

**Art Beyond Markets: Examining the Dynamic Interplay Between Private
Market Trends and Public Policies in Italy**

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Arriving here has not been easy and I can't even rap my head around the fact it's now over. This journey made me meet many people which helped me through all the troubles that I had during this adventure and I hope they will stay in my life for a long time. Above all I need to thank my parents that supported me in my studies and that made all of this possible and especially my mother who gave me the original idea behind this thesis.

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Theoretical framework.....	5
2.1	Public fundings in France and in the UK	7
2.2	Taste	9
2.3	Other examples of how public policies shape art	13
2.4	Risks of private intervention	14
2.4.1	AI	15
2.5	Change towards private intervention in Italy.....	16
2.6	Policies in the Netherlands	18
2.7	Example of successful artist in the art market.....	21
3.	Methods	23
4.	Analysis.....	25
4.1	Italian male artists over 60	26
4.2	Italian male artists in their 50s	27
4.3	Italian male artist in his 40s	28
4.4	Italian female artists over 50	29
4.5	Italian female artists in their 20s	30
4.5.1	Performance artist.....	31
4.6	Dutch female artist in her 20s.....	32
4.7	Dutch male artist.....	33
4.8	Dutch female artists over 50	33
4.9	Interview of an expert in the art sector	34
5	Conclusion	34
6	Limits of the thesis and takeaways for the future.....	35
	References.....	36

Abstract

The contemporary art market is a complex ecosystem where artists, collectors, galleries, and institutions interact dynamically. This thesis explores the influence of the private art market on artists, focusing on the financial pressures and commercial interests that shape artistic production and creativity, with a particular focus on Italy. It investigates whether the relationship between artists and the market negatively impacts artistic integrity and poses significant challenges, and examines the potential benefits of increased state involvement and public funding as solutions. Italy, known for its rich artistic heritage, presents unique challenges for contemporary artists navigating a market dominated by private interests. This research uncovers the extent to which market demands influence artistic decisions, potentially compromising creative integrity. Using qualitative methods, the study includes in-depth interviews with Italian artists to gather insights into their experiences and opinions on market influences. Comparative interviews with Dutch artists, who benefit from greater state support, provide a broader perspective. The comparative analysis assesses the impact of state support on the arts. In the Netherlands, substantial state support creates a stable environment for artists, while in Italy, inconsistent institutional support leads to financial insecurity and limits artistic development. The Dutch model promotes a stable and innovative artistic landscape, whereas the Italian model fosters independence and entrepreneurial spirit despite its challenges. The thesis first presents a theoretical framework within existing literature on art markets, artist autonomy, and public funding. It then outlines the research design and data collection methods, followed by an analysis of interview findings. The discussion and conclusion address the implications, offering policy and practice recommendations to support contemporary artists in Italy. This thesis aims to deepen the understanding of the interplay between market forces and artistic practice, advocating for a balanced approach that values both private market engagement and public support in sustaining a vibrant and diverse artistic landscape.

Key words

Contemporary Art Market, Artistic Production, Creative Integrity, Financial Pressures, Private Interests, Public Funding, State Support, Italian art scene, Market demands, Artist autonomy

1. Introduction

The contemporary art market is a complex ecosystem where artists, collectors, galleries, and institutions interact in dynamic and often unpredictable ways. Within this intricate web, the influence of the private art market on artists has become a subject of increasing scrutiny, particularly concerning how market forces shape artistic production and creativity. This thesis aims to explore the financial pressure and commercial interests of the art market and how this influences artistic decisions, with a specific focus on the Italian art scene. By examining whether the relationship between artists and the art market brings a negative influence on artists and poses significant challenges, the research will delve into the potential benefits of increased state involvement and public funding as mechanisms for mitigating these issues.

In Italy, a country renowned for its rich artistic heritage, contemporary artists face unique challenges as they navigate a market dominated by private interests. This research seeks to uncover the extent to which market demands influence artistic decisions, potentially leading to a compromise in creative integrity. The central question is whether the pressures of the private art market undermine the artistic process and if so, whether a stronger presence of the state and public provision could provide a viable solution.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of this issue, the thesis employs qualitative research methods, primarily through in-depth interviews with Italian artists. These interviews will offer firsthand insights into the experiences and opinions of artists regarding the influence of the private market on their work. Additionally, the research includes interviews with Dutch artists to provide a comparative perspective, given

the differing cultural and economic contexts of the two countries. By comparing the Italian and Dutch experiences, the research aims to identify common challenges and potential strategies for supporting contemporary artists.

A comparative analysis between Dutch and Italian artists can also provide valuable insights into the impact of state support on the arts. In the Netherlands, artists benefit from significant state support and easier access to public funding, whereas in Italy, artists often face a lack of institutional support. By examining the differences in the experiences and outcomes of artists in these two countries, we can assess the effectiveness of these contrasting approaches to arts funding. Italian artists frequently operate in a more challenging environment, where state support is limited and inconsistent. The lack of public funding means that many Italian artists must rely on private patrons, commercial sales, or personal resources to sustain their work. This can lead to financial insecurity and limit opportunities for artistic development. This is not the case in the Netherlands, where artists benefit from greater state support.

Comparing these two systems allows us to evaluate which model is more effective in promoting artistic excellence and sustainability. The Dutch model, with its emphasis on state support, tends to produce a stable and innovative artistic landscape, where artists can pursue their creative visions without the constant pressure of financial survival. On the other hand, the Italian model, while challenging, often fosters a sense of independence and entrepreneurial spirit among artists, who must navigate a more competitive and uncertain market. Ultimately, this comparison highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. The Dutch system's comprehensive support structure enables a diverse range of artistic practices and ensures cultural enrichment, while the Italian system's reliance on private initiative can lead to a dynamic, albeit precarious, artistic environment. Understanding these differences can inform policymakers and stakeholders in both countries as they strive to create conditions that best support the arts and their contributions to society.

This thesis is structured to first present the theoretical framework, situating the research within the existing literature on art markets, artist autonomy, and public funding. Following this, the methodology section will outline the research design and data collection methods. Subsequently, the findings from the interviews will be presented and analyzed, highlighting key themes and patterns. Finally, the discussion and conclusion sections will address the implications of these findings, offering recommendations for policy and practice aimed at fostering a more supportive environment for contemporary artists in Italy.

Through this investigation, the thesis aspires to contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between market forces and artistic practice, advocating for a balanced approach that recognizes the value of both private market engagement and public support in sustaining a vibrant and diverse artistic landscape.

2. Theoretical framework

Public policy interventions in the arts, cultural, and creative industries are often justified by several key economic rationales. These rationales highlight the necessity for government involvement to promote economic growth, innovation, and competitiveness while addressing inherent market inefficiencies.

Market failure justifications are based on several factors, such as the status of arts and culture as non-rival public goods, the need to moderate the effects of upfront investment costs or monopoly power, and the inherent uncertainty of creative production (Bakhshi H., et al, 2015). These justifications have traditionally been a cornerstone for government intervention in creative industries. Key aspects include:

Public Goods: Cultural and artistic products are often considered public goods, characterized by non-excludability and non-rivalry. This means individuals cannot be excluded from enjoying the benefits of cultural goods, and one person's consumption does not diminish the availability for

others. As a result, private markets may underprovide these goods due to the inability to capture their full social value. Government intervention is thus warranted to ensure their production and accessibility.

Externalities: The production and consumption of creative goods and services can generate positive externalities that are not fully reflected in market transactions. For instance, cultural activities may enhance social cohesion, promote creativity and innovation in other sectors, or contribute to the overall well-being of society. Without government intervention, these positive externalities may be underappreciated or underinvested by private actors.

Imperfect Information: Creative industries often operate in environments characterized by imperfect information, where consumers may not have complete knowledge about the quality or value of cultural products. This asymmetry can lead to market inefficiencies, such as underinvestment in innovative or niche cultural offerings. Government interventions, like information campaigns, quality standards, or certification programs, can help mitigate these information gaps.

Monopoly Power: In some cases, creative industries may be dominated by a few large firms or creators with significant market power. This concentration can lead to reduced competition, higher prices, and limited diversity in cultural offerings. Government intervention through antitrust measures, regulation, or support for smaller players can help prevent these negative effects and promote a more competitive and diverse creative economy.

Governments may intervene in the creative industries to support them as drivers of economic growth. This intervention often involves transforming individual creativity and talent into intellectual property that can be commercially exploited (Bakhshi H., et al, 2015). Policies may focus on talent generation, strengthening copyright regimes, and addressing barriers to business capacity and finance. By supporting the creative industries in this way, governments see it as an investment in the broader economic landscape, leveraging the unique contributions of these sectors to the economy.

Creative industries are characterized by high levels of innovativeness, such as introducing new products and services to the market and finding novel ways to reach audiences. These industries, with their high productivity and innovation, are frequent targets for industrial policy strategies due to their potential to generate beneficial externalities. Recognizing the innovative capacity of the creative sectors, governments aim to harness this potential to drive economic growth and societal progress.

Moreover, governments may support creative sectors based on their export potential. The cultural and creative industries have been identified as strategic sectors globally, with rapid growth in trade volumes (Bakhshi H., et al, 2015). Countries with a competitive advantage in these industries can benefit disproportionately from global economic development. By fostering these sectors, governments can enhance their countries' economic performance on the global stage.

Additionally, creative industries are considered 'upstream' in the value chain, making their activities harder to imitate or outsource to lower-cost competitors (Bakhshi H., et al, 2015). This upstream position makes them attractive targets for industrial policy interventions. Supporting these industries helps maintain a competitive edge in the global market and protects against the risks of offshoring and imitation.

These economic rationales highlight the diverse ways in which governments justify interventions in the arts, cultural, and creative industries to promote economic growth, innovation, and competitiveness. Market failure justifications for government intervention in the creative economy stem from the recognition that markets may not always allocate resources efficiently or produce socially desirable outcomes. By addressing these market failures, government interventions in the creative economy aim to foster a vibrant and sustainable cultural sector that benefits both creators and society as a whole.

2.1 Public fundings in France and in the UK

In recent decades, the public funding traditions for visual arts have evolved differently in France and the United Kingdom. France has a long history of state intervention in cultural affairs, with a strong emphasis on public funding for the arts. The French government has traditionally provided substantial financial support for artists through grants, subsidies, and special tax policies (Mahieu S., 2017). This support has enabled French artists to create and exhibit their work with less reliance on market forces. The consistent state support helps artists pursue innovative and experimental projects without the immediate pressure of commercial viability.

The influence of public funding on artists' careers and artistic practices is evident through examples such as Annette Messager, Daniel Buren, and Claude Lévêque (Mahieu S., 2017):

Annette Messager, a renowned French artist, has received public funding and support for her diverse artistic practice spanning photography, sculpture, and installation art. Her works, known for challenging traditional notions of art and identity, have been made possible through public funding initiatives.

Daniel Buren, a prominent French conceptual artist, is recognized for his innovative use of stripes as a visual motif in installations and interventions. His large-scale projects engaging with architectural spaces have been influenced by public funding and institutional support, enabling him to realize his creative vision.

Claude Lévêque, a contemporary French artist, explores themes of light, space, and perception through immersive installations. Public funding initiatives have played a significant role in shaping Lévêque's artistic practice, allowing him to undertake ambitious projects and exhibit his work on an international scale.

These artists exemplify how public support for visual art creation can shape an artist's trajectory, project scale, and engagement with diverse audiences. The evolution of public funding traditions in France and the United Kingdom has had a profound impact on the artistic landscape in both countries.

On the other hand, the United Kingdom has adopted a more mixed approach to public funding for the arts (Mahieu S., 2017). Even though the United Kingdom has historically focused on public policy interventions in the arts, cultural, and creative industries, recent decades have witnessed a notable shift in emphasis towards economic rationales. This shift reflects a broader recognition of the economic potential of these sectors and the need for targeted policies to leverage their strengths and address challenges to growth and innovation.

One key change has been the transition from a 'market failure' rationale for government intervention to a 'market opportunity' one (Bakhshi H., et al, 2015). This evolution acknowledges the increasing globalization and demand for cultural and entertainment goods, propelled by digital technologies. As a result, the UK has shifted towards active industrial policy for the creative industries, aiming to capitalize on the country's competitive advantage in these sectors. In addition to seizing market opportunities, there is now a heightened focus on innovation and export potential within the creative industries. Recognizing their capacity to drive economic growth, policies have increasingly targeted sectors with high levels of innovativeness and export potential. This strategic alignment aims to promote competitiveness and productivity, positioning the UK as a global leader in creative innovation. The UK government has articulated industrial policy strategies aimed at talent generation, strengthening copyright regimes, and addressing barriers to business capacity and finance within the creative industries. These proactive measures demonstrate a commitment to supporting the sector and enhancing its contribution to the economy. Moreover, there is a growing emphasis on the upstream position of creative industries in the value chain. Acknowledging their role as innovators and trendsetters, policymakers recognize the strategic importance of sustaining and enhancing the competitiveness of these industries. This focus helps protect

against the risks of imitation or outsourcing to lower-cost competitors, ensuring the UK remains at the forefront of creative excellence.

However, while the UK has evolved its approach to public policy interventions, challenges remain, particularly concerning funding traditions and budgetary constraints (Mahieu S., 2017). Unlike France, which has a long history of state intervention in cultural affairs with a strong emphasis on public funding for the arts, the UK has adopted a more mixed funding model. Recent budget cuts have led to a greater reliance on private funding and commercial revenues for art institutions, increasing pressure to generate their own revenue. Nevertheless, the shift in emphasis towards economic rationales for public policy interventions underscores a broader recognition of the economic potential of the arts, cultural, and creative industries in the UK. By leveraging these strengths and addressing key challenges, targeted policies aim to foster growth, innovation, and competitiveness in the creative economy, ensuring its continued contribution to national prosperity and cultural vitality. Historically, private patronage has played a significant role in the UK's cultural sector. While the UK government has provided some level of public funding for cultural initiatives, recent years have seen budget cuts affecting public funding for the arts. These cuts have led to a greater reliance on private funding and commercial revenues for art institutions. Consequently, UK artists and institutions are under increasing pressure to secure private sponsorships and market-driven revenue streams to sustain their activities. This shift has influenced the nature of artistic production and exhibition in the UK, pushing artists towards projects that are more commercially viable. Overall, the evolution of public funding traditions in France has maintained a strong emphasis on state support for artists, allowing for greater artistic freedom and less dependency on market forces. In contrast, the UK has seen a shift towards a more mixed funding model, with increasing pressure on institutions to generate their own revenue. This divergence in funding approaches reflects broader economic policies and cultural priorities in each country and significantly impacts the creative landscape and artistic practices within their respective contexts.

These differences in public funding models between France and the UK underscore the varying impacts of governmental support on the creative industries. While both countries recognize the importance of the arts, their approaches to funding and supporting artists reveal distinct priorities and challenges, shaping the future of visual arts in each nation. The shift towards private funding in the UK's visual arts sector can be attributed to various factors, reflecting the challenges posed by fiscal austerity and market constraints (Mahieu S., 2017):

Public Funding Cuts: Reductions in public funding for the arts directly impact the resources available to artists and art institutions. As government support diminishes, artists may find themselves with fewer opportunities to secure funding for their projects, thereby limiting the scope and scale of their artistic endeavors.

Increased Reliance on Private Funding: With dwindling public funding, artists and art organizations are compelled to seek alternative sources of funding, leading to a heightened reliance on private donors, philanthropic foundations, and corporate sponsorships. However, this shift towards private funding may influence the types of projects that receive support, as they may align more closely with the preferences and priorities of private donors.

Market Pressures: Market dynamics exert significant influence on artistic decisions, as artists navigate the need for commercial viability and audience appeal to ensure financial sustainability. In a competitive cultural landscape, artists may feel compelled to create works that resonate with market trends and consumer preferences, potentially compromising their artistic autonomy.

Artistic Freedom vs. Commercial Demands: Artists often grapple with a delicate balance between maintaining their artistic integrity and responding to market demands for commercially viable or

popular art forms. The tension between artistic vision and commercial success can pose challenges for artists seeking to navigate the expectations of both the art market and broader society.

Innovation and Risk-Taking: Fiscal austerity and market constraints can either stifle or spur artistic innovation and risk-taking. While financial pressures may discourage experimentation, some artists may view constraints as an opportunity to explore new creative avenues and push the boundaries of their practice.

Government Policies: Cultural policies and government interventions shape the direction of artistic work by influencing funding decisions and regulatory frameworks. Changes in government priorities and funding allocations can have significant implications for the types of art that are supported and promoted, thereby shaping the cultural landscape.

Audience Engagement: The preferences and expectations of audiences play a pivotal role in shaping artistic work, as artists seek to create works that resonate with their target audience. In an increasingly competitive cultural environment, artists must consider how their creations will be received and appreciated by the public, potentially influencing their artistic choices and creative direction.

By navigating these multifaceted factors, artists and art institutions must adapt to evolving financial landscapes while striving to maintain artistic excellence and cultural relevance. Balancing financial imperatives with artistic integrity poses a significant challenge for artists, requiring them to navigate the complexities of the art market while remaining true to their creative vision.

Leila Jancovich's article on the participation myth highlights key findings regarding policy implementation and barriers to increasing participation in the arts in the UK (Jancovich L., 2017). The article reveals that policy implementation is often influenced by vested interests among funding recipients, with a narrow range of voices from a powerful cultural elite dominating decision-making in the arts sector. Additionally, it identifies a correlation between cultural activity and socio-economic status, along with psychological barriers to engagement with the arts. Jancovich suggests that the implementation of participation policy within the English context may not effectively address these barriers. To overcome them, she proposes a shift towards co-production and wider participation in decision-making. This approach would allow both professionals and users to contribute equally to the planning process, thereby avoiding pre-set agendas and promoting genuine change.

Furthermore, the article argues for the redistribution of funding to reduce the power of the cultural elite and broaden the range of voices involved in arts policy and practice (Jancovich L., 2017). By adopting a more public-facing approach, arts organizations can better serve the interests of a diverse constituency. Emphasizing the importance of widening participation in decision-making processes, Jancovich advocates for the inclusion of a broader range of voices within the arts sector. This inclusive approach can challenge the dominance of self-interest and lead to meaningful changes in policy and practice. Overall, the article suggests that by implementing these solutions, the arts sector can overcome barriers to participation and increase public engagement in cultural activities. However, it acknowledges the challenges posed by resistance to change within the arts sector and the unequal distribution of power in decision-making processes.

2.2 Taste

A study conducted in the 2010s sheds light on how individual taste can influence auction prices, particularly in the art market in London (Silvia D. et al, 2012). This research delves into the intricate relationship between variations in mood, often influenced by weather conditions, and subjective risk perception, affecting auction prices for art between 1990 and 2007. The study posits that the private value of an

artwork, closely intertwined with personal taste and mood, can be approximated by fluctuations in weather patterns. Interestingly, the findings reveal a trend: on sunnier days, auction prices for art tend to soar. This suggests that mood, heavily influenced by weather, exerts a significant impact on bidding behavior and ultimately shapes prices, particularly in the lower price spectrum.

Moreover, the study identifies a distribution pattern within auction prices (Silvia D. et al, 2012). The lower end of the price distribution is predominantly occupied by artworks with a higher private value component, indicating the pivotal role of mood in influencing prices within this segment. Conversely, prices at the upper end of the distribution are primarily driven by common value characteristics, with the presence of a cartel between auction houses serving as a proxy for this component. The research underscores the importance of recognizing the role of emotions, such as mood influenced by weather, in auction settings and its profound implications for participants in the art market. Leveraging a unique dataset comprising presale estimates for paintings auctioned by leading houses like Sotheby's and Christie's in London, alongside weather data from the British Atmospheric Data Centre, the study unveils the intricate interplay between weather conditions and auction prices for art.

By amalgamating information on art prices with weather data, the study provides valuable insights into how variations in mood, as influenced by weather, impact auction dynamics and pricing mechanisms in London's art market. Ultimately, it highlights the nature of auction behavior and the factors influencing art prices, underscoring the need for a comprehensive understanding of these dynamics by market participants.

It is clear that taste is influenced by many factors and, in turn, influences the art market. But what is taste? The concept of "taste" encompasses a complex set of ideas related to individual preferences, cultural consumption, and aesthetic judgments (Hanquinet, 2018). In the context of sociology and cultural studies, taste goes beyond mere personal likes and dislikes, delving into the social, historical, and cultural dimensions of how individuals engage with and evaluate cultural objects and practices. Taste can be understood as the set of preferences, inclinations, and judgments that individuals use to navigate the cultural landscape. It involves the selection, appreciation, and evaluation of various cultural forms such as art, music, literature, fashion, and cuisine. Importantly, taste is not solely determined by individual choice but is deeply influenced by social, economic, and historical factors.

From a sociological perspective, taste often reflects an individual's social position, cultural capital, and habitus (Hanquinet, 2018). Social position, including factors such as class, education, and occupation, shapes an individual's exposure to different cultural forms and their ability to engage with them. Cultural capital, which encompasses knowledge, skills, and experiences related to culture, also plays a crucial role in shaping taste. Additionally, habitus, a concept introduced by Pierre Bourdieu, refers to the internalized dispositions and preferences that individuals acquire through their social experiences, significantly influencing their taste in cultural matters. Furthermore, taste is not static but evolves over time and in response to changing social and cultural contexts. It is subject to historical shifts, cultural trends, and the influence of various social institutions such as the media, education, and the arts.

In summary, the definition of taste in sociology encompasses the multifaceted ways in which individuals engage with and evaluate cultural objects. It is deeply intertwined with social, historical, and cultural dynamics.

It is also important to explore how taste is developed. Taste emerges from a complex interplay of individual experiences, social influences, cultural exposure, and personal preferences, shaped by a variety of factors that interact dynamically throughout an individual's life (Hanquinet, 2018). Socialization plays a crucial role in shaping taste during the formative years. Through socialization, individuals learn cultural norms, values, and preferences from their families, peers, and communities. This process introduces individuals to different cultural forms and guides their early preferences. Cultural capital, a concept that includes knowledge, skills, and experiences related to culture, significantly influences taste. Individuals with higher

levels of cultural capital tend to have greater exposure to a variety of cultural forms, leading to the development of more refined or diverse tastes (Hanquinet, 2018). Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus also plays a critical role. Habitus refers to the internalized dispositions and preferences acquired through social experiences, shaping how individuals perceive and engage with cultural objects (Bourdieu, 1979b).

Exposure to different cultural forms, such as art, music, literature, and cuisine, is another crucial factor in the development of taste (Hanquinet, 2018). Individuals with access to a wide range of cultural experiences are more likely to develop diverse and nuanced tastes. Media and popular culture further influence taste by exposing individuals to various cultural products and trends, thus shaping mainstream tastes and preferences. Peer influence is also significant. Peers and social networks introduce individuals to new cultural experiences, trends, and preferences, impacting what is considered fashionable, desirable, or culturally valuable. Additionally, personal preferences and individual experiences contribute to the development of taste. These personal factors, including likes, dislikes, and unique experiences, influence how individuals engage with and evaluate cultural objects.

Overall, taste is a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon, shaped by a combination of social, cultural, and individual factors. It is an ongoing process influenced by a wide range of experiences and influences throughout an individual's life.

Taste can, however, be artificially shaped by the creation of taste regimes. These regimes refer to discursively constructed normative systems that guide and regulate the aesthetics of practice within a culture of consumption (Arsel Z., & Bean J., 2013). They play a crucial role in shaping preferences for objects, actions performed with objects, and the meanings associated with objects in a given cultural context. Taste regimes are established through practices such as problematization, ritualization, and instrumentalization. These practices work together to create a coherent framework for understanding and enacting aesthetic order in various domains of consumption. They provide a teleoaffective structure that organizes objects, meanings, and actions, allowing individuals to navigate the complexities of marketplace offerings and make choices that align with the shared values and meanings embedded in the regime. Marketplace institutions, including magazines, websites, and transmedia brands, play a significant role in perpetuating taste regimes by disseminating and reinforcing specific aesthetic norms and values. Whether articulated by a centralized authority or emerging from a network of media with a common aesthetic sensibility, taste regimes serve as guiding mechanisms that influence consumer behavior and shape cultural practices related to consumption.

In essence, taste regimes are complex systems that regulate acts of consumption by providing a structured framework for understanding and enacting aesthetic preferences, behaviors, and meanings within a given cultural context (Arsel Z., & Bean J., 2013).

Furthermore, taste regimes play a significant role in influencing consumer behavior in aesthetically oriented cultures by shaping preferences, actions, and meanings associated with objects (Arsel Z., & Bean J., 2013). These normative systems, constructed discursively, guide individuals in their consumption practices within a particular cultural context. Taste regimes provide a framework for understanding and enacting aesthetic order in various domains of consumption, such as fashion, home decoration, cooking, and travel.

In fashion, for example, taste regimes influence what is considered stylish or trendy. Designers, fashion magazines, and influencers establish norms that consumers follow, thereby shaping their choices and preferences (Arsel Z., & Bean J., 2013). These regimes dictate not only what people wear but also how they perceive themselves and others within the cultural landscape. Similarly, in home decoration, taste regimes determine the trends in interior design, guiding consumers in selecting furniture, colors, and decorative items that reflect a cohesive aesthetic. This influence extends to how spaces are organized and experienced, impacting daily living environments. In the realm of cooking, taste regimes manifest through popular culinary trends and dietary practices. Celebrity chefs, cooking shows, and food blogs contribute to

constructing these regimes, influencing what ingredients are favored, how dishes are prepared, and the overall presentation of meals. This not only affects individual cooking practices but also shapes broader cultural attitudes towards food and dining. Travel is another domain where taste regimes play a pivotal role. Travel magazines, websites, and influencers curate lists of desirable destinations and activities, shaping perceptions of what constitutes an ideal travel experience. These regimes influence travel choices, from the destinations visited to the types of accommodation preferred, and the activities undertaken. They create a framework for what is considered culturally enriching or adventurous, guiding travelers in their quest for meaningful experiences.

Consumers navigate the vast array of marketplace offerings by engaging with taste regimes, which help them make choices that align with the shared meanings and values embedded in these regimes (Arsel Z., & Bean J., 2013). Through continuous engagement with taste regimes, individuals develop a sense of aesthetic order and coherence in their consumption practices. This engagement is not passive; consumers actively interpret and sometimes challenge the norms presented to them, contributing to the dynamic evolution of taste regimes over time.

Likewise, the art market can significantly influence taste in various ways (Arsel Z., & Bean J., 2013):

Exposure to Artworks :The art market introduces buyers, collectors, and the general public to a wide range of artworks, artists, and styles. This exposure to diverse pieces can shape and broaden individuals' artistic preferences and tastes, allowing them to develop an appreciation for different forms and genres of art.

Market Trends; The art market can set trends by promoting certain artists, movements, or styles through exhibitions, auctions, and marketing efforts. These trends influence what is considered fashionable or desirable in the art world, impacting individual tastes and guiding public interest towards particular types of art.

Expert Influence: Experts in the art market, such as curators, critics, and dealers, play a significant role in shaping taste. Their assessments and endorsements of artworks can sway public opinion and guide preferences toward specific artists or genres. The influence of these experts often determines which artworks gain prominence and recognition.

Price and Value Perception: The prices achieved in the art market can influence perceptions of value and quality. High prices for certain artworks may lead to increased interest and appreciation for those pieces, affecting taste and preferences. The financial success of particular artists or styles can elevate their status and desirability in the eyes of collectors and the public.

Cultural Significance: Artworks that gain prominence in the market can become culturally significant, influencing broader societal tastes and preferences. The market's recognition of certain artists or movements can elevate their status, impacting artistic trends and shaping cultural narratives.

Accessibility and Availability: The accessibility and availability of different types of artworks in the art market also influence taste. Exposure to a variety of art forms and styles, made possible by the market's offerings, can shape individuals' preferences and appreciation for different genres. The availability of artworks for sale provides opportunities for engagement with diverse artistic expressions.

Overall, the art market serves as a dynamic platform that not only reflects existing tastes but also has the power to shape and influence artistic preferences. Through exposure, trendsetting, expert influence, value perception, cultural significance, and accessibility, the art market actively participates in the evolution and development of taste.

2.3 Other examples of how public policies shape art

Just as the art market influences taste and, consequently, what is deemed "successful" art, government policy also plays a crucial role in defining art within society. Government policies can range from restrictive measures to supportive initiatives, significantly impacting the arts. One of the primary ways government policy influences the definition of art is through financial support granted to individuals and organizations within the artistic fields (Heikkinen M., 2008). The power to define what is considered art and who qualifies as an artist involves both symbolic and material resources. Inclusion within the realm of defined art grants individuals and organizations access to resources intended for the arts. Therefore, government policies contribute to the creation and maintenance of boundaries within artistic fields.

An example of government policy significantly influencing the perception of art can be seen in the case of comics in Finland (Heikkinen M., 2008). Over the decades, government policies have played a pivotal role in shaping the development and recognition of comics as an artistic field. In the 1950s, comics producers and distributors were often under suspicion for criminal activities, and during the 1960s and 1970s, comics were frequently discussed in terms of censorship and restrictions. These government policies contributed to a negative perception of comics, hindering their recognition as a legitimate form of art. In the early 1980s, there were plans for restrictive taxation measures targeting the production and distribution of comics. Such policies could have severely impacted the economic viability of the comics industry, further preventing its growth and acceptance as an artistic field. However, a significant shift in government policy occurred during the 1980s. By the end of the 1990s, comics had gradually come to be included under the auspices of state support for the arts. This change marked a substantial reorientation of government policy towards supporting comics as an artistic field.

Today, the Finnish field of comics is well on its way to becoming an established art form, with government support playing a crucial role in this development (Heikkinen M., 2008). The evolution of comics in Finland—from being viewed with suspicion and subject to censorship, to being recognized and supported by government policies—demonstrates the profound impact that policy decisions can have on the status and perception of an art form. This case exemplifies how government policy can influence the definition of art in society by shaping public perception and providing necessary support for artistic fields to thrive.

Comics are just one example of how public policies significantly influence the arts in the Nordic countries—Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. The Nordic model of state support for artists provides financial assistance and recognition to artists, and administrative definitions of artists play a crucial role in shaping public arts policy (Heikkinen M., 2005).

The Nordic model of state support for artists has distinct characteristics that set it apart from other regions of the world (Heikkinen M., 2005). In Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, artists' associations and professional artists actively participate in decision-making processes related to state support. This involvement allows artists to directly influence policy outcomes and reforms, ensuring their needs and perspectives are considered in public arts policy. The Nordic model emphasizes peer evaluation of artistic quality as a key criterion for allocating support. This approach ensures that decisions are based on artistic merit, maintaining high standards within the artistic community and ensuring that support is directed to deserving artists. Decision-making bodies are structured according to various categories of art and artists, reflecting the scope and coverage of artist support in each country. By categorizing support, the Nordic model ensures that different art forms and artists receive appropriate attention and resources. Artists also play a significant role in shaping public policy towards the arts in the Nordic countries. Their input and expertise are sought by committees and working groups planning arts policy reforms, highlighting the importance of artist involvement in policy formulation and implementation. The interaction between administrative definitions of artists and public arts policy can influence the definitions of art and artists within artistic fields. This dynamic raises questions about the relationship between state arts policy and

artistic production, suggesting that state support can shape not only the financial conditions for artists but also broader cultural and artistic trends.

The Nordic model has several distinct characteristics that differentiate it from other regions (Heikkinen M., 2005):

Strong Professional Organizations: Artists in the Nordic countries have strong professional organizations that act as pressure groups, negotiation partners, and expert advisers to the state. This level of organization and influence may not be as prevalent in other regions.

Direct Impact of State Support: State support in the Nordic countries has a direct impact on individual artists, providing financial prerequisites for artistic activity and significantly influencing the situation of artists.

Focus on Artistic Merit: The emphasis on peer evaluation and artistic quality highlights a focus on artistic merit that may differ from support systems in other regions. This criterion ensures that support is granted based on the intrinsic value of the art.

Close Interaction with Artistic Fields: The Nordic model is characterized by close interaction between the state and artistic fields in decision-making processes. Artists play a significant role in policy formulation and implementation, ensuring that their voices are heard and their needs are met.

Arts Policy Definitions: The administrative definitions of art and artists in the Nordic countries are shaped by the interaction between the state and artistic fields. This leads to unique "arts policy definitions" that reflect the specific context of state support for artists in these countries.

In summary, the Nordic model of state support for artists is distinguished by its inclusive decision-making processes, emphasis on artistic quality, structured resource allocation, and significant artist involvement. These characteristics ensure that the arts receive robust support and that the definition of art is continually shaped by both policy and practice.

2.4 Risks of private intervention

When considering a private system in managing the arts, it is crucial to take into account its potential risks. One prominent example is the controversy surrounding museums that rely on private funding and the subsequent scandals that can arise from their funders. The Sackler family case illustrates these risks well.

The Sackler family, known for their involvement in the pharmaceutical industry and philanthropy, owns Purdue Pharma, the company behind OxyContin, a prescription opioid linked to the opioid crisis in the United States (Dyer O., 2019). The family's role in the marketing and distribution of OxyContin has led to widespread addiction, overdose, and death, attracting significant criticism. Despite their philanthropic contributions to various institutions, including museums, universities, and hospitals, the Sackler family's involvement in the opioid crisis has prompted many institutions to reassess their relationships with the family. The Sacklers have three branches, descended from brothers Arthur, Mortimer, and Raymond Sackler, all of whom were New York psychiatrists. Mortimer Sackler's descendants, primarily based in Britain, have been particularly active in philanthropy and the arts, while Raymond Sackler's descendants are less engaged in the art world but involved in conservative causes in the United States.

The scandal involving the Sackler family centers on their control of Purdue Pharma, which faced public scrutiny and litigation for misleading marketing practices that contributed to the opioid crisis (Dyer O., 2019). In 2007, Purdue Pharma and three executives pleaded guilty to criminal misbranding charges related to OxyContin's marketing and paid \$634 million in fines. The Sackler family members, major stakeholders in Purdue Pharma, have been accused of making decisions that led to OxyContin's widespread abuse, resulting

in numerous lawsuits from various entities, including over 600 US cities, counties, and Native American tribes. As a result of the controversy, many institutions have distanced themselves from Sackler donations and partnerships. The Sackler Trust announced the suspension of new donations in the UK following decisions by the National Portrait Gallery and the Tate Gallery to decline Sackler grants. Similarly, the Guggenheim Museum in New York and Columbia University have stopped accepting future Sackler contributions. Tufts University initiated an independent investigation into Sackler donations, and Oklahoma reached a settlement in which the Sacklers agreed to pay \$75 million of the \$270 million settlement.

Furthermore, in response to the Sackler family's involvement in the opioid crisis, particularly their role in profiting from the sale of opioids, museums have taken various decisive actions (Alesandrini E., 2020). Activists, such as artist Nan Goldin, have staged protests at prominent institutions like the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Guggenheim Museum. These demonstrations have called for the removal of Sackler funding and raised awareness about the family's ties to the opioid crisis. Several major museums have publicly renounced Sackler funding. In 2019, the National Portrait Gallery and Tate Modern in London, as well as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York City, announced they would no longer accept donations from the Sackler family. These decisions reflect a significant shift in the art world's stance on ethical funding. Additionally, some museums have initiated programs to support communities affected by substance use disorders. For example, the Currier Museum of Art in New Hampshire launched The Art of Hope, a community support program providing resources for those impacted by addiction. This initiative also facilitates discussions about addiction and recovery through art, highlighting the museum's commitment to addressing the broader social issues linked to the opioid crisis.

This underscores the critical need for caution when relying on private funding. Institutions must be aware of the potential risks, such as the possibility of losing that funding due to controversies or ethical concerns associated with the donors. The case of the Sackler family is a stark reminder of these risks. Their significant contributions to museums and other cultural institutions became highly problematic once their role in the opioid crisis came to light. This controversy not only deteriorated the reputations of the institutions that received Sackler funds but also forced many of them to sever ties and publicly renounce further donations.

Moreover, the loss of such funding can lead to financial instability for these institutions, which may have become dependent on substantial private donations for their operations, exhibitions, and programs. The abrupt need to seek alternative sources of funding can disrupt planned activities and affect long-term projects. Therefore, when relying on private funding, institutions must conduct thorough due diligence on potential donors, assess the long-term sustainability of accepting such funds, and consider the ethical implications. Building a diversified funding portfolio, which includes public grants, individual donations, and corporate sponsorships, can also mitigate the risks associated with the sudden withdrawal of support from any single source.

2.4.1 AI

Another challenge that arises when artists heavily rely on commissions, particularly in a competitive art market, is the potential threat posed by AI (Artificial Intelligence). In an effort to attract more commissions and thereby increase their earnings, artists may feel compelled to compete with AI-generated art.

While AI technologies have made significant strides in various creative domains, including generating art, music, and literature, it's crucial to recognize that AI cannot fully replace the work of human artists (Anantrasirichai N. & Bull D., 2020). Although AI can assist artists by generating ideas, enhancing productivity, and exploring new creative possibilities, it lacks the emotional depth, intuition, and unique perspective that human artists bring to their creations. AI-generated art often lacks the authenticity, originality, and personal expression inherent in human-made art. Human creativity is deeply rooted in

emotions, experiences, and cultural influences, elements that are challenging for AI to authentically replicate. Additionally, the subjective nature of art and the ability to convey complex emotions and messages through creative works are aspects where AI struggles to emulate human capabilities.

While AI can be a valuable tool for artists to experiment with new techniques and styles, the essential role of human artists in the creative process cannot be overlooked. Human creativity encompasses intuition, empathy, critical thinking, and the ability to establish meaningful connections with audiences—qualities that AI currently cannot fully replicate (Anantrasirichai N. & Bull D., 2020). Therefore, while AI may augment and enhance the work of artists, it's unlikely to entirely replace them in the creative process. The symbiotic relationship between human creativity and AI technologies is expected to evolve further, with artists utilizing AI as a tool to inspire, innovate, and collaborate in novel ways.

However, when artists heavily rely on commissions and compromise their authentic artistic traits to compete with AI-generated art, they risk losing their unique advantage. The distinction between an artist and an individual commissioning an AI generator becomes blurred, undermining the authenticity and value of the artist's work. This challenge must be carefully considered as artists navigate the intersection of AI technology and their creative practice.

2.5 Change towards private intervention in Italy

Unlike France, the UK and Nordic countries, Italy has experienced a notable increase in the privatization of its cultural heritage (Benedikter R., 2004). This trend is driven by various arguments and factors, creating a complex and multifaceted landscape. Italy's rich artistic heritage, encompassing numerous historic monuments and cultural sites, is both a national asset and a financial burden. The preservation and maintenance of these treasures require significant resources, which the state often lacks. Without adequate funding, many of these monuments risk falling into disrepair.

The debate on the privatization of Italian cultural heritage is both national and international. Proponents argue that partial privatization can help alleviate public debt and achieve annual savings, transforming the management of Italian artistic heritage into a profitable enterprise (Ponzini D., 2010). They believe that effective private management can make cultural assets financially viable. However, this push for privatization has raised concerns about the commercialization of culture. Critics fear that prioritizing profit over cultural and social considerations could lead to the 'Disneyfication' of European culture and the expropriation of public history and heritage (Benedikter R., 2004). The term "Disneyfication" refers to the process by which cultural or historical sites, events, or experiences are transformed or adapted to resemble the sanitized, commercialized, and often idealized versions commonly associated with Disney theme parks and entertainment. This term is often used to critique the commodification and simplification of culture for mass consumption, emphasizing spectacle and entertainment value over historical accuracy or cultural authenticity. In the context of European culture, "Disneyfication" can refer to concerns about the commercialization and homogenization of historical sites and cultural experiences to cater to tourist demands and maximize profits. Critics of Disneyfication argue that it can lead to the loss of cultural diversity, the distortion of historical narratives, and the prioritization of entertainment over education or preservation of authentic heritage. The term is often used in discussions about the impact of tourism, globalization, and commercial interests on cultural heritage sites and traditions, highlighting the tension between commercial viability and the preservation of cultural identity and historical significance.

Critics also argue that Italy, which already spends relatively little on preserving its cultural heritage compared to other European countries, should explore new sponsoring initiatives and strengthen state-run management to safeguard cultural integrity and social value (Benedikter R., 2004).

Several factors drive the privatization of cultural heritage and the arts in Italy. Financial and institutional justifications are at the forefront, with privatization seen as a way to reduce pressure on public budgets,

maximize efficiency, lower production costs, improve public service delivery, reduce political influence on economic activities, and promote the diffusion of property and entrepreneurial rights (Ponzini D., 2010). The Italian government is increasingly involving private and non-profit sectors in cultural policies due to the broad conception of cultural heritage in Italy. This approach raises questions about public expenditure allocation and pushes the public sector to engage private actors wherever possible. The integration of private management with specific projects involving cultural assets, coupled with a focus on local policymaking, provides solid economic and institutional reasons for privatization, fostering urban regeneration and economic development. From a territorialization perspective, the private sector is seen as complementing rather than replacing the state, leading to localized actions that influence the definition and effects of privatization. This perspective aligns with local policies aimed at urban regeneration and revitalization.

In summary, the privatization of cultural heritage in Italy is driven by financial constraints, economic and institutional justifications, and a strategic integration of private actors. While privatization offers potential benefits, it also raises significant concerns about the commercialization of culture and the preservation of Italy's rich artistic legacy.

Privatization may enhance the accessibility of cultural heritage sites in Italy by involving private actors in their management and promotion (Ponzini D., 2010). The integration of private entities in cultural policies could potentially improve the visitor experience, making these sites more accessible to the public. However, this approach raises concerns about the commercialization of cultural heritage and its impact on public access if private entities prioritize profit over public interest. The involvement of private actors in the preservation of cultural heritage sites can bring additional resources and expertise for conservation and management. Privatization may lead to innovative approaches to preservation, as private entities could introduce new technologies and strategies to maintain and protect cultural heritage assets. Nonetheless, there are risks of neglect or inappropriate management practices if profit motives overshadow preservation goals.

Overall, the impact of privatization on the accessibility and preservation of cultural heritage sites in Italy is likely to be mixed, with both positive and negative consequences (Ponzini D., 2010). Policymakers and stakeholders must carefully consider these implications to ensure that the privatization of cultural heritage sites aligns with the goals of accessibility, preservation, and sustainable management. This balanced approach is essential to safeguarding Italy's rich cultural heritage while enhancing public access and engagement.

Furthermore, privatizing cultural heritage sites can have several potential consequences for conservation and public engagement (Benedikter R., 2004). One major concern is the risk of commercialization, where profit motives may prioritize revenue generation over the conservation and educational value of these sites. This could result in heritage sites being treated as commodities rather than valuable historical and cultural assets. Privatization can also impact the conservation of heritage sites. Private owners may prioritize cost-cutting measures or commercial activities that could compromise the integrity and authenticity of the sites. This focus on profitability could lead to neglect or inappropriate management practices, undermining preservation efforts.

Another significant consequence is the potential loss of public engagement and community involvement in the preservation and promotion of these sites (Benedikter R., 2004). Public ownership often fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens, encouraging their active participation in maintaining and promoting cultural heritage. Privatization might diminish this sense of communal involvement and stewardship. Additionally, privatization could aggravate inequalities in access to cultural heritage. Those who can afford to pay for access may enjoy exclusive privileges, while marginalized groups might face

further exclusion. This inequality can undermine the principle of cultural heritage as a shared resource accessible to all.

Lastly, privatization may impact the collective cultural identity of a nation or community (Benedikter R., 2004). When heritage sites are viewed as private assets rather than shared heritage, the collective sense of cultural identity and continuity may be weakened.

These potential consequences highlight the importance of carefully considering the implications of privatization on access, conservation, and public engagement. Ensuring the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage for future generations requires a balanced approach that protects the integrity of these sites while fostering inclusive public involvement.

To conclude this discourse, several potential solutions or alternatives can be considered to address the challenges posed by the privatization of cultural heritage sites.

One approach is Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), where the public and private sectors collaborate in the management, preservation, and promotion of cultural heritage sites (Ponzini D., 2010). This model allows for shared responsibilities and resources while maintaining public oversight, ensuring that cultural and historical values are upheld alongside commercial interests. Another solution involves greater community involvement. Engaging local communities and stakeholders in decision-making processes related to cultural heritage management ensures that the interests and values of the community are preserved. Community-based approaches can enhance the sustainability and inclusivity of heritage preservation efforts by fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens.

Increasing the involvement of the non-profit sector in cultural heritage preservation and management is also a viable alternative to full privatization. Non-profit organizations often have a mission-driven focus on cultural heritage conservation and public access, which can align more closely with the goals of heritage preservation than profit-oriented models (Ponzini D., 2010). Strengthening government funding and support for cultural heritage preservation is another critical solution. Adequate public investment in heritage sites can reduce the reliance on privatization as a revenue-generating measure, ensuring their long-term sustainability and accessibility. Additionally, implementing robust regulatory frameworks and guidelines for the management of cultural heritage sites can help safeguard their preservation and accessibility, regardless of ownership or management structure. Clear regulations can ensure that heritage sites are protected and managed responsibly, balancing the interests of various stakeholders.

While privatization may offer benefits in terms of efficiency and innovation, exploring these alternative approaches can help balance the need for sustainable management and preservation of cultural heritage sites. By involving multiple stakeholders and maintaining a focus on public interest, these solutions can contribute to the effective conservation and inclusive access to cultural heritage.

It is important to specify that while we are primarily discussing the privatization of cultural heritage, these considerations also apply to contemporary art in Italy. Given the country's broader trend towards privatizing cultural assets, the same principles and approaches must be considered for contemporary art. The financial constraints and potential benefits of privatization discussed in relation to cultural heritage are equally relevant to contemporary art. Therefore, the strategies and solutions proposed for heritage sites should also be applied to the management and promotion of contemporary art, ensuring that both historic and modern cultural assets are preserved and accessible in a balanced and sustainable manner.

2.6 Policies in the Netherlands

Contrary to Italy, in the Netherlands, cultural policies for the arts are diverse and multifaceted, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage and commitment to supporting artistic expression (Otte H., 2019). The Dutch government provides substantial funding for the arts through various national, regional, and local

cultural funds. This financial support sustains cultural institutions, artists, and events across the country. Policies aim to promote cultural participation among the general public by making cultural activities and events accessible and inclusive. Initiatives such as cultural education programs, community arts projects, and subsidies for cultural events increase public engagement with the arts.

The Netherlands values cultural diversity and strives to support artists from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. Policies promoting cultural diversity in the arts ensure representation and recognition for artists from minority communities. The preservation and promotion of cultural heritage are integral to Dutch cultural policies (Otte H., 2019). Efforts to safeguard historical sites, monuments, traditions, and artifacts play a crucial role in maintaining the country's cultural identity. Furthermore, the Netherlands actively participates in cultural exchange programs and collaborations with international partners to promote cultural diplomacy, artistic exchange, and cross-cultural understanding. Policies often focus on fostering innovation and creativity in the arts. Support for experimental art forms, interdisciplinary collaborations, and emerging artists contributes to a vibrant and dynamic cultural landscape. Cultural policies in the Netherlands emphasize sustainability and accessibility in the arts sector. Initiatives promoting environmentally friendly practices, cultural sustainability, and barrier-free access to cultural venues aim to create a more inclusive and environmentally conscious cultural sector.

An example of cultural policy in the Netherlands is the Mondriaan Fund which is a prominent Dutch public fund dedicated to supporting visual arts and cultural heritage in the Netherlands (Otte H., 2019). Established in 2012 and named after the renowned Dutch artist Piet Mondrian, known for his abstract geometric paintings, the fund aims to foster the development, production, and presentation of contemporary visual arts while preserving the country's cultural heritage.

The Mondriaan Fund provides financial assistance, grants, and subsidies to artists, curators, museums, galleries, and other cultural institutions involved in the visual arts sector. Its key objectives and activities include (Otte H., 2019):

- Providing Grants and Subsidies: The fund offers financial support to individual artists and art organizations for various projects, exhibitions, research, and residencies.
- Promoting Internationalization: It supports the internationalization of Dutch visual arts by facilitating participation in art fairs, exhibitions, and exchange programs, thus promoting Dutch art on a global stage.
- Encouraging Diversity and Innovation: The fund finances initiatives that promote diversity, inclusivity, and innovation within the visual arts sector, ensuring a dynamic and representative art scene.
- Supporting Art Education and Public Engagement: It invests in art education, public programs, and audience engagement activities, fostering a deeper connection between the public and the arts.
- Preserving Cultural Heritage: The fund is committed to preserving and promoting Dutch cultural heritage through conservation projects, research, and documentation.

Through these comprehensive efforts, the Mondriaan Fund significantly contributes to the visual arts landscape in the Netherlands. By providing crucial financial resources and opportunities, it enables artists and cultural institutions to thrive and enrich the cultural fabric of the country.

Another notable example of the Netherlands' commitment to the visual arts is the Royal Prize for Free Painting, a prestigious award recognizing exceptional achievements in this field (Otte H., 2019). Established in 1871 by King William III, the Royal Prize is awarded biennially to Dutch artists who demonstrate exceptional talent, creativity, and innovation in their artistic practice. Considered one of the most prestigious awards for visual artists in the Netherlands, the Royal Prize for Free Painting honors excellence in the arts through a long-standing tradition. Recipients of this esteemed prize receive recognition, financial

support, and the opportunity to showcase their work to a broader audience. The award is typically presented by a member of the Dutch royal family or a representative of the Dutch government during a special ceremony celebrating the artistic achievements of the recipients. This recognition not only acknowledges the talent and dedication of Dutch artists but also promotes and enhances the appreciation of visual arts throughout the country.

Alongside the public funding and policies provided by the Netherlands, numerous private entities, organizations, foundations, and individuals actively support contemporary artists in their careers (Otte H., 2019). Through various initiatives, grants, residencies, mentorship programs, and exhibitions, these private entities contribute significantly to the art world. They offer financial assistance, professional development opportunities, and exposure for artists, enabling them to thrive in their artistic endeavors.

In Rotterdam, Studio Seine stands as an exemplary private gallery dedicated to nurturing emerging artists (Klerkx M., 2023). Founded by Linda Seine, the gallery reflects the city's hands-on mentality, a touch of assertiveness, and profound enthusiasm. With a strong social commitment to both artists and visitors, Linda curates an original and contemporary art program, striving to achieve the highest possible standards for her artists, both within and beyond Rotterdam. The gallery's journey began in the spring of 2010 when Linda and her partner stumbled upon a renovation project offered by the Rotterdam municipality. Recognizing its potential, they envisioned combining an independent exhibition space with a coffee roastery, where they could also reside.

Their journey, however, was fraught with delays and unforeseen challenges during the renovation process, leading to a prolonged timeline for completion (Klerkx M., 2023). Despite the setbacks, they finally inaugurated the gallery in October 2016, marking the beginning of a series of diverse exhibitions in collaboration with numerous artists and guest curators. Over time, the gallery expanded its scope, representing artists in their careers alongside its role as a curator. Linda's goal is to offer a welcoming and accessible platform for anyone curious about contemporary art, showcasing a diverse range of works from both emerging and established artists. With a personal touch and a keen eye for talent, Linda selects artists based on their potential for development and the quality and impact of their work. Through Studio Seine, she aims to provide a supportive environment for artists to explore and exhibit their creations, free from the constraints of conventional gallery norms.

The intricate tapestry of the Dutch contemporary art ecosystem is intertwined by a myriad of private entities, initiatives, public policies, and funds, each playing a pivotal role in nurturing artistic talent and fostering creativity. Through a collaborative effort, these multifaceted components collaborate to provide artists with indispensable support, abundant resources, and boundless opportunities to realize their artistic visions, elevate their craft, and broaden their horizons.

At the core of this ecosystem lie government agencies and cultural institutions, responsible for administering grants, subsidies, and fellowships that underpin the framework for artistic development and cultural enrichment. Through these public policies and funds, artists are empowered with the means to pursue their practice, experiment with new techniques, and engage with diverse communities. By investing in arts education, infrastructure, and outreach programs, public entities democratize access to cultural expression, ensuring that art remains inclusive and accessible to all.

Complementing the efforts of government agencies and cultural institutions are private entities, ranging from galleries and art institutions to philanthropic organizations and corporate sponsors. These entities serve as pillars of support, offering artists access to exhibition spaces, promotional platforms, and financial backing essential for the cultivation and dissemination of their work. Through strategic partnerships and innovative initiatives, private entities facilitate the exploration of new artistic frontiers while amplifying the voices of emerging and established creators alike.

Moreover, collaborative endeavors between public and private sectors further enrich the Dutch art landscape, fostering synergies that drive innovation and sustainability. Joint initiatives, such as artist residencies, cultural exchanges, and collaborative projects, bridge the gap between artistic vision and audience engagement, fostering dialogue and understanding across borders and disciplines. By leveraging the collective expertise and resources of both sectors, these efforts amplify the impact of artistic endeavors, catalyzing social change and fostering cultural dialogue on a global scale.

In essence, the Dutch contemporary art ecosystem thrives on the dynamic interplay between private entities, public policies, and collaborative initiatives. Together, they form a vibrant tapestry of creativity, resilience, and inclusivity, empowering artists to transcend boundaries, challenge conventions, and inspire audiences worldwide. As stewards of cultural heritage and champions of artistic expression, these collective efforts exemplify the enduring legacy of Dutch artistry and the enduring power of creativity to transform and uplift society.

2.7 Example of successful artist in the art market

Before advancing in the thesis, it is crucial to illuminate the trajectories of several established artists who have achieved success in the art market. Examining how they navigated their journeys and managed their acclaim will reveal the diverse ways in which artists can interact with the art market. The following examples showcase distinctly different experiences, highlighting the varied paths to success.

Anselm Kiefer is a renowned German artist celebrated for his profound and thought-provoking works that delve into themes of history, identity, mythology, and the human condition (Huysen A., 1992). His art is distinguished by its monumental scale, the use of diverse materials such as lead, straw, and ash, and the incorporation of rich symbolism drawn from German history and culture. Kiefer's innovative and provocative artworks have profoundly influenced the contemporary art world, establishing him as one of the most significant artists to emerge from post-World War II Germany.

Kiefer's rise to fame and recognition is attributed to his ability to challenge traditional artistic conventions and tackle complex themes of history, memory, and identity (Huysen A., 1992). His use of unconventional materials, large-scale installations, and the integration of German history and mythology in his art captured the attention of critics and audiences alike. His work has garnered critical acclaim, international exhibitions, and the support of influential collectors and institutions, cementing his reputation as a leading German artist. The depth and complexity of his art, along with its engagement with historical and cultural narratives, have resonated deeply with audiences. A key factor in Kiefer's success is his ability to transcend the boundaries between painting, sculpture, and installation art, creating a unique artistic language that resonates globally. His works command high prices and attract significant interest from collectors, galleries, and museums worldwide. The scarcity of his large-scale pieces, coupled with their intricate symbolism and historical significance, makes them highly desirable among collectors seeking investment-grade art. This demand is reflected in successful sales at major auction houses and prestigious art fairs.

Kiefer's presence in prominent art collections and institutions further enhances his market value and solidifies his status as a pivotal figure in contemporary art (Huysen A., 1992). His relevance, innovation, and critical acclaim have established him as a sought-after artist, allowing him the freedom to explore challenging and controversial themes without the need to create specific works for financial gain. Kiefer is known for his artistic freedom and his willingness to push the boundaries of traditional artistic practices. He experiments with a wide range of materials, scales, and subject matter, reflecting his deep engagement with history and his desire to provoke thought and reflection. His use of unconventional materials like lead, straw, and ashes showcases his innovative approach and his commitment to pushing the limits of artistic expression. Furthermore, Kiefer's large-scale installations and immersive environments provide powerful and evocative experiences for audiences. His ability to confront difficult and uncomfortable subjects

demonstrates his commitment to artistic freedom, allowing him to express complex ideas and emotions without constraint. This freedom enables him to create bold, thought-provoking, and deeply resonant works, reinforcing his position as a leading figure in contemporary art known for his uncompromising vision and creative exploration.

In summary, Anselm Kiefer's success and critical acclaim have granted him the liberty to experiment constantly, producing works that challenge perceptions and engage viewers on profound levels. His artistic freedom and relentless innovation ensure his enduring impact and significance in the art world.

Jeff Koons is a renowned American artist celebrated for his provocative and controversial works that blur the lines between high art and popular culture (Issa N. & Tendra P., 2022). Known for his large-scale sculptures and installations, Koons challenges traditional notions of art and consumerism. His most iconic series, Celebration, features brightly colored, playful sculptures like the famous Balloon Dog, exploring themes of consumerism, mass culture, and the boundaries between art and commerce. Koons rose to fame through his innovative and controversial approach to art, which captured the attention of both the art world and the public. By blending elements of popular culture with high art, Koons set himself apart from other contemporary artists. His Celebration series, with its vibrant and whimsical pieces, played a crucial role in his rise to prominence. The visual impact and thought-provoking nature of his work sparked debate and controversy, further increasing his visibility and appeal.

Strategic collaborations with influential art dealers and collectors, along with Koons's keen marketing acumen, solidified his reputation as a leading figure in contemporary art (Issa N. & Tendra P., 2022). Solo exhibitions at prestigious venues, such as the Château de Versailles in 2008, expanded his audience and confirmed his status as a prominent artist. Koons's relationship with the art market is both significant and complex. His works are highly sought after by collectors and institutions, leading to substantial financial success and critical acclaim. His ability to create visually striking and provocative pieces that appeal to a broad audience has made him a coveted artist in the art market. Sculptures from his Celebration series, like Balloon Dog, have fetched millions of dollars at auctions, reflecting their high demand among collectors. Koons's association with prominent art dealers and galleries, such as Larry Gagosian, has elevated his market status and increased the value of his artworks. Exhibitions at prestigious institutions have further cemented his position in the contemporary art world. His innovative approach, strategic collaborations, and the ability to create resonant works have all contributed to his commercial success.

Koons's work can be considered commercial due to several factors (Issa N. & Tendra P., 2022). He has strategically marketed his art, creating pieces that appeal to a wide audience, including collectors and enthusiasts. The popularity and financial success of his sculptures, particularly those from the Celebration series, underscore their commercial appeal. Collaborations with influential art dealers and galleries have enhanced the commercial value of his artworks. Additionally, Koons's focus on creating visually striking and provocative pieces that resonate broadly reflects the commercial aspect of his practice. His ability to generate interest and demand through marketing strategies and high-profile exhibitions highlights the commercial nature of his art.

While Koons's work is undeniably commercial, it also challenges traditional notions of artistic value and authenticity, raising questions about the intersection of art and commerce in the contemporary art world. His success reflects the complex dynamics of cultural value and marketability, positioning him as a pivotal figure in the ongoing dialogue about the role of art in society.

Mike Kelley was a renowned American artist celebrated for his diverse and provocative body of work, which encompassed performance art, sculpture, installation, painting, music, and video (Anderson M. & Haley R., 2013). Kelley's art often explored themes of memory, trauma, childhood, popular culture, and the complexities of the human psyche. As a key figure in the contemporary art world, he was recognized for his boundary-pushing creations that challenged societal norms and conventions. Kelley's lasting impact on the

art world continues to be studied and celebrated for its innovation and daring exploration of difficult themes.

Kelley gained fame and recognition through his ability to push traditional artistic boundaries and delve into complex subjects. Several factors contributed to his rise to prominence video (Anderson M. & Haley R., 2013):

Diverse Body of Work: Kelley's multidisciplinary approach showcased his versatility and creativity. By working across various mediums—including performance art, sculpture, installation, painting, music, and video—he was able to explore a wide range of themes, demonstrating his artistic breadth and ingenuity.

Exploration of Taboo Subjects: Kelley was unafraid to tackle taboo subjects such as childhood trauma, repressed memories, and popular culture. His willingness to address these challenging topics captured the attention of critics and audiences, sparking important discussions about the role of art in confronting uncomfortable truths.

Innovative Techniques: Kelley's use of unconventional materials and techniques, combined with his unique artistic vision, set him apart from his contemporaries. His innovative approach garnered him a reputation as a trailblazer in the art world.

Critical Acclaim: Throughout his career, Kelley received widespread critical acclaim. His work was exhibited in prestigious galleries and museums worldwide, and he earned numerous awards, grants, and accolades, solidifying his contributions to contemporary art.

Influence on the Artistic Community: Beyond his own artwork, Kelley significantly impacted the artistic community through teaching, writing, and collaborations. His influence extended beyond his creations, helping shape the practices and perspectives of other artists.

Kelley's relationship with the art market was complex and multifaceted. While he achieved significant commercial success, he maintained his artistic integrity and critical perspective video (Anderson M. & Haley R., 2013). His works were highly sought after by collectors, leading to substantial financial success and higher market values for his pieces. Representation by prestigious galleries played a crucial role in promoting and selling his work, providing him with a platform to reach a wider audience and connect with buyers. Despite his commercial success, Kelley remained critical of the art market and its influence on artistic production. He often explored themes related to consumer culture, commodification, and the commercialization of art, reflecting on the complexities of the art market within his work. This critical engagement underscored the tension between his financial success and his skepticism of the market's impact on artistic expression.

In summary, Mike Kelley's artistic talent, bold exploration of challenging themes, and innovative approach solidified his place as a celebrated and influential artist. His relationship with the art market was characterized by a balance between achieving recognition and maintaining a critical stance towards the commodification of art. Kelley's legacy endures as an exemplar of how artists can navigate the commercial aspects of the art world while staying true to their creative vision and critical inquiry.

3. Methods

This qualitative research commenced with a review of the theoretical framework, delving into previous studies that are pertinent to the themes explored in this thesis. The literature review comprehended a wide range of research on private and public policies within the art sector. This included an examination of policy

impacts on artists' autonomy, funding mechanisms, and the broader economic and cultural implications of these policies.

Additionally, the literature review incorporated case studies and real-world examples to provide an understanding of the current landscape. These case studies were drawn from diverse geographic and cultural contexts, offering insights into how different countries approach the intersection of public and private support for the arts. By examining successful models and identifying common challenges, the review aimed to highlight best practices and potential pitfalls relevant to the Italian context.

The review also paid close attention to historical developments in art policies, tracing the evolution of support systems for artists especially in the last 20 years. This historical perspective helped contextualize current debates and policy decisions within a broader temporal framework, revealing trends and shifts in the art world.

By building a solid theoretical foundation, this literature review set the stage for the empirical research that followed. It identified gaps in existing knowledge, informed the development of research questions, and provided a critical lens through which to analyze the data collected from interviews. This foundational work was crucial for framing the subsequent empirical research, ensuring that it was grounded in a thorough understanding of the existing academic discourse and practical realities of the art sector.

Following the theoretical groundwork, interviews were conducted to gather firsthand insights and experiences from contemporary artists. The subjects of these interviews were chosen to represent a wide range of experiences, encompassing different age groups among both Italian and Dutch artists. This diversity ensured a variety of perspectives, particularly in terms of career stages and market exposure.

In terms of artistic style, the interviewees were primarily figurative artists focusing on painting and/or drawing. However, to provide a broader perspective, one performance artist was also included. The inclusion of this artist aimed to understand the unique challenges and opportunities faced by performance artists in a market predominantly oriented towards more tangible, traditional forms of visual art. Performance art, with its ephemeral and experiential nature, provides a contrasting viewpoint on issues such as marketability, audience interaction, and the valuation of art.

Additionally, an expert from the art sector based in the United States was interviewed to provide an external viewpoint on the issues analyzed in this thesis. His expertise and objectivity, stemming from his position outside the two countries under examination, made him an invaluable addition to the research. This external perspective allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the art market dynamics and offered extra insights that enriched the analysis. Furthermore, his non-artist status enabled him to offer more objective and analytical opinions on the art world. Without the personal biases that might come from being an artist, he could provide a clear and impartial assessment of the challenges and opportunities faced by contemporary artists. His insights helped contextualize the experiences of the Italian and Dutch artists within a broader, international framework, enhancing the overall depth and scope of the thesis.

The interview guide for the artists was carefully crafted to ensure flexibility, allowing the artists to speak freely while still addressing key aspects of interest. Each artist was asked about their works and their objectives when creating art, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of their personal experiences and motivations. Additionally, they were questioned about their relationship with the commercial aspects of selling art and their interactions with art critics. The final part of the interviews focused on discussing the role of state involvement in the lives of contemporary artists, providing insights into how governmental policies and support impact their careers and creative processes.

The interviews conducted for this research were meticulously analyzed through a rigorous process of coding. This process began with a detailed examination of each transcript, during which specific segments of text were identified and labeled with codes that represented key concepts, ideas, or themes. These codes

were derived both from the research questions and the recurring patterns that emerged during the interviews.

Once the initial coding was completed, the next step involved organizing these codes into broader thematic categories. This thematic analysis enabled the identification of overarching themes that connected various interviews. By grouping related codes together, it became possible to discern commonalities and differences in the experiences and perspectives of the interviewees. This approach facilitated a deeper understanding of the key issues and trends affecting contemporary artists within the Italian art market.

During this phase, particular attention was given to the context and nuance of each participant's responses. This included examining the language used, the emphasis placed on certain points, and the underlying sentiments expressed. By considering these aspects, the analysis aimed to capture the complexity and richness of the interview data.

Moreover, a critical aspect of the analysis involved identifying any inconsistencies or contradictions within the interviews themselves. This entailed assessing whether artists exhibited any incoherence in their responses, such as conflicting statements or shifts in opinion. By scrutinizing these inconsistencies, the research sought to understand the possible reasons behind them, which could include changes in personal circumstances, evolving views over time, or the influence of external factors such as market pressures or public funding policies.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the coding process, multiple rounds of review were conducted. This iterative process involved revisiting the transcripts and refining the codes and themes to better reflect the data.

The thematic categories that emerged from the coding process were then used to structure the presentation and analysis of the interview data. This allowed for a coherent and systematic exploration of the key issues, highlighting the diverse experiences and insights of the artists interviewed. The analysis also considered the differences between Italian and Dutch artists, as well as the perspectives of the non-artist expert from the United States, providing a comprehensive view of the influences and challenges faced by contemporary artists in different contexts.

Ultimately, this meticulous and thorough approach to data analysis ensured that the findings of this research were robust and well-founded, providing valuable insights into the relationship between the private art market and contemporary artists in Italy, and offering potential solutions to the challenges identified.

This methodological approach, combining a robust theoretical foundation with detailed qualitative analysis, aimed to provide an understanding of the relationship between the private art market and contemporary artists, with a focus on the Italian landscape.

4. Analysis

A total of 14 artists were interviewed for this thesis, with 10 residing in Italy and 4 in the Netherlands. For the sake of thorough analysis, these two groups will be examined separately.

The Italian group consisted of 5 male and 5 female artists, spanning various age groups. Among the male artists, one was in his 40s, two were in their 50s, and two were over 60. The female artists included three in their 20s, one in her 40s, and one in her 50s. Only two of the Italian artists, the man in his 40s and the woman in her 50s, relied on art as their primary source of income. The others had supplementary occupations: the younger artists were students, and the older ones were teachers.

The Dutch group, though smaller, was also diverse. It comprised one male artist over 60 years old and three female artists. Among the women, one was in her 20s and had just completed her studies, one was in her 50s, and the last was over 60 years old. Of these, only the two older women stated that they were full-time artists, though the woman over 60 mentioned having several side jobs to cover her rent. The remaining artists included a teacher (the male artist) and a recently graduated student between jobs.

This diversity in age, gender, and career stage across both groups provides a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences, enriching the analysis of how contemporary artists interact with the art market and state support.

Similarities were observed within the groups based on sex and age. Therefore, the analysis will proceed using these divisions to better understand the experiences and perspectives of the artists.

This categorization allows for a focused examination of the commonalities and differences in how male and female artists across various age groups navigate their careers, engage with the art market, and interact with state support systems. By analyzing these divisions, the study aims to provide an understanding of the factors influencing the professional lives of contemporary artists in Italy and the Netherlands.

4.1 Italian male artists over 60

The two Italian artists over 60 years old exhibited notable differences in their responses, providing a rich tapestry of perspectives on the contemporary art world. Firstly, the first artist was more succinct and direct, with his interview lasting just over 20 minutes. He focused on conveying his points concisely, whereas the second artist was more expansive and reflective, often elaborating his answers with personal anecdotes and detailed experiences, making his interview significantly longer.

The first artist painted a rather pessimistic picture of the art sector. He expressed a strong sense of independence, asserting that he is not influenced by the art market and remains indifferent to others' opinions of his work. However, he did acknowledge a fundamental truth about the nature of art: once a piece is completed, it is meant to be viewed by others, and regardless of his feelings, the public's taste will ultimately determine its reception. This dichotomy highlights the inherent tension between an artist's personal vision and public perception.

He was highly critical of the state's involvement in the arts in Italy, or rather the lack thereof. According to him, the absence of government funding for the arts creates a bleak outlook for future improvements in the sector. His critique extended to the art market as well, which he described as an environment dominated by individuals who lack a deep understanding of art yet hold the power to dictate its rules. This sentiment of disillusionment with the art market was a recurring theme among several other artists interviewed.

In contrast, the second artist was more optimistic about the potential for state intervention in the arts. He believed that, despite current shortcomings, there is hope for improved policies that could better support artists. Nevertheless, he shared the first artist's view that the art market can often stifle creativity.

Despite asserting that he is not influenced by the art market and paints solely for himself with the aim of sparking meaningful discussions, his actions suggested a more complex relationship with commercial influences. He frequently accepts commissions from galleries and non-profit organizations, creating series on themes he might not have chosen independently. He provided an example of being commissioned to create a series on whales. He pondered whether to depict charming, pleasing whales to appeal to viewers or to paint dead whales to provoke thought and discussion. This internal debate underscores the tension between artistic integrity and market demands.

This contradiction raises intriguing questions about the extent to which artists recognize their own influences. While they may genuinely believe in their artistic independence, their actions reveal a more

nuanced reality. The practice of painting on commission, for instance, can be seen as a constraint on creativity, as it involves working on themes selected by others. This situation challenges the notion of originality and raises the debate on whether commissioned work can still be considered true artistic expression.

Both artists provided insights into the impact of state support, or the lack thereof, on their careers. The first artist's pessimism about state intervention was rooted in the belief that without substantial financial backing, the situation for artists in Italy is unlikely to improve. He expressed a sense of resignation regarding the current state of affairs, indicating that the lack of government support is a significant barrier to artistic growth and sustainability.

The second artist, while more hopeful about potential improvements, also highlighted the declining public funding for the arts. He noted that financial support has diminished year after year, leading to an absence of public provisions for artists. This reduction in funding impacts artists' ability to sustain their practice and innovate within their field.

These contrasting perspectives provide valuable insights into the varied experiences and views of older Italian artists. The differences in their outlooks underscore the complexities of navigating the art market and the significant role that state support can play in an artist's career. The first artist's directness and pessimism highlight the challenges and disillusionment many artists feel, while the second artist's optimism and willingness to engage in commissioned work illustrate a more adaptive and hopeful approach.

Together, these narratives enrich our understanding of how artists at different stages of their careers perceive and interact with the art market and state support. They reveal the delicate balance artists must maintain between staying true to their creative vision and adapting to external influences and market demands. This duality is central to understanding the contemporary art world and the myriad ways artists strive to sustain their practice and achieve recognition.

4.2 Italian male artists in their 50s

The interviews with the male artists in their 50s revealed similar contrasting perspectives as seen with the older artists. One artist was particularly direct and even more pessimistic than the over-60 artist, offering a stark critique of the current state of support for artists in Italy. He firmly stated that the Italian government is completely absent in aiding artists, expressing a deep sense of disillusionment with the system. According to him, the only feasible way to practice art freely is to have a different primary job, as making a living solely from art is virtually impossible. He recommended becoming a teacher in the arts, as this not only provides financial stability but also contributes to one's growth as an artist.

Both artists in their 50s shared a practical approach to their work, contrasting with the more goal-oriented perspectives of the older artists. Rather than creating art to achieve a specific objective, they engage in painting as a personal study of evolving themes. Their focus is on exploration and development within their artistic practice, driven by personal interest and intellectual curiosity.

The first artist, in addition to his pessimistic outlook on state support, emphasized the importance of having a secondary job. He believes that being a teacher is particularly beneficial, as it not only ensures financial security but also enhances artistic growth through continuous learning and engagement with students. This practical approach underscores his belief that the art market alone cannot sustain an artist in Italy.

The second artist, while also practical in his approach, expressed a more optimistic view on state intervention. He believes that art is incomplete if not seen by others and actively seeks feedback from viewers, valuing their interpretations and perspectives, which might differ from his own vision. This engagement with the audience is crucial to his understanding of his work.

Despite acknowledging the current lack of support, he remains hopeful about the potential for state intervention to improve. He expressed a preference for a public system, emphasizing that while Italy currently offers minimal assistance, he believes in the possibility of positive change. This optimism highlights his belief in the role of public support in fostering a vibrant art community.

These contrasting perspectives among male artists in their 50s enrich our understanding of the diverse experiences within the Italian art community. The direct and pessimistic artist underscores the harsh realities many artists face, advocating for financial stability through secondary employment. His viewpoint highlights the systemic challenges and the need for practical solutions to sustain an artistic career.

On the other hand, the reflective and optimistic artist emphasizes the importance of audience engagement and remains hopeful about future state support. His perspective suggests that despite current shortcomings, there is room for improvement and a belief in the potential for a more supportive environment for artists.

Together, these narratives illustrate the complex interplay between personal artistic practice, financial stability, and the broader socio-political context. They reveal how artists navigate their careers amidst limited support, balancing their creative endeavors with practical considerations. This duality is central to understanding the contemporary art world and the varied ways artists strive to sustain their practice and achieve recognition.

In addition to his practical approach and critical stance on state support, the first male artist in his 50s articulated a particularly harsh view on the influence of the art market. He categorically defined artists who allow their work to be influenced by market demands as "B series" artists, a term that starkly denotes a lack of respect and serious consideration. This disdain for market-driven artistry underscores a broader sentiment shared by many Italian artists, particularly the male cohort.

This artist's perspective highlights a deeply ingrained belief in the sanctity of artistic integrity, which he feels is compromised when artists cater to market trends or popular tastes. He views such practices as a degradation of true artistic value, reducing the artist to a mere producer of commodities rather than a creator of meaningful, original work. This notion is not just a personal bias but reflects a broader cultural and philosophical stance on the role of the artist in society.

Interestingly, while not all expressed their views as strongly, many of the male Italian artists interviewed echoed similar sentiments. They often conveyed a cautious approach to the art market, wary of its potential to dilute their creative vision. This collective skepticism is indicative of a cultural ethos that values artistic authenticity and intellectual rigor over commercial success.

This widespread disdain for market influence among Italian male artists points to a broader issue within the contemporary art ecosystem: the tension between maintaining artistic integrity and achieving commercial viability. For many, the art market represents a necessary evil, a domain where artistic merit is often overshadowed by monetary considerations.

The contrasting views on state intervention and market influence also reveal a dichotomy in attitudes among Italian artists. While some remain pessimistic, believing that the lack of state support and the overpowering influence of the market stifle true artistic expression, others maintain a cautious optimism. They hope for a future where public support for the arts can create a more nurturing environment, allowing artists to thrive without sacrificing their integrity.

4.3 Italian male artist in his 40s

The interview with the sole male artist in his 40s, who relies exclusively on his art for income, provides a particularly intriguing perspective. Unlike the other artists, who balance their creative endeavors with other

professions, this artist's full-time dedication to his craft offers unique insights into the challenges and rewards of making a living solely through art.

Throughout the interview, the artist exhibited a sense of entitlement, perhaps a result of his successful integration into the art market. He primarily paints portraits, which he acknowledged as his primary source of income. Interestingly, he insisted that he is not influenced by external factors, even though he follows specific guidelines for commissioned portraits. He emphasized that his portraits are always created in his unique style, which he claims has remained consistent over time. Clients, he noted, seek him out specifically for this style and never dictate how he should paint their portraits.

The artist explained that while portrait commissions are his bread and butter, he dedicates a few times a year to working on pieces purely for personal growth and artistic exploration. These projects may carry deeper meanings or personal significance, but are limited in frequency. Despite his commercial focus, he maintained that his creative integrity remains intact.

Interestingly, the artist often collaborates with firms on advertising campaigns. He recounted a project with Lavazza, a well-known coffee company, where he used coffee stains to create his art. This approach was quite different from his usual style, which he had just claimed never changes. This contradiction raises questions about the extent to which artists are influenced by market demands, even if they believe otherwise.

The artist expressed an unusual perspective on state involvement in the arts. Contrary to the pessimism of his peers, he stated that the Italian state is quite involved in supporting artists, though he acknowledged that these efforts do not always work effectively. He voiced a preference for private sector involvement over public support, arguing that firms are the best entities to work for, rather than private collectors or galleries.

He also stressed the importance of networking and social media for contemporary artists. According to him, frequenting places where artists gather, maintaining a large network of artist friends, and being active on social media are crucial for staying updated and finding job opportunities. He views these strategies as essential for self-promotion and career advancement in today's art world.

In summary, this artist's experience highlights a blend of commercial pragmatism and artistic integrity, offering a unique perspective on the complexities of making a living solely through art. His views on state support, private sector involvement, and the importance of networking provide valuable insights into the varied ways artists navigate the art market.

4.4 Italian female artists over 50

Despite their differences in age, style, and life experience, the next two interviews reveal notable similarities in perspective and approach. The first interview is with a female Italian artist in her 50s who primarily works with photography and currently sustains herself solely through her art. The second interview features an artist over 60 who is a teacher and works with traditional artistic media, such as painting and sculpture. Despite their different mediums and stages in their careers, both artists share a common approach to their work, focusing on its artistic value rather than its marketability.

The photographer in her 50s emphasized the struggles she faced earlier in her career, when she had to juggle multiple jobs to stay afloat. This background underscores the financial challenges that many artists face and highlights the resilience required to establish oneself in the art world. She noted that not having to hold down other jobs now allows her to devote herself fully to her art, but it has taken years of dedication and perseverance to reach this point.

Both artists expressed that they do not consider the saleability of their work during the creation process. They believe that focusing on market trends or the preferences of potential buyers could compromise their

artistic integrity, leading to a loss of uniqueness and potentially creating a repetitive format that lacks true creativity. For them, the creation process is driven by a desire to explore and express personal themes and ideas rather than catering to market demands.

Neither artist has altered their style in response to external criticism. Their artistic productions are seen as vehicles for personal growth and self-expression, and they follow a consistent thematic thread throughout their careers. The photographer in her 50s highlighted the difficulties of establishing oneself as an artist, noting that it requires significant effort, persistence, and a degree of luck. She observed that there was more economic support for the arts when she was emerging, but such support has become increasingly scarce.

In contrast to some of their male colleagues, neither of these female artists holds a negative view of those who are influenced by the art market. They believe that being market-oriented is a personal choice and does not diminish an artist's importance. However, the artist over 60 emphasized that artists must strive to innovate and not become mere followers of market trends. She believes that true artistic expression involves taking risks and pushing boundaries, and that succumbing to market pressures can stifle creativity and result in work that lacks depth and originality.

Both artists also agree that the Italian state is largely absent in supporting artists. They expressed frustration with the lack of funding and resources available to artists in Italy. However, they remain optimistic about the potential effectiveness of public support, drawing comparisons to successful public policies in countries like France and the UK, where government intervention in the arts is more robust and consistent.

They believe that public intervention can be particularly beneficial in the early stages of an artist's career, providing the necessary support and resources to help emerging artists develop their practice and gain visibility. However, they also stress that public support should not be seen as a permanent solution. Artists must take responsibility for their careers and work towards establishing themselves independently. The artist in her 50s pointed out that, even with public support, the art world is highly competitive, and artists must continually innovate and adapt to sustain their careers.

4.5 Italian female artists in their 20s

The two interviews with artists in their 20s reveal contrasting approaches to art and the art market. The first artist takes a somewhat passive stance, believing that the meaning of her works is determined by the viewer rather than the artist. She sees viewers as integral to the creative process, with their interpretations shaping the significance of her art. When creating, she focuses on recreating images that she deems important, allowing her audience to derive their own meanings from her work.

Regarding the influence of the private market, she expresses uncertainty. While she desires artistic freedom and independence from market pressures, she acknowledges the possibility of being swayed by commercial interests, particularly if she were to pursue art as her primary source of income. To mitigate this risk, she plans to pursue teaching alongside her artistic practice, viewing it as a way to maintain creative autonomy and avoid reliance on the private market.

Her outlook on public support for artists is decidedly pessimistic, echoing sentiments shared by other artists. She laments the lack of assistance from the Italian state, citing its minimal support for artists. When considering the merits of private versus public support, she struggles to make a definitive choice due to the absence of a functioning public system. Despite the challenges posed by limited state funding, she has achieved some recognition, such as winning a competition to exhibit at the Venice Biennale as an emerging artist. However, she highlights the daunting odds faced by emerging artists, with only a small fraction receiving such opportunities amidst stiff competition.

Overall, the first artist's perspective underscores the precarious position of contemporary artists, who must navigate the complexities of the art market while striving to maintain artistic integrity. Despite the lack of robust state support, she remains committed to her artistic practice and seeks alternative avenues to sustain her career while preserving her creative freedom.

The other artist, on the contrary, provides a profound insight into the abstraction process in art, elucidating it as more than a mere transformation of images or concepts into new forms. For her, abstraction represents a deeply personal journey of reinterpretation and reconstruction, wherein memories and impressions are distilled into innovative artistic expressions. This intricate process involves not only detachment from the original context but also a profound reimagining, often leading to novel insights and emotional resonance within the artwork.

In her artistic practice, she adopts a versatile approach, experimenting with various mediums and techniques to explore the boundaries of her creativity. Each artwork serves as a canvas for both introspection and experimentation, allowing her to delve into the depths of her psyche while pushing the limits of artistic expression. This duality between introspection and experimentation imbues her work with a rich tapestry of meanings and interpretations, inviting viewers to engage with the complexities of her artistic journey.

Regarding the commercial aspect of art, she takes a principled stance, adamantly asserting the unsellable nature of art itself. In her view, the commodification of art diminishes its intrinsic value, reducing it to a mere commodity subject to market forces. She forgoes the notion of creating art for commercial gain, emphasizing instead the importance of artistic authenticity and creative autonomy. While she acknowledges the necessity of engaging with commissions to sustain her artistic practice, she does so with caution, mindful of preserving her artistic integrity amidst commercial pressures.

Furthermore, her critique of the art market extends to its inherent biases and exclusivity, wherein opportunities are often limited to a privileged few. She echoes the sentiments of many emerging artists who find themselves marginalized within a system dominated by entrenched power dynamics. To challenge this status quo, she advocates for radical artistic interventions that disrupt conventional norms and challenge established hierarchies. By embracing artistic subversion and experimentation, she believes that artists can reclaim agency and redefine the parameters of artistic discourse.

Turning her gaze to the Italian art scene, she laments a pervasive culture of conservatism that suffocates innovation and marginalizes emerging voices. Despite Italy's rich cultural heritage, she perceives a reluctance to embrace contemporary artistic practices, resulting in a disconnect between tradition and innovation. This ossified cultural landscape, compounded by dwindling public funding, poses significant challenges for aspiring artists seeking recognition and support.

In conclusion, her perspective offers a critique of the art market while advocating for a reimagining of artistic practice that prioritizes authenticity, experimentation, and social relevance. By interrogating the boundaries between art and commerce, tradition and innovation, she invites us to reconsider the role of art in society and the possibilities for creative resistance within an increasingly commercialized world.

4.5.1 Performance artist

The interview with another Italian artist in her 20s sheds light on the world of performance art, a medium that she navigates with meticulous planning and collaborative spirit. Unlike traditional solo performances, she prefers to work with a team, orchestrating every aspect of her art from conception to execution. This collaborative approach allows her to realize complex ideas and create immersive experiences that transcend the boundaries of individual expression.

Central to her artistic practice is a commitment to effecting change through her performances. Rather than merely entertaining or provoking, she sees her art as a catalyst for social transformation, addressing pressing issues and catalyzing meaningful dialogue. By harnessing the power of collective action, she seeks to engage audiences in participatory experiences that challenge perceptions and inspire action.

When it comes to the commercial aspects of her art, she confronts the inherent challenges of selling performances head-on. Recognizing the financial barriers that ticketed events can pose, she strives to make her work accessible to all by abstaining from traditional monetization models. Instead of charging admission fees, she explores alternative avenues for funding, such as incorporating physical objects into her performances that can be sold afterward. This approach not only might ensure financial sustainability but also democratizes access to her art, fostering greater inclusivity and engagement.

Despite her emphasis on artistic autonomy, she remains receptive to feedback and open to evolving her style based on external input. Whether from audiences or collaborators, she values diverse perspectives as opportunities for growth and refinement. This willingness to adapt and experiment fuels her creative process, driving her to constantly push the boundaries of her art and explore new artistic horizons.

Turning her attention to the role of the state in supporting the arts, she echoes the sentiments of many artists in lamenting the lack of government intervention in Italy's cultural landscape. While acknowledging the challenges of breaking through in the Italian art scene, she believes that greater state involvement could facilitate greater opportunities for emerging artists. By fostering a more supportive environment for creativity and innovation, she envisions a future where artists can thrive and contribute meaningfully to society.

4.6 Dutch female artist in her 20s

The Dutch artist in her 20s brings a refreshing perspective to the realm of art, as her primary goal is not driven by commercial success but rather by a profound appreciation for the beauty and wonder of the world. Through her paintings, she seeks to capture fleeting moments that inspire awe and fascination, inviting viewers to share in the same sense of enchantment that she experiences. For her, art serves as a means of escapism, providing solace and allowing her to navigate and express her emotions in a world that she perceives as inherently beautiful.

Unlike some of her peers, she maintains a steadfast commitment to her artistic vision and personal growth, prioritizing authenticity over commercial viability. While she acknowledges the economic considerations of selling her artwork, she remains resolute in her dedication to preserving the integrity of her creative process and staying true to her artistic identity. Despite the pressures she faces from academia and the art market to conform to competitive norms, she remains steadfast in her pursuit of artistic exploration and self-discovery.

In contrast to the Italian artists who expressed skepticism about state intervention, she recognizes the potential benefits of public funding for emerging artists in the Netherlands. However, she advocates for a balanced approach, emphasizing the importance of fostering self-reliance and resilience among artists. While public policies can provide valuable support during the formative years of an artist's career, she believes that artists must ultimately learn to navigate the challenges of the art world independently.

Currently employed at Studio Seine, a small independent gallery dedicated to promoting emerging artists, she exemplifies the collaborative spirit and community-oriented ethos that underpins her approach to art. By engaging with supportive spaces like Studio Seine, she not only gains visibility for her work but also contributes to a broader ecosystem that nurtures creativity and innovation. Through her unwavering dedication to her craft and her commitment to authenticity, she embodies a new generation of artists who prioritize artistic integrity and creative exploration above all else.

4.7 Dutch male artist

The sole male Dutch artist among the interviewees, aged over 60, identifies himself as a community artist with a deep passion for teaching art to others. While his true enjoyment lies in imparting artistic knowledge and skills to his students, his primary artistic output consists of paintings depicting scenes from Rotterdam, which happen to be quite popular and commercially viable. Despite the economic potential of these works, he emphasizes that his motivation for creating them stems from a genuine fondness for the subject matter rather than financial gain. For him, the satisfaction derived from painting scenes he loves is paramount, and any financial success that follows is merely a bonus.

Having reached a certain level of professional recognition and stability in his career, he has grown less concerned about public criticism. While he acknowledges that critiques may have affected him in his younger years, he now feels confident in his artistic abilities and no longer feels the need for external validation. This newfound self-assurance allows him to create art with greater freedom and authenticity, uninhibited by the fear of judgment or criticism.

Regarding state involvement in supporting artists, he acknowledges the Dutch government's efforts but notes that assistance tends to be limited and selective. While some artists may benefit from government support, he believes that such initiatives primarily serve artists in the early stages of their careers. However, he also recognizes that the effectiveness of these policies can vary, and not all artists may have access to the same opportunities for support. Despite these limitations, he remains grateful for the support he has received throughout his career and continues to find fulfillment in both his artistic practice and his role as an educator within the community.

4.8 Dutch female artists over 50

The final two interviews present a captivating dichotomy of artistic approaches and perspectives. While both artists have committed themselves to their craft as their primary vocation, their divergent philosophies and experiences offer profound insights into the multifaceted nature of the artistic journey.

The artist over 60 exemplifies a deeply introspective and almost purist ethos in her artistic practice. For her, art is not merely a profession but a profound personal expression, disconnected from the constraints of commercial viability. Her creative process is an intimate exploration of self and subjectivity, driven by an intrinsic desire for self-expression rather than external validation. With a firm commitment to authenticity, she resists commercial pressures, rejecting commissioned work to preserve the sanctity of her artistic vision. Instead, she navigates the art world with a steadfast dedication to her unique voice, unfazed by market trends or societal expectations. In her view, art transcends commercial imperatives, serving as a conduit for introspection, contemplation, and emotional resonance.

Conversely, the artist in her 50s adopts a more pragmatic and commercially attuned approach to her artistic career. While she acknowledges the importance of artistic integrity, she also grapples with the economic realities of sustaining herself as a professional artist. Balancing creative autonomy with financial viability, she navigates the art market with a keen awareness of commercial considerations, leveraging gallery representation and commissioned work to sustain her practice. Despite occasional compromises in pursuit of financial stability, she remains committed to her artistic vision, albeit within the constraints imposed by market dynamics and client expectations. Her pragmatic approach reflects a negotiation between creative expression and commercial imperatives, highlighting the intricate interplay between art and commerce in the contemporary art world.

In their reflections on state involvement in the arts, their perspectives diverge once again, revealing contrasting attitudes towards government support for the arts. The artist over 60 advocates for increased government intervention, envisioning a more robust public infrastructure that fosters artistic engagement

and accessibility. Proposing policies aimed at reducing societal barriers to artistic participation, she emphasizes the transformative potential of state-sponsored initiatives in enriching cultural life and nurturing artistic talent. In contrast, the artist in her 50s expresses reservations about government intervention, citing concerns about bureaucratic inefficiencies and political interference. While acknowledging the potential benefits of state funding, she remains wary of government overreach and advocates for a more decentralized approach to supporting artists, favoring private patronage and market-driven mechanisms.

4.9 Interview of an expert in the art sector

The final interview features a prominent figure in the art world, who boasts a distinguished background in art history and curation. Holding a PhD in the history of art from the University of Oxford, he currently serves as the Senior Advisor for Creativity and Art at Thomas Jefferson University. His extensive experience includes working closely with artists and managing workshop programs as part of the academic curriculum at his university. Additionally, he has served as the director and curator of a specialized museum for 13 years, highlighting his deep expertise and passion for the arts.

The workshops he oversees provide artists with invaluable opportunities to gain new skills and diversify their expertise. A significant aspect of these workshops is their focus on DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), which includes sessions on marginalized communities in society. For artists, this presents a unique opportunity to incorporate these diverse perspectives into their work, enriching their artistic expression.

Moreover, the interviewee is an expert in art auctions. He notes that people tend to favor the opinions of art historians over those of gallery owners and dealers, as there is often a perception that the latter have ulterior motives driven by their business interests. This sentiment is echoed by many of the artists interviewed, who view the business side of art with a degree of skepticism.

One of the artists interviewed suggested that social media could be a valuable tool for artists to promote themselves. The interviewee agrees, noting that while influencers can help advertise art, there is a risk that their promotional tactics might misrepresent the art as mere products. Instead, artists managing their own social media accounts face the challenge of building a following and gaining visibility. To address this, he suggests that participating in activities organized by larger institutions, like the workshops at Thomas Jefferson University, can be beneficial. Being tagged in posts by these institutions can lead to "cross-pollination," making it easier for artists to become known online and reach a wider audience.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, while many of the artists interviewed claim not to be influenced by the private market, there is a clear lack of public provisions in Italy. This deficiency highlights a significant gap that could be addressed by looking to other European countries, such as the Netherlands, where artists enjoy more opportunities. However, despite the Netherlands having more public and private opportunities for artists, there is still room for improvement. The Netherlands could benefit from examining the situation in France, which offers robust support for the arts.

The interviews revealed several potential solutions to improve the situation for artists. A balanced mixture of public and private provision was suggested as an optimal approach, ensuring artists receive support without becoming overly reliant on either sector. Making art more accessible to viewers was also emphasized, along with building a strong network of artists to share experiences and resources. Staying involved in non-market-driven art activities, participating in workshops, and maintaining a presence on social media were identified as effective strategies for artists to thrive.

It is also interesting to note that Dutch artists generally view creating art for the purpose of selling as a personal artistic choice. In contrast, Italian artists expressed a general disdain for those who prioritize commercial success over artistic integrity. This cultural difference highlights the varying attitudes towards the commercialization of art across different countries.

Overall, the insights from these interviews suggest that while public support is lacking in Italy, there is much to be learned from the more supportive environments in countries like the Netherlands and France. By adopting a balanced approach and fostering accessible, community-driven art practices, artists can better navigate the complexities of the art world while staying true to their creative visions.

6 Limits of the thesis and takeaways for the future

This thesis, based on 15 interviews with artists, provides a preliminary exploration into the influence of the private market and the role of public provisions in the art world. However, the limited number of interviews is insufficient to develop a strong, conclusive proof. A larger sample size and a more diverse selection of artists would be necessary to draw more robust conclusions and identify broader trends with greater accuracy.

Furthermore, while interviewing artists offers valuable insights into their experiences and perspectives, it is important to recognize that the information gathered may not be entirely reliable. Artists might have exaggerated or understated their true influences and experiences, either intentionally or unintentionally. For example, some artists may claim they are not influenced by the art market when, in reality, they might not be fully aware of the subtle ways in which market forces shape their work. Discrepancies observed in some interviews underscore the need for a cautious interpretation of the data.

Additionally, this thesis does not account enough for the perspectives of other key stakeholders in the art world, such as gallery owners, collectors, art critics, and policymakers. Including these viewpoints in future research would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics between artists, the market, and public support systems.

In conclusion, while this thesis offers valuable preliminary insights, further research with a larger and more diverse sample, as well as the inclusion of multiple perspectives, is essential for a more conclusive and nuanced understanding of the issues at hand.

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