, we discussed the possibility of artists being "stolen" by the big galleries. Since we have also commented on the mid-sized expanding, opening more spaces and needing more product, is there an instance where the mid-sized gallery starts looking at the small, emerging galleries for new artists to take on as well? Is there a chain in that way?

M.A. We haven't poached anyone! But we have a few artists that we discovered through our artists. That happens fairly often. One of them, an artist by the name of Lucas Arruda, came to us and said, "I really need you to look at this painter." And another artist named Adriano Costa said, "I really need you to look at this sculptor." It happened to be the same artist, who was showing with different galleries. Through those two contacts alone, we already had a connection with him, and he ended up showing with us. But that change happened in a much less dramatic way than in New York. Maybe that's just São Paulo, maybe it's our naiveté, maybe we haven't got to another point. We also have taken a lot of artists that have other galleries, like Michael Dean or Neill Beloufa, but there isn't this sense of competition, at least yet.

L.S. Opening in satellite cities—and you've seen it in LA—is a way to show artists in your gallery that can't show in your city. It's interesting to watch other galleries rush to these big cities where it's happening so that they can make sure that their artists don't show at another one. It's kind of amazing.

A.S. I'm not saying it's an easy process, but first of all: the word "poach" belongs with eggs. I find it really weird when applied to artists. Anyway, like I was saying, it's not an easy process, but it does happen. I don't think it happens because you need product, necessarily. If there is an artist that we like and they like our gallery, —maybe they come to us through another artist—, we'll sometimes say to them, "Do me a favour: write me a short letter and tell what it is that is not being met by your current situation." We really think about that to decide if it's going to work. Then, it may or may not happen. It's never easy. We've had artists leave us just as we've taken artists from other galleries, but I think how you do something makes it as collegial as it possibly can be. None of us are going away. You are going to run into that person in the men's room of the Basel Art fair, and it's either going to be uncomfortable or it's going to be horrible. You have to do what makes you feel OK about that situation. I think that is a personal decision.

M.G. Thank you very much Adam, Lisa and Martin. I've learnt a lot this morning. I would also like to thank the audience for their questions and comments.

Jeffrey Boloten

Jeffrey Boloten is the Course Leader for the Art & Business Programme at Sotheby's Institute of Art, in London. Since 2004, he is also Co-Founder & Managing Director of ArtInsight Ltd., the education partner of art market research firm ArtTactic. He is a frequent speaker on the global art and art investment markets, and is also the author of the chapter "The Market for Photography" in the *Grove Dictionary of Art* (Oxford University Press).

François Chantala

François Chantala earned a degree in Law in 1994, studied Art History at the École du Louvre and received his BA in 1997. In 2000, after having worked at Christie's Contemporary Art Department in London for two years, he joined Thomas Dane, then a private dealer, to work specifically on building collections in Europe and the US. In 2004, Thomas Dane Gallery was established in London, where Chantala has since been a director and partner.

Susan Dunne

Susan Dunne started in the art world as part of the 19th-century European painting department at Christie's in the early 1980s. In 1990, she joined the Pace Gallery, a leading contemporary art gallery representing many of the most significant international artists and estates of the 20th and 21st centuries. Since 1960, Pace has been a constant, vital force in the art world and has introduced many renowned artists' work to the public for the first time.

Martin Klosterfelde

Martin Klosterfelde founded the eponymous gallery in Berlin in 1996, which focused on pioneering new artists as well as more established names, such as Hanne Darboven, Matt Mullican, and Lawrence Weiner. In 2013, Klosterfelde closed his gallery and became Director and International Art Specialist at Phillips. In September 2016 he joined Sotheby's as Senior Director and Senior Specialist.

Simon de Pury

Simon de Pury is one of the leading figures in the art market. He is renowned for his deep and longstanding knowledge of the global marketplace and for his legendary performance on the auction podium. He was Chairman Europe and Chief Auctioneer Worldwide at Sotheby's. From 2000 to 2012 he was Chairman and Chief Auctioneer of Phillips de Pury & Company. Together with his wife Dr. Michaela, in 2013 he founded de Pury de Pury, a company specializing in building collections, consulting established collectors and institutions. In 2016 de Pury published *The Auctioneer*, his memoirs.

NEW MODELS IN COLLABORATION: THE GALLERY AND AUCTION HOUSE RELATIONSHIP

SPEAKERS

**François Chantala, Susan Dunne,
Martin Klosterfelde, Simon de Pury**

MODERATOR

Jeffrey Boloten



NEW MODELS IN COLLABORATION: THE GALLERY AND AUCTION HOUSE RELATIONSHIP

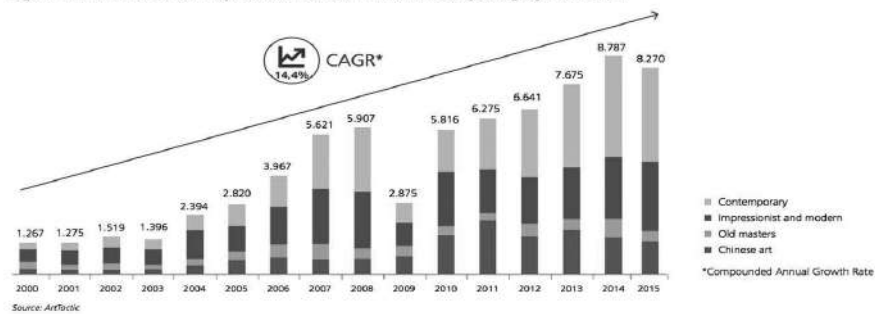
Jeffrey Boloten (J.B.) Thank you very much to Talking Galleries for inviting us and for arranging such a wonderful panel. What I want to do first is show some charts, graphs and numbers. No one has done it yet and I think someone should, so it's going to be me. Our session has quite a provocative title. A lot of people were asking me, "What are these collaborations?" We are going to talk about collaborative initiatives happening today. We are also going to look at what the situation has been and how it could change in the future. We are incredibly lucky that everyone on our panel has been on both sides of the game, as it were, so they have both the gallery and the auction house perspective. Not only that, but they have experience working at a very high level.

I'd like to begin by contextualizing what we are going to talk about. I think it's interesting to see that a lot of the relationships between auction houses and galleries have to do with what's happening in the market, what the particular tensions and the necessities for collaboration are. There have been some incredibly big changes in the market, and it's useful to go through them quickly so that we can better understand the background of today's discussion. The numbers that I'm about to show are courtesy of Clare McAndrew and Arts Economics. They are from 2015—her new report is due to come out on March. The size of the global fine and decorative art market is \$63.8 billion, which represents a 150% growth since 2003.

The art market has been growing hugely in the past 10 years. The big news is that there was a 7% fall from the highest mark,

in 2014. That sent a lot of shock waves through the art world, which has always followed an increasing trajectory until we see a sudden dip. That's caused a lot of interesting things, and it had some people worried about a possible collapse of the market. In terms of the split between dealer and gallery, in 2011 it was about 50-50. Remember this all comes from the gallery surveys that Clare does on an international scale in order to quantify auction sales and dealer sales. You'll be pleased to know that in 2015 that figure was steadily rising on the dealer side, so perhaps 10 years from now it'll be 100% and there will be no auction houses. It's an interesting result.

Figure 1. Christie's and Sotheby's auction sales (in millions US\$) by category 2000-2015



This is a scary graph. What's interesting about it is the huge growth of the art market in general since 2000. This is the auction market, dominated by Sotheby's and Christie's. The dip in 2009 indicates that it was quite a bad year, but what was amazing, and what people comment on all the time, is the resilience of the art market and the speed at which it recovered from that financial crisis, almost getting back up to the record levels within one year. From then onwards it was all fine, everything was going well until 2015, when there's been another dip. So there is gas pouring out into the auction world and the art world, in some way.

What's happened? I'm not going to go into too much detail, but as you can see the contemporary market has a lot to do with the drop. Auction sales fell about 14% in post-war and contemporary art, and I think that trend will continue in 2016—remember this is from 2015.

There's also been a 20% decrease in the number of transactions, which is key. There has been less supply at auction. Why is that? There are a number of reasons. One of them is the competition for consignments between auction houses. Guarantees have slowed down (they have become risky and expensive), which means that people aren't putting their big pieces up for auction as much as they were before. Chinese sales have fallen as well, by 23%. That has been felt in the art market, for many reasons, not necessarily all bad. Some of them are related to changes in the market and in the economy (including the Chinese economy), while others have to do with a lot of measures to stop corruption, which is a good thing.

“AUCTION HOUSES ARE MOVING INTO A TERRITORY THAT HAS TRADITIONALLY BELONGED TO GALLERIES AND DEALERS. MOST RECENTLY, THERE'S BEEN A MOVE TOWARDS MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR ARTISTS AND ARTISTS' ESTATES.”

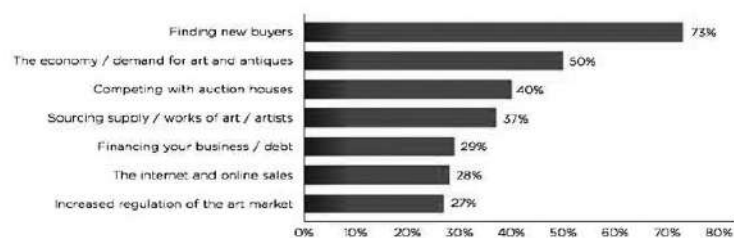
That's basically what's been happening. What are the responses from the auction houses? How are they affected by these changes? It's very interesting. We have seen a lot of expansion of collector services, which is causing some concerns and tensions for the gallery scene. Private treaty sales are rising at about 20% or more some years—in terms of the percentage of auction house sales, so it's not just the auction they are relying on, which has always been the remit of galleries and dealers.

We'll talk about whether that's a collaboration or not. In addition to that, we have seen a rise in art advisory services, especially Sotheby's offering to advise clients not just within the auction house but across the whole market, which is a very interesting development. A third new trend has to do with selling exhibitions and spaces, such as the S2 gallery for Sotheby's. Christie's has a similar one. So auction houses are moving into a territory that has traditionally belonged to galleries and dealers. Most particularly and recently, there's been a move towards management services for artists and artists' estates, and that's what I'm going to talk about in our discussion, because it's quite a big novelty and a new role for the auction houses to be taking on.

Another effect of these issues is the migration of expertise. Auction house staff, with a lot of collector ties and experience, have been moving into the gallery and art advisory world. We'll talk about the effects of that as well, because some of our panellists are examples of that trajectory. More generally, there's something that we need to get out: yes, it's great to talk about collaboration, but the big elephant in the room is that there has been a historic tension between galleries and auction houses, and that's because they have different priorities.

Galleries are very much custodians of the artists' careers and markets, and when they lose control, when things go to auction—we talked about Adrian Ghenie's case yesterday—the situation becomes quite tricky. Auctions don't have the same priorities as galleries in their relation to the artists and their careers. So there's a mismatch in terms of the stakeholders of a career. Auction houses have considerable advantages: they are big and international, they have data and they have close ties with collectors everywhere. That's not easy for a gallery to compete with, sometimes.

Figure 1m Top Challenges Facing Dealers in 2015



© Arts Economics (2016)

Where does that leave us? Clare McAndrew's very interesting report talked a lot about asking galleries what their biggest challenges were. The results can be seen in this graph. I find it significant that competing with auction houses was one of their top concerns. I know the word "competing" is not what we are supposed to talk about today, but I thought I should refer to it, because it underlies a lot of the discussion we want to have. To begin with, I would like to ask our panel members, what's your view on these statistics? Do you think competing with auction houses is really a big challenge for galleries?

Martin Klosterfelde (M.K.) I have a slightly untypical view on this, most likely because I used to be a gallerist and I represented young artists. Then I made quite a radical shift, closed my gallery and started to work for Phillips. Recently, about six months ago, I moved to Sotheby's. I do understand the fears and the concerns. However, I find myself very often talking about things that have easy solutions. The fear is there, the mechanisms are there, and some things have probably changed in recent years. I remember when I started going to auctions, in the early 90s, and you could hardly find an artwork that was less than 20 years old. That shifted more and more towards emerging artists. Right now the shift is going away from that again, and that was one of the things that I said to myself when I joined Phillips. I understand the problems that can arise, but in my role as an auctioneer I think I have incredibly constructive conversations with gallerists and dealers. If there are concerns, we talk about them and usually find solutions that work for both sides.

**“ANY GALLERY IS ABOUT
STABILISING A MARKET: MAKING IT
AND KEEPING IT STABLE, SO THAT
ARTISTS CAN GROW IN A HEALTHY
FASHION.”**

J.B. Susan, what do you think about that competition?

Susan Dunne (S.D.) I'll begin by saying that I am very happy to have started at an auction house. I didn't plan to go from auction to gallery, but in hindsight I'm happy it worked out that way, because the auction houses give you an incredible overview of the resale market. What you showed are auction figures. People who make these tallies have no access to what actually happens in a gallery. They have no access to gallery figures, so I have to say that these figures are a bit skewed. It is cyclical. We are obviously very competitive with auction houses for material, but at a time when these figures go down, the figures go up in a private gallery, because people don't necessarily want the exposure of auction, they want to sell something privately.

So when things started going south in the auction market last year, we all of a sudden had Rothkos for resale, which we hadn't had. It's very competitive at the high level, but the two places have two different

missions. Even different galleries have different missions. The one I work for is for artists that are already internationally established by the time they join the gallery. In a way, it's a management system for people who already have international fame or are in museum collections worldwide. I know nothing about emerging careers, it's an entirely different set of circumstances. Still, I'd say any gallery is about stabilising a market: making it and keeping it stable, so that artists can grow in a healthy fashion.

The auction's mission is the sale. If they make a mistake or guarantee something for 18 million and it doesn't work—say it ends at 13—, they think, "OK, we won't do it next time." We don't do that, because it can be incredibly damaging for a market. So we are talking about two different businesses. When I started at Christie's, the head of the contemporary art department used to say, "Dealers are your enemy." I wanted to call dealer friends and ask what the prices at the last show were, but we weren't allowed to. Now there's much more of a dialogue, as Martin said. One sees shows and knows the asking prices, but you don't really know what things sold for. So an auction can skew an artist's market. It's competitive to get material and, ultimately, there are two different missions.

**“IT’S A LITTLE BIT DIFFICULT
TO TALK ABOUT COMPETITION
BETWEEN AUCTION HOUSES AND
GALLERIES, BECAUSE WE DO SUCH
DIFFERENT THINGS.”**

François Chantala (F.C.) It's a little bit difficult to talk about competition between auction houses and galleries, because we do such different things. And yet, at some level, when I'm handling a resale or a secondary market group of works, we are in competition. It's that sense of omnipotence, or omniscience, of the auction house: the feeling that they can or that they should do anything, because they have to answer to their board or their group of investors. To gain market share is, in essence, the most frustrating and unrealistic endeavour of all, because every attempt to penetrate the primary market has failed, and I suspect it will continue to. I strongly believe that people do what they do, and they are good at it, but we have to maintain a certain kind of distance.

"Collaboration" is a noble, beautiful word, but very often the only way I experience it is through a phone call—a day before the sale, if I'm lucky—with a very anxious person that tells me, "We have nobody interested in your artist." And every time I reply, "Call me earlier, you have my number." You obviously have been very keen to get that artwork sold at your auction, but you made the mistake of overpricing it just because someone took you on for a ride. That's the extent to which I generally collaborate. It's a little bit submissive on my part.

**“ULTIMATELY WE ALL PURSUE
THE SAME GOAL. THAT’S WHY WE
HAVE MANY MORE THINGS THAT
UNIFY US THAN THINGS THAT
DIVIDE US.”**

J.B. What about you, Simon?

Simon de Pury (S.d.P.) I know you wanted a panel with blood on the floor and lots of disagreements. I don't want to disappoint you too much, but I believe that, whether we are dealers, gallerists, curators, advisors or auctioneers, we have one thing in common: we are all passionate about art. We love it, and we feel a responsibility toward the work that is entrusted to us—on a temporary basis and, again, in any of those capacities. So ultimately we all pursue the same goal. That's why we have many more things that unify us than things that divide us. I have the strong feeling that, for a good market to exist, you need to have strong galleries, strong artists and strong auction houses, not just one of them.

When you are a dealer and you sell something privately, the only way you can justify the price you are asking for is by referring to similar works that have been sold on the public market. Equally, you can't have a proper auction if you don't have the whole dealer community participate. There is a constant need of each other. Of course, it's much more interesting to say it's competitive. What isn't, though? Life is competitive, but what we have in common is much stronger than what divides us.

J.B. There's no blood there at all! It's very disappointing.

S.D. Well, I can happily disagree with that. We don't rely on auctions to price artists' work. We make a market; we create it. We don't look at auction prices and say, "Oh, we'll do this." Going back to Ghenie, whom we represent, we brought Thaddaeus in because we wanted European representation for him, and Thaddaeus has done an amazing job, but we are looking at a show opening tomorrow in New York and the auction prices, as he said, have gone up to \$3 and even \$10 million. There are a lot of speculators in the market. We are not pricing the new works, even at a million dollars. We are keeping them. We are building stability for the artist. These are two different things.

"WE DON'T RELY ON AUCTIONS TO PRICE ARTISTS' WORK. WE MAKE A MARKET; WE CREATE IT, WE BUILD STABILITY FOR THE ARTIST."

S.d.P. But you can't avoid it.

S.D. You can. You can select who you sell to and bring things up.

S.d.P. But, you see, there's a lot of hypocrisy in the whole thing—now we are disagreeing, Jeffrey will be happy. There's this idea of placing the works with real, true collectors who have true, clean, noble motivations, instead of selling to dirty speculators. So you choose the people that you sell to, and the next thing they do is come to you and say, "What can I sell it for? How much more can I get for it?" When you collect—and I happen to be a collector as well—and you say you're a dealer or an auctioneer, people are worried to sell to you. "Oh my God, it's terrible to sell to an auctioneer!" You are happier selling to someone who says that they are doing a museum, or doing this and that wonderful project. But then sure enough—Ghenie is a perfect example—there is strong demand for that particular artwork, and the person who bought something for a museum that he was going to do... Well, it takes him less than 12 months to put the artwork in the market, where it reaches a high price.

For people who are snubbed by the galleries, because there are such big waiting lists, the only way to get something is at auction. Nobody

is going to intimidate them by saying, "You sold, you are villain! You are going to be blacklisted, you are awful!" Whoever happens to pay the highest price is going to get the artwork, and that is a wonderful system.

"FOR A GOOD MARKET TO EXIST, YOU NEED TO HAVE STRONG GALLERIES, STRONG ARTISTS AND STRONG AUCTION HOUSES, NOT JUST ONE OF THEM."

F.C. It is a wonderful system as long as everybody maintains a certain level of calmness and connoisseurship. But take someone who has work that is comparable in some way or another to a piece that sold for 5 million. Then his work will also be worth 5 million, because two guys—it's often two guys—have decided that they really want that piece. Both guys want it, so the price ends up going insanely high. Then I have the artist calling me and saying, "How come my work is worth 100,000 in a gallery if it sold for 5 million at auction?" Of course, I understand why that happens. The beauty of it is that, as you said, someone who makes millions every day, someone who has the means and the will to buy, doesn't understand why they are not allowed to, why they have to wait. That's the beauty of what we do.

S.D. But that's a price, not a market.

S.d.P. You see, when you have a good collaboration—and here we come to the title of this panel—between galleries and auction houses, at the end of the day you are working in the artist's interest. When you have a concerted effort to have both a good primary market and a secondary market for an artist: that's when their career benefits. I can fully sympathise with the problem that skyrocketing prices cause not just for the gallery, but mostly for the artist. When you suddenly go from zero to a huge price, how do you maintain that level? It's very tough. We have examples of artists who managed to, but normally you prefer a gradual climbing of the prices.

S.D. Otherwise, it can even destroy a career.

F.C. Especially in the case of young artists.

J.B. That's going to happen, though, because there's no supply, so prices are going to go up at auction. That leaves the galleries with a dilemma. What do they do? The artist might be pressuring them, saying, "Look, it made 7 million, why aren't you charging 7 million at the primary market?"

S.D. Artists don't like it when that happens at auction. I called Bob Ryman the night after his painting made \$10 million at Sotheby's, and he just said, "Ugh no, now they are going to come out of the woodwork, people are going to go crazy!" Artists don't want that. They look for stability. They want museum shows. They want to be in public collections. They are not excited by something selling for \$10 million at auction. They find it disrupting.

J.B. So Martin, does that come into your thinking, or are you just happy to make 3 million?

"WHEN YOU HAVE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO HAVE BOTH A GOOD PRIMARY MARKET AND A SECONDARY MARKET FOR AN ARTIST: THAT'S WHEN THEIR CAREER BENEFITS."

M.K. We do take all these elements under consideration. We try to be as responsible about it as we can. The bottom line is that we supply services and sell artworks on behalf of clients. If they would like to sell something, we try to optimise what they will get in return for it. But we do discuss these things quite thoroughly, especially with young artists, because it's not right to destroy somebody's career. I'll give you a good example. For one of our October sales we had a Michael Krebber painting, and a lot of speculators came up to us and asked, "Wow, who's this hot, new artist?" I said, "Hold on, he has been around for 25 years." We hung Krebber's painting next to a Sigmar Polke because we really wanted to contextualize it. I think we did a great service to the artist. I worked with all the gallerists together, I said, "We are taking this painting in. We would like to place it, it's going to be an evening sale. Let's do it together." We did it and it was very successful.

The dealers and the collectors were very pleased with the results. That's what I was trying to mention earlier on: it's good to have a dialogue. I understand your point of view, Simon, I think it's very extreme in one direction, whereas Susan's is very extreme in the opposite direction. I think the truth is somewhere in the middle. Some artists do get excited about high auction results, and possibly for the wrong reason—but that's not for me to say, everybody is entitled to their own opinion.

F.C. That is a very decent position, and Martin is a very decent dealer. I'm not denying what he said, he's a friend and I trust him. He's worked with artists, he respects them, he likes them and he's close to them, but it's undeniable that in auction houses you have lists of artists and that often your mission—especially as a junior specialist or as someone fairly new in the organisation—is to find work by one of those artists at whatever cost. So you're going to be on the phone with someone you know, maybe someone you once strongly advised to buy a particular piece. And you call them six months or a year later and say, "We really want your work." I don't call that providing a service to the art community. I call that providing a service to your company. That's fine, there's nothing wrong with it, but we shouldn't mix things up.

"EVEN IF THE SECONDARY MARKET IS STRONG, THE ARTIST WILL BENEFIT IN THE PRIMARY MARKET, BECAUSE THOSE WORKS WILL AUTOMATICALLY SELL AT A DIFFERENT PRICE."

S.d.P. I've never seen collectors—even those who buy with the noblest of intentions, not caring about the investment aspect—brag about the devaluation of one of their pieces. They never say, "Listen, I paid a million dollars for this and now it's only worth \$100,000." I have never heard that. You always hear the opposite story, which tells you that nobody is insensitive to the fact that value should go up. Even if the secondary market is strong, the artist will benefit in the primary market, because those works will automatically sell at a different price. That being said, you can decide, in extreme cases, to keep it at a certain level.

I'm told that, for your next exhibition of Adrian Ghenie, you're going to sell most of the work to institutions, which is also his wish, so that it goes to museums. That will solidify his market, which is great, but I

think auction houses do act in a very responsible way, because we have seen that when some artists overproduce and suddenly see their prices go down, there are waiting lists of people who want to sell those works at Sotheby's, Christie's and Phillips. But every one of these houses refuses to take more than two or three works by a given artist for any given sale.

F.C. And they multiply the amount of sales. Every month we get one. There used to be a season. There used to be a couple of sales in every city in the main market places, whereas now you get a sale every month.

S.d.P. You get a fair every month, a sale every month... It's just part of the greater access that we have, as we discussed yesterday. I think that's what makes it all the more interesting. There is a massive demand and a massive offer of things that are potentially available. That's where the curating process gains importance.

**“THERE IS A MASSIVE DEMAND AND
A MASSIVE OFFER OF THINGS THAT
ARE POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE. THAT'S
WHERE THE CURATING PROCESS GAINS
IMPORTANCE.”**

S.D. I want to address what you said about the secondary market, which is very important for us. We have a tremendous investment in our artists. Some of them have been with our gallery for 50 or 60 years. We're responsible about the secondary market, whereas auction houses... Take Bob Ryman, a highly sought-after artist with a great career. Not a lot of work comes on the secondary market, so Sotheby's takes a painting and estimates it at \$20 to \$21 million. I have the highest price for a Ryman; I know his market better than anybody. Do they call me? No. They put it up at \$18 to \$21 million, and then I have everyone calling me—starting with the Ryman family—to ask why it didn't sell. It has huge repercussions. The people who look at auction results see this and say, “Well, that was bought in.” But it was mishandled. It's not worth the value that they put on it and, instead of collaborating with the dealer, they go out on a limb like that.

M.K. That's an unfortunate example from the past.

S.D. It was last year.

M.K. But that's like a century ago!

F.C. That is the problem with auctions.

Lisa Schiff: And what should the price for the Bob Ryman have been?

S.D. The price would have been \$10 to \$15 million. I could have sold it for about \$12 million, which is what happened. Somebody bid \$12 million, but it was the guarantor, who was the dealer.

J.B. Is that one of the collaborations that we should be talking about? Should there be more collaboration between auction houses and dealers to set the price estimates? Is that happening more?

S.D. Not at a high level.

F.C. Not even at a lower level.

S.d.P. I think that in some cases it does happen, and it's very interesting that you have some artists who are regularly at auction and for whom there is a very good, close exchange of information or advice between the galleries representing the artist and the auction house, and then you have some dealers or galleries that are obsessed in making sure that their artists don't get near an auction. In the end, what does that do? It harms the artists. Particularly with the new type of bias that has come into the market in the last 5 years, if collectors never see a work by an artist at auction, they feel very insecure. So it's reassuring when an artist is regularly at auction. I'm absolutely convinced that those galleries that have an open perspective and look for the best interest of the artist seek close contact with the relevant expert in the auction house.

**“IF COLLECTORS NEVER SEE A WORK
BY AN ARTIST AT AUCTION, THEY FEEL
VERY INSECURE.”**

S.D. Nobody's denying that the secondary market is extremely important. It just has to be responsible.

J.B. The blood is now starting to come out! We talked about the migration of auction house staff into the gallery system—and vice versa, to some degree, as in Martin’s case. What have been, and what could be, the effects of that? Is it a positive thing that auction houses have senior workers with incredible contacts in the gallery system?

S.D. It’s individual.

F.C. Can you give some examples?

S.D. I think Jeffrey’s talking about Brett Gorvy partnering with Dominique.

F.C. I’m sure.

J.B. Is that a good thing?

S.D. We don’t know yet.

**“NOBODY’S DENYING THAT THE
SECONDARY MARKET IS EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT. IT JUST HAS TO BE
RESPONSIBLE.”**

M.K. It depends on the person and on the intention. Because I was a gallerist, I’m always into dialogue. It’s worked very successfully for me. As you mentioned, there have been so many changes in the last couple of years. Why has that happened? Why are models being questioned? Why are we here in the first place? It’s a very exciting moment. Auction houses are now going into areas where they weren’t before, but they are also doing it because there is a demand for it. What I find quite interesting, and I’ve learnt this in the last four or five years, is that there is a type of collector that really prefers working with auction houses. They don’t like working with galleries. I was thinking, “Why is that?” And everybody has their own story and their own reasons. With the expansion into the Asian market...

S.D. They feel more comfortable at auction.

M.K. The Chinese, for the time being, only come to us. We open the doors to programmes and other artists. I believe that in the long-term

they are going to start working really intensely with galleries as well. It’s going to work better. It goes in either direction.

S.D. They feel that it’s a public forum and that it’s more transparent, but in fact it isn’t.

M.K. There just hasn’t been a history, like in New York or in Europe, for the traditional gallery model. It’s a very new market, and really new people.

J.B. That’s another thing that I really want to talk about. There are a number of places where there isn’t that in-built tension, like the new markets: China, the Middle East, etc., where the structure isn’t there, or at least it isn’t solidified. Are there more possibilities for collaboration in these new fields than in Western markets?

S.D. It’s not a collaboration, but they do enter through the auction forum. We had a young artist, and all of a sudden we were getting so many requests from Asia. I said, “What is going on?” And Arnie explained to me that Christie’s magazine had written that this was the most promising young artist in the world. The magazine was distributed in Asia, and suddenly everybody was contacting us. Auction does bring the international community into the market place.

F.C. It has always happened. I have collectors who are very savvy and they are still a little bit reluctant to trust our prices, gallery prices. It’s a made-up price. An auction price is very simple: how much are two or three people supposed to bid. There are cases of manipulation, but most of the time it all boils down to how much certain people are willing to pay for an artwork. Some collectors love that. And they love the brand. People look at Christie’s history, they see it dates back to 1766, they see the profile of James Christie and they just go, “Wow, I will buy from them.” It’s fine, because it makes people become collectors. It brings them into the scene, which is very good.

J.B. Simon, you have made a big effort to bring new collectors into the market, young collectors. Did you see that as competing with the galleries?

S.d.P. In my case it happened by necessity, in many ways. By passion too, passion for contemporary art, which is something I’ve loved my

whole life. Professionally, the only time these things came totally together—because before I was more with the old masters and the impressionists—is when I was with Phillips. We couldn't afford to focus on the areas that the big houses dominated. Instead, we decided to focus on design, photography and emerging contemporary art. We decided that we were going to work in a completely new way within those three fields. We curated the sales. We turned down 80% or 90% of what we'd been offered to sell, but we really constructed our sales with people who had never been sold at auction and that we believed in.

We did the same thing in design and in photography. Initially, it was extremely tough, because you had to make a massive effort to achieve a minimal result, but then it began to work. We saw the role that the secondary market can play in establishing an artist's value. When the *Nurse* exhibition took place at Barbara Gladstone in 2003, the paintings oscillated between \$35,000 and \$75,000. I kept telling my collector friends, "He's an incredible artist and his new body of work is absolutely extraordinary, you should really try and get one." But it would go into one ear and come straight out of the other.

When we sold the first Richard Prince for a million dollars, suddenly the same people came back to me and said, "When can you get me a Richard Prince?" So you have different collectors for whom art starts to register at different levels. For some people it starts at the one million level, for some it starts at the 10 million level. I know that some of the best Rothko buyers—his key market-makers today—didn't know about his paintings until they reached \$40 million. When they saw that a good Rothko sold in the \$40 to \$60 million range, suddenly they said, "Oh my God, this is really interesting." The art market is a pyramid.

At the top, you have a very small group of individuals who are willing and able to pay \$100 million, or more, for a single work of art. From there, you can go down until you reach the bottom of the market, which is eBay, where 120 million people buy every day. With Phillips, we saw ourselves as curators, because we felt that establishing the artists we believed in would make a difference.

J.B. So, in a way, were you not acting more like a gallery? In the sense that you were developing new talent...

S.d.P. It's about championing artists that you believe in.

S.D. It's shaping a market, but it's not shaping a career.

J.B. There is a difference then, I see.

S.d.P. But I think it's also shaping a career, because we heard yesterday that what really matters is the artist, and I agree. How many artists are now feeling insecure because of the current environment? They come and ask for advice. They say, particularly some of the big artists, who are represented by four or five galleries, each on a different geographical area, "I have three galleries representing me and now there's a fourth one that wants to represent me as well. Would it be good for me?" And you have young artists coming to ask, "How many works can I produce each year? How many can I get away with without flooding the market?" So what an artist wants is somebody to hold his hand and guide him, not only for the next exhibition but for the secondary market as well, and also to help with projects that are outside of the art world—commercial collaborations, etc. That's why I think it's interesting that we see some disruptive things happening, like what Swizz Beatz is doing, with no commission. We didn't mention that yesterday.

“COLLABORATION HAPPENS MOSTLY THROUGH PRIVATE SALES, WHERE AUCTION HOUSES ACT AS DEALERS.”

J.B. Sorry, I think we might be swaying a bit too far away, and I really would like to talk about the new collaborations. A lot of this stuff is about the past, what has happened. Are there instances where there is collaboration, be it formal or informal?

S.D. I would say it happens with private sales. Sotheby's once approached me with a Franz Kline painting that they were unable to sell, for example, and it was exactly what a client of ours was looking for. So I think collaboration happens mostly through private sales, where auction houses act as dealers. They have access to material that doesn't necessarily come into the gallery. I think that is a way we can collaborate. But François said it earlier. It's fascinating: they'll take the artist on and then call you the day before the sale to say that there's no interest. And they expect you to bid on every single artist in their huge, telephone-book sized catalogues.

M.K. That's another unfortunate example from the past!

S.D. We'll even get a call from London saying, "The sale starts in an hour, there is no interest."

F.C. Jeffrey, I think the fact that you are wondering what potential fruitful collaborations are is in itself a reflection of our own confusion. The contemporary art auction is something fairly new, so we are still finding our ground. We could say that it started in 1973, and on the wrong foot, in a way: a collector in New York put some works up at auction and the artist happened to be there. Some say he punched him and some say that he cornered the collector that was selling his work and the work of Jasper Johns and he said, "I want a kiss, because when I get fucked I like to be kissed."

S.D. That was the first time a work of art reached \$100,000.

F.C. It was! Anyway, we should remember that this beautiful relationship between galleries and auction houses—we all do things together, we have common endeavours, we believe in the primary and the secondary market, we believe in artists' careers—actually started off on the wrong foot. That tells you that the artist is not necessarily very happy that things happen that way, but they do, and it's fine.

J.B. Simon, I think you can't wait to intervene.

S.d.P. I'm very happy that François mentioned those sales, because the first were done by Christie's and Sotheby's in the 1970s. Back then, the focus was from 1945 onwards, which meant the last 25 years. When we speak of the emerging art auction, it's basically art of the last 25 year. Now it's post-war to contemporary art, but it's very interesting when you see the catalogues of Sotheby's and Christie's from back then. Half of the content is hyperrealism, with mostly artists that you no longer hear of. You have a full-page illustration of Ernest Trova and then, in the same catalogue, you have a tiny little posted stamp of Cy Twombly. So you see how taste evolves, you get to see what was being looked at in that particular moment. It's not so new that some artists shoot up and then down again. Social media has just amplified it.

F.C. And it's kind of frustrating that the auction houses have become the taste-makers that they are. It used to be us galleries. So we are like,

"Wait I second, I used to tell people what's good and what's not, and now they don't even trust me!" They look at the auction catalogue and there is an illustration of Jeff Koons...

S.D. And another thing about auction records and the secondary market. We'll look at a sale on Artnet and say, "Oh, so this work made this price." Yes, but it was relined. Does Artnet say that? No. It was in terrible condition. It was an insurance claim. So the figures are skewed. They are not a reflection of the market place.

M.K. Basically, it goes back to what Lisa said: the personal conversations between client and gallerist are very important. You can't just generalise. There's a story behind everything.

J.B. I'd like to go back to what we talked about in terms of the auction houses becoming more involved in things that dealers used to do. What about art advisory? It's a very groundbreaking thing to have in-house art advisors who presumably operate across the whole market, advising their clients to go to Christie's and buy something, or to go to a gallery and buy something. Is that one of the things that drew you back to the auction world, Martin? Is that going to make a difference?

M.K. Well, I was particularly interested in questioning the model when I started my dialogue with Sotheby's in the spring of this year. I've known Allan Schwartzman for a very long time and I respect him and his views very much. The same goes for Amy Cappellazzo, whose biography fascinates me. It's a very exciting time, because things are being questioned. These models are incredibly old—the gallery model, for instance. And here we are, having a constructive conversation to see what direction things will go. A small change can have a great impact. I don't think it's a threat to the art advisory system. I think it's a natural evolution of demand.

S.D. It's more professional. Auction houses always had "special client services", which was the name of the department when I was there. So they always had in-house advisory services, but it was home-grown. Now it has been taken to a very professional level. Allan is an unbelievable advisor.

M.K. Yes, and he's respectful and sensitive about all these issues.

S.D. Exactly.

S.d.P. I think that every person who has acted in the art market is an art advisor at the end of the day.

F.C. I agree.

S.d.P. What I find fascinating is that when you deal with one of the three auction houses, if you ask two or three individuals in the same company, they each will give you different types of advice on the same work. You see the difference between those who absolutely feel the pressure to sell—and therefore they focus exclusively on making a sale happen and getting you in as a bidder—and those who give you a piece of advice that is maybe disserving their company or the sale of that particular lot but that, in the long-term, will make you go back to that person, because you know they give you proper advice. I think inside auction houses you can find people with incredible integrity in terms of the advice they give you. That's why, when they leave the houses, they can build on that integrity, because they always know that the clients who asked for advice got unbiased information, regardless of which side they were on.

J.B. So it's not so much of an institutional issue. It's more about building relationships on a personal level.

F.C. If you work for a large firm, whether it's a gallery or an auction house, you might have less freedom of judgement and choice. That's normal. However, as Simon says, you have decent people everywhere.

S.D. Actually, it can be the opposite way as well. We are such a large place that we have more freedom. There are certain artists in the gallery stable that I've never sold. It's almost like umbrella companies underneath, little individual businesses under a big company.

**“I DON'T KNOW IF MAKING A CONSCIOUS,
AGGRESSIVE MOVE INTO ARTISTS' ESTATES
IS EVEN REALISTIC.”**

J.B. What about managing artists and artists' estates from an auction house perspective? Is that a new thing? Is there huge conflict because you are actually managing their career as well as selling it on the free market?

S.D. Well, let's see. Who are they representing? They are not representing anybody yet.

J.B. It's an attempt. They are trying to, especially with artists' estates. Do you think it has the potential of working? Finally, in a way, auction houses could become stakeholders in the artists' career, which they weren't before. That might make things even.

S.D. Let's see if it works. It might not work and the model might have to be shifted altogether.

F.C. People who run estates are very different so, who knows? Some people are very interested in strategic deals, and some people just want to get a check. Some are obsessed with perpetrating the legacy of their father, their wife or whatever it is. It's a very different field. I don't know if making a conscious, aggressive move into artists' estates is even realistic. We've just seen one backfire: Ruth Asawa was managed by someone at Christie's, I believe, or at least they were flirting with the idea for a long time, and it's just been done with a commercial gallery. I think, in the end, galleries will have a preference, because they have a history, they have that love and care for what they do—even if it's sometimes deceptive. People want an exhibition programmed, so I think galleries will be more attractive for estates.

S.D. I agree. The purpose of an auction house is to make money, whereas the gallerists who started in my generation never thought that they were going to make a dime in the business. It was about having a life in art, building artists' careers, etc. I totally agree with you: we need a strong secondary market and we need art fairs. Both are crucial to the business. But, like I said this morning, if there is no gallery, there is no art fair; if there is no gallery, there is no auction house. Pace has represented some artists for 55 years, and there were decades when we just kept showing them even though nothing sold. Take Robert Irwin, who's one of the geniuses of our times. We just kept pouring money into the situation. We just kept building on it—and digging a bigger financial nadir for ourselves—, but it was a different thing.

F.C. It would be very nice if everybody worked like that.

J.B. Great. How about we take some questions now?

CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUESTIONS (C/Q) FROM THE AUDIENCE

Lisa Schiff. If the art world were Star Wars, auction houses would be the Death Star and Amy and Allan, from Sotheby's, would be stormtroopers. I think that's how we have painted it, and I think it is 100% hypocrisy. There's a vilification of the auction houses, which is not good. I'm happy that Allan is at Sotheby's and that Martin put a Krebber up in the right place. There is nothing worse than seeing a really good Albert Oehlen in the day sale or the morning sale, when it should really be in the evening sale. I think you are saying the same thing: we need talented people working everywhere. And we need to be open. I can't tell you how many times I've gone to a gallery to resell something and I have been personally vilified for doing it, and my client too.

“AS A COLLECTOR, YOU ARE EXPECTED TO KEEP BUYING FROM EVERY GALLERY ALL THE TIME SO THAT YOU CAN GET THE ONE THING THAT YOU ACTUALLY REALLY WANT, BUT YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO SELL ANYTHING.”

Many times a gallery cannot sell the work, so I'm doing all I can not to let it go into auction if that will upset the gallery so much, because I have to preserve my client's relationships. That happens quite often. As long as advisors and collectors are acting responsibly as well, there is a way to resell responsibly. We are not 50 years ago at Pace, when maybe money didn't matter and you bought one or two things a year. Now, as a collector, you are expected to keep buying from every gallery all the time so that you can get the one thing that you actually really want, but you're not allowed to sell anything. I think there is an ingrained idea of good and bad in the art world: "It's bad to talk about money. We only have to care about meaning. It doesn't exist without that." I feel there is an in-built hypocrisy that I can't stand.

J.B. Is there a question coming up? This is great, but...

Lisa Schiff. Yes, sorry. That was more of a comment, but I do have a question. What do you think about artists going right into auction houses? What about Damien Hirst?

F.C. That's a rare thing. It happens once in a generation. It's like an earthquake; it's not meant to be.

S.D. And it blew up his market.

S.d.P. If you look at Asian artists, or artists who don't come from the US or Western Europe, there is a very different attitude. I think that you should look at everything with an open mind. Anything is possible. The art market is very protective of the way it's been organised. Of all the markets that we know, it's the one that has changed the least over the last 15 years. Nearly every other market was turned upside down with the technological revolution. Now some little things are trying to make a structural change. Whether it will happen or not, that's another question, but I think one should look at everything with an open mind. Whenever somebody is bold enough to take risks and do something new, it is interesting and worthwhile.

S.D. I don't think auction houses are interested in building a career. You can't see one of everything, or see one price, and say it's a market. Is an auction house going to put on an exhibition? Because people can't understand the work by seeing one piece here and another one there. They understand the work at art fairs because they have seen it in gallery spaces. Is an auction house going to build an artist's career, to listen to all their problems and get them a lawyer for their divorce? Seriously, it's a whole different job.

“THE ART MARKET IS VERY PROTECTIVE OF THE WAY IT'S BEEN ORGANISED. OF ALL THE MARKETS THAT WE KNOW, IT'S THE ONE THAT HAS CHANGED THE LEAST OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS.”

S.d.P. It is, but it's a job that somebody who works at an auction house is just as well equipped to do if he or she decides to. You are the proof. You are a former auction house worker who has become a very trusted, important dealer. And Martin has the opposite trajectory: he was a very trusted dealer who later became a very trusted auction specialist. At the end of the day, it depends on your commitment to the artist. What is your commitment to the artist? You cannot say an auctioneer cannot do this or a gallery cannot do that.

Auction houses have taken over certain activities that galleries were doing, and there is no reason why galleries shouldn't take over some of the activities that auction houses were doing. We live in an open world, nothing is set, and nothing should keep you from trying out new things. It's like with banks: there are big banks, which deal with all sorts of operations, and there are small, merchant banks, which do one specific thing. Nobody says, "Oh my God, this bank is doing all of this, it's appalling!"

“AUCTION HOUSES HAVE TAKEN OVER CERTAIN ACTIVITIES THAT GALLERIES WERE DOING, AND THERE IS NO REASON WHY GALLERIES SHOULDN'T TAKE OVER SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES THAT AUCTION HOUSES WERE DOING.”

C. I just wanted to add something to that. I'm from Istanbul, where the market is very tiny compared to what we're talking about here. It's not an established market either; we are trying our best as collectors, gallerists and artists. There are times when we use the auction to reach collectors that don't visit the gallery. It works. It's actually a good way to show the work to other collectors, because there is a limit to the amount of people who buy from the gallery. Many years ago, maybe some of you can remember it, Sotheby's London had an auction of Turkish art. It didn't really work, but there were of course mutual benefits, because they wanted Turkish collectors and we wanted to open up to the world. It was a little bit like a career initiative. I agree with Simon: we need to be open-minded, because there is another part of the world that actually needs these platforms.

F.C. We are all open-minded, I think. However, we are very protective of our own galleries.

C. Me too. I learned the business in New York and then came back to Istanbul. So I know all of this—that I should be protective, that auction houses are the enemy, etc. I know all the information, but when you come to the practicality, you sometimes need these tools to establish the market. That being said, I'm obviously against speculation, which also happens in Turkey.

Georgina Adam. Simon, you were saying that galleries could take the initiative and do certain things like an auction house. What were you thinking of specifically?

S.d.P. That's for you to think about creatively.

Georgina Adam. That's not an answer!

S.d.P. I'm giving you an evasive answer, sorry. I feel that everybody can do whatever they like. Some galleries want to be animating and have cultural programmes that bring in new people or new things. But in the way that auction houses have decided to do private sales—and they do need them in order to be commercially viable, just imagine what would happen if they didn't do private sales—, it is very important to keep the cost structure going. It's 10 times more expensive to sell something at auction, in terms of the infrastructure, than as a mid-sized gallery. I think that there is no reason why one of the mega-galleries should decide not to do the activities of auction houses. There is not a monopoly that says they are the only ones allowed to.

S.D. I don't think auction houses are the enemy. I think we all need each other. Auction houses, galleries, art fairs... We all need each other to survive and thrive, but to become one big conglomerate under the same roof would be a mistake, in my opinion.

C. Hello, my name is Martin Bernhard and I'm the owner of Baró Galeria in São Paulo. My question is the following: if galleries and auction houses run on a different model, how is it possible to integrate the different activities under the same roof without having a conflict of interests? How can you deal with it?

S.D. Great question. There is definitely a conflict of interests.

M.K. I think what he just said answered the question: there is a conflict of interest. I agree with Susan.

J.B. The art world is like that: no conflict, no interest, basically. More questions?

Q. Yes, hi. I work a lot with Africa and the Middle East. One of the Middle Eastern artists that I work with wanted to fund an exhibition. He told me, "Don't worry, I can just put a work up at auction to fund

the exhibition.” At first, from my Western perspective, I said, “Are you crazy?” And he said, “No worries, it’s something we do.” And in fact this was something that happened to me at the beginning of my career—only five years as a gallerist. Now I’ve seen that it’s something they do there. As Lisa said, we tend to vilify the auction house.

The gallery has a model and the auction house has a different one, and it’s very difficult to find a way to collaborate, even though we need each other. However, I think new models of collaborations can be found in other parts of the world. In the case of Africa, there are things happening in Sotheby’s. People from Sotheby’s have approached me to have a coffee and talk about possible collaborations. Maybe you can tell us more about it. Is there something happening? Are you working on a new model?

**“WE ALL NEED EACH OTHER TO SURVIVE
AND THRIVE, BUT TO BECOME ONE BIG
CONGLOMERATE UNDER THE SAME ROOF
WOULD BE A MISTAKE, IN MY OPINION.”**

M.K. I don’t think there is a strategy for a new model. Then again, it depends on your definition of “collaboration.” In my view, I collaborate with galleries and dealers on a daily basis. Maybe I have a phone exchange, or I’m looking for something that they have, or I have something that they are looking for. And then we just work together, basically buying and selling art, which is what I do. Susan gave that Kline example, but it also goes the other way quite often. I don’t think there is a new strategy, not one that I’m aware of, anyway. I agree with you absolutely, though.

J.B. I think we mentioned that in the new markets galleries and auction houses do come together and work collaboratively, because there is no one else to go to there.

M.K. What we won’t be doing is representing artists. But we have an ambitious S2 programme, where we basically show secondary market material. We just hired Darren Leak, who did a great job at Christie’s on the Mayfair, putting together a really great Polke and Richter show. There’s a really exciting Kusama and Louise Bourgeois show coming up. So we have somebody in our team who wants to do this sort of

things. We work with dealers, collectors, and potential buyers on that. Again, it’s not a new strategy, but we are trying to do great things at a very high level, because we are all really passionate about it.

Q. Hi, thank you for your sharing your thoughts and expertise. I’m happy to say that I was Jeffrey’s student at the Sotheby’s Institute of Art. I’m just surprised that we have the word “institute” up there on the screen, but nobody talked about education. Could it be that Sotheby’s and the auction houses can give back to communities in this connoisseurship aspect, not so much based on investment but more in terms of cultural, educational talks? What could these programmes look like?

J.B. Martin, everybody’s looking at you.

M.K. Well, improvising really quick, I’ll say yes, absolutely. The big auction houses obviously both have educational programmes, and Frieze, another really big corporation, decided to go in that direction as well. We do it because we feel it’s a good thing to share our knowledge, our passion and our inspiration. It’s great that you mentioned it and I hope I answered your question.

Q. Hi. My name is Juan Moreno. I’m from Barcelona and I work at an auction house and a gallery. It’s clear that today auction houses depend heavily on the work done by the galleries, but to what extent do galleries feel that auction houses can be used to their advantage?

S.D. Well, there are advantageous things that happen, but I don’t think that they can be “used” to our advantage.

J.B. Would Pace sometimes place something at auction?

S.D. For a client, certain things are better sold at auction, certain things are better sold privately. So I negotiate with auction houses on behalf of collectors. We are not really using them or manipulating them, though. Maybe I misunderstood the question. Advantageous things happen for galleries when somebody discovers a work at auction and then comes into the gallery, that type of things.

F.C. Auction houses also make first buyers feel more comfortable in the otherwise quite intimidating world of art. That’s a very good thing that they can do, and they’re very good at it. As Simon pointed out, having

no secondary market can be detrimental to your artist, just like having too much of it. It's also a nice social event.

S.d.P. Galleries constantly consign to auction houses. Those of us who are or have been auctioneers know this. A lot of buying and consigning takes place. Again, it comes back to what I was saying in the beginning: we all need each other. There's one big segment of the art world that we have not mentioned, which is the museum world, the institutional world, which is just as important an element in this recipe. And there's also great animosity sometimes between the commercial side of the art world, which we are all a part of, and the non-commercial side of the art world. I've heard museum curators say, "Oh, we will not touch an artist if he has a strong market." To which I replied, "That is pathetic, your museum shows Picasso and Matisse. Are you not going to endorse them either just because they have a strong market?"

**“THERE'S ALSO GREAT ANIMOSITY
SOMETIMES BETWEEN THE COMMERCIAL
SIDE OF THE ART WORLD, WHICH WE
ARE ALL A PART OF, AND THE NON-
COMMERCIAL SIDE OF THE ART WORLD.”**

S.D. But that's a whole different topic.

S.d.P. Anyway, we all need each other. We are a family and, as such, we have disagreements. That's what makes family life exciting.

Lisa Schiff. I have another question, actually. If the kiss of death for an artist's career is when primary market prices drop below secondary market prices...

F.C. That's not the kiss of death.

S.D. Not at all.

F.C. It requires a little explanation, but it's not the kiss of death.

S.D. Exactly.

Lisa Schiff. From my experience placing an artwork in the \$250,000 to \$500,000 range, seeing that it's later selling for \$25,000 at auction

terrifies people from a monetary point of view. Sometimes people don't care, but I feel horrible for those artists, because I care about them so much. My question is, because auction records are so powerful, there is a technological advancement happening right now that will crowdsource primary market prices. Are you OK with that?

S.D. It's fine. We actually have a printed price list on the counter. People say you cannot get it at Gagosian, but we do have it at Pace.

Lisa Schiff. But I'm talking more of an online platform, an Artnet sort of thing, where you can browse any artist's primary market prices.

F.C. Is that happening?

Lisa Schiff. No, not yet, but I think if somebody did it, it would have the potential to be as revolutionary as Artnet was in 1998, or whenever it started. So I'm just curious, could you see a power shift happening in terms of the numbers? I feel like it would be a levelled playing field.

S.D. Either way it has to be contextualized for a collector, it has to be explained. You can't look at a spreadsheet and say, "This is the market; this is what happened." Everything has nuances.

J.B. Another levelled playing field is the online market. I wanted to talk about it too, but we didn't have time. It's new and it's fresh. There are collaborations between auction houses and galleries on the same platform, so for me it's another area where things possibly will come together. Are there any other questions?

Q. Just quickly, what kinds of collaboration with galleries can happen online? Do you have some data on that?

J.B. That's something I was looking into. Artsy and Invaluable both have platforms where galleries and auction houses sell. So they are sharing platforms, which is a new, interesting thing.

M.K. Just to give you some figures, at Sotheby's there was a 20% increase in online buyers in 2016. In total, \$155 millions worth of artwork were sold online.

F.C. What do you mean by online? Is it online bidding?

M.K. Yes. It's not an online auction, but it's online bidding. And what's quite interesting about these statistics is that 90% of those sales are completely new to us. Something is happening there.

C. You recently told us that auctions and the secondary market handle contemporary art and art that was produced recently. However, to a certain extent, most of the experimental art nowadays is neither on the secondary market nor represented in auction houses. I'm thinking of video art, for instance. The current assumption here has been that art is a painting or an object, which doesn't match what is happening today in terms of artistic production. Galleries reflect what is being produced nowadays, and sometimes it doesn't have a market. I'm talking about performance, conceptual art that is not material and video art—where the market is shrinking, even though video art is becoming increasingly important in terms of artistic discourse.

We heard about galleries and auction houses working together to expand the market in new areas, but it's always within this idea of focusing on Korea or Africa, for example. For me it's very reactionary to still think in geographical terms, because in the end we talk mostly about painting, whether it's from the 60s or from an African artist from the 80s who was not in the global art market. I'd really like to know if, on the auctioneer side, there is a desire to integrate into the market areas of artistic production that are not so easy to represent in a catalogue or online.

S.D. Only if they start programming like galleries, because an auction is not going to do anything unless it is a money-making vehicle.

F.C. Neither are the big galleries.

S.D. I disagree. If we think we'll lose a lot of money with an exhibition, but it's important that we do it, we do it. Auction houses don't take risks like that.

F.C. In this capitalist world, the people who take risks are always the people without money. I don't know if Pace is looking at this kind of art. Do you represent the kind of artists that he was referring to?

S.D. Yes. We started a business model in California called Pace: Art + Technology. I met the attorney here today, who is from Berlin and

represents Random International. We work with him now. We are working with artists who work in a completely different way. So yes, we do.

Adam Sheffer. Along these lines, I have a concrete question that I'd love to ask Martin. It's related to what Jocelyn said. Imagine I bought a Tino Sehgal and now I want to sell it. You and I have been friends for 25 years, you are the only person I work with from the auction house—say I had a fall-out with Marian [Goodman] and I don't want to sell through her. How would you handle that?

M.K. It depends. It's a very extreme and specific situation. First of all, I would see if I could place it, if I had a client for it, before actually considering auction. If you were to insist on an auction, I would consider it, absolutely.

Adam Sheffer. Would you call Marian and actually ask her about the work and the conditions under which it was sold?

M.K. She would then call you and stop this whole process.

Adam Sheffer. And what if I said, "Too bad, this is how I want to do it. I don't want anything else from her. My loyalty is to Martin"?

M.K. Wow, you have a role play thing going on.

Adam Sheffer. I just think this is one of those potentially new ways of collaborating in which she could assign the collector but you could handle the deal. Would you accept?

F.C. I would be completely open to do it, and I'm confident that we would place the work together in a good way.

S.d.P. Actually, it was always my dream to be able to sell a Tino Sehgal at auction. Sadly, the possibility never materialized. I thought it would have been a fun, innovative thing to do. Also, to answer the previous question: it was also my dream to do a video-only auction. I have discussed it on numerous occasions with my colleagues at Phillips and, sadly, the commercial reality forced us to drop the idea. If we were to go ahead with an auction where we sold, in the best-case scenario, 15% of what was offered, we would actually have done a disservice to video art. So it's the commercial reality that prevented us from doing it, unfortunately.

F.C. If video art starts to sell in 10 years, auction houses will start to handle it.

S.d.P. And also, consider the difference between a gallery putting up an exhibition that turns out to be a failure and an auction house having an auction where nothing sells. The public side of an auction makes all the difference. Not selling things is really tough for the auction house, because it's totally public. However, we know plenty of exhibitions where nothing sold and still there were no repercussions, because there is no transparency.

M.K. Also, if I may add, video art is not so popular right now. I'm pretty sure it's coming back, though. Very recently, there were a couple of examples of very successful auction results, one for Bruce Nauman at Christie's, last season.

J.B. Any other questions?

C. Following up on this, I think that's exactly the difference between an auction house and a gallery: the capacity, the ability and the will to invest long-term, to build the career of an artist without any guarantee of success.

F.C. But that is something to celebrate. We have different missions.

C. To me, that is the difference. There can be collaborations and interesting conversations, but by default an auction house will never be willing to support an artist for 10 or 20 years without having sold one work. Some galleries do it.

S.D. Of course! Even for 50 years.

S.d.P. And some dealers became very wealthy because of the works they were not able to sell.

J.B. We've been talking about the situation at a high level, but most people here are at medium level. Are there different issues at stake? Are we speaking about too high a level?

S.D. Are you asking the audience?

J.B. Yes, I am.

C. Well, I might have a case study for you. I'm about to show an artist that disappeared for 10 years. When he came back, he broke the auction records—I think it was Sotheby's in Doha, maybe 5 years ago. After that auction, he's the highest valued Arab living artist. I'm a small gallery, so I'm very happy. I am very passionate about his work. Now I find myself in a complicated situation: I am working with someone that has been out of our ecosystem for more than 10 years, I will soon have a wonderful show in Madrid, but I don't really know how to approach it.

F.C. On what level?

C. On a commercial level. As a gallery, practically. I will receive the work, I will have to set the price, and I know there's a lot of demand. I know people are expecting the work. So this is the reality of a small gallery from Madrid dealing with something that was very successful at auction. The sale he made was £1 million.

F.C. Wow, you are lucky. Did he only sell that one product?

C. Yes. It's a piece that he made with stencils. The Qatar Museum acquired it. It's just an example of the problems that a small gallery like mine has to deal with, given that you were talking about it.

J.B. Thank you very much for sharing your case. I'm afraid we have to start wrapping up, but I want to thank you all. You have been very honest and open. It's not often that we hear what is happening inside. Is there anything that you would like to say as last words that would be instrumental to bring this collaborative process to fruition?

M.K. If I might take the lead on this one, the title of our talk was "new models in collaboration", and we haven't been able to come up with a single one. I think that speaks for itself. Our roles are defined, and yes, we are working together on a daily basis. I think communication is key, but I don't think very exciting new models are in the making.

J.B. Is collaboration just the way that you work together at a basic level?

F.C. It's very much about personal relationships. I believe strongly in these fields of knowledge and competence, and I strongly believe that this is one of the most exciting things. If someone from an auction

house can develop astute knowledge of the market, great, I would like to learn from that. We work together, we have similar endeavours.

S.D. This generation is completely different from the one prior.

“THE TITLE OF OUR TALK WAS ‘NEW MODELS IN COLLABORATION’, AND WE HAVEN’T BEEN ABLE TO COME UP WITH A SINGLE ONE. I THINK THAT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.”

S.d.P The answer is “Talking Galleries.” Spending two days with people from the same field is fantastic. It fosters very necessary conversations, both onstage and offstage. It’s great. The more communication there is, the better the mutual understanding will be.

Adam Sheffer. We are at a moment of changes. We don’t know where things will go, but people are trying. I know that at S2 in New York they are doing a show called *Now You See Me*, and it’s an exhibition of what they consider to be nine of the most significant women artist of the 20th century. It’s curated by Elizabeth Goldberg, who is the head of the American Art Department and somebody that I’ve known for almost 30 years. When she came up with the idea, Elizabeth called me and said, “I want to collaborate with you on this, because I don’t know about Louise Bourgeois and Joan Mitchell the way you do, and I want to draw some serious relationships with Georgia O’Keefe and Tamara de Lempicka.”

We went through the list of works that they had, both museum loans and things for sale. I said, “The problem with your show is that you don’t have a single living artist in it. You really need to have Lynda Benglis, who is the continuation of this dialogue.” Our gallery’s needs were met as well: we could consign some things from the primary market to their show, and we recommended a couple of secondary market things that we knew about and that had been on the market for a long time, so we wanted to keep them out of public auction. That way, they can sell and get a commission, and we can weight in on the catalogue—we obviously hold all the copyright access for the images, we could approve the essays, etc. They even got a sponsor from Dior, which is going to dress Lynda. She is going to show up at the event and take a

group of museum curators and high net worth collectors through the exhibition. They’re never going to represent Lynda Benglis. But they were smart enough to come to the source, because they wanted to do things in a way that offered them that credibility.

S.D. That’s collaboration!

J.B. We finally found it, we can go have lunch now! I just want to give thanks again to our group of panellists and our audience.

Simona Malvezzi

Architects Simona Malvezzi, Wilfried Kuehn and Johannes Kuehn founded Kuehn Malvezzi in Berlin in 2001. Public spaces and exhibitions are the main focus of their work as architects, designers and curators. They were in charge of the architectural design for Documenta 11, the Flick Collection in the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, and the Julia Stoschek Collection in Dusseldorf, which was nominated for the international Mies van der Rohe Award. The firm has designed the reorganisation of a number of contemporary and historical art collections, and dealt with sensitive preservation issues for listed buildings such as the Museum Belvedere in Vienna, the Liebieghaus in Frankfurt, the Berggruen Collection in Berlin and the Kunstgewerbemuseum, also in Berlin. Their projects have been shown in international solo and group exhibitions, including the 10th, 13th and 14th Architecture Biennial in Venice and Manifesta 7 in Trento.

Moritz Küng

Moritz Küng is an independent exhibition curator and book editor who works, above all, at the intersection with art and architecture. He has overseen exhibitions for, among others, the 25th art biennial in Sao Paulo (2002, with Richard Venlet), the 11th architecture biennial in Venice (2008, with Office KGDVS), the 26th international biennial of graphic design in Brno (2014, with Mevis & van Deursen) and the 25th biennale interieur in Kortrijk (2016, with Heimo Zobernig). He has curated comprehensive solo shows with architects like Arno Brandhuber, Christian Kerez, Lacaton & Vassal, SANAA or Eduardo Souto de Moura, or artists such as Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Thomas Hirschhorn, Allen Ruppersberg, Joëlle Tuerlinckx or Cerith Wyn Evans. Recent publications include the catalogue raisonné *The Book(s)* by Peter Downsbrough (2013), as well as the artists' books *Hielos-Picos* by Iñaki Bonillas (2015) and *Book* by George Brecht (2017). Born in Lucerne, Switzerland, he currently lives in Barcelona.

ARCHITECTURE FOR ART. GALLERY SPACES

A SUMMARY

SPEAKER

Simona Malvezzi

PRESENTER

Moritz Küng



ARCHITECTURE FOR ART. GALLERY SPACES A SUMMARY

Can architecture contribute to shaping a gallery's profile? How may an architectural proposal affect the artworks on display? What are the specific spatial needs of a gallery and how can architecture work creatively in order to meet them? These three thought-provoking questions were at the core of the conversation that curator Moritz Küng and architect Simona Malvezzi had during their session at Talking Galleries 2017.

The Kuehn Malvezzi studio might well be considered part of a minority—if not altogether one of its kind—within the architecture sector. Out of the over 200 projects that they have worked on, more than two-thirds are related to the art world: nine gallery conversions, over 30 museum projects and competitions, and almost 90 displays for art exhibitions and fairs. As curator Küng explained, the studio's identity is defined by its artistic sensitivity, just as its practice is deeply rooted in contemporary art and discourse.

Showcasing some of her studio's key projects and references, Malvezzi revealed the fertile relationship that ties art and architecture together, allowing for notions such as display, copy, ready-made, exhibitionism or reappropriation to be transferred from the artistic realm to architectural practice. To Malvezzi, "Exhibiting something is creating a very precise relationship between the visitors and the artworks." The goal, ultimately, is to articulate an efficient kinaesthetic narrative. Among the many strategies involved in achieving that, Malvezzi and Küng discussed the importance of using in-between spaces, creatively approaching light, playing with the notions of foreground and background, reinforcing the focal point by erasing distractions, or considering how a visitor's itinerary is affected by its duration and the physical experience it dictates—walking, sitting or even lying down

all foster different interactions with an exhibition. A good example of how all these elements can be taken into consideration was Kuehn Malvezzi's proposal for Documenta 11. Inspired by the idea of a labyrinth, the studio put the visitor's movement at the centre of their project, suggesting two different itineraries that entailed two different experiences with the art exhibited: the comprehensive approach versus its shortcut. As Malvezzi explained, plans do not always need to be groundbreaking: the ones drawn for Documenta 11 were modelled after the first Renaissance gallery, the Uffizi, designed by Giorgio Vasari.

Shifting from fairs to galleries, Malvezzi explained the benefits of clearly stating the difference between outdoors and indoors: by marking the gallery's entrance as the beginning of a new spatial narration, the visitor's relationship to the works exhibited gains an element of surprise and concentration. As Küng pointed out, "The white space is a pseudoneutral terrain." It is in that sense that architecture can intervene, defining the parameters of a spatial experience that conditions the reception of art. The extent to which that conditioning matters was clear to Malvezzi, who argued that, "Architecture changes the fixed meaning of the artwork." A number of examples were provided to illustrate how new curatorial decisions can open up as well: using soundproof walls made it possible to place a quiet Marina Abramović video next to a noisy Aaron Young in the Julia Stoschek collection, in Dusseldorf. Furthermore, architecture does not only spatially arrange the artworks, but it can also serve as their very platform, as in the case of Heimo Zobernig's in-situ work placed in the pergolas that the Kuehn Malvezzi studio built for the Belvedere Museum in Vienna.

During the Q&A session, several related topics were discussed, such as the importance of a gallery's storage room, the appeal of using historical buildings for modern art exhibitions, and how the differences between a gallery and a public institution give architectural projects a slightly different set of circumstances.

Jesse Ringham

Jesse Ringham has extensive experience in both the commercial and arts sector, with a leading focus on digital. As the current Director of Digital in SUTTON, he leads international digital campaigns, developing strategy, content and feeds for the company's clients. Before SUTTON, Ringham worked at Tate, where he delivered the digital campaign for the new Tate Modern launch. In addition, he has worked with many creative partners, from Facebook and Instagram to Eurostar and Topshop. Ringham was responsible for Tate's digital marketing and social media strategy, which resulted in one of the world's largest social media followings for a museum. He has advised cultural organisations on digital marketing on an international scale, in cities like Beijing, Copenhagen, Doha, Moscow, Muscat and New York. Ringham also worked at Marks & Spencer and Topman/Topshop, where he managed the brand and digital marketing.

SOCIAL MEDIA. ANALYSING YOUR INVESTMENT

SPEAKER
Jesse Ringham



SOCIAL MEDIA. ANALYSING YOUR INVESTMENT

I'm going to talk about three areas related to social media. The first one is strategy. Where are we going? How has the media landscape changed over the last six to 12 months? I'll then talk about content. What can we do in terms of planning content, telling the story behind your gallery, the artist and the artworks? We'll discuss how to engage people, how to be a bit more creative. Advertising costs are increasing: budgets are working harder and harder, and advertising returns are under scrutiny, so we have to be a lot more creative in order to find and reach people that are new to art. We need to establish new partnerships as well. I'll talk about that in a minute. The third element of my presentation will be evaluation, which is very important. Is all this hard work actually doing anything? Is it helping us achieve our goals? The great thing about digital platforms is that you can assess, optimise and improve in real-time, while the campaign is live. You can see how people are interacting. If they don't like things, they let their opinions run riot. So we're going to talk about innovation, metrics and the future of digital.

Digital makes art accessible to everyone. This is always rattling around at the back of my head. The potential is almost endless. It's a lot of hard work, but it does pay off. Risks are a part of it, of course. We must take risks within digital, especially in social media, which is critical to change. So how do we evolve? The main thing is to take risks and to do what no one else is doing.

As you know, we began with print in the form of traditional newspapers—which I love coincidentally—and how their content has evolved into desktop and PC. Obviously, that's a bit of a headache for a lot of publishers as far as advertising goes: how do we sell more ads? Now we've moved to mobile formats. Screens are getting smaller and smaller, and so are people's attention spans. Advertising is getting restricted, so we have to be more creative, more visual and more impactful. In the last six months, social media has been rolling

out lots of editorial based content. Social media brands in my opinion appear not satisfied with just being distributors of engaging content; they also want to be owners, possibly. We've seen large amounts of initiatives rolled out in the last six months. Google and Facebook pretty much own the advertising world at the moment, which presents a lot of worry for a lot of people. With the whole fake news phenomenon coming out, this could be a full circle in terms of how people come back to trusted, reliable journalism.

Let's begin by talking about "social editorial". Facebook Instant Articles, for example, which is Facebook editorial package that helps media publishers develop richer, more extensive content within Facebook. I'm sure you've seen or heard of Facebook Live. Live broadcastings are on the rise. We are going back to being "in the moment", having a performance in a gallery where the artist is talking to you from your phone. And we should keep an eye on Facebook Virtual Reality. Virtual reality is a word everyone (Apple, Google, Sony, Microsoft...) has invested in.

**“TREAT EACH PLATFORM DIFFERENTLY.
THEY EACH HAVE A DIFFERENT AUDIENCE;
THEY EACH HANDLE DIFFERENT CONTENT
IN DIFFERENT WAYS.”**

There is a lot of money going into virtual reality to create experiences wherever you are in the world, bringing the artists to you, wherever they live. It's about bringing that experience to you, "seeing through the eyes" of the artist. There are huge creative opportunities within the world of virtual reality. Consider Facebook Live 360, where you can even have live virtual reality going on. The impact of this is immense, and it all started to resonate more widely in the last couple of months.

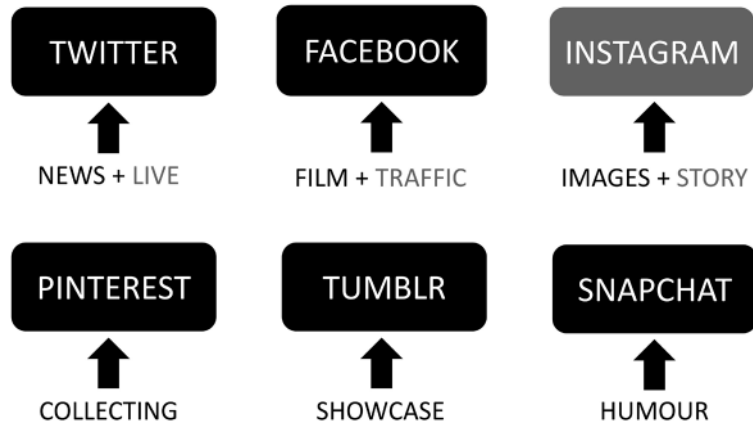
Twitter Moments and its editorial package are also interesting. They're curating content; basically, putting in editorial effect to tweets. That way, rather than seeing an endless flow of tweets, the growing editorial team at Twitter is collating tweets that are bespoke to you. Snapchat Stories and Instagram Stories are different ways for you to get news from your social network. So, instead of going to other websites, you have everything there with in the platform. Many younger audiences are now getting all their information from their trusted social platform,

from their friends too, but also directly from brands in very innovative ways, whether it's live broadcasting or VR. So that's how Twitter Moments works, you submit various tweets and messages. It is not as successful as other initiatives, like Snapchat Stories and Instagram Stories. This is how the Met used it last year to talk about architecture in our day. They did a live stream. They brought in advocates like Wolfgang Tillmans and Vivienne Westwood to talk about art and reflect on architecture and design, but partnering with Dezeen and the Met, and then taking that to Twitter. Just like you would when working with a journalist: you submit a story and they decide whether or not to feature it as a Twitter Moment in your country. If it's a really good story, they will take it globally, reaching millions of people. Snapchat Stories works in the same way. It is very expensive, but it's another way of getting content out there, to people across social media, in a very creative way.

Let's now talk about our conversation with audiences (essentially, the audience, the people looking at your Instagram feed). This is what drives growth. It's all about the audiences. As a brand, you can join the party with your content and hopefully they engage and run with it. What I would recommend is to treat each platform differently. They each have a different audience; they each handle different content in different ways. So I would look at these almost as different publications, different tones of voice, if you wish.

**“IT'S ALL ABOUT THE AUDIENCES.
YOU JOIN THE PARTY WITH YOUR
CONTENT AND HOPEFULLY THEY
ENGAGE AND RUN WITH IT.”**

There is a key question when producing a campaign digitally and across social media: how do we (the art sector, the exhibition) relate to other audiences in the world of fashion, music or sport, for example? This is where we jump into other audiences. Take the fashion world. How does the artist and the artwork relate specifically to that particular world? How can we get that coverage and that reach? Our task is very much about acting like a detective and finding links with all of these different cultural and creative interests.



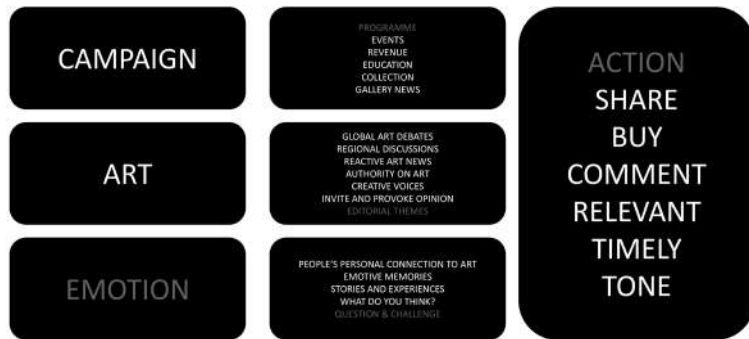
With the different social platforms, it's about coming up with different strategies for each platform. Like I said, different audiences need different ways of talking, different types of content. Twitter revolves around news of the moment, being in the room, the live element. Film content says a million words. It's multipurpose and multichannel. Facebook drives traffic to websites, hence why it is still the fastest-growing social media platform in the world, unbelievably. We should also think about Instagram, and obviously, Instagram Stories, although it's behind the scenes, it's image-led, it's a visual-led platform, which is great for us in the Arts. And then there's Pinterest, which is still growing strongly and is all about collecting, gathering. It also drives traffic or visitors to websites. What about Tumblr? I use it as a showcase, so it's about crowdsourcing. There we have a younger audience-based platform where you actually ask them about what their interests are, what their work is. And there's Snapchat, a very hard platform to crack at the moment, where it's all about weaving humour into your messaging. Undoubtedly, it's still in its early days, but it's one of the platforms at the moment for 25s and under.

**“HOW DO WE (THE ART SECTOR,
THE EXHIBITION) RELATE TO
OTHER AUDIENCES IN THE WORLD
OF FASHION, MUSIC OR SPORT,
FOR EXAMPLE?”**

This is how I would approach a digital campaign. Everything starts with Google. The articles, the press you use, the way your website is built, your tweets, etc. Everything feeds into Google, because at the end of the day, in my experience the largest percentage of people that find out about you will come from either word of mouth or Google. Knowing how to work with Google is key. Apart from that, we have advertising, which is becoming increasingly expensive. You can say to publishers “I want to be on this page at this particular time with this content.” It's very expensive. I don't know how many people in the room have ever clicked on a mobile ad, but the numbers are getting smaller and smaller. Social media is definitely in the middle. This is the conversation that we're having. Paid social media is also gaining importance. We know with Facebook, due to their algorithm, you're allegedly only organically reaching a very small portion of the users following you on your page. So if you've got a page of a thousand followers, you're allegedly only reaching a small fraction of the total following, unless you invest in paid advertising to boost your visibility. That's the income model here. That's what Instagram is presently currently rolling out and increasing. After all, they need to evolve to be income-generating platforms.

**“SOCIAL MEDIA, ON TOP OF BEING
A BRILLIANT WAY TO INTERACT
WITH AUDIENCES, ALSO PULLS
PEOPLE TOGETHER WITHIN YOUR
ORGANISATION.”**

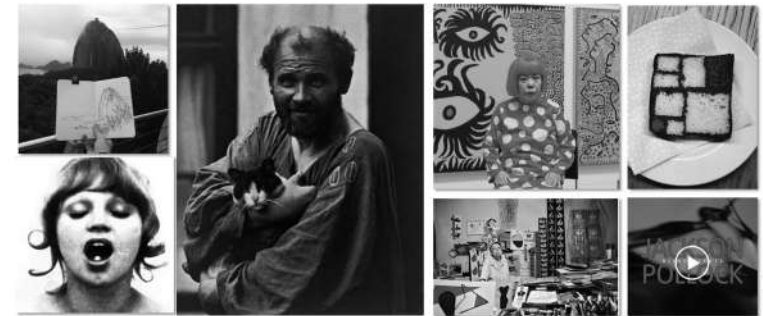
This is how social media works. If you've got a tiny team—everyone starts with one person—, how do you grow? The idea is to bring other people from within the gallery together. Social media, on top of being a brilliant way to interact with audiences, also pulls people together within your organisation. It's very much the cement, because everyone is discussing stories and memories, everyone is enthusiastic about the artists and the exhibitions they're working on. So, all these people can get involved, whether it's the curators, the people dealing with public programmes and events within the space, the PR team, even the retail team. Everyone has got a story to tell.



This is how I'd work out social media content every week. A third of the content that goes out is campaign-led, so it's purely talking about yourself, your programme, your exhibitions, your events. The other third is art outside the walls of your institution, of your brand—so, not talking about yourself. What is going on in the wider world? How can you tap into big debates that are happening? How can you spark a conversation within the art world? It's about becoming an authority on art or on one particular artist. The last component of the three is emotions, turning the camera on the public. What are their emotional connections to the art that you're exhibiting? What are their personal connections and stories? Inviting the public "into the campaign" is crucial. That is essentially the strongest bit of social media. Every bit of content that you do needs that call to action. What do you want people to do when they see that film or read that article? Is it to share it? Is it to buy, hopefully? Is it to comment? How relevant is that article at that particular time? What is the tone of voice like? How can you experiment to boost people's engagement with that content?

Content can completely vary, for example, if the audience gets to see the process of the artist behind the scenes, at the studio. Filming that and getting the artist to talk personally and emotionally about their work can be very compelling. We can also try injecting humour in the campaigns, working with cake. We've got a big show in the UK called *The Great British Bake-Off*, for which I've worked with a previous winner of the show who's made cakes resembling the artists' work. People love this, because it's a really accessible way to learn more about an artist. Another idea is jumping into exhibitions just before the

doors are open to the public. This is one with Kusama looking a little bit shell-shocked just before the doors open to the journalists. It's almost like a public preview rather than a private one. What else? Things like artists and cats. For every other artist I've worked with there seems to be a picture of them holding a cat. This is Klimt. Artists' sketchbooks are very popular as well. This is what I was talking about regarding the audience: asking people what their connection to art is. I was working on an exhibition about Turner, for instance, where we showed his sketchbooks and said, "Now we'd like to see yours." It was almost like asking people to open their personal diaries. We had sketchbooks getting posted all around the world, from Tokyo, to Moscow, to areas of south London. It was extremely inspiring to see people interacting and talking, even trying to buy sketchbooks off from each other.



Social media is also great for testing ideas out: if they work on social media, how can you take them to the next level? I've collaborated with Exterior Outdoor and Ocean Outdoor, companies that run big digital outdoor advertising screens across the country. In London, they have smart digital screens that can detect moisture, rain, weather, time of day, even the flow of traffic. So, we decided to adapt and incorporate that to the collection.



This, for example, is something we did during rush hour at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The screen said, "You can't rush a masterpiece." The whole idea is that the artwork resembles the environment you're in, whether it's by a roadside or on the Underground. That project was a success. I took it underground to the London Underground and displayed content about the weather. Every Friday at Tate, we displayed artworks that represent the weather. British people are fascinated by the weather, so we do weekly art weather forecasts. Again, this is just another way to bring the artwork outside the walls of the gallery, getting people to look up from their mobile phones while they're waiting for the train and simply read the weather through artists. It's another way to help people interpret art and get involved.

“SOCIAL MEDIA IS ALSO GREAT FOR TESTING IDEAS OUT: IF THEY WORK ON SOCIAL MEDIA, HOW CAN YOU TAKE THEM TO THE NEXT LEVEL?”

Moving on, films are great content to engage audiences. Now, we're working with two key artists and a respected fashion designer in Delhi, India. We film them talking about their studio, the location, the inspiration, why they got into art and what it does for them. Film is basically mobile's best friend. Film becomes your currency. Film is budget-wise, incredibly valuable and benefits your website in the long run. You can build up a whole history of film content about art.

The way to go about commissioning film, or at least what I would suggest for social media, is to first identify the audience you want to reach with that content. Who out there can you partner with, whether

it's an airline or a luxury department store? Who can you collaborate with? Who can you collaborate with budget-wise as well? The most important thing is to figure out where this film is going to be based, seeded and distributed.

So, it's about finding advocates for the different audiences that you want to reach, and also focusing on not alienating your existing audiences through film. That's the key bit: establishing the audience you want to reach, plus the partner, the advocate and the type of content that you want to do, whether it's a series of articles, a film, or live streaming with an artist straight into the studio.

“FILM IS BASICALLY MOBILE'S BEST FRIEND. IT'S MULTIPURPOSE AND MULTICHANNEL.”

I'd also like to talk about Facebook 360. The last Facebook 360 film I did was of Georgia O'Keeffe and her Ghost Ranch, out in New Mexico. Wherever you look with your mobile, you can see the landscape of New Mexico, and you can go into her home and her studio, where her work is. Meanwhile, you're hearing the archive audio of the artist talking. So it's a really innovative way to tell a story through digital, through virtual reality. And it proved to be so popular. Facebook promoted it, it gained 3.7 million views and it's right at the top of the VR charts. It's wonderful that an art film is there.

Let's move on to the lovely world of Instagram. Instagrammers love to be challenged, so we've run different initiatives. Every week there's something called Weekend Hashtag Project. This one was about architecture. We introduced them to a curator, and the idea behind it was that the curator would judge and credit the winning photos. The photos that Instagram liked, they would promote across their Instagram feed, which is 70 million (their Facebook is about 40 million). So it's all about visibility, and it was a challenge. The idea was for Instagrammers to take photos of gallery spaces and architecture, and submit that under the #WHParchitecture. The galleries' photography curator judged the winning photo, added credibility to the project. The winning photos had nearly 800,000 likes. By doing this kind of collaboration with Instagram, you're getting quite a bit of visibility.

Inform >6mth
 Excite >3mth
 Big Bang >Opening
 Maintain >Post

And then there are initiatives like #Empty, which have been around for a while. You open up your institution (your gallery) to the public or to influential Instagrammers so that they get to go in before the doors open. I did it at Tate Modern. The idea behind it is to let people into the spaces, because they will take pictures and they're all micro-influencers (people who have 1,000 to 2,000 followers on Instagram).

As you can see, it all boils down to being the authority on arts. All the films that we've done, the imagery, the articles, asking people about their memories of art and their emotions, interviews, live broadcasts, finding those advocates... It's a lot of work, but it's all about telling the stories, informing people and educating them on artworks so they can engage and spread the word about the exhibition.

To finish up, the way I'd approach a digital campaign is following these four stages. When you've got an exhibition open, starting six months out, all the content would be about educating the public on the artist in the exhibition. The next stage, three months out, is aimed at exciting people. That can be done through small film trailers, teasers, tours of their studio, etc. And, lastly, there's the Big Bang, the moment itself, where we can do live streams, have the advocate bringing people in, saying how great this exhibition is. Once it's open, we work on maintaining that, focusing on people's reviews and responses, reflecting on the exhibition and what it does to them.

If you've got any questions whatsoever on digital, I'll be glad to try and answer them.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUESTIONS (C/Q) FROM THE AUDIENCE

Q. Thank you for the presentation, Jesse. I think you give a very broad overview of the topic, which can be a little bit confusing for an art gallery when it comes to deciding what to do at its level. It would be very useful to have a beginner's guide, or a more advanced guide, on how to go through all of this, especially when you are a mid-sized gallery with a small-sized staff, where probably no one is trained for these initiatives. What would be your advice?

J.R. Everyone starts small. I've worked with galleries of all sorts of sizes, from one person to fairly large teams. The idea is to find the stories. Who can interpret those stories? In the case of small galleries, it's now becoming cheaper and cheaper to produce very short films on iPhone. Even a huge company like Burberry produced its 2013 campaign film using an iPhone to do the shoot. It's just about being creative with what you've got: identifying what the story is and finding the best channel to get it out. But it does take work. Everyone starts with one person and grows from there.

Q. I have a question about reaching people (say, art collectors) via social media. Is there any way to track or understand who sees or likes your content? Can you tell which of your followers are art collectors, and can you get in touch with them that way? Is there a way to turn this into commerce?

J.R. I come from a commerce background, so that's vital to me. It's all about creativity and getting eyeballs. It's like reading reviews: it's very hard to ascertain if they connect with sales. But the idea is to look through who is liking your content, to be reactive. If a particular influential person is re-tweeting your content, you thank them and start a dialogue. Like I was saying specifically about social media, it's all about the audience. You have to talk with them, you have to start a dialogue. That's when you start finding the people who are really advocating your exhibition. Reward them and bring them into the gallery, just like you would the journalists.

Q. Thank you very much for the presentation. It was excellent. I was wondering if you could share with us some statistics about the situation. Do you have an idea about how our industry (the art industry, especially galleries) uses social media? Do galleries use it?

Do you have some statistics on the return of it? I mean concrete data about it. I would also like to ask a second question. We are entering a very interesting moment with millennials, people who were born with an iPhone on their hands, a smartphone, let's say. You mentioned it too. We are viewing everything smaller and smaller on our screens, but we will be facing a new generation of people with a new kind of experience. I personally think that is one of the greatest challenges to face. I don't know how art will fit with this new experience. Do you have a guess, or some leads, on what will be happening? 360 videos are just the beginning of it, but we are talking of virtual reality for the art world.

J.R. I think you've just got to turn the challenge on its head and use it as a huge opportunity. Like I was saying at the beginning, digital makes art accessible to everyone now, and, if done correctly, it's a global thing. You can now see performances happening live through your Facebook feed, talk about it with your friends and share it broadly. It's just fantastic. And in terms of the return on investment, it is purely a case of looking at the comments, looking at the effect that the exhibition, the artist or whatever it is you're promoting, has had on people. That's the key thing. It's very difficult, like I was saying with the previous question, to ascertain if that's caused a direct sale. With the likes of Facebook, you can see how many people click on posts and then click through to your website, you can follow that whole journey. But I would say is that it's the sum of many parts. Social media is very much the voice of what we do, and it amplifies it broadly. I would say it works as the cement, it has a very important role.

Q. I have two questions. First, is there a platform that will emerge as the one we should focus on? And in relation to that, do you think any of these platforms can actually replace the need for a website?

J.R. That's a really good question. I think that could be the case. From my point of view, social media is no longer social media. They're all digital platforms, they're companies in their own right. Whereas previously it was a social network, now you're seeing live streams, virtual reality, editorial... It's really evolved. Again, it depends on who the person is that you're trying to reach, who the audiences are. Like I said, Facebook is still the fastest growing platform, but in countries outside the West. That's of interest to a lot of people. Facebook drives users to websites where they want to find out more. Instagram has got different KPIs. It's visual-led, which really suits the game we're in

—however in my experience, doesn't drive direct traffic to websites. So you always need to go back to deciding what your priority and your business objective are: if you want to get people to visit your website, then go down the route of Facebook, because they're doing fantastic stuff to encourage website traffic now. If you have a big performance programme, again Facebook offers live streaming, although Instagram live stream has just launched hot on the heels of Facebook Live.

Q. I know sales have happened on Instagram, where a client will see something hashtagged and then they'll ask me if I can get it. I'm sure that's happening with galleries. I heard of a huge private sale that was rumoured to happen on a Basquiat through hashtags. I just wondered, do you think that they would ever enable a system where they cut into sales?

J.R. I think it's a really interesting idea. I know back in the earlier days of Facebook, they did try to do the same thing with ecommerce revenue, they called it "social ecommerce". And ASOS, a big fashion brand in the US, actually built an entire website in Facebook, which allegedly cost them a lot of time and money. But this was at a time when people were very concerned about where their data was going. I think maybe as younger generations come through, because they are more trusting (or oblivious) about their data, sales within social platforms will grow. But right now, in my view, privacy is still a bit of a concern. In my opinion, Facebook appears to be being doing a second push in developing a viable ecommerce platform within Facebook, much the same way WeChat in China has done very successfully through their mobile payments ability.

Q. One more question and I promise I'll give this up. I feel like right now all galleries should hire somebody like you to work in-house. Where do you recommend we look for this type of expertise? I feel like the art world can be very small, and we just move within this art pool, but do you have an art background, or a tech background?

J.R. I'm passionately connected to art. I went to art college, then took the commercial route and finally came back into art. Marketing is my background, but I think you need a passionate connection to art and artists to really do a good job. Hopefully that answers your question.

Q. You started off the presentation by saying that, because of a lot of fake news, there was a sort of going back to traditional forms of media. In that context, with people receiving so much information through Instagram, Facebook, etc., do you think the slightly older population are left aside? Would it be a good strategy to mix digital with more traditional media?

J.R. Yes, totally. It's always wise not to put all your eggs in one basket and invest entirely in a digital platform. You should not alienate your traditional audience, so I would say yes, spread the media.

Q. But what kind of mix? It would depend on age groups, right?

J.R. It depends on the age group, the artist... Like we were saying, it depends on the audience you want to attract. It goes campaign by campaign.

Q. I think a lot of galleries, particularly mid-sized galleries, are thinking very practically: what kind of image are you supposed to show? Do you show your artist eating a hamburger, writing a funny comment on top of that? I actually sat next to Robin Cembalest in New York. I believe she works for the ADAA. She made a very interesting point on how a lot of galleries essentially regurgitate their press releases on social media and how that's very inefficient, because it almost defines you. It's just repeating what everyone else is saying, whereas the way galleries can really create access in an important way is by providing an insider's guide into, say, Agnes Martin's last show and how it came about. I think a lot of galleries need to focus on that element. Even if it doesn't necessarily relate to sales, it creates more of an aura around their work.

J.R. I think there is a connection. It creates relevance. A lot of the content is trying to capture the personality, the DNA of the artist, and hopefully that resonates with the people that we're trying to attract. So, yes, I totally agree.

C. Just one final point. I think everyone is concerned about sales and how to channel these strategies into sales. I personally look at Artsy every month and notice where the traffic is coming from. I know that a third of our market is based in, say, Europe, particularly in Belgium, and in Los Angeles. You can actually track those things.

J.R. The amount of information you can get off the back of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and obviously, your website, is immense. You can see how many people watch your film, when they stop, when they go back, where they're from, how old they are. That's why Facebook is worth so much, because it's all about data and information.

Q. Thank you for your presentation. All the examples you showed us were about sales, and I wonder if, for you, the approach for a gallery should be the sales, or if you have any hot tips. On the other hand, I would like to know what you think about Artsy.

J.R. I've been working with quite a few galleries, art fairs, and institutions like the British Council. We're currently doing some projects with Venice. And everything we mentioned applies. We were just talking about the story, the link, how you bring the artist's voice, how you help people interpret and understand the artist. I think that approach can be adapted to all sorts of galleries depending on resources and budget. As far as Artsy goes, I find it great. I've met the people behind it many times, and what they're doing is absolutely fantastic. They're diversifying. They're constantly evolving with all sorts of different initiatives. They are very innovative. And they're going up against no less than Google to become an authority on that particular artist by having works from public collections and private collections. It is a very clever thing to do, but obviously very competitive as well. The way it's editorially run is brilliant. I look at it as buying through editorial, which is what the fashion world has been doing with the likes of Net-à-Porter, where you buy through the magazine. It's a similar principle and it's brilliant.

Q. Could you expand a little bit more on the concept of storytelling? I think it is crucial for having good content on social media.

J.R. Of course. There are so many artists in the world, and the role social media play is a very accessible and formal way to tell the story about art, something extremely engaging. We're lucky now, we can tell that story, whether it's an article or whether it's bringing in an advocate from an audience that we want to tap into. We can collaborate with that advocate through VR or through a live stream. I think the idea behind storytelling is working out the type of content and the tone of that content for particular types of audiences that you want to attract. Look at timings. I briefly showed a slide that included three key stages:

six months before the exhibition, three months before the exhibition and lastly the big opening. I would recommend structuring content according to those timings, and really informing people. I worked on a campaign for Tracey Emin's *My Bed*, which is a fantastic piece, but also demands a huge role of interpretation, especially for new audiences. So we produced a lot of films for it. I got one of Tracey getting into the bed, because every time it goes on display, she gets into her bed and moulds the sheets, and she described it as a portrait rather than what you see. That interpretation was distilled very slowly at the beginning, so when the debate came—is this a work of art?—people were more educated and were not afraid to come in. They were more informed to join the debate, and that caused a ripple across social media.

Q. My question is very related to the previous one, about targeting the different audiences: what's the risk in doing that? Could your identity be damaged, in a way, if you create content that maybe the more sophisticated audience is not happy with? To target new audiences you need more humour, like we were saying, so you can show an artist eating a hamburger. That might attract a younger, funkier crowd, but the older collector will not really be happy with it. And yet you need to target both. So what do you do? Do you create two channels? I understand the concept of testing, but can that test also damage your identity?

J.R. The key thing is making sure everyone's involved. And that could obviously include the artists' estates, which can be very tough. Let people know why the decision to have an artist eating a hamburger has been made. Social media moves extremely fast, so before you know it you're literally into the next day. We should try different bits of content, but loop people in. If you are going down a route that is quite contentious and can provoke debate in the wrong way, it needs to be aired beforehand. So there's a lot of preplanning involved in something that looks very off-the-cuff. I've traditionally planned campaigns about six months in advance. I look at all the messaging over six months and then, the week before, we confirm that messaging is going to happen. So preplanning is essential for something that looks so informal.

C. I just want to add to your comment. As a gallerist, I have found social media to be extremely useful. The way I've used Instagram is having my own private account and then the gallery account. It makes a lot

more sense. As we're doing a very personal business, collectors like to follow our personal accounts too. In fact, on Instagram you can now privately email one another, which comes in really handy. And collectors are actually on Instagram. They are posting things (sometimes your artists), which allows us to engage because they use hashtags. So hashtags are a really useful tool. With Facebook, you must have your own personal account to open a gallery page, because you must be the admin and control it, alone or with other staff. Of course, having a gallery page is useful, because you can do the build-up, like you said, but it's not a museum. We would start the build-up five to four weeks before the event and the preparation, the installation, and so on and so forth. Then came the reviews, the opening, the shots, etcetera. Twitter is also very helpful. My gallery focuses on photography, or rather it used to. It was the only gallery in Istanbul focusing on photography. So the best way for me to actually engage an audience and create a larger collector base was to post a lot of news from all the other galleries: any arguments or discussions going on in museums, artists coming to Istanbul, artists' talks and so on. I posted that kind of information. That way, the gallery's Twitter page became one of the most important spaces in the contemporary art scene, actually, if you're especially interested in collecting photography.

J.R. I think individual voices are a brilliant strategy. Going back to the last question—how to segment your biggest social media account—, I should have mentioned that when you have different voices in the organisation (your academic voice, your curator, maybe even your artists, as well) the big account can serve almost as the hub to put people into. If someone is really into film, they can follow a film curator, and vice versa. They can have more of a personal, one-to-one conversation with them. So individual voices are a great way to go. The only problem is if you go too far with it and you end up with lots of different accounts. Then the challenge will be keeping everyone motivated, because social media is a hungry beast and it needs a lot of love. Spreading too much can become quite heavy in terms of workload.

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Printed in 2017

Talking Galleries is organised by SCREEN PROJECTS, a cultural agency based in Barcelona dedicated to developing cultural projects in the field of contemporary art. It is also the agency behind LOOP Barcelona, the platform focused on the study and promotion of the moving image that unfolds into a Festival, a Fair and the Studies programme, taking place yearly during spring. SCREEN PROJECTS is involved with art professionals worldwide and is open to collaborations.



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Talking Galleries is an open platform to debate and exchange ideas specific to the art gallery sector. Founded in 2011, it holds an annual symposium in Barcelona and organises conferences worldwide, facilitating the proper space for gallerists to discuss new trends in the art market and share their views and expertise.

Since Talking Galleries first started, the art market has experienced considerable changes. Despite having recovered from the crisis it faced almost a decade ago, many of us think we are at a delicate turning point again. Galleries, auction houses and art dealers are reassessing their models. Today more than ever, it is necessary to share our ideas, coordinate strategies and take advantage of common strengths.

This book collects the world-class talks and panels that made up the programme of the 5th Barcelona Symposium, which was held at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) from 16 to 17 January 2017. As readers will see, some of the most relevant matters in today's art gallery management were discussed by leading figures in the field. Whether they comment on the evolution of art fairs, the role of digital strategies, the effect of globalisation on galleries or the transformation of curatorial practices, their insights are extremely enriching for those of us who work in the art gallery sector.

“The Talking Galleries notebooks, produced after each symposium, summarise the presentations, panels and discussions, thus sealing with a permanent record the lively and interactive two days when gallerists and other art market professionals meet to discuss their mutual concerns.”

Georgina Adam

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