



THE MODERN SYSTEM OF VISUAL ART IN THE CONTEXT OF ART MARKETING

Zunnunova Umida

*Associate Professor of the Department Informatics and Management National Institute of Fine Art
and Design named after K.Behzod, Uzbekistan, Tashkent*

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the modern system of visual art in the context of art marketing. The development and search for new expressive means in the visual arts is currently associated with the direct influence of screen technologies. Fine art becomes a subcategory of media culture, which offers the viewer a complex and technically high-quality visual product. The desire to virtualize images, creating immersive and interactive art spaces, is becoming increasingly relevant among artists, developing not only in the individual, but more often in the collective work of art groups, including IT engineers and designers.

KEY WORDS: *visual arts, art marketing context, creative industries, fine arts*

The emergence of new needs, especially the aesthetic, symbolic and emotional needs of modern society, has led to the birth and development of industries specialized in the production of goods and services, which are very creative in content and whose use and exchange value is determined by their aesthetic and symbolic value. The cultural and creative sector concerns the historical and artistic heritage of the country, which is the cultural core, which is the result of the creativity of past generations, as well as the artistic production of current generations. Creativity is the contribution that facilitates the production and transmission of content by cultural industries that provide goods and services with a high symbolic content. The creative process is strongly present in the realm of material culture as an expression of a country or region and the communities living there.

The creative industries, although they differ significantly from each other, depend on each other in technical, economic and social respects. First, the human factor plays a key role in the characteristic mode of production. Secondly, they are involved in the creation and transmission of symbolic meaning. Finally, the end result implies some form of intellectual property (Throsby 2001). However, in order to define the visual arts industry, additional points of contact must be found by which the boundaries of the sector can be defined. Thus, it can be stated that the visual arts system consists of all socio-economic agents involved in various areas of the cultural and creative sectors, and which:

- Have a production function in which the human factor plays a key role, and especially creativity (A);
- Based on the existence of some form of intellectual property (B);
- Produce a unique (and therefore non-reproducible) cultural product with a high symbolic content (C);
- Satisfy the need for aesthetic and cultural identity (D).

The visual arts system thus defined is a collection of such size and complexity that it can be seen as a cluster of economic agents of varying value and importance. These agents are closely interrelated and offer for various purposes (commercial or cultural purposes) as well as in their respective structures (galleries, auction houses, fairs, museums, foundations) art objects with a high



symbolic content, designed to satisfy aesthetic and cultural needs that the consumer expresses as an alternative use of his economic power. The sector brings together a number of rather heterogeneous activities and operators: from an institutional point of view (for example, firms in the public or private sector, whether they pursue commercial goals or not); in terms of the motivations encountered (for example, cultural, financial or social); with respect to funding flows (whether or not government subsidies predominate). Currently, more than 400,000 companies (more than 350,000 galleries and consultants, as well as 23,000 auction houses) operate in the global art market, providing about 2 million jobs. The production chain, which falls more or less directly into the cultural heritage sector in developed countries, for example in Italy, includes more than 900,000 companies and about 3.5 million jobs.

In the context of art marketing, the study of the visual art system is based on the definition of demand. The demand for goods and services that enable the art system to function comes from four categories of socio-economic agents: private collectors, companies, government bodies, and cultural institutions. The special demand for goods and services associated with the art system stems from the needs of each of these categories. The benefits of consuming art are usually distinguished according to functional, cultural, symbolic and emotional criteria. Functional benefits are sought when a person feels tension caused by anxiety about a need. Art could satisfy a functional need if it was acquired with decorative intent (to furnish the house in a pleasing way) or speculative intent. Art satisfies cultural needs when it provides educational benefits. For example, a large number of studies have shown that gaining knowledge is one of the main reasons why people visit museums and art galleries. Symbolic benefits, as opposed to strictly functional ones, refer to the meaning that a product acquires on a psychological and social level, but are also associated with semiotic aspects: the consumption of artistic products actually reveals the personality and cultural level of the individual, on the other hand, the desire to achieve a certain social status. Finally, emotional gains are related to the desire for stimulating and fun experiences and come down to the sensations and fantasies that result from consumption.

Then it seems obvious that the consumption of art goods satisfies needs of various kinds, both external (utilitarian) and other internal (emotional). In particular, there are at least four motivations for consumption in the contemporary art market related to the goals and needs of families, companies, associations and cultural institutions. The first of these requirements is related to the need to beautifully decorate the house and satisfy the demand for decorative works of art. The need to convey an image of prestige to well-known stakeholders leads collectors and firms to demand works of art by well-known artists. The need to represent both culture and a credible self-image fuels the demand for avant-garde art. Finally, the need to speculate and diversify one's portfolio through alternative investments fuels the demand for art and art banking. Although this is mainly due to different institutional goals (promotion of culture), the artistic need and the resulting demand for works of art from public institutions (museums, agencies, municipalities, provinces) arises from motives much like those of companies. However, compared to the latter, the marketing activities of cultural institutions are more driven - by the amount of resources involved and the way they develop - by the bureaucratic management that traditionally characterizes them, making them less market-oriented.



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