



HOLDING MULTIPLE JOBS IN ORDER TO MAKE A LIVING OR TO MAKE A LIFE?

A qualitative study of visual artists
in the Netherlands

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Author: Angela Schoonderbeek
Student number: 468723
Supervisor: prof. dr. A. Klammer
Second assessor: dr. P.V. Bhansing

“I’ll buy you a diamond ring my friend, if it makes you feel all right. I’ll get you anything my friend, if it makes you feel all right. I don’t care too much for money, money can’t buy me love” (The Beatles, 1964).

“You can’t always get what you want, but if you try sometimes, you might find, you’ll get what you need” (The Rolling Stones, 1969).

Abstract

Multiple job holding is a solution for artists' financial problems. However, what if? What if financial problems and multiple jobs are distracting visual artists from creating high quality art? What are the implications of this life style? What are the pros and cons of holding multiple jobs and, maybe most importantly, are the artists still satisfied with their artistic work? They are making a living, but to what extent are they also making their lives in the way they want to? How creative are artists in making their lives? Can they still valorise themselves as artists when they hold multiple jobs? Do we need to protect our artists by subsidising them? Would we be sacrificing a flourishing cultural sector when we stop subsidising the arts? With questions and issues such as these in mind, I decided to talk to visual artists, since they are the experience experts in this matter.

This Master Thesis focusses on the research question: *To what extent are visual artists in the Netherlands still making an artistic life while having multiple jobs?* In order to formulate an answer, the conducted research was based on a theoretical framework which consists from three parts. Firstly, the framework discusses theory about how multiple job holding enables artists to make a living, followed by theory about how they could also valorise their artistic lives and own sense of cultural entrepreneurship. Especially Klamer's value based approach played an important role throughout the conducted research. The data for this research was gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews with visual artists from the Netherlands and representatives of an art gallery, the Mondriaan Fund and Cultuur+Ondernemen.

Since the process of conducting qualitative research can bring about changes in researchers themselves (Palaganas et al., 2017), reflexivity is a significant part of this master thesis' research findings. By using an explorative and reflexive approach, I was able to investigate my own questions and assumptions throughout the process which has resulted in numerous new insights and precious memories. Although the results show that the impact of multiple job holding on a person's artistic life differs per individual, it appeared to be possible to discover common threads within the interviews. Therefore, the gathered data is presented according to four main themes: autonomy, subsidy, market and balance. The data analysis was structured according to the three themes of the theoretical framework: making a living, making a life and the artist as a cultural entrepreneur.

Keywords: visual artist, multiple job holding, contemporary art market, financing, values, autonomy, balance, arts subsidy

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1. Prologue

It may all have started with my love for the visual arts which has developed throughout my years of studying. Although I have a background in theatre, I started visiting museums more and more during my bachelor's programme and eventually even decided to follow extra courses in art history after already having finished my minor in it. The combination of focussing on both theatre and visual arts opened my eyes for the visual qualities of theatre plays and the stories that paintings and sculptures could tell. My love for both art disciplines is still growing, which motivates me to find a way to contribute to the Dutch cultural sector in my future career. However, taking into consideration the current situation of the contemporary art market in the Netherlands, I could not help but still have urgent doubts about whether we are doing the right thing here. These exact doubt have formed both my motivation and starting point for conducting the research for this master thesis.

My initial interest in visual artists stemmed from my assumption that these persons could work at any time, as long as they have their own studio and the required materials. Their work is never finished and they devote their lives to their work. Therefore, talking about the work-life-balance of visual artists would be unnecessary: work is life and life is work. But I started to question this assumption, since artists are only human and, moreover, individuals with their own dreams and needs. Is it true that visual artists do not need a work-life-balance or may this be an unrealistic expectation? Could it be that artists also need other things in their lives besides their art? If so, art would require serious sacrifices. If you are devoted to making art as good and as much as possible, other goals might become impossible to reach. These goals could be materialistic, but also personal or private. Although this may sound potentially dramatic, I believe that sacrifices do not have to be a negative thing only. Therefore, I did not want to focus on what is being sacrificed by artists in this master thesis, but for what cause these sacrifices are being made. What do visual artists in the Netherlands want? What is important to them? In what ways could we support them? Should we support them financially in the first place or should they be responsible for their own income? Although this dilemma is perfect material for a master thesis about the pros and cons of arts subsidies, that is not necessarily the objective of this research.

By doing explorative research, I aimed to challenge my own assumptions and to investigate the doubts and ideas that occurred along the way. In this way, I wanted to explore to what extent the assumptions and ideas that I had developed throughout the years by reading books and articles would be confirmed when I started a dialogue with artists from the “real

world”. Moreover, I hoped to be surprised and inspired by new perspectives and ideas of the experience experts that I was going to interview. My main assumptions and ideas were that it is a good thing that the Dutch government supports its cultural sector by, amongst others, subsidising contemporary artists. In this way, the government signals the importance of a strong and flourishing cultural sector in which contemporary artists are irreplaceable. However, this does not mean that every person who calls itself ‘visual artist’ has a right for subsidy. On the contrary, it is only fair that artists have to find alternative ways for financing their lifestyle when they are not able to pay their bills anymore, just as any other citizen who needs to work for a sufficient income. From this perspective, multiple job holding is a practical solution for artists who do not want to give up making art but do face financial problems. However, I could not help but think: what if?

What if financial problems and multiple jobs are distracting visual artists from creating high quality art? What are the implications of this life style? What are the pros and cons of holding multiple jobs and, maybe most importantly, are the artists still satisfied with their artistic work? They are making a living, but to what extent are they also making their lives in the way they want to? How creative are artists in making their lives? Can they still valorise themselves as artists when they hold multiple jobs? Why do they need to be artists in the first place? What is their urgency? Do we need to protect our artists by subsidising them? Would we be sacrificing a flourishing cultural sector when we stop subsidising the arts? My fear for this risk is quite strong and I have to admit that it is tempting to let this be the argument for subsidising visual artists maybe even more than we are doing nowadays. However, are their financial struggles really a problem and, if so, does it need to be solved by the Dutch government? Are subsidies really the right way towards a strong and sustainable cultural sector in which master pieces are being produced or is multiple job holding an interesting and responsible alternative?

With these questions and issues in mind, I decided to talk to visual artists, since they are the experience experts in this matter. In my personal experience sceptics, politicians and established cultural organisations are quite present within the current public debate about arts and culture subsidies in the Netherlands. Therefore, this master thesis could also be considered as an attempt to give the voices of visual artists some more exposure and weight. What do they think? To what extent and in what way do subsidies and multiple jobs impact their artistic and/or personal lives? And what are the effects on the quality of their art pieces? By using an explorative and reflexive approach, I was able to investigate my own questions and assumptions throughout the process which has resulted in numerous new insights and

precious memories. Therefore, I want to thank everyone who has contributed to this: my supervisor Arjo Klamer and of course my thesis companions Giacomo Arnoldi, Robin Ekkart and Violet Broersma. Furthermore, I would love to draw special attention to all the artists who were willing to welcome me in their studios: Bas Coenegracht, Diane Meyboom, Inge Aanstoot, Hans Abbing, May Heek, Patrick Koster, Roland Maas and Victor Elberse, but also to the artist Rob Knijn as a representative of the Mondriaan Fund, the gallerist Renée Albada Jelgersma and of course former director of Cultuur+Ondernemen Jo Houben. Their input has made the creation of this master thesis possible and for which I am grateful.

2. Visual Artists in the Netherlands

Although managers and policymakers seem to assume that it is possible to clearly and understandably define the visual arts (Roodhouse, 2006), it is being described in many different ways in academic literature. Therefore, it could be challenging to formulate one clear definition of the concept of the visual artist. O'Reilly (2005) describes a number of different ways in which a definition of the visual artist could be formulated (p. 263). For example, he states that one could think of a person who is painting pictures as a painter, but also of a creative or cultural worker who has a job in which he is supposed to produce creative works to sell to customers. Moreover, a visual artist could also be described as a cultural producer, entrepreneur, artist-marketer or art brand. Roodhouse (2006) explains this variety of definitions on the basis of “the fact they are not drawn up by practitioners in the field concerned, but rather by economists, statisticians, and administrators” (p. 56). Whereas he notices an international interest in a classification system, this has not been established yet due to the complexity of the “fast-moving arena” (p. 56) in which the visual arts exist.

Mitchell, & Karttunen's (1992) explanation for the difficulty of formulating a definition of a visual artist is methodologically based. They make a distinction between the questions “who is an artist” and “what is an artist” (p. 175). When researchers aim to determine who artists are, they approach the artists as members of a professional group, whereas they deal with ontological and existential problems when they aim to figure out what defines an artist (p. 175). Therefore, the way in which the concept of the visual artist is defined depends on which question (who or what) is answered and by whom. This master thesis will approach the visual artist as defined in UNESCO's (1998) definition of artist in their report on culture, creativity and markets:

“Any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or recreates works of art, who constitutes works of art to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of the arts and who is or asks to be recognised as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations or association.”

Taking this definition into consideration, this master thesis focusses on visual artists in the Netherlands who contribute to the development of the arts by creating art works, possibly in collaboration with associations or independently. Creating art is an essential part of their lives and they aim to be recognised as artists. After all, “an artist may be full of his own work, but what does that work mean if there is no one to appreciate the work?” (Klamer, 2017, p. 146).

When people want to study at an academy for the arts in the Netherlands, there are multiple options available. Different cities throughout the country offer different programmes in which students are able to develop their artistic skills. The three programmes that are probably best known in the Netherlands are the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, the Willem de Kooning Academie and ArtEZ. The Gerrit Rietveld Academie (2019) is located in Amsterdam and presents itself as “an international university of applied sciences for Fine Arts and Design”. All current students follow a general first year after which they can specialise for the following three years of the bachelor programme. The students can choose for the programmes: “Architectural Design, designLAB, Fashion, Graphic Design, Jewellery – linking bodies, TXT (Textile), Ceramics, Fine Arts, The Large Glass, Beeld en Taal, Photography or VAV – moving image” (Gerrit Rietveld Academie, 2019). The Willem de Kooning Academie (2019) is located in Rotterdam and offers bachelor programmes for visual artists such as Fine Art, Graphic Design and Illustration. ArtEZ (2019) is located in the cities Arnhem, Zwolle and Enschede and offers amongst other things the programme Fine Art. Furthermore, both the Willem de Kooning Academie and ArtEZ offer different programmes for students who want to also become teachers in the visual arts.

BKNL (2019) is an informal platform for organisations which are dedicated to visual artists, museums, galleries and other institutions for presentations and exhibitions. According to the report of BKNL (2018), most visual artists in the Netherlands who graduated from art academies face serious financial struggles. The report shows that visual artists in the Netherlands live in so called poorer households, although this number is slowly decreasing (p. 36). No less than 22% of the visual artists earned a gross personal year income of less than 2.000 euros between 2013 and 2015 and 73% earned less than 20.000 euros between 2013 and 2015 (p. 35). This has likely to do with the fact that less than the half of recently graduated visual artists is able to sell their work to art collectors and only around a third of the applications for structural funding could be honoured (p. 43). Therefore, it may not be surprising that almost half (43%) of the alumni combines their artistic work with jobs from outside the artistic field (p. 28). Compared to other artists from other disciplines, such as dancers, theatre makers and musicians, visual artists appear to be the art professionals who combine artistic work with other jobs the most (p. 28).

When visual artists in the Netherlands face monetary struggles, there are different ways in which they can try to improve their financial situation. BKNL (2016) initiated to draw up which financial arrangements the Dutch government provides for entrepreneurs and to what extent these are also applicable for visual artists, since they are ought to be

entrepreneurial as well (p. 3). Their research focusses on arrangements on the local, regional, national and EU-level and explores which paths are accessible for artists. The bad news is that the outcome of their research points out that financial arrangements other than those of the cultural funds are hardly applicable to the situation of visual artists who often work as freelancers, since their practice and financial possibilities differ too much from those of other freelancers in the Netherlands (p. 4). Since funds generally support initiatives without financial gain, it is not attractive for visual artists to work within a legal form other than a freelancer or fund. However, the good news is that artists just like any other entrepreneur in the Netherlands are able to benefit from fiscal advantages such as tax reductions and other financial compensations (p. 4). Moreover, they are able to apply for cultural funding. Based on their findings, BKNL (2016) advises artists to collaborate with other disciplines and initiate cross overs. They especially point out the possibility of combining visual arts and technical innovation and of focussing on the cultural participation of disadvantaged groups, since funds are generally interested in initiatives that do so (p. 4).

The Dutch government aims to stimulate cultural organisations to gain their own sources of income via their audience, private funds, donors and sponsors (Rijksoverheid, 2019). The Dutch public fund for visual arts and cultural heritage in the Netherlands is the Mondriaan Fund (2019a). It annually contributes “30 million euros to the work of young talents, proven artists and cultural organisations” (Mondriaan Fund, 2019b) and falls under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Mondriaan Fund, 2019a). However, it is noteworthy that the biggest part of the governmental budgets is paid to museums that preserve and present art and that little budget is left to use for investing in the contemporary, actual and living art (Raad voor Cultuur, 2018, p. 46). Since the budget cuts that were due to the financial crisis of 2008 had a negative impact on the development of contemporary art and since the possibilities within the contemporary art market are limited, the Dutch Arts Council argues for the necessity of extra monetary support from the Dutch government (p. 46).

Taking this all into consideration, one could safely state that most visual artists in the Netherlands face financial struggles which they could try to overcome by at least trying to use the possibilities that the Dutch government offers them: the public Mondriaan fund, tax advantages and general support. Moreover, in their attempt to become more entrepreneurial, visual artists could also approach the organisation Cultuur+Ondernemen (2019a) which presents itself as “the knowledge centre for entrepreneurship in the cultural sector” for organisations, artists and creatives “who wish to get more return on their activities”.

Cultuur+Ondernemen (Culture+Entrepreneurship) provides low-interest loans, publications and advice and organises special workshops and events (Cultuur+Ondernemen, 2019b) and is partially supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. However, not too long ago this situation used to be different in the past. Therefore, it is necessary to also include some Dutch governmental regulations for visual artists in this section.

From 1948, a new regulation was implemented in the Netherlands, known as the Beeldende Kunstenaars Regeling or BKR (IJdens, et. al, 2007). It focussed on the socio-economic position of visual artists and was financed by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (Pots, 2000, p. 314-315). The regulation was executed by Dutch municipalities and provided visual artists a payment at the level of a minimum wage in exchange for pieces of art (IJdens, et. al, 2007, p. 12). The pieces of art needed to be made by the artists themselves and they had to meet certain quality standards. It is noteworthy that the expenses for this regulation increased the period between 1960-1983 due to an increase of artists within the BKR, whereas the amount of upcoming top artists showed a significant decrease at the same time (Bos, & Gaaff, 2012, p. 236). Although more and more visual artists wanted to use the BKR, the Dutch government decided to end the regulation in 1982 (IJdens, et. al, 2007, p. 12). During the period of time that followed, the Wik (Wet inkomensvoorziening kunstenaars) appeared in 1999, followed up by the Wwik (Wet werk en inkomen kunstenaars) between 2005 and 2012.

Just as the BKR, both the Wik and the Wwik were the responsibility of the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment and the regulations were again executed by municipalities (IJdens, et. al, 2007, p. 13). However, there were also important differences. Firstly, the regulations were not based on an exchange of art pieces and they were only temporary, whereas the BKR was of indefinite duration. Furthermore, the Wik and Wwik focussed on professional artists in general and therefore not on visual artists only. Moreover, the payments of the Wik and Wwik were significantly lower than the ones of the BKR: instead of the minimum wage level, artists could only receive 70% of the minimum wage (IJdens, et. al, 2007, p. 13). It is important to keep these developments and different regulations in mind while speaking with visual artists and other individuals who are involved, since this history is likely to be a vivid memory still. Numerous visual artists were already active during this period and it is likely that they even used these regulations in order to cope with their financial struggles in the past.

3. Packing for the Journey

This research started off with the development of a theoretical framework which provided a starting point for analysing the data gathered through the semi-structured in-depth interviews with the respondents from the visual art world. Firstly, theory about the way in which visual artists make a living is discussed, followed by the second theme about how they valorise their artistic lives. Finally, the theoretical framework is also based on theory about the way in which the activities of entrepreneurial visual artists could take place within the different spheres as discussed in Klamer's (2017) value based approach. What follows is a discussion of academic theory and literature that provided relevant information and guidelines for the conduction of this research.

3.1 Making a Living

Although "artistic labour markets are puzzling and challenging ones for social scientists" (Menger, 1999, p. 541), this did not stop them from continuing their research on artistic labour markets. Throsby (2010) characterises artistic labour by "three features that combine to set artists apart from other workers in their labour market behaviour" (p. 80): relatively lower financial rewards, a relatively higher level of variability of artistic earnings and the role of non-pecuniary motives in determining artists' time allocations. Especially a possible outcome of the first feature is relevant for this master thesis, since Throsby shows how this difference in financial rewards, compared to "other occupations with otherwise similar characteristics" (p. 80) could result in multiple job holding. Multiple job holding is "when an individual holds more than one job or runs more than one business during a reference week, where his/her primary job typically refers to the one with the greatest number of hours usually worked" (Pouliakas, 2017, p. 2).

Hlouskova et al. (2017) explain the decision for multiple job holding by describing the different ways in which people set their individual reference levels for what income is required for their own well-being. Reference levels can for example be the result of comparisons to others or of changes in the economic environment and they "play an important role in determining if a worker will take on multiple jobs or not" (p. 682). When workers decide to have a reference level that is similar to what they are able to earn in their "safe job", they do not have to turn to "risky jobs" (p. 682) that offer a higher income level. However, if the workers have a reference level that is at a higher expected wage rate than the safe job offers, they have to "try to increase their income by undertaking multiple jobs including new

risky ventures” (p. 682). Depending on how loss averse a worker is and on whether his or her reference level is set under or above the maximum earnings from a safe job, workers will allocate hours to either a safe job only or also to new risky ventures. From this point of view, multiple job holding is necessary in order to compensate a certain lack of financial reward. However, monetary income is not generally considered to be the main incentive for artists who “do not regard work as a chore where the only purpose is to earn an income” (Throsby, 2010, p. 81). The stereotypical poor artists may be short on cash, they possibly do receive a high “physic income” (Rengers & Madden, 2000, p. 28) and numerous intrinsic rewards that motivate them to keep investing their energy in making art (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

When artists are willing to hold multiple jobs, they typically work in different labour markets: a market for “pure” creative work, a market for “arts-related” work and a “non-arts” market (Throsby, 2007). An example of an arts-related second job for artists could be teaching in their art form, which artists seem to experience in a different way compared to non-arts jobs. Abbing (2002) notices that in general teaching art “pays better and offers more satisfaction” (p. 144) than non-arts jobs, evidenced by the phenomenon of art students who try to get a teaching degree as well and who do not give up their second jobs when “their financial prospects suddenly improve” (p. 145). However, the majority of artists reduce their risks by holding non-arts jobs “out of necessity” (p. 144), but not necessarily out of interest or passion. Since making art is their chosen profession and empirical evidence indicates that artists “often forgo lucrative alternative employment in order to spend more time pursuing their creative work” (Throsby, 2010, p. 81), the wages in the non-arts occupation mainly seem to enable artists to spend the rest of their time on the arts. From that point of view, the non-arts income of artists could be considered a form of subsidy to the arts (Rengers, & Madden, 2000).

The consequences of artists’ less interested attitude towards monetary income are subject of extensive research. Governments, family and friends seem to be exploited when they support artists that depend on their environment’s support, since they decided to support the art world under pressure (Abbing, 2002). This pressure could be motivated by the merit good argument and is possibly enabled by a person’s or government’s willingness to pay for the non-market benefits from the arts (Towse, 2010; Throsby, 2010). Or maybe those who decide to support just feel sorry for the poor artists. In any case, it would be too easy to simply point to poor artists as the (only) cause of exploitation, but it is also hard to determine who is exploiting whom in this context. For example, Abbing (2002) would state that it is not the artist’s environment that is primarily sacrificed, but the artist itself. Moreover: artists sacrifice

themselves in their pursuit of artistic integrity, a belief shared by many artists and scientists (Levine, 2018). The question would therefore be to what extent an artist's intrinsic motivation leads to self-exploitation.

Abbing (2002) recognises artists as relatively more selfless and therefore intrinsically more motivated compared to other professionals. However, he considers the idea that artists are exclusively intrinsically motivated as one of the myths of the arts, since he is aware that "in standard economic theory, people are selfish by definition" (p. 82). Therefore, paradoxical as it may seem, even the most devoted artists are likely still serving their self-interest by their own selflessness. Other than that, it also seems quite hard to picture a situation in which an artist experiences no extrinsic incentives at all, but we could still safely assume that high intrinsic motivation in such a case is required (Kreps, 1997). Intrinsic motivation could be understood as an experience which is "an end in itself" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014, p. 201) that immediately rewards itself by the enjoyment that, in this case, the artist feels in the here and now. This also reminds us of Klamer's (2017) description of praxis: "a practice that contains the purpose in itself and is, therefore, the good to strive for" (p. 114). When making art is your praxis, you will strive for perfectionating your craft, regardless of extrinsic rewards. But what sacrifices are needed for achieving this particular sense of enjoyment and does this lead to self-exploitation?

One of the most obvious examples of sacrifices that artists have to make in order to be considered "truthful" is their monetary wealth, since they are ought to be intrinsically motivated and therefore not interested in making money (Abbing, 2002). From this perspective, true artists seem to be the exact opposite of commercial artists that are completely self-interested and exclusively extrinsically motivated. Yet, one thing remains unclear: how much money needs to be sacrificed in order to be considered a true artist? On the one hand, an increased personal budget provides artists the luxury to do work they actually enjoy (Rengers & Madden, 2000). On the other hand, the so called "Hidden Cost of Reward" shows how external rewards can even be counterproductive and therefore cause undermining intrinsic motivation (Frey & Jegen, 2001). What other sacrifices does an artist have to make in order to achieve the highest level of quality, quantity and enjoyment without losing its intrinsic motivation at the same time?

Artists are ought to give up traditional rewards such as status and income (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014), but also possibly essential matters in life such as power, prestige and even love (Levine, 2018). If you add all this together, artists seem to be willing to make a lot of sacrifices. To what extent could this be considered self-exploitation? Since the term

“exploitation” implies that “there are people who receive unearned income from unequal forms of exchange” (Abbing, 2002, p. 288), it seems that artists are only exploiting themselves when their individual conclusion is that they personally had to sacrifice more for their art than they eventually gained from being an artist. Although the concept of psychic income is able to explain why artists decide to sacrifice their other needs, it does not seem to justify addictive artistic production. Can we consider devoted artists reasonable, even when they are not willing to give up their art for a sufficient income, family or love life?

Unfortunately, it remains unclear to what extent we need to protect self-exploiting artists against themselves or whether this should all remain the responsibility of the rationally behaving individuals that artists should be. Is the assumption “Gee, he must be a real artist; he seems to sacrifice everything for his art” (Abbing, 2002, p. 182) still sustainable or even reasonable? Are devoted artists free of choice when they are forced to make the trade-off between sacrificing their art or a sufficient income? How poor do we need artists to be before we take them seriously? Are self-exploiting artists simply behaving irresponsible or should the supporting environment play a more responsible role in this matter? It is clear that further research is needed, especially in order to explore the possibilities of finding a balance between paternalism on the one hand and ignorance on the other.

3.2 Making a Life

“Most of the things we do need to be motivated by the expectation of extrinsic rewards, because there are no other reasons for doing them” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014, p. 106). However, decades before this statement Csikszentmihalyi (1978) already also claimed that research had showed how our intrinsic motivation, in almost every thinkable situation, enables us to immediately feel rewarded for what we do. This would be the case for activities such as exploring, dancing, singing (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014) and in particular those of artists who work non-commercially and selflessly devoted to *l’art pour l’art* (Abbing, 2002). The stereotype artist is often quite poor, since that person rather makes art than money: “as long as artists earn less than a minimum level of money, artists seek money in order to make art, but when funds are sufficient they quickly lose interest in earning money” (p. 87). As already mentioned in the previous section: the stereotypical poor artists may be short on cash, they possibly do receive a high “psychic income” (Rengers & Madden, 2000, p. 28) and numerous intrinsic rewards that motivate them to keep investing their energy in making art (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

While looking at studies dedicated to the working conditions of artists, Lindström (2016) notices that “work held alongside the artistic activity is often perceived negatively, as it prevents artists from dedicating themselves to art on a full-time basis” (p. 44). However, Lindström argues for more positive narratives on multiple job holding – and she is certainly not the only one. Although many artists have learned to “manage risk and to stay alive through multiple job-holding” (Throsby, 2010, p. 82), sometimes this could be considered to be something more than “just some survival strategy” (Abbing, 2002, p. 145). Since multiple job holding is an interesting option for different types of workers, it is a misconception to believe that only low-skilled workers with financial problems decide to hold multiple jobs, (Pouliakas, 2017). Multiple job holding could have positive effects on a worker’s financial security, sense of entrepreneurship, development of new job skills and future job mobility and task variety (Pouliakas, 2017). Therefore, this master thesis will not only focus on the stereotype artists who consider their non-arts jobs as “necessary evil” (Abbing, 2002, p. 145). Moreover, this master thesis will also explore the opportunities of becoming a “hybrid artist” who consciously decides to hold multiple jobs by “choosing a certain product-mix or combination of activities” (p. 145).

Although it might be tempting to use economic arguments for the relevance of the arts, this thesis does not aim to “demonstrate that some economies grow better and faster than others due to the presence of artists” (Klamer, 2017, p. 16). As an addition to the previous section, this current section aims to reach beyond the instrumental and economic approach in which artists hold multiple jobs out of necessity to survive. Klamer’s (2017) value based approach will therefore be an important part of the theoretical framework of this master thesis. This approach focusses on the realisation of values and the different ways in which people make their values real. One of the main problems that Klamer seems to have with traditional economics, is that it determines the value or worth of something on the basis of its price and utility value. According to his point of view, the conventional methods for measuring wealth and poverty leave out the most important possessions (p. 142) since “values are not precise and you cannot hold onto them” (p. 52). Classical economics explains value by price we have to pay, whereas the value based approach considers the price as a constraint which avoids us to realise our real values.

The value based approach provides room for artists who are not necessarily motivated in a monetary way, since they have a different worldview and therefore “tend to perceive things differently from everybody else” (Klamer, 2017, p. 35). Klamer is convinced that money could never be the ultimate goal for anyone, since it is only instrumental and therefore

does not constitute someone's ideals (p. 34). A more important question for artists would be about what is important to them. Of course, artists are dedicated to the arts but what does that really mean? In what way does making art contribute to the realisation of their personal values? What values are they making real by making art? What is their art good for and why? The answers to these questions possibly differ per individual, since the questions are about personal ideals or purposes that people consider as important (p. 33). According to Klamer (2017), ideals are the goods we strive for. The value of these goods goes beyond a price tag or other monetary value: "an ideal is something we long for even if we know that we can never realise it" (p. 33), such as living according to a vegan lifestyle, practice academic researching or making art.

Since ideals and values are hard concepts to attach numbers to, Klamer's (2017) question "so who of the two is richer, the lawyer or the artist?" (p. 127) seems impossible to answer. The answer lies in both person's values and in the extent to which they are living according to them. Although numerous people would criticise this way of thinking since they would prefer to answer the question in terms of money, Klamer notices that there is at least some understanding for the justification "in surmising that there is life beyond the market" (p. 164). Klamer's division of the five different spheres (Market, Governance, Oikos, Social and Cultural) help to make sense of artists' behaviour and of how they valorise their artistic lives in different contexts. Since it matters in which sphere artists valorise their art (p. 164), the next section will briefly discuss the way in which the spheres differ from each other. Furthermore, the next session will also point out the possibilities for artists to behave entrepreneurial by becoming aware of the different spheres.

3.3 The Artist as a Cultural Entrepreneur

Klamer's (2017) five sphere model entails the Market, Governance, Oikos, Social and Cultural spheres and is considered to be "a critical element in the value based approach" (p. 215). The model is an extension of the two-sphere model that is often used in economics and each sphere is characterised by a certain logic and by positive and negative values, rhetoric and the way in which relationships with others are being established. The market sphere plays a key role in the process of realising our values, since the market provides the goods and services that are required. Therefore, the market sphere could be considered as instrumental, especially since its interactions are instrumental as well and "do not require relationships" (p. 210). The dominant logic in the market sphere is the logic of exchange in which positive

values come about such as efficiency, innovation and entrepreneurship that are “instrumental for the realisation of material welfare” (p. 210). Although relationships and values are instrumental for the realisation of welfare which is also instrumental in itself, operating in the market sphere does require social skills (p. 213-214).

Klamer (2017) notices how much talking takes place in art markets: gallery owners sell works to collectors they like, traders exchange knowledge and have to establish trust, but also artists need to show their faces at important events (p. 213). Since participating in the market sphere requires social skills, it is not surprising that socio-economists “consider markets as socially-embedded” (p. 214). This implies the presence of the logic from the Social sphere within the Market sphere. Rodner, & Kerrigan (2014) even state that numerous artists are used to balancing between artistic conventions on the one hand and market demand on the other. They need to develop a social network in which art experts who have the required social and cultural capital to connect artists to “a wider audience of private and public collectors, cultural and corporate institutions, and art enthusiasts” (p. 103). Furthermore, Rodner, & Kerrigan (2014) illustrate the importance of social, cultural and symbolic capital for artists by the example of the artist Andy Warhol. Although he was a commercial success, they state that his struggle as an artist did not take place in order to achieve monetary gain but to access the art world as a respected artist (p. 110).

However, the overlap of different spheres could cause the crowding out of one sphere when its valorisation “is undermined by the encroachment of another sphere” (p. 214), whereas the encroachment of another sphere could also cause crowding in when it adds value in the valorisation process. The market could crowd out the social sphere when artists are willing to sacrifice their time with family and friends or when they are willing to risk their artistic reputation in order to become commercially successful. The question is whether this happens to artists who are willing to hold multiple jobs in order to survive financially. Do they still have time for their family and friends? And what do other artists think about their side jobs that are possibly even outside the art world? The overlap of the Social and the Market sphere could also cause the crowding in of the Social sphere when trust and mutual sympathy are generated within the Market. This could result in better deals, social support and strong communities (p. 214). Since the five different spheres tend to overlap each other constantly, it is necessary to find the right balance between them (p. 216).

However, how to enter the Market sphere as an artist in the first place? As already mentioned in the prologue: “an artist may be full of his own work, but what does that work mean if there is no one to appreciate the work?” (Klamer, 2017, p. 146). Since the logic of the

market sphere is all about exchange, artists need to convince others of their art in order to make them willing to pay for it. Therefore, it is crucial for artists to participate in the dialogue of the art market. According to Klammer, this is what valorisation is all about: artists need to get others interested in their ideas; they gain value once they are able to share their ideas with others (p. 146). Once artists try to exchange their ideas and their works with potential consumers, they enter the Market sphere. An artist could try to sell his works to others, but he could try to find other ways of making money as well, such as applying for subsidies or grants. Once an artist starts filling in application forms or talking to the representatives of cultural funds, he enters the sphere of the government (p. 152). This could make the balance between the different spheres even more complicated, since this sphere also has a logic on its own. In the end, Klammer would state that it is important for artists to be aware of the sphere in which they valorise their art, since their message and ambitions could easily be lost “in the heat of the money game” (p. 174). This research aims to investigate to what extent monetary issues could be considered problematic and to what extent they offer opportunities.

4. Ready for Take-Off: Research Design & Methodology

4.1 Research Question and Sub Questions

This master thesis focusses on the following research question and sub questions. Note that sub questions c and d aim to describe processes and mechanisms, whereas sub questions a and b aim to go beyond these descriptions by including characteristics of the interviewed artists in the analysis (e.g. gender, age, family, career stage, and expectations of and objectives for the career).

Research question:

To what extent are visual artists in the Netherlands still making an artistic life while having multiple jobs?

Sub questions:

a. Why do visual artists choose their profession?

b. Why do visual artists choose for multiple job holding?

c. In what way does the multiple job holding of visual artists in The Netherlands affect their artistic lives?

d. What are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of multiple job holding in relation to the artistic lives of visual artists in The Netherlands?

4.2 Qualitative Interviews

In order to formulate answers to the questions that are mentioned in the previous section, this research used a qualitative research strategy. By this strategy, the outcomes of semi-structured in-depth interviews with Dutch visual artists, gallery workers and policy makers were analysed. This means that this master thesis is based on a cross-sectional research design, since the qualitative interviews took place at a single point in time (Bryman, 2012). The theoretical framework as discussed in chapter 3 of this master thesis provided a starting point for conducting qualitative research in which the relationship between multiple job holding and

the valorisation of an artistic life was explored. The sampling was based on maximum variation to ensure a variation that is as wide as possible “in terms of the dimension of interest” (Bryman, 2012, p. 409). Furthermore, the sampling was also based on the likelihood that respondents could support or contradict the hypothesis as formulated in the theoretical framework in chapter 3.

Due to research limitations, a total amount of over 13 hours of semi-structured in-depth interviews was used in order to collect the required data. During these interviews, respondents were asked open questions and could therefore answer “however they wish” (Bryman, 2012, p. 246). This is an important advantage of open questions, since this avoids the risk of forcing the respondents to use terms they normally would not use. The respondents were therefore able to answer in their own terms and to surprise me with unusual or unexpected answers. In order to avoid the risk of becoming “too impressionistic and subjective” (p. 405), the main questions were prepared before the interview. In this way, my attention could be focussed on all areas desired. The method of this master thesis is reflexive, which will be explained in the following paragraph. Therefore, the semi-structured in-depth interviews were for me an opportunity to challenge my own assumptions and ideas and, moreover, to be surprised by the stories of the respondents. Since every respondent its own perspective on the situation and experience, this was respected in the way I approached the individuals during their interviews.

Since the outcomes of qualitative interviews “typically take the form of a large corpus of unstructured textual material, they are not straightforward to analyse” (Bryman, 2012, p. 565) and a practical strategy to process the output was necessary. Initial coding would produce an unnecessarily large amount of data, since the respondents will answer open questions during the interviews. Therefore, open coding by hand was used for breaking down the collected data in order to examine, compare, conceptualise and categorise them: “this process of coding yields concepts which are later to be grouped and turned into categories” (p. 574). The result of this division can be found in the different themes as discussed in the following chapter of this master thesis: autonomy, subsidy, market and balance. In this way, the analysis of the open answers of the interviews sheds a light upon the different ways in which and upon the extent to which the multiple job holding of visual artists in the Netherlands has an impact on their artistic life and their valorisation of themselves as artists.

4.3 Reflexive Research

Since the process of conducting qualitative research can bring about changes in researchers themselves (Palaganas et al., 2017), reflexivity is a significant part of this master thesis' research findings. Although this decision could be considered “unprofessional” or “intrusive”, aiming for total detachment of the researcher within qualitative research could even be considered unreasonable and, moreover, hindering the research process (p. 427). Reflexivity invites the researcher to focus on its own role and learning process, since “it recognises mutual shaping, reciprocity and bi-directionality, and that interaction is context-dependent and context renewing” (Mann, 2016, p. 28). The decision for doing reflexive research has transformed the conducted research into “a dialogue – challenging perspectives and assumptions both about the social world and of the researcher herself” (Palaganas et al., p. 427) which eventually has enriched the process as a whole and its outcomes. Therefore, I paid attention to the analysis of the active role and subjectivity of myself as a researcher during the conducted research.

Furthermore, the used approach could be considered as explorative. The reflexive journey of this master thesis started off with a dive into academic literature on multiple job holding as a visual artist and on the value based approach. In the following stage of the research, the journey was able to take unexpected turns thanks to the input of the respondents during the semi-structured in-depth interviews. During these interviews, my first ideas and expectations were challenged and could be questioned even more and developed through the analysis of the gathered data. The interviews with the different individuals offered numerous points of view for approaching certain issues within the contemporary visual art market. Since it was an ongoing process, surprises and changes could occur during the research itself and, moreover, new questions could occur thanks to the surprising input of the respondents.

5. The Journey

If there is one thing that I am truly going to miss from working on my master thesis, it would be the opportunity to invite myself in artists' studios. I got the chance to get into contact with eight artists who were willing to share their personal ideas, thoughts and experiences with me. I am honoured to present a selection of themes that appeared during my conversations with them and I would like to complement their stories with the perspectives of a gallery owner from Amsterdam, the former director of the organisation Cultuur+Ondernemen and a representative of the Mondriaan Fund who is also an artist himself. Looking back on my conversations, I could notice some common threads in the stories that have been shared with me: the need for autonomy, the dynamics around arts subsidies, the maintenance of balance on different levels and the difference in logic between the ways in which we could reflect on the contemporary art market. These threads will be discussed in the following paragraphs of this chapter. However, before we dive into these themes, I would like to introduce the different artists that I have spoken with.

The journey started off with Patrick Koster, a visual artist based in Amsterdam who uses knives and scissors as brushes to create art pieces in which he paints with plastic on light. Since violence is an important theme in his work, it is more than convenient that he combines his career in the visual arts with practicing martial arts in his own karate school. Secondly, I visited Diane Meyboom in Krimpen aan den IJssel who I once met as my spinning instructor in the gym in Rotterdam. One day I found out that this was “only” a side job next to her career as a miniature artist and the surprise became even bigger when she appeared to be incredibly talented as well. She is specialised in creating amazingly detailed replicas of the works of masters such as Rembrandt van Rijn, Jan Vermeer, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Caravaggio and many more. Moreover, she uses the same centuries-old techniques and pigments and she also makes her own frameworks by hand. On top of that, her works are painted in miniature frames of 1:12 or smaller (often as big as a post stamp). The third artist that I met in her studio in Diemen was May Heek. Through her prints, videos and light installations, May manages to explore the different ways in which we reflect on our surrounding world. Furthermore, she is currently a teacher at the academy where she once was a student herself (ArtEZ) and an advisor for the Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst.

As mentioned before, I did not only want to talk to artists. Therefore, my fourth visit was brought to the gallery of Renée Albada Jelgersma in Amsterdam. Before she founded the

gallery with her brother, Renée worked in the New York art world for years. She runs the gallery by herself since 2018 and aims to connect and bring together artists, art critics, scientists and art lovers. That same day, I met the painter Bas Coenegracht who is currently receiving the grant for “Bewezen Talent” of the Mondriaan Fund and who works three shifts per week as an art teacher at the cultural centre for students CREA in Amsterdam. My sixth visit brought me to an anti-squat location in Leidschendam. Here, in the former restaurant Veurhuis and on the terrain of the GGZ (the Dutch mental healthcare organisation), lives the painter and sculptor Roland Maas in the middle of his art: “I have always lived with my art, I do not make a distinction between my house and studio.” Throughout his artistic career he has always tried to making as an artist, but at the moment of the interview he was almost going to start with a new side job again – for several reasons. The next visit was at Inge Aanstoot, a young painter who already won the Piket Kunstprijs and the Sacha Tanja Penning and who currently works in the kitchen of the museum Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam. Whereas Diane works on probably the smallest canvasses imaginable, Inge’s works are generally five square meters or even bigger.

One of the last artists I spoke with was Victor Elberse at the Willem de Kooning Academie. This academy plays an important role in his life: “where I have been working for twenty years is also the place where I once graduated.” He teaches numerous different courses at the academy and also teaches art at a primary school. The next artist I spoke with was Hans Abbing, whose academic work is one of the building blocks for the theoretical framework of this master thesis. Although his professional career started off in economics, he soon found a way in which he could combine this with a second career as a visual artist. Throughout the years, he developed different “systems” which enabled him to switch between the academic and the art world. He does not combine these two different careers during the same period of time, but in general Hans switches every half year. However, there have also been longer periods in which he was able to work on either his art or economics. The last two interviews were with other professionals in the cultural field. Although Rob Knijn is a painter himself, I interviewed him mainly as a representative of the Mondriaan Fund. Lastly, I had the chance to talk with Jo Houben, the former director of the organisation Cultuur+Ondernemen, about his perspective on the contemporary art market.

5.1 Autonomy

During my interviews with the artists we discussed the ways in which they combine their artistic work with other activities. I was wondering at what point in their career they had decided for this direction and why? Unexpectedly, every interview eventually seemed to come down to the matter of autonomy: how could artists remain true to themselves during times of financial struggles? How could they still create art as much as possible while they also have to work somewhere else in order to be able to pay their bills? It appeared that multiple job holding could both be a distracting burden and a blessing in disguise. Therefore, this first paragraph discusses the motivations for artists to choose for multiple job holding and what the pros and cons are of this particular lifestyle. The question is whether multiple job holding could contribute to the autonomy of an artist or whether this works counterproductive.

Most interviewed artists already knew that they wanted to be artists at a young age. Moreover, they stated that they never became artists, since they were already artists all along. For example, Victor told how he started drawing at the age of three and how he never stopped doing so. Furthermore, Diane stated that “It was never a decision. No, it was already something inside of me. It has been my occupation throughout my entire life.” Although the artistic process has challenges of its own, being an artist most likely also comes with financial problems. How to pay for the rent of your house or studio when nobody is buying your work (yet)? After her graduation at ArtEZ, May faced this question and soon decided to think about what she wanted to do besides her own artistic work. It never seemed the question if she was going to hold multiple jobs, but rather in which way. Eventually, she founded a commercial photo studio with her then-partner and she soon had the opportunity to also start teaching art classes. Throughout her career, there were periods of time in which she sold enough works to make a living. However, she kept working in multiple jobs in order to maintain a stable income and to save for her further career.

This idea of a stable income seems to be experienced as something beneficial to all interviewed artists. Bas described that his work as a teacher in CREA provides “half his income - the stable half.” The other half of his income consists from the profit he makes from selling his paintings. He described this half as “fluctuating”, since it is irregular and is therefore different every month. He notices that this irregular half of his income depends on how many expositions he has, how much of his work is exhibited at art fairs and whether his work is a hit among buyers or not. This became particularly problematic when Bas became a father. Now that he has a job besides his artistic career, he experiences less pressure: “You become stressed when you have to wait three months for your money. Now I know that I can

afford my monthly bills.” This security also made things easier for Hans who stated that his stable income gave him a certain peace of mind that he could use well: “I knew that I had enough on my bank account every month to do the things that were important to me.” Apart from the security of a stable income, May described her multiple jobs as “a kind of social safety net”, because they provided her a healthy rhythm and a community outside of her studio.

This sense of belonging is also mentioned by other artists during the interviews. Diane described how isolated her artistic work is from the outside world: “Besides my contact and meetings with people in the miniature world and the art fairs, I was always working. (...) It felt like the walls were closing in on me.” Therefore, it seems that having multiple jobs is not only motivated in financial terms, since some artists also feel the need for social contact. This has been confirmed by almost every interviewed artist, since they stated that they would still want to have a job besides their artistic work, even if it was not necessary financially. Roland would agree with Diane’s statement about how a job provides the opportunity to stay in touch with other people, since he noticed: “Sometimes I can only tell by the reaction of the cashier in the supermarket whether I act grumpy or not, otherwise I would not even notice. You simply need human contact and small talk.” Whereas Inge would prefer to grab a cup of coffee with a fellow artist or do some volunteering, Roland would become isolated quite quickly if he would not have a job outside his studio. However, he was not a huge fan of multiple job holding right after graduation. On the contrary, whereas May immediately started thinking about which multiple jobs were attractive to her, the only thing Roland wanted to think about was making art.

Although Roland received an allowance at the beginning of his artistic career, this quickly became problematic. His allowance was provided by the municipality of where he lived and in order to keep receiving his allowance, he had to prove that he applied for jobs, but how often do you see a vacancy especially for artists? “If I had lived in Amsterdam as a graduated artist they would have known what to do, since a lot of artists live there. But I lived in a village after graduating from an arts academy.” Roland remembered that attempts such as finding a residency or gallery were accepted as job applications by artists who were living in cities such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, but that his municipality only demanded applications for work in paid employment. Since Roland was not attracted to this idea and rather focussed on making his art, the municipality decided to cut his allowance more and more until he eventually did not receive any anymore. Ironically, this was the moment for Roland to start looking for a side job in order to survive financially. When there was no other

way out, he decided to make a move towards multiple job holding, but where did this aversion towards a side job come from? Why did he wait this long?

According to Roland, his aversion has to do with his need for artistic autonomy. In his creative work, Roland does not want to make any concessions and therefore his side jobs have to be outside the art world. In this way, Roland manages to create two different worlds in which he works: the world of his studio in which he lives together with his pieces of art and the other world in which he works in a side job that has nothing to do with his art. But is it really necessary to isolate your side job from your artistic practice in order to remain autonomous? Other interviewed artists could be considered as the living proof of the opposite. For example, May spoke about having “multiple professional selves”. She is not only an artist, but she is also a teacher at ArtEZ and an advisor at the Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst. Whereas Roland creates separated worlds, May considers all her activities as a part of her practice. This integration of activities in the art practice could also be seen in the work life of artists such as Bas and Victor who both also work as teachers. Moreover, the sports careers of Patrick and Diane even seem to go beyond that. These examples touch upon the matter of balance which will be discussed in the last paragraph of this chapter.

Working in multiple jobs enabled May to develop herself through doing different things, whereas she experiences her artistic life as “quite isolated”. So far, multiple job holding has brought her so many new insights that she is not sure about what her future will bring. She does not know in which direction she wants to move next: become an advisor, art theorist, curator, artist or all at once. Although May seems to be happy about her decisions, she also seems to experience external pressure since she stated: “You create work and at that point it is still unclear for whom or what, but there is a whole world of residencies you want to apply for and curators you want to talk to. (...) Yes, that is always in your mind.” This statement could be unexpected: are you still an autonomous artist when you have potential buyers in mind? Roland would probably say no, since he stated: “For a long time, I didn’t sell art works, but I simply got a kick out of creating them. But shouldn’t that be the only reason for making art? It is the only reason: you do it for yourself and for nobody else.” Statements such as these remind of the romantic ideal of *l’art pour l’art*, but is that really the only way towards autonomous art? Jo would say no.

During his interview, Jo made a comparison between visual artists and commercial start-ups: “It is decisive for start-ups to also focus on making money from the outset, while people within the cultural sector aim to avoid contact with potential customers. I wonder: where does this behaviour come from and what purpose does it serve?” The examples of May

and Roland seem to contradict each other while they both consider themselves as autonomous artists. According to Jo, it could be interesting for artists to stop isolating themselves and start a dialogue with potential customers. “You could say: I am going to paint something and start talking to people very soon. Would you buy this? If not, why? Could I change something about it?” From this perspective, the artist ultimately decides whether he goes along with the feedback of others or not. Would that make him more free, more autonomous? Or should he completely isolate himself from the demand side? Is that not the same as locking yourself up? This could be the thing with autonomy: there might not have to be a right or wrong, since you could handle things your own way. Just like Roland mentioned: “Whatever works for me does not have to work for everyone. But one could not state that we should keep subsidising artists because paid employment would mean the end of art. I am the living proof that this is not the case. It all depends on your mindset.” But what is this mindset then?

From Jo’s perspective, artists could still be true to themselves while also taking into account what potential buyers demand. Therefore, in other words: they would still be autonomous. This does not mean that artists have to make exactly what others want, since they still make their own decisions. They could still decide whether they would give the people what they want or not. Jo’s point of view provides room for artists such as Roland who decides to make art for himself and to find a commercial side job in order to survive financially, but also for artists who are able to find a way to make their art work in a commercial and therefore more entrepreneurial way. This distinction does not necessarily have to do with autonomy, but rather with independency. Right at the beginning of the interview, Jo already stated: “Throughout the years I have become a bit more radical about certain topics. One of these topics is that, generally speaking, you are above 18 years old when you manifest yourself as an artist and when you are above 18 you have to take care of yourself.” Being an artist is about making decisions about staying true to yourself while possibly adapting to a changing market. For example, Inge would probably sell more paintings if she decided to work on canvasses of a smaller size. However, she does not: “Not everything is sold right away. I mean, nobody is going to hang this above their couch, since it is too big for that. But the thing is: I feel the need to create in this way.”

If the difference between the artists does not have to be found in their level of autonomy, it could possibly be found in their entrepreneurial qualities. For example, Diane makes numerous commissioned art works. One could state that, apart from the works she initiates herself, she creates on demand. But at the same time, she is still able to refuse certain requests if she does not feel the need to, so why would she not be autonomous? Furthermore,

Rob is an example of how your artistic and creative skills as an artist could be of great help in an organisation or business. According to his own experience, it could be equally satisfying to use your talents for a company and your contribution could be of great added value. While having this in mind, the next paragraph will dive into the matter of arts subsidies. Since an entrepreneurial mindset could come in handy while facing applications for cultural funds, the next paragraph is also related to the tensions around being autonomous and entrepreneurial as an artist.

5.2 Subsidy

Although there were differences of opinion as to whether arts subsidy is a good or a bad thing, most artists seem to agree that it could be hard to succeed in applying for a subsidy. So far, Victor has almost never been able to receive subsidy. It is not clear to him what the problem really is: “Either I’m not good at applying or my work was maybe not good enough.” Inge seemed to confirm this doubt: “I think that the people who are good writers are able to receive subsidy sooner for a project that might have a lower quality.” If that is really the case it would mean that subsidies simply go to the artists who are able to play the game in a smarter way than others. Bas could be an example of how it could help an artist to understand the world of arts subsidies. He told about how he managed to create a network around himself consisting from people who could share their experiences with him: “That’s how I began to understand how the whole game works.” And it paid off: he received two subsidies (in Dutch: startstipendia) at the start of his career and was already represented in galleries in the Netherlands and abroad and currently he is receiving a grant for being a proven talent (in Dutch: bewezen talent). Is it really a game and if so: are we playing fair?

According to Hans, it is really hard for him to fit in and to join the game: “I have received some subsidy, but that was only during a short period of time which is easy to point out. There was a short period of time that they [arts funds] were interested in figurative art. (...) And immediately when that was over, I couldn’t receive subsidy anymore.” It is hard to point out why Hans’ applications were rejected, but it is clear that he experiences the world of arts subsidy as “very compulsory”, since he states that their demands are “very narrow: not a lot is covered.” However, even if the road to subsidies is narrow and difficult: artists could decide to move into a different direction. Diane is an example of an artist who has decided to play a different game, since subsidy was never necessary: “I have always financed myself.” Furthermore, Patrick choose to do the same: “I never received subsidies and at a certain point

it seemed an interesting standpoint to not go into that at all.” However, at the moment the interview took place Patrick had started to investigate the possibilities of project-based subsidies, since he seems to have integrated in the art world more throughout his career. This might help him in order to be recognised by art funds.

Subsidies are also attractive to Inge who already received prize money in the past (both the Piket Kunstprijs and the Sacha Tanja Penning). She believes that the only difference between the two is that a committee decides about subsidy and a jury about prize money, but the outcome is the same: the artist receives money. The advantage of both prize money and subsidy is that they provide room for the artist to spend time in the studio and to make art. Although Inge won several prizes, she is still struggling with applications for cultural funds: “It is really hard to explain what you want to investigate in order to concretise an application.” Moreover, during the period in which she had to work four days a week in order to survive financially a subsidy would have been more than welcome, but she did not dare to take the risk. Applying for a subsidy is time consuming and she was already short on time due to her side job: “You want to think about the long run: if I would have that bag of money. But by the same token, my work could turn out to have been for nothing while I didn’t use these hours in my studio.” There appears to be an important trade-off considering time being spent on making art or on getting access to funding.

Although the benefits of receiving subsidies and multiple job holding seem quite similar, it is interesting that Rob stated that receiving a subsidy could take away the need for multiple job holding. However, this raises the question whether subsidy is a better and more sustainable solution for financial problems compared to multiple job holding. Taking this doubt into consideration, one of the main questions still appears to be whether subsidies are a good or bad thing. Bas would be optimistic, since he states that “Subsidies enable you to work harder and to have a better concentration.” However, one could wonder if that is really the case. Could it also be that artist starts to work harder when they cannot rely on subsidies? Bas answered this with other fair questions: “How and in which circumstances perform artists at their best? When you have to work harder in order to earn more profit? Or do you perform better when you find yourself in a stable situation in which you know that the bills for your studio and materials have been paid for the coming four years?” His response made me wonder about to what extent subsidies should protect artists from stress in order to avoid the risk of the production of lower quality. However, this would imply that subsidies are the right instrument for achieving high quality art. Is that really the case?

Bas stated that subsidies are “essential” to him, but Roland would probably disagree with him: “It is not true that you will make better art when you always have the means. When somebody receives a subsidy, this does not mean this person will create a master piece. (...) Otherwise we would be seeing way more master pieces by now.” Renée also did not notice a causal relationship between subsidy and higher quality art. Moreover, she expected that quitting subsidies would start a filtering process in which only the people who are really willing to commit will stay. She tended to be a bit suspicious about the intentions of subsidised artists: “I have more trust in an artist who is an artist and does other things aside than in somebody who received subsidies throughout his entire life. That makes me think: what would happen if these subsidies stop one day?” She noticed that many artists in the Netherlands quit when they are not able to receive subsidy anymore. Roland would agree with this attitude towards quitting arts subsidies, since he stated: “I believe that this would be an amazing filter for people who have the heart and talent for creating art. They will continue, they will find a way.” Although Rob stated that the contemporary art market would become “poorer and less balanced”, he also sees the importance of filtering out people: “It is good to make decisions, since it is not an allowance: it only supports your career for a short period of time.” Rob aims to stimulate artists by providing subsidies and hopes that they will become independent in the long run. However, Jo appeared to be sceptical about this train of thought: “I am convinced that artists do not benefit from that, it is not a sustainable solution.”

From Jo’s point of view, subsidies fill the gap in the income of artists, but they are not the solution for the actual problem. Therefore, he stated that “There is only one sustainable solution: artists should take responsibility for obtaining their income.” As long as artists are willing to work for too little money, Jo does not believe a sustainable solution could occur. During his interview, Jo shared his ideas about alternative solutions which will be discussed in the next paragraph. Before we dive into that matter, it is necessary to point out that the decision between subsidy and multiple job holding is not easy to make. This could be illustrated by the interviews with Roland and Renée, since they both agreed that multiple job holding is an understandable part of the reality of an artist’s life. However, Renée is used to artists from New York who have to work 40 hours a week in order to survive financially, whereas Roland’s experience is that he was not able to create art anymore when he worked that many hours a week: “I was simply tired. When I arrived at home, I was completely exhausted. I laid in front of the tv and nothing really happened. That’s when I realised that I had ended up in a downward spiral.” Due to his downward spiral, Roland had become too tired to create art and therefore he had no production to show to cultural funds. Without

production he was not able to apply for subsidy anymore and without subsidy he was forced to work many hours in order to survive financially.

The same has happened to Inge when she experienced that she was working too many hours: “Working four days a week in order to be able to pay the rent of the studio where I could not be, since I was always working in order to pay for the studio where I never was.” Although Renée did not see the problem of artists who are working 40 hours a week, the opinions about this appear to differ. Moreover, other advantages of subsidy were mentioned, apart from surviving financially and having enough time to create art. For example, May experienced that receiving a subsidy or scholarship contributed to her confidence as an artist. Moreover, this recognition indicates the moment in which she truly felt like being an artist for the first time: “The moment I received a scholarship for studying in New York after my bachelor programme I knew it.” Bas would probably understand this feeling, since he described his first subsidies as a kind of “validation” for his own ideas and work: “It provides room for you to believe that your ideas are valuable. (...) You need time and space for that.” Taking these advantages into account, May does not consider subsidies as an unnecessary luxury. On the contrary, she stated that these are necessary to make ends meet: “You cannot work full-time. (...) I received so many scholarships and even then it was hard.”

The stories about the impossibility to work full-time next to your artistic career all seem to contradict Renée’s perspective, but where does this difference in opinion come from? One reason could be found in the differences between the mindset of people who grew up in a country with an extensive history of governmental subsidies for the arts on the one hand and of people who are not necessarily familiar with these traditions. Renée has worked in New York with artists who had chosen a certain lifestyle in which they have to work many hours besides their artistic careers, whereas artists in the Netherlands such as Victor and Roland have received the Wik during the earlier stages of their careers. Although Renée seemed a big fan of the way in which the contemporary art market works in New York when she stated: “I think that the style in New York works in New York for what it is, but I do think that New York is a special place,” this does not mean that she advocated for implementing this way of working in the Netherlands in the exact same way. Nevertheless, it could be interesting to compare the two different markets with each other in order to find out whether they could learn from each other.

The artists in New York know what they are getting themselves into, since Renée describes that they all know that they are moving to an expensive city in which they have to pay a lot of rent for their house and studio. Therefore, the artists who are working in New

York are the ones who are able to make this combination work. Does that mean that every artist has to be able to meet that standard or is that unrealistic? And perhaps most importantly: could it be affecting the quality of art if we expect every artist to work so many hours in another job? According to Renée, we do not have to worry about that, since she knows numerous artists who are able to work 40 hours a week and create high quality art at the same time. But how could we be sure that this is the case for every artist? Especially since multiple artists that have been interviewed for this research would disagree. This could have to do with the different mindset that has developed in the Netherlands. Jo described how the Dutch government has become “an important actor” within the cultural sector through the provision of subsidy. He noticed the upside of this: “These subsidies could create room, provide room whereby things could come into existence.” However, this has also a downside: “At the same time, it is an incredibly addictive instrument.” Although he emphasised that he aims to be careful with strong words such as ‘addictive’, he is not the first person to mention this issue. Renée would agree with Jo’s point of view, since she stated: “I feel as if artists in the Netherlands expect subsidy, because they are artists. I think that this stems from the past of the BKR and Wik and that that mentality is still present here.”

Indeed, Victor was positive about the period during which he received the Wik: “It meant that you were encouraged to actively enter the field. For me this worked fantastically: you became more creative in order to earn that money. It kept me awake.” Although Roland does not feel the need to receive the Wik anymore, he thinks it could be interesting for starting artists who could use financial support as a boost for their careers. However, isn’t that just postponing the day on which these artists are not ‘starting’ ones anymore and enter the filtering process as Roland had described before? If Renée is right about the idea that artists in the Netherlands “are used to being subsidised,” this would have serious implications for the way in which they behave in the market. These implications are problematic for Renée, since she did not agree with people who argue that we have to make exceptions for artists simply because they are artists: “Other people with normal jobs may also earn little money while they might deserve better. (...) The fact that people depend on governmental subsidies, only because they are artists, is hard to explain.”

It needs to be clarified that all this does not have to mean that Renée and Jo are against subsidising the arts sector. Jo notices that “Making money is underrated in the arts sector, receiving money is very much overrated. I don’t know any other sector in which people talk so much about money while there is so little money there. They have made a perverted movement towards money.” He stated that arts sector in general should act more professional

in the market in order to gain more revenue and that the government should mainly support innovative and experimental initiatives, since “the market will never pay for that.”

Additionally, Renée also argued for a different way of subsidizing the arts sector: “I would prefer to see how more money was being spent on the education about the art, since nobody is able to really look at art here. (...) Spend your money on that in order to get more people interested and to make your art world living again.”

5.3 Market

Although every interview touched upon the subject of the market, this topic was especially present during the interview with Jo. He stated that “As long as the income of artists is not in proportion to their efforts and costs of living, a huge part of the sector will remain stuck in the swamp of amateurism.” From that perspective, the exploitation of artists is due to their own lacking ability to cope independently and to be responsible. Did artists let go too much of their own control? Do some artists really have to accept that their work is more amateurish instead of a professional practice? Who decides that? Rob would state that one could make a distinction between an artist and an amateur based on his or her recognition by others and income from his or her art, since “these are things you need if you want to make a living out of it.” I could not help but feel some resistance when he stated: “A hobby does not bring in money, you invest money into it. So, if you do something professionally, the goal has to be to make money out of it.” My resistance stemmed from my own empathy for artists such as Roland who would not find this argumentation reasonable, since they make art for themselves and try to operate independently from external expectations. They are not thinking about making money while being an artist, but is that a realistic thing to do? Jo’s perspective already pointed out that it could be possible to be both autonomous and entrepreneurial as an artist.

My resistance also made me wonder about where we could find this line between amateurs and professionals exactly. I could safely state that it is incredibly hard to make a living out of creating art, but there are examples of artists who eventually managed to do so after years of struggle. Does the fact whether you are an artist or not depend on whether people are buying your work or not? Does the fact that you are able to sell your work make you an artist? If so, how do you know when to give up your dream? How do you know if you are investing money in a hobby or in a professional career that is simply not gaining revenue yet? Imagine that I consider myself as an artist, but nobody is buying my work. If I would give up my dream that would mean that all the money that I had invested turns out to be

money invested in my hobby. However, if I take my chances and I manage to become a successful artist eventually this would mean that that same money was invested in my professional career. How do you know if you should be persistent or not? Besides this insecurity, May pointed out another complication in the market: “I know numerous artists whose work is highly admired but is not saleable. What do you do then?”

Rob noticed that sometimes the market “is not ready yet” while the artist is producing high quality art. It is not surprising that artists then decide to move towards subsidies as a solution for their financial struggles. But what if the funds are not willing to support you? Rob stated: “If you are not recognised by a fund or others, you will have to find other ways in your life. There are not many people who persist endlessly without being recognised. Eventually you will try doing something else and maybe that’s a good thing. Apparently, there is no spot for you within the visuals arts.” Jo would agree: “At a certain point I think it is for the best if fellow artists tell you: this is not going to work, maybe you should try doing something else.” At first, I thought this perspective was quite hard on artists. However, there may be some truth to Rob’s statement: “People who study Dutch, French or Philosophy may also end up in jobs they did not expect. Your choice of study does not dictate the rest of your life.” Furthermore, Jo stated almost the exact same thing during his interview: “Many lawyers never become one and they still have a good life.” However, subsidy and recognition by others are not the only way towards an artistic life. Multiple job holding could still be an understandable alternative for those who are not willing or ready to give up their dreams.

The idea that artists may have to accept that their dreams are not realistic and that they maybe should consider a career switch reminds us of the filtering process which was discussed in the previous paragraph. It is a logic which reminds us of market mechanisms from which the cultural sector often tries to protect itself. Therefore, Jo stated: “Market forces, the idea that the market works as a selective instrument on its own, are hard to find within the arts sector.” He illustrated the difference between the subsidised system and the market by describing different swimming pools. The swimming pool which represents the subsidised system is nice and warm and has inflatable rings floating around. However, watch out: it is five meters deep, so if you are not able to grab one of the inflatable rings you will drown. The other swimming pool which represents the market is unpredictable. The water could be boiling hot at the one moment and freezing cold at the other. Moreover, the water could suddenly change from being flat like a mirror into a tsunami. According to Jo, “You will need way more skills in order to be able to operate successfully in there.” But why is it even a problem that we have two different swimming pools next to each other?

Jo's argumentation was based on the dynamics that appeared in the Netherlands after the second World War. Since the Dutch government aimed to lift up its society during that period of time, cultural organisations could be of great help to them by producing cultural values. Throughout the years that followed, a relationship between cultural organisations and the government was being built which Jo would call "System 1" and in which subsidy constantly flows from the government towards cultural organisations. However, Jo also noticed a change in the political mindset after some decades. From that perspective, cultural organisations should no longer be depending on governmental support only and they should start building relationships within the market which Jo calls "System 2." The main problem that Jo has with this approach is that the government expects cultural organisations to perform well in both systems at the same time while this causes problems: "Organisations who have worked with governmental legislations and subsidies for forty or fifty years are now suddenly forced to build relationships on the market." However, the market does not play by the same rules. How could we explain these differences? According to Jo, the first step would be to understand which values lie behind the different actors who are active in the different systems.

Firstly, the government aims to produce values such as democracy, transparency and sharing means in a fair way. Jo sees how the government aims to make sure that as many people as possible could benefit from the ways in which their taxes are being spent. Furthermore, the government aims to limit risks as much as possible. Secondly, cultural organisations aim to make a difference by producing values such as diversity and authentic ideas. From this perspective, artists need to protect their ideas and the winner takes it all. Lastly, the market produces values such as taking risks, growth, competition, revenue and again the winner takes it all. Jo confirmed that, from this perspective, cultural organisations have more in common with the market than with the government: "So it is quite odd that the arts sector has a harder time working with the market than with the government." In both the market and cultural organisations people have ideas that they do not want to share with their competitors. However, the market is able to use the idea in order to develop a money flow, whereas cultural organisations appear to struggle with this. In order to tackle this problem, Jo argued that the government should change its rules for cultural organisations. If the government demands cultural organisations to operate in the market, they need to be able to have equity capital. This would have two advantages: "If things go wrong, you have a buffer. Furthermore, with equity capital you are also able to attract more trading capital in order to perform better and more in the future."

How interesting Jo's perspective may be, it reflects on the arts sector from a macro point of view, whereas visual artists of course perform on a micro level. What choice do they have, other than multiple job holding or simply giving up, when they are not able to participate in the market with their work and they are not supported by the government? Even if Jo is right about how people above 18 years old should be able to take care of themselves, could we then still blame artists for not being entrepreneurial enough? Answering that question may become harder when you realise that times and mindsets have been changing in the Netherlands and not every art student appears to have been prepared for that. To what extent are art students aware of the reality of their future career when they start studying at the academy? For example, May described: "I did not think about that, no. And I was a bit rebellious." Weren't we all after we just finished high school? She enjoyed her time at the academy, but this had to come to an end eventually: "All of a sudden you find yourself graduated with no income." She was not the only one who did not feel prepared when she had to enter the art market in 2007. Three years before that, Bas graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy while he had no idea about how the art market works: "Not at all. In the time I graduated people did not talk about these things." Roland graduated from the art academy St. Joost in Breda in 1990. Times were different back then, but he would certainly recognise these doubts: "I did not know the market at all and certainly not how it works. The academy did not prepare us for that."

It would certainly help to know how to play by the rules of the market in order to make a living as an artist, but whose responsibility is it to support artists in learning these skills? The government, the market, the academy or the artist itself? According to different respondents, it is not realistic that there are so many art academies in the Netherlands. Patrick stated that this is "Far out of line with reality and the schools are only becoming bigger and bigger." Renée would agree, since she stated that the amount of art academies is too big: "So many artists graduate every year. These numbers: should that be possible?" To Rob the number of academies is not really the problem. On the contrary: "As far as I'm concerned, there could not be enough academies." He notices how graduated artists may not become artists eventually, but that they have become "creative and open people" thanks to their arts education. But is it fair to educate people when you know that there is a high probability that they will never be able to use their skills? Roland appeared to have a problem with this: "If you have a system in which art academies put new artists on the market year by year, I think you should take responsibility for that. (...) Would you educate chimney sweeps when there are no chimneys anymore?"

Another potential problem that occurs within the system of the contemporary art market is the dynamic that arises due to cultural funds and art prizes. Although Rob stated that the Mondriaan Fund does not aim to function as a quality mark, this does happen according to other respondents. Bas noticed how art collectors and galleries become more interested when he receives a grant from the fund and the prizes that Inge won have had a direct effect on the prices of her paintings: “This where market forces seem to appear: I could calculate the price of my paintings by the formula length plus width times a factor. This factor becomes bigger as you accomplish more.” Accomplishments that influence her price are for example how long ago she graduated, which prizes she won or whether the work has been exhibited in a museum. Roland has a problem with this dynamic and even seemed disappointed when he stated: “People start to look at you in a different way when you won all these prizes and received subsidies. (...) When your work is exhibited somewhere its value will increase, but what is that based on? Is that what the art world is about?” However, Inge nuanced Roland’s suspicion of being crowded out by recognised artists: “The fact that your name is known or that your work is represented in collections or museums does not mean that you are financially independent.” Just like Roland and despite the fact that she may be successful on the paper, Inge still has to work in side jobs in order to make ends meet.

Although multiple job holding is a common phenomenon amongst artists, not every respondent felt like this is widely accepted. According to Bas, multiple job holding “is part of the job” but he also noticed that it is being judged by his colleagues: “Some artists could be arrogant about it, because it lies outside what is real art.” Victor experienced the same thing when he worked in a furniture shop: “I could sense that my artistic friends thought that this was inferior. (...) They were used to the luxury of receiving subsidy and I was not.” Why is there still a taboo on holding multiple job when it is such a common thing to do? Roland’s theory is that artists and cultural funds assume that artists who work part-time in another job are therefore part-time artists. Therefore, it has been “not done” for him to tell others about his side jobs, whereas he now notices that the mentality is changing and that younger artists accept that he has to work in side jobs as well. Why is there such a distance between those who receive subsidy and those who are not? May did not believe that this attitude is contributing to the quality of the arts sector: “You find yourself in an environment that monitors you and your success. It is all about success while that does not have to mean that this enables the creation of the best work.” Therefore, Roland decided: “I think the best you can do as an artist is to not care about what the art world thinks of you.”

So far, I mainly discussed the mindsets of the producing artists and facilitating academies and cultural funds. However, respondents have also expressed critique on the mindset of the customers who are also operating within the market. One of the biggest frustrations amongst artists seems to be that often people are not willing to pay for their work. Therefore, artists are often requested to work for exposure instead of money. For example, Inge was requested to create a mural in a restaurant for free. According to the owner, this would provide her a lot of exposure. Inge was quite sceptical about this argumentation: “Oh really? All of your pizza eating customers are also art buyers?” If Inge would say yes to all these requests, all she would earn is exposure and “You cannot do groceries of exposure.” However, she made an exception for a commissioned mural in the Kunsthal in Rotterdam. She did not get paid a lot of money, but she was enthusiastic about this type of exposure. Still she felt that there was something wrong: “The workers who were going to paint over my mural after a few months were going to earn more per hour than me.” When she expressed this issue to the financial department of the museum they found a solution: Inge would receive a budget of a few hundred euros that she could spend on paint. Therefore, Inge was eventually paid in some money, exposure and paint.

Many things seems to go wrong within the contemporary art market, resulting in poor and dependent artists. Subsidies could fill the hole in the income of artists, but is this a sustainable solution or would multiple job holding be a better alternative? According to Jo, we could never solve these problems if artists are not willing to participate more in finding a solution. Furthermore, he also stated that “The government should create as much room as possible for the market on the one hand, and make sure that people do not drown there on the other.” Finding a solution therefore appears to be not only the responsibility of the artists but of many other actors in the market as well. How could customers, cultural funds and policymakers contribute to this and are they willing to do so?

5.4 Balance

How do artists keep balance between being an artist on the one hand and holding multiple jobs on the other? And why is this necessary? As mentioned before, working full-time affected Roland’s production in a negative way. His initial plan was to plan his life in such a way that he would work full-time in a side job for half a year in order to be able to work in his studio for the other half year. Since this did not work out the way he intended, he decided to work less hours a week. He does not care too much about what kind of job it is, but it should

not be too time consuming: “Generally speaking, I mainly look at the number of hours.” He manages to keep the amount of hours low thanks to his low budget lifestyle: he does not own a car, lives anti-squat and rarely goes on vacation. It is clear that the respondents have different needs compared to the artist from New York that Renée was talking about: they need enough time to work in their studio. For example, Bas told: “My works cannot develop themselves quickly, so it could happen that I’m working three weeks or a month on one piece.” For many artists it is important that they are able to work in their studio for a consecutive period of time – in most cases at least a couple of days or even weeks. Inge compared this necessity to studying for an exam: “You need time and attention. Imagine that you read for one hour once a week: you won’t remember what you were doing.”

Victor would agree with the idea that he needs enough time to spend in his studio. However, this seems to be impossible due to his activities as a teacher at the Willem de Kooning Academy where he once graduated himself. During the first ten years of his career he tried to make a living out of his art, and he did not have side jobs. This enabled him to live an isolated life: “Not seeing people for a long time is no problem for me, since it enables me to reach a certain depth and to make my own work. I miss that a lot these days.” Although he was so poor that he did not always have something to eat, he considered himself rich because he could enjoy the depths in his own mind and spirit. This does not mean that he does not love his current job at the academy. On the contrary, he even stated: “Educating has saved my life.” However, he noticed that he might be “too involved” with his students and responsibilities at the academy. Therefore, he is not able to work in the way that he used to anymore. Whereas most respondents stated that they need at least a day or three in their studios, Victor prefers to work there for at least two weeks in order to become addicted to his own work: “It takes two weeks to develop a certain flow of addiction and then I find my balance again.” Unfortunately, the reality of a teacher does not involve many holiday periods which are longer than two weeks.

Furthermore, respondents did not only tell about how they kept balance between their artistic work and side jobs but that they also need time for their personal or private lives. According to Inge, your side job should therefore not be too time consuming, since you also have your private life and household and: “If you have a side job for four days a week this does not mean you will be working in your studio the other three days. You cannot work seven days a week, at least not forever.” This contradicts Renée’s experience with artists who were willing and able to work seven days a week. She stated that “of course they complained, because it is incredibly busy,” but that is was also an inevitable part of the life they chose at

the moment they came to New York as an artist. In opposition to these artists, May attaches importance to her weekends and personal life: “You are your own person and you have work. These two are not the same for me. (...) There is a dividing line between them.” This was not always the case: at the start of her career she did not want to miss out on opportunities and being busy was no problem for her: she was a starting artist with a commercial photo studio and she taught at the preliminary program of ArtEZ where she once graduated herself. However, at the end of her twenties she needed more time: “If your private life is not in a good place it cannot support your work.”

It seems that as long as the respondents do not work too many hours a week, this does not have to distract them from their work as an artist. The ideal division of time is never equal: the artists stated that they need to spend the bigger part of their time in their studio, but they appeared to be willing to reserve around 30 or 40 percent of their time for other jobs or commercial activities. According to Patrick, the right balance allows you to sometimes reach to point of boredom from which interesting work could come into existence. However, he does not need to experience this on a daily basis: “On other days I can sit behind my desk, but nothing will come out of it. In that case I might as well go jogging or leave and come back the next day.” Roland mentioned something quite similar during his interview: “When you start working in your studio, you might be able to work concentrated for three hours in a row. I would call that an outstanding achievement. After these three hours you lose your concentration and what do you do then? You might go read, play computer games or watch a movie but you could also use that time to work somewhere else.” During the interview, Roland did not have to work for three months, so he had spent all of his time in his studio. Although he had expected to produce more art thanks to this freedom, this did not happen. He created just as much as he normally does when he has a side job and he even started to procrastinate: “You might become a bit more efficient when you know that you do not have the time tomorrow because of work.”

Whereas Roland’s idea of switching every half year from working full-time in a side job to being in his studio full-time did not work out so well, this turned out to be Hans’ salvation. Since Hans suffers from psychological problems from time to time, the variation in his work is needed in order to get through difficult times. He described: “After a while I get disappointed in myself, so after half a year making art I believe it is not good enough and the same for half a year of science. Luckily, I can switch to the other side and have hope again. After half a year the disillusion will kick in again, so that’s the trick. It works for me.” However, there have been times during which Hans worked on either his arts or his economic

theory for a longer period. These are good signs: apparently he did not disappoint himself and switching to the other discipline is therefore unnecessary. Although this “system” which Hans has created for himself works well, it also comes with challenges. Especially when he has to switch from economics to the arts: “In order to be able to draw I have to reach a certain point of emptiness in which I stop thinking about anything. No thoughts about economics or anything else whatsoever.” During the first month after the switch he only creates “bad drawings” and Hans described this process as “heavy”. Whereas Rob seems to consider his other work as a form of sacrificing his art since this means you are not focussed on your artistic career 100 percent, Hans does not share this idea.

Multiple job holding is not a sacrifice for Hans: “Why not? Because I believe that I can start again every moment, I’m a free human being.” He did not have this mindset from the beginning: “While I was writing my first book, I was panicking.” He was afraid that he would lose his artistic talent and therefore tried to finish his book as soon as possible. Moreover, he always had to make the decision between following his heart or mind: “The world would not miss me as an artist. It’s not that they would miss me as an economist either, but maybe a bit more.” He felt the need to contribute to something bigger than himself, but he was not only scared of disappointing himself but also others. Therefore, he was not able to work full-time as an economist at the academy. Looking back, Hans assumes that he could have done better if he had not been suffering from his own insecurities: “I could have been a better artist and scientist if I had been a different person.” However, he also knows that many of his drawing would not have existed without his personality. Moreover, he has gained enough trust in his talents nowadays. On top of that, he stated that he experiences less pressure now thanks to his retirement: “Everything I do now is a bonus.” Since Hans could not mention any other disadvantages of his lifestyle, it is clear that Hans’ so-called system works successfully for him. However, the distinction between two different careers does not have to be this black and white for every artist.

Both Patrick and Diane are examples of how a sports and arts career could strengthen and complement each other within a relationship that seems to be quite symbiotic. Diane described the relationship as follows: “It is a beautiful whole: the one needs the other and vice versa.” Since sports and art have played important roles throughout the lives of Patrick and Diane, the question is not whether they should combine the two but rather in what way. While Patrick was studying at ArtEZ and the Gerrit Rietveld Academy he also earned his black belt for karate and only one year after his graduation he founded a karate school in Amsterdam in 1994. The idea behind the karate school was to provide karate for artists and was therefore

according to Patrick a project with an idealistic missions and a social component. Since Patrick was not able to earn enough money with his art at the beginning of his career, he started working more and more in his karate school. Looking back on this period of time, he was having a hard time: “I missed the time in the studio back then.” Although he did not feel welcome in the art world at the start, things have turned out quite well for Patrick. He is represented in galleries, exhibitions and he is able to sell works now. However, this does not mean that he will quit the karate school: “That is not an option. I don’t think I can do without it.” The same counts for Diane, who once started going to the gym at her doctor’s advice and quickly transformed into a sports instructor herself.

At a certain point Diane was working so many hours on her miniature art that she developed rheumatism in her hands and feet. It became necessary to practice sports again in order to improve her physical health. Therefore, she started going to the gym and from there “things got out of hand.” When she noticed a vacancy for a sports instructor there she decided to apply and within a few years she had become the general manager of the gym. Since this job and her study to get a degree in sports were very time consuming, she was not able to work on her miniatures for a few years. Although it is clear that Diane is enthusiastic about her sports career, she started to miss practicing art and she appeared to be missed in the field as well. At that moment she realised that she has a unique talent: “I started creating miniatures again and everyone was so happy to have me back. That’s when I realised that it is very special what I have been doing all that time.” Diane wanted to make her comeback and had to sacrifice her career as a manager of the gym. However, she did not want to quit her sports career entirely. Although it is financially maybe not even necessary anymore and she is able to make a lot of commissioned work, Diane still wants to continue her lessons in the gym for approximately ten hours a week: “Most of my time is spent on miniature art, but the sports needs to stay present as well.”

Diane is an example of how two careers could strengthen each other when coexisting. Thanks to practicing sports, Diane is physically still able to practice her miniature art and thanks to her creativity she is able to create lessons in which she expresses her own creativity as well. However, the combination could become challenging when both careers become more time consuming. Diane needs to create new sports lessons on a regular basis and visits fairs and events in order to stay up to date about developments in the sports industry. Furthermore, during these periods it could happen that art buyers order numerous art pieces who she does not want to say no to. Diane told how she could “drown herself in work,” but that she is able to work several nights in a row in order to finish everything on time. Although

she manages to successfully combine the two careers at the same time, her private life has to be compromised during times like these. Diane is probably able to cope with this imbalance thanks to her energetic character. Victor admitted that he used to be better at living a fragmented life when he was younger: “I had the energy back then, but I have become older. My issue has become my level of energy and concentration.” Whenever Victor is not able to reach his flow anymore, he becomes irritated and mad. This may fit the romantic picture of the poor artist, but Inge stated: “People always think that artists need to suffer, but actually you, as a human being, just want to be comfortable in your own skin.”

When it is rightly balanced with your artistic career and personal life, multiple job holding appears to be pleasant and inspiring. The motivation does not have to be monetary. Although Rob realises that he is not able to focus a hundred percent on his artistic career because of his work at the Mondriaan Fund, he would not want to miss it. He does not consider the combination a problem, because he claimed to be able to make a distinction between the different tasks in his life. Moreover, his job enables him to use his artistic skills in a different way: “You don’t have to use your creativity for your visual arts only, it could also be useful in other ways. In a way, I’m of added value for the organisation thanks to my creativity. You can use it in different ways and it still offers you the same amount of satisfaction.” This perspective is interesting, since it allows artists to still use their artistic skills, but in a place where they are able to contribute to an organisation and to earn a decent salary. Although this work could be something completely different from your artistic work, the two do not have to be completely separated from each other, since you are using the same set of skills. At least, this is what I could see happening in Hans’ career, since he stated that he uses his talent for thinking systematically and creating emotionally in both his artistic and academic work.

Furthermore, the artists who also work as art teachers appeared to be happy about this combination as well. Apart from the salary, they mentioned advantages such as inspiration, a sense of belonging, contact with the current academic field and joy. Inge would like to work as an art teacher as well, but she also mentioned the potential downside of this: responsibility. Her side jobs did not come with too much responsibility so far, but she would feel responsible for students. This could be the trade-off when artists have to decide between a side job outside the artistic field with less responsibilities and a job as an art teacher. Although Bas does teach at CREA, he would probably understand her point of view. According to him, multiple job holding has not only to do with the amount of work you have to do, but also with the kind of responsibility you have. His work at CREA works for him, because the organisation offers

him enough freedom for the structure and content of his lessons and he does not feel too much responsibility. He is, of course, responsible for his students and the quality of his own lessons, but: “It is not a position in which I am a coordinator or whatever. (...) I don’t think that would work for me.” Eventually, every individual needs to find its own balance point. Jo stated: “In order to be flexible, you need to have a stable core. If your core isn’t stable, flexibility turns out to be nothing more than having no sense of direction.”

6. How Is This All Going To Fit In My Suitcase?

This chapter focusses on a deeper analysis of the data gathered through the semi-structured in-depth interviews as presented in the previous chapter. The analysis is structured according to the themes of the theoretical framework as discussed in chapter 3: making a living, making a life, and the artist as a cultural entrepreneur.

6.1 Making a Living

At first glance, all interviewed artists seem to fit Pouliakas' (2017) definition of multiple job holding, since every individual "holds more than one job or runs more than one business during a reference week, where his/her primary job typically refers to the one with the greatest number of hours usually worked" (p. 2). Although they all seem to consider being an artist as their primary job, most of them also have experienced periods of time in which they were not able to survive financially if most of their time was spent on being an artist. Surviving as an artist could therefore imply that you cannot dedicate most of your time to making art. The decision for holding multiple jobs could be explained by the different ways in which people set their individual reference levels for what income is required for their own well-being (Hlouskova et al., 2017). From this point of view, multiple job holding is necessary in order to compensate a certain lack of financial reward. Examples of reference levels of the interviewed artists are Bas, who started worrying about his income once he became a father, Roland, who does not feel the urge to spend a lot of money on a house, car or vacation, or May, who also needs to have enough free time for her private life. When unsubsidised artists are not able to sell their work (yet), it could be a logical choice to start holding multiple jobs in order to meet their reference level.

Although multiple job holding seems to be an understandable decision, it appears to be necessary to keep a certain balance between your artistic life and side job. Although Renée is used to artists from New York who need to work in a side job full-time in order to survive financially, this appeared to be impossible for Roland. When he came back from his full-time job, he was "simply tired" and he had no energy left to create art. Furthermore, the same has happened to Inge when she experienced that she was working too many hours: "Working four days a week in order to be able to pay the rent of the studio where I could not be, since I was always working in order to pay for the studio where I never was." Although multiple job

holding seems to be an inevitable part of the reality of artists, it has a serious impact on their energy level. Victor admitted that he used to be better at living a fragmented life when he was younger: “I had the energy back then, but I have become older. My issue has become my level of energy and concentration.” Moreover, this fragmented lifestyle could also have a negative influence on artists’ ability to reach a certain state of flow. Artists cannot work in their studio for just a couple of hours, they often need at least three days in a row in order to find the right concentration for their work.

Since the interviewed artists appeared to be unable to work full-time in a side job, they have to sacrifice a certain monetary wealth as long as they are not selling a lot of their art works. Although it is assumable that artists make this sacrifice easily, since they are intrinsically motivated and not interested in making money (Abbing, 2002), Inge would not agree: “People always think that artists need to suffer, but actually you, as a human being, just want to be comfortable in your own skin.” She is the living proof of how an increased personal budget provides artists the luxury to do work they actually enjoy (Rengers & Madden, 2000). Inge immediately quit her side job when she won enough prize money with the *Piket Kunstprijs* and *Sacha Tanja Penning* to financially survive for a few years. Furthermore, Roland only started looking for a side job when his allowance stopped. Just like when artists receive an allowance or prize money, one of the benefits of multiple job holding is having a stable income. Therefore, Bas’ income now exists from a “stable half” which he earns with his job as a teacher at *CREA* and a “fluctuating” other half which consists from the irregular profit he makes from selling his paintings. This kind of security contributed to Hans’ peace of mind: “I knew that I had enough on my bank account every month to do the things that were important to me.”

However, most of the interviewed artists proved that monetary income does not have to be the main incentive for artists who “do not regard work as a chore where the only purpose is to earn an income” (Throsby, 2010, p. 81). They may fit the stereotype of the poor artist who is short on cash, but they do receive a high “physic income” (Rengers & Madden, 2000, p. 28) out of both their art and second career. In line with Abbing’s (2002) statement about how in general teaching art “pays better and offers more satisfaction” (p. 144) than non-arts jobs, artists such as Bas, Victor and May are not willing to give up their work as art teachers when “their financial prospects suddenly improve” (p. 145). Furthermore, this is also the case for Diane and Patrick who would not be able to work as artists without their sports careers. Moreover, it could also be a wise thing to keep working in your side job in order to start saving for a rainy day. For example, throughout May’s career there were periods of time

in which she sold enough works to make a living. However, she kept working multiple jobs in order to maintain a stable income and to save for her further career.

Besides the motivations for multiple job holding, I also stated in my theoretical framework that artists seem to sacrifice themselves in their pursuit of artistic integrity, a belief shared by many artists and scientists (Levine, 2018). Therefore, I wondered to what extent an artist's intrinsic motivation leads to self-exploitation. It unfortunately appears to be quite hard to answer this question, since giving up the arts never seemed to be an option in the first place. The poorer lifestyle and multiple job holding therefore seemed to be accepted as a part of the job. The alternative is to quit making art and that would be a way bigger sacrifice. However, the question could be raised whether we could consider them artists or amateurs. Rob stated that it is possible to make this distinction based on an artist's recognition by others and income from its art production, since "these are things you need if you want to make a living out of it." From his perspective, "A hobby does not bring in money, you invest money in it. So, if you do something professionally, the goal has to be to make money out of it." Should artists think about making money while their practice could be interpreted as an experience which is "an end in itself" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014, p. 201) which does not reward itself in terms of money but in joy? And what about artists such as Patrick and Diane who have become better artists thanks to their second career? How is that still amateurish? According to May, your multiple jobs could become an "integrated" part of your artistic practice.

Since multiple job holding is such a common decision among artists, it never seemed the question if May was going to hold multiple jobs after her graduation at ArtEZ, but rather in which way. Although May's side jobs take place within the artistic and cultural field, the theoretical framework pointed out that the majority of artists reduce their risks by holding non-arts jobs "out of necessity" (Abbing, 2002, p. 144), but not necessarily out of interest or passion. Roland and Inge are useful examples of this approach, since they both have tried to avoid working in side jobs for a long time. According to Roland, his initial aversion to multiple job holding has to do with his need for artistic autonomy, since he does not want to make any concessions in his creative work. Therefore, his side jobs always take place in another field outside the art world. Inge's perspective could strengthen this argumentation, since she aims to work in side jobs in which she does not have too much responsibility. However, one could wonder whether it is really necessary to isolate your side job from your artistic practice in order to remain autonomous. This friction between being an autonomous

artist and a cultural entrepreneur appeared to be of big importance during the interviews. Therefore, this will also be discussed in the following paragraphs.

6.2 Making a Life

A number of interviews with the multiple job holding artists confirmed how “work held alongside the artistic activity is often perceived negatively, as it prevents artists from dedicating themselves to art on a full-time basis” (Lindström, 2016, p. 44). The clearest examples of this issue are possibly Inge and Roland who both eventually reached a point in their lives in which they were working so many hours in their side jobs that they became unable to create art. Furthermore, the fragmented lifestyle that Victor has due to his career as an arts teacher at the Willem de Kooning Academy is also challenging for him, since this affects his working flow as an artist. He is not able to reach the same level of energy and concentration anymore which are required for his artistic work. Therefore, Victor becomes mad and irritated. Their stories seem to contradict Renée’s theory that artists are able to work 40 hours a week besides their artistic work. Although her theory is based on the living proof of numerous visual artists who she met during her years in New York, a number of the interviewed artists explained that they need multiple days in a row in order to reach a certain state of flow which is necessary for the creation of art works that meet their quality standards.

However, other interviews confirmed Lindström’s argument for the possibility of more positive narratives on multiple job holding. Although all interviewed artists appear to have learned to “manage risk and to stay alive through multiple job-holding” (Throsby, 2010, p. 82), this was often more than “just some survival strategy” (Abbing, 2002, p. 145). On the contrary, the combination of two careers could develop quite naturally, as were the case with Patrick who has always been both a visual and a martial artist at the same time. Moreover, this combination appears to be symbiotic, since both visual arts and karate enable him to investigate the subject of violence and to express himself in an artistic way in which both disciplines are connected. Moreover, the same seems to be present in Diane’s life. Although her decision to start going to the gym could be considered as a survival strategy to some extent (since she had to cope with rheumatic symptoms due to her work as a miniature artist), her sports and artistic career strengthen and complement each other. Her artistic work receives most of her attention, but quitting her sports career is out of question: “Most of my time is spent on miniature art, but the sports needs to stay present as well.” One could safely state that the combination works successfully in the lives of Patrick and Diane, but it does have an impact on the private life of Diane.

Although Klamer (2017) is convinced that artists “tend to perceive things differently from everybody else” (p. 35), he states that money could never be the ultimate goal for anyone, since it is only instrumental and therefore does not constitute someone’s ideals (p. 34). Therefore, artists are not motivated in monetary terms while they do need to survive financially just like everybody else. But what if they are motivated enough to have two careers simultaneously but have too little time? During particular periods of time in Diane’s career, the combination of sports and arts becomes challenging. It could happen that both careers become more time consuming at the same time, due to developments in the sports industry and an increase of demand from art buyers for example. Although Diane is able to cope with this imbalance, probably thanks to her energetic character, she also told how these peaks of work load could affect her private life, since she tends to drown herself in work. This points out an important implication of multiple job holding: it does not only become challenging to make the combination work between two different careers, you also need to consider how this affects your private life. Therefore, different interviewed artists appeared to have decided to protect their private lives in certain ways.

What is important to artists? What is most important: their artistic work or private life? And to what extent are they willing to give up their side jobs? Since ideals and values are hard concepts to attach numbers to, Klamer’s (2017) question “so who of the two is richer, the lawyer or the artist?” (p. 127) still seems impossible to answer. However, Victor is an interesting example of how a monetarily poor artist could still feel rich when he has enough time and space to reach the depths of his own mind and soul. Moreover, artists do not seem to attach too much value to material wealth. For example, many of them live in anti-squat locations and Roland decided not to drive a car or to go on expensive vacations. In that sense one could say that artists who are able to work enough hours in their studio therefore may sacrifice monetary wealth, but could still be rich in artistic terms. These sacrifices come with a price in the context of their bank account, level of stress and private life, but it seems to be worth it. After all, they all seem to attach a lot of importance to their own autonomy. Could we therefore assume that this was their conscious decision all along?

Although Inge and Roland consider their non-arts jobs as “necessary evil” (Abbing, 2002, p. 145), this does not necessarily mean that multiple job holding has no benefits. Multiple job holding could have positive effects on a worker’s financial security, sense of entrepreneurship, development of new job skills and future job mobility and task variety (Pouliakas, 2017). For example, May spoke about having “multiple professional selves”. She is not only an artist, but she is also a teacher at ArtEZ and an advisor at the Amsterdams

Fonds voor de Kunst. This enabled her to develop herself through doing different activities, which brought her so many new insights that she is not sure about what her future will bring. She does not know into which direction she wants to move next: as an advisor, art theorist, curator, artist or as all at once. Whereas Roland creates separated worlds by making a clear distinction between his artistic work in his studio and his side jobs outside the art world, May considers all her activities as a part of her practice. This integration of activities in the art practice could be compared with the way in which Patrick and Diane combine sports and arts and with the way in which other art teachers manage their lives.

By conducting this research, I aimed to explore the opportunities of becoming a “hybrid artist” who consciously decides to hold multiple jobs by “choosing a certain product-mix or combination of activities” (Abbing, 2002, p. 145). All artists seem to consciously choose for particular side jobs. Roland and Inge aim to work outside the art world, whereas May, Bas and Victor make use of their artistic qualities in their work as art teachers. Moreover, May also works for a cultural fund just as Rob who states that this enables him to apply his artistic skills in a different way: “You don’t have to use your creativity for your visual arts only, it could also be useful in other ways. In a way, I’m of added value for the organisation thanks to my creativity. You can use it in different ways and it still offers you the same amount of satisfaction.” From this point of view, multiple job holding does not have to take place outside your artistic bubble, since you are using your same set of skills within different contexts. Another example of how this could work is visible within Hans’ career, since he stated that he is able to use his talents for thinking systematically and creating emotionally in both his artistic and academic work. On top of this, Diane and Patrick show how a second career could be of such a great importance that your artistic career becomes inseparable from it.

The interviews confirmed stereotype idea of the poor artist, since they all seemed to rather make art than money. However, the combination of different activities is working out so well for most of them that they do not seem to fit Abbing’s (2002) assumption that “as long as artists earn less than a minimum level of money, artists seek money in order to make art, but when funds are sufficient they quickly lose interest in earning money” (p. 87). The art teachers appeared to be unwilling to give up their contact with students and Diane and Patrick cannot function without their sport careers. Moreover, multiple job holding provides artists the chance to escape their isolated artistic lives for a while and to make contact with people from the real world and to experience a sense of belonging. This advantage of multiple job holding even convinced Roland who has become used to the idea of multiple job holding. It

even motivates him to work more efficiently, because he cannot procrastinate his artistic work when he knows that he has to show up at his job the next day. In the end, only Inge did not seem too enthusiastic about working in a side job next to her career. Whenever she has enough money on her bank account, she quits her job and whenever she is in need for social contact she would rather grab a cup of coffee with a fellow artist or work as a volunteer.

6.3 The Artist as a Cultural Entrepreneur

By conducting this research, I aimed to investigate to what extent visual artists' monetary issues could be considered problematic and to what extent they offer opportunities. As discussed in the previous paragraphs of this chapter, the data gathered through the semi-structured in-depth interviews show that the decision for multiple job holding could have both a positive and negative effect on an artist's practice. For example, multiple job holding could provide artists a steady income and therefore more peace of mind. Furthermore, side jobs could be a source of inspiration and an opportunity to develop different skills and to have more social contact. However, side jobs are possibly too energy- and time consuming and could therefore also be a distraction or an obstacle for the artist concerned. These insights are the result of interviews about personal experiences, whereas it is also possible to reflect on this matter from a more abstract point of view. This last paragraph therefore aims to include a macro-perspective within this research on visual artists who hold multiple jobs. While doing so, this paragraph reflects on the importance of matters such as cultural entrepreneurship, autonomy and subsidies within the particular context of multiple job holding visual artists in the Netherlands.

Let us start with how Jo's theory about the two different systems which are currently active simultaneously reminds us of Klamer's (2017) five-sphere model. This model is considered to be "a critical element in the value based approach" (p. 215) and is therefore also an essential part of the theoretical framework of this master thesis. Cultural organisations, the government and the market play important roles in both Jo's and Klamer's theory. Klamer assigns these different actors to their own spheres which are characterised by a certain logic and by positive and negative values, rhetoric and the way in which relationships with others are being established. Jo notices a similar dynamic, since he stated that the government, market and cultural organisations play by different rules and produce different values. This process of producing values could easily be compared with the way in which Klamer notices how values could be valorised within the different spheres. For example, Klamer (2017) states

that the market sphere plays a key role in the process of realising our values, since it provides the goods and services that are required. Therefore, the market sphere could be considered as instrumental, especially since its interactions are instrumental as well and “do not require relationships” (p. 210). However, Jo did describe how cultural organisations are ought to build relationships with the market and government at the same time.

According to Jo, problems occur when cultural organisations are forced to follow the rules of the government and market at the same time, since they are completely different from each other. Moreover, cultural organisations also differ from the government and market themselves, since they do not produce the same values. This seems in line with Klamer’s (2017) description of how the dominant logic in the market sphere is the logic of exchange in which positive values come about such as efficiency, innovation and entrepreneurship that are “instrumental for the realisation of material welfare” (p. 210). Jo’s statements could add other values to this, such as taking risks, growth, competition, revenue and the winner takes it all. This difference in logic affects the ways in which should behave in order to operate successfully. Jo illustrated this by describing two different swimming pools. He compared the subsidised system with a nice and warm swimming pool of five meters deep in which you should be able to grab an inflatable ring if you do not want to drown, whereas he compared the market with a swimming pool in which the water could change any moment from boiling hot to freezing cold and from being flat like a mirror into a tsunami. Therefore, according to Jo, “You will need way more skills in order to be able to operate successfully in there.”

However, the problem does not have to be the fact that there are differences between the three discussed spheres. Jo would rather state that the mindset of artists and the government could produce problems, since they are currently working in both “System 1” and “System 2”. Therefore, he noticed that: “Organisations who have worked with governmental legislations and subsidies for forty or fifty years are now suddenly forced to build relationships on the market.” Since the Market and Governmental Sphere both produce different values and follow a different set of rules, the situation becomes complicated. Klamer (2017) states that since the logic of the market sphere is all about exchange, artists need to convince others of their art in order to make them willing to pay for it. Therefore, it is crucial for artists to participate in the dialogue of the art market. According to Klamer, this is what valorisation is all about: artists need to get others interested in their ideas; they gain value once they are able to share their ideas with others (p. 146). In order to produce ideas and art works, artists could try to find monetary recourses from different spheres. Once artists try to exchange their ideas and works with potential consumers, they enter the Market sphere,

whereas they enter the sphere of the government when they start filling in application forms or talking to the representatives of cultural funds (p. 152).

Although it is interesting to include this macro perspective on the contemporary art market in this master thesis, the main focus is still of course on how visual artists perform on a micro level. What are the implications of the different logics and rules of the spheres for the lives of visual artists? The theoretical framework of this research pointed out that Rodner, & Kerrigan (2014) state that numerous artists are used to balancing between artistic conventions on the one hand and market demand on the other. Jo would support such a mindset, since he assumes that it could be interesting for artists to stop isolating themselves from the market and to start a dialogue with potential customers. In this way, artists are still able to decide what they are going to make, while knowing what is happening amongst art buyers. Taking this into consideration, being an autonomous artist might not have to mean that you should be hiding yourself from the demand side. One could be an artist and an entrepreneur at the same time. However, numerous respondents did not seem to be open to balancing between different spheres, since they rather seemed to isolate themselves in order to avoid the risk of making artistic concessions. Therefore, artists such as Roland and Inge do not even want to holding multiple jobs within the art world.

Furthermore, the theoretical framework also mentioned how artists need to develop a social network in which art experts who have the required social and cultural capital to connect artists to “a wider audience of private and public collectors, cultural and corporate institutions, and art enthusiasts” (Rodner, & Kerrigan, 2014. p. 103). However, what if artists are simply not willing or able to enter the spheres of the market and government? The interviews pointed out that it could be quite hard to succeed in applying for an arts subsidy. This possibly has to do with the understanding of the different logics, since Bas stated that he learned “how the whole game works” and indeed received multiple subsidies, whereas Victor does not know why he has almost never been able to receive a subsidy: “Either I’m not good at applying or my work was maybe not good enough.” Inge seemed to confirm Victor’s doubt: “I think that the people who are good writers are able to receive subsidy sooner for a project that might have a lower quality.” One could therefore suspect that subsidies might simply go to the artists who are able to play the game in a smarter way than others. Interestingly, Klamer (2017) also seems to approach this dynamic as a game when he states that it is important for artists to be aware of the sphere in which they valorise their art, since their message and ambitions could easily be lost “in the heat of the money game” (p. 174).

However, the question remains: are we playing fair? The money game makes the life of visual artists quite complex: they valorise their artistic ambitions in different spheres at the same time. Klamer (2017) notices how the overlap of different spheres could cause the crowding out of one sphere when its valorisation “is undermined by the encroachment of another sphere” (p. 214), whereas the encroachment of another sphere could also cause crowding in when it adds value in the valorisation process. The interviews for this research confirmed this in different ways. Firstly, multiple artist appeared to be unwilling to risk their artistic autonomy in order to become commercially successful. From that point of view, the importance of the Cultural sphere seems to crowd out the Market sphere. However, whenever artists’ lives become busy due to multiple job holding, this could cause crowding out of their private lives and therefore Klamer’s sphere of the oikos. However, this does not have to be a bad thing at all. Although Diane’s busy schedule sometimes does not provide enough room for her private life, she would not be able to still create her miniature art without her sports career. Furthermore, Patrick’s career as both a visual and martial artist enables him to study violence on a level that would be unable to reach without the symbiotic relationship between these two disciplines. Moreover, Victor even stated: “Educating has saved my life.”

7. Souvenirs (Epilogue)

This Master Thesis focussed on the research question: *To what extent are visual artists in the Netherlands still making an artistic life while having multiple jobs?* In order to formulate an answer, the conducted research was designed as if it was a journey. Firstly, I started packing by developing my theoretical framework which consisted from three parts. Firstly, the framework discussed theory about how multiple job holding enables artists to make a living, followed by theory about how they could also valorise their artistic lives and own sense of cultural entrepreneurship. Especially Klamer's value based approach played an important role throughout the conducted research. After formulating my research design and method, I was ready for take-off. From there, my journey brought me to semi-structured in-depth interviews with eight different visual artists, a gallerist from Amsterdam and a representative from both the Mondriaan Fund and Cultuur+Ondernemen.

Since the process of conducting qualitative research could bring about changes in researchers themselves (Palaganas et al., 2017), reflexivity was a significant part of this master thesis' research findings. By using an explorative and reflexive approach, I was able to investigate my own questions and assumptions throughout the process which has resulted in numerous new insights and precious memories. During my interviews with these respondents, my first ideas and expectations were challenged and could be questioned even more and developed through the analysis of the gathered data. The interviews with the different individuals offered numerous points of view for approaching certain issues within the contemporary visual art market. Since it was an ongoing process, surprises and changes could occur during the research itself and, moreover, new questions could occur thanks to the surprising input of the respondents.

Although the results show that the impact of multiple job holding on a person's artistic life differs per individual, it appeared to be possible to discover common threads within the interviews. Therefore, the gathered data was presented according to four main themes: autonomy, subsidy, market and balance. The data analysis was structured according to the three themes of the theoretical framework: making a living, making a life and the artist as a cultural entrepreneur. The data analysis showed how the data that was gathered along the way still seemed to fit in my suitcase. However, I also came across new and unexpected insights which I consider as my souvenirs. Although they may not all fit in my suitcase, I would love to also present them here in the final chapter of my Master Thesis.

The decision for holding multiple jobs could be explained by the different ways in which people set their individual reference levels for what income is required for their own well-being (Hlouskova et al., 2017). From this point of view, multiple job holding is necessary in order to compensate a certain lack of financial reward. When unsubsidised artists are not able to sell their work (yet), it could be a logical choice to start holding multiple jobs in order to meet their reference level. Most interviews proved that monetary income does not have to be the main incentive for artists who “do not regard work as a chore where the only purpose is to earn an income” (Throsby, 2010, p. 81). They may fit the stereotype of the poor artist who is short on cash, but they do receive a high “physic income” (Rengers & Madden, 2000, p. 28) out of both their art and second career. Therefore, Klamer’s (2017) question “so who of the two is richer, the lawyer or the artist?” (p. 127) still seems impossible to answer. Artists who aim to work enough hours in their studio may have to sacrifice monetary wealth, but they could still be rich in other terms. Their sacrifices may come with a price in the context of their bank account, level of stress and private life, but they seem to be worth it.

Interestingly, numerous artists seemed to care about their side jobs in a similar way. In line with Abbing’s (2002) statement about how in general teaching art “pays better and offers more satisfaction” (p. 144) than non-arts jobs, artists such as Bas, Victor and May appeared unwilling to give up their work as art teachers when “their financial prospects suddenly improve” (p. 145). Furthermore, this could also be seen within Diane’s and Patrick’s practice. Since the relationship between their different jobs became so symbiotic, they have become unable to work as artists without their sports careers. Generally speaking, all respondents mentioned specific advantages and disadvantages of holding multiple jobs while being an artist. Firstly, it could provide them a steady income and therefore more peace of mind. Furthermore, side jobs could be a source of inspiration and an opportunity to develop different skills and to have more social contact. Multiple job holding could be an interesting opportunity for artists to use their talent for creativity outside their studios.

However, a number of interviews with the multiple job holding artists confirmed how this decision “is often perceived negatively, as it prevents artists from dedicating themselves to art on a full-time basis” (Lindström, 2016, p. 44). Although it was often more than “just some survival strategy” (Abbing, 2002, p. 145), it appeared that multiple job holding could indeed have a negative impact on the extent to which artists are able to valorise their artistic lives. A possible disadvantage which should be taken into account is that side jobs could become too energy- and time consuming and could therefore be a distraction or an obstacle for the artist concerned. This reminds us of Klamer’s (2017) theory about “crowding out” (p.

214) whenever one sphere becomes more important than the others, whereas the interviewed artists spoke about a certain disbalance. Although multiple job holding seems to be an understandable decision, it appeared to be necessary to keep a certain balance between your artistic life and side job, while also taking your private life into consideration. The fragmented lifestyle due to multiple job holding could have a negative influence on artists' ability to reach a certain state of flow. Artists cannot work in their studio for just a couple of hours, they often need at least three days in a row in order to find the right concentration for their work.

A striking dilemma that occurred during the journey was whether we should make a distinction between artists and amateurs and, if so, how. According to Rob, this distinction would be possible by looking at an artist's recognition by others and income from its art production. From his perspective, "A hobby does not bring in money, you invest money in it" and having multiple jobs in order to survive financially could therefore imply that you are an amateur. However, one could still wonder whether making money with art should really be the goal, when the artistic practice could also be interpreted as "an end in itself" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014, p. 201). Multiple job holding does not have to imply amateurism, since artists such as Patrick and Diane prove to even become better artists thanks to their second career. Furthermore, May explained how multiple jobs could become an "integrated" part of your artistic practice in which you could develop different "professional selves". One could therefore wonder whether it is really necessary to isolate your side job from your artistic practice. According to Roland, this is necessary for him in order to remain autonomous.

The importance of the theme autonomy was another surprise along the way. Roland explained that it is necessary for him to create two different worlds in which he either works on his art works or in a job outside the art world in order to avoid making concessions as an artist. Moreover, it seemed as if most artists do not want to worry about potential buyers while they are working in their studios. However, Jo pointed out that this mindset does not necessarily have to contribute to an artist's autonomy. If you are truly autonomous, why should it then be necessary to isolate yourself from other people's opinions? It could be valuable to receive feedback and to investigate the demand side of the market in order to make thoughtful decisions. This discovery made me wonder whether the friction between being an autonomous artist on the one hand and a cultural entrepreneur on the other is really correct or whether this should be reconsidered.

Another dilemma that deserves some attention here, is whether we are doing the right thing within the context of arts subsidies. The interviews pointed out how opinions about this

matter could differ, but it is clear that the dynamics around arts subsidies could cause inequalities between and frustrations among artists. Although this is not the aim of the Mondriaan Fund at all, it does seem to function as a quality mark within the contemporary art market. Furthermore, the suspicion exists that artists who are better writers will automatically have better chances at receiving subsidies. Is this really a “money game” (Klamer, 2017, p. 174) and, if so, are we playing fair? Moreover, we could also question if subsidies are really a sustainable solution for the financial struggles, since artists become dependent or maybe even addicted to them. From that point of view is multiple job holding maybe a more attractive solution for artists’ monetary issues, especially when they are unrecognised by cultural funds and art buyers. Moreover, this might also contribute to the level of independency of our artists. However, the main issue that I still have with this point of view is the risk of distracting or burden artists in such a way that this will affect the quality of their work. In the end, it all seems to come down to finding the right balance between the different spheres in which artists have to operate at the same time while they are trying to valorise themselves.

The reflexive and explorative character of my approach enabled me to put myself in the shoes of the interviewed artists and other representatives of the contemporary art market. This has made it easier for me to feel empathy towards different opinions and to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to operate within this world. Especially the interview with Jo confirmed the value of Klamer’s value based approach, since his perspective made clear that when you take into account that different logics are active at the same time, you start to discover the frictions that occur and why. Since this approach allowed me to keep an open and curious attitude towards the individual perspectives on multiple job holding, I was able to discover unexpected themes that appeared to be of great importance. Looking back on the perseverance and endurance that the artists have showed, my appreciation for artists in general has only become bigger.

If I had the chance to continue this research, different scenarios would be possible. Firstly, it would be interesting to include even more participants from the contemporary art market in order to find out what else there is to find. Secondly, it is also possible to conduct a similar research on artists from other disciplines, such as theatre or music, in order to find out whether there are similarities and differences between art disciplines. Lastly, a comparison could be made between different countries if this research would be conducted in other locations around the world as well. For now, this research has reached its final destination, but this does not mean that it is over.

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