

# **BRIDGING THE GAP: HOW CONTEMPORARY GALLERIES ADAPT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES ACROSS GENERATIONS**



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## Bridging the Gap: How Contemporary Galleries Adapt Engagement Strategies Across Generations

### ABSTRACT

This research explores how contemporary art galleries are adjusting their engagement strategies to accommodate generational shifts in collector behavior. With Millennials entering the art market alongside more established Baby Boomer and Generation X collectors, galleries face the challenge of meeting diverse expectations around communication, access, and value. The theoretical groundwork to conduct this study relies on marketing strategies in the art, generational theory, art consumer behavior, and gallery engagement strategies. Through a mixed-methods approach, combining 11 semi-structured expert interviews with gallery professionals and a survey of 110 art collectors, this study investigates how engagement preferences differ across generations and which strategies are most effective for attracting and retaining new collectors. The mixed-method approach utilized was a sequential exploratory design beginning with qualitative interviews, followed by a quantitative survey used to enhance the qualitative findings. The findings reveal that while all generations value trust and personalized service, their preferred modes of engagement diverge significantly. Baby Boomers favor in-person contact and institutional trust, whereas Millennial collectors are more responsive to digital platforms, pricing transparency, and flexible purchasing options. Despite embracing digital tools for visibility and outreach, galleries emphasize that long-term loyalty continues to rely on relational marketing and exclusivity. Theoretically, the research contributes to literature on arts marketing, generational segmentation, and symbolic value in cultural consumption. Practically, it offers galleries insights into tailoring hybrid strategies that bridge traditional relationship-building with digital fluency and inclusivity. Key recommendations include adopting omnichannel engagement, enhancing transparency, and creating accessible entry points without compromising curatorial integrity. While this study focuses primarily on Western markets, future research should consider broader demographic inclusion, especially the growing influence of Gen Z and non-Western collectors. Longitudinal studies are also encouraged to track how collector relationships and motivations evolve over time in a rapidly changing cultural economy.

**Key Words:** Art Collectors, Generational Segmentation, Galleries, Arts Marketing, Engagement Strategies.

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# 1 Introduction

Galleries play a central role in the art market as key intermediaries between artists and collectors. Traditionally, they have shaped market trends by determining which artworks are exhibited, promoted, and sold. However, the contemporary art market is undergoing a generational shift. As millennials become an increasingly influential segment of collectors, their distinct preferences, such as digital engagement, socially driven values, and interest in emerging and diverse artists, are challenging the conventional gallery model designed for older generations. Researchers like Clare McAndrew (2023, 2024) have observed a rise in the volume of artworks priced under \$50,000, reflecting the growing demand at the lower end of the market. This trend is partly driven by the purchasing behavior of millennial and gen z collectors. Simultaneously galleries are facing challenges within profitability as it is being squeezed due to rapidly increasing base costs over past years. It was reported that payroll and rent costs account for an average of 61% of the base operational costs, with rent accounting for the largest share at 33% in smaller business segmentation (McAndrew, 2025). In response, art galleries, as both cultural and commercial intermediaries, must navigate this evolving landscape to remain relevant, responsive, and financially sustainable for future operations.

Understanding how galleries adapt their engagement strategies across generational cohorts is significant from both societal and academic perspectives. Societally, this research sheds light on the evolving role of galleries in shaping cultural access and taste-making for increasingly diverse audiences. Given that the art market is characterized by high volatility and is deeply influenced by fluctuations in discretionary income, understanding generational differences in consumer behavior can help galleries prepare for their next core clientele. Academically, the study contributes to cultural economics and arts marketing literature by linking generational consumer behavior theory to real-world gallery practices. While prior studies have examined collector motivations, such as Zolfagharian & Cortes (2011) and Velthuis (2003), and broader market dynamics, like Solimano (2022), few have investigated how galleries strategically respond to generational change. This research investigates how galleries should adapt their engagement strategies to meet the changing preferences, values, and behaviors of different generational segments. Specifically, it examines how gallery practices interact with the broader consumer behavior patterns of distinct age groups, including branding, event-based outreach, digital communication, and loyalty-building. The aim is to identify where strategies align with collector expectations and where there may be

gaps or opportunities for innovation. This research therefore provides new empirical insights into a timely transformation in the visual arts ecosystem by connecting previously separate strands of research.

The central research question guiding this thesis is as follows:

To what extent, and in what ways, do contemporary art galleries need to adjust engagement strategies across different generations of art collectors?

To gain further structure for the mixed-methods approach, three sub-questions were formed:

1. How do engagement preferences differ between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennial art collectors?
2. What specific gallery engagement strategies are perceived as most effective by the next generation of collectors?
3. How do these strategies align with the motivations, expectations, and behaviors of different generational cohorts?

To define the main concepts used that are subject to varying definitions, "engagement strategies" refer to the range of tactics galleries use to attract, retain, and communicate with collectors, both online and offline. The specific strategies could include event formats, communication channels, pricing transparency, and brand positioning. The "Generations" are defined using commonly accepted birth year categories, Baby Boomer (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Millennial aka Generation Y (1981–1996) and Generation Z (1997–2012). The "collectors" are understood as individuals who have purchased contemporary art for personal or professional reasons.

To answer the research questions the study employs a mixed methods approach. Eleven semi-structured expert interviews were conducted with gallerists and gallery staff in the Netherlands and the US to understand a variety of strategic decision-making and engagement tactics. These qualitative findings are complemented by a survey distributed through various platforms, yielding insights from 110 respondents across four generational groups. The combination allows for both deep contextual understanding and cross-generational comparison of collector behavior.

The structure of this research is as follows: Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature on the role of art galleries as intermediaries and explores how they balance transactional and relational marketing approaches in the context of changing collector demographics. It introduces key theoretical concepts such as symbolic value, omnichannel engagement, and generational marketing. Chapter 3 outlines the research design, explaining the rationale for the mixed methods strategy, and detailing the data collection and analysis processes. Chapter

4 presents the results of the interviews conducted with gallerists and survey results from the collectors. It identifies key themes in gallery strategy, such as loyalty-building, generational segmentation, and platform use, and analyzes collector preferences. Finally, Chapter 5 synthesizes the findings to draw conclusions, address the research question, and propose recommendations for galleries seeking to remain generationally inclusive and economically viable as the market shifts over time.

## **2 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding the evolving role of contemporary art galleries and the generational dynamics shaping collectors' behavior. It explores how galleries function as cultural intermediaries, negotiating symbolic value, marketing strategy, and consumer relationships within a shifting and competitive market. By combining insights from cultural economics, arts marketing, and generational theory, this section lays the groundwork for analyzing how galleries engage with collectors from Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial cohorts.

The structure of this theoretical framework is divided into five key sections. The first section introduces the contemporary art market context, focusing on the gallery's multifaceted role as intermediary, brand, and experience provider. Then the emotional and symbolic nature of art as a product and the contrast between transactional and relational marketing approaches are discussed. Next a dive into generational theory and segmentation will define the three main generational cohorts under consideration and analyzing their preferences in communication, technology, and purchasing. Additionally, the various engagement strategies employed by galleries, ranging from physical events to digital innovation, will be reviewed while focusing on consumer behavior across the generations, including decision-making processes, taste formation, social influence, and relationship-building. Together, these themes create a theoretical scaffold that informs this study's empirical research.

### **2.1 The Contemporary Art Market and the Gallery**

Galleries within the contemporary art market have long acted as cultural intermediaries, shaping taste and value by selecting artists, curating exhibitions, and cultivating reputation (Bourdieu, 1984). By building connections with artists and art buyers, they serve as gatekeepers to the art market, navigating cultural prestige and commercial value (Velthuis, 2020; Lazzaro & Picchi, 2023). However, sales are not the sole



responsibility of said gallerists. They must promote their artists to the other actors, especially in the primary art market, such as media, museums, and critics, which also hold power in the value creation chain of artist, market, and audience (Cellini & Cuccia, 2014). In this way, galleries function not only as market gatekeepers but as meaning-makers within a broader system of symbolic exchange.

Contemporary art galleries operate at the intersection of cultural production and commercial enterprise. Galleries operating in the high-end art market cultivate brand identities tied to exclusivity and connoisseurship while typically operating in both the primary and secondary market segments. By contrast, smaller galleries in the low-end market, typically operating exclusively in the primary market segment, emphasize accessibility and experimentation (McAndrew, 2024; Cellini & Cuccia, 2014). Their dual roles underscore their function as both market actors and aesthetic tastemakers. Furthermore, galleries increasingly act as experience providers. As the cultural sector becomes more entwined with the experience economy, galleries are tasked with creating memorable, emotionally resonant encounters, whether through immersive exhibitions, intimate events, or bespoke client services (Cellini & Cuccia, 2014). These roles have become even more pronounced amid recent market volatility. In the face of declining profitability and rising competition, many galleries are adapting by increasing the number of exhibitions, participating in more art fairs, and experimenting with online sales channels. For instance, the average number of exhibitions held by galleries in the lower-mid valuation range rose from 5 in 2019 to 9 in 2024, reflecting a strategic push to sustain visibility and attract new generations of collectors (McAndrew, 2025).

## **2.2 Arts Marketing and Valuation in the Gallery Context**

The gallery business operates heavily on social interaction and personal contacts, interactions mainly conducted at on-site gallery events or during participation in fairs (Habelsberger & Bhansing, 2021). Marketing in this context involves more than just promoting artworks; it encompasses relationship management, brand storytelling, and audience development. Drawing on scholars, such as Colbert (2020) and Seaman (2020), this study considers the dual marketing approaches used by galleries: transactional strategies aimed at sales, and relational strategies aimed at building long-term connections with collectors. These efforts are deeply intertwined with the symbolic value of art and the role of cultural capital, as theorized by Bourdieu (1984), positioning the gallery as both market actor and tastemaker. Furthermore, historically, the gallery business relied solely on in-person

events to build and sustain itself. Now, with the integration of digitalization, the gallery business resides in both online and offline sales and communication. That being said, the industry still heavily relies on personal contact as art fairs and gallery walk-ins are still the primary sources for new buyers, responsible for 31% and 23% of sales, respectively (Ricucci & Blank, 2025; McAndrew, 2025). Meanwhile, sales through websites or social media accounts totaled 12% and 6% respectively (McAndrew, 2025).

### *2.2.1 Relational vs. transactional marketing strategies & Omnichannel Marketing*

Art as an experience good makes its marketing framework as product-led and not demand-led. François Colbert (2020) emphasizes that cultural marketing differs from traditional marketing exactly in that it prioritizes the product itself as the starting point rather than the market demand. Effective strategies include segmenting, targeting, positioning, differentiating, and innovating (Colbert, 2020). The emotional and experiential nature of art consumption, such as the feelings elicited during exhibitions and interactions with staff, plays a pivotal role in patron satisfaction. The relational marketing and sales approach is imperative to create trust and loyalty from clientele to gain long-term engagement versus short-term transactional sales (Schreiber, 2022).

In terms of transactional strategies, art fairs are a significant player in the art market. Fairs are not only seen as sales platforms but also as gatekeepers to the gatekeepers, controlling access to profitable markets. They create the opportunity to share customer groups of many galleries, opening pathways to gain new long-term clientele or, at the very least, transactional one-time buyers. However, with such competition in one space, galleries participating in fairs must adapt their business models to compete effectively. This includes leveraging technological advancements and forming strategic alliances to enhance their visibility and reach (Lazzaro & Picchi, 2023). Smaller galleries, however, often struggle to replicate the success of more extensive, established institutions due to resource constraints (Benghozi, 2020). To combat this disadvantage, omnichannel marketing has emerged as a critical strategy for galleries, especially when aiming to attract the next generation of collectors (Schreiber, 2022). Omnichannel marketing is a seamless integration between online and offline experiences, a technique that millennial collectors exhibit a preference for (Hiscox, 2023). For instance, digital channels like Instagram facilitate initial awareness and inquiry phases while still leading to galleries or fairs as the setting for purchasing art. Galleries are increasingly expected to balance online accessibility with premium, personalized, offline interactions to build trust and loyalty (Schreiber, 2022; Seaman, 2020).

### *2.2.2 Symbolic and functional value of art as a product*

Art is not merely a product of exchange; it carries deep symbolic, emotional, and cultural meanings. Velthuis (2003) argues that pricing in the art market functions not only as a market mechanism but also as a semiotic system, conveying messages about artistic worth, social status, and gallery identity. Price can act as a signifier of prestige and quality, particularly in the context of collectors seeking to signal taste or gain cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Galleries navigate this symbolic terrain, often using pricing and curatorial language to reinforce emotional value and scarcity.

From the functional valuation position, the first point of determination of value in the primary art market is predominantly the size of an artwork, the length of the artist's career, and the artist's reputation to a certain degree (Beckert & Rössel, 2013; Schreiber, 2022). As the artist's reputation grows and gains traction, more actors are engaged in the valuation of art, such as curators, art critics, other gallerists, and museums (Velthuis, 2003). However, digitalization in the art world has given anyone the power to share their opinion of art, not only traditional tastemakers. Furthermore, with said digitalization prices are available more transparently, resulting in younger or inexperienced art buyers being able to base their art valuation on other prices found online, in contrast to art experts (Habelsberger & Bhansing, 2021). That being said, the value of art in the contemporary art market continues to rely on social constructs that are hard to define and due to the subjective nature of art as an experience good, unable to rely on the consumer's willingness to pay. Many scholars, such as Leavell (2016), Zolfagharian & Cortes (2011), Rojas & Lista (2022) have researched the motivations of art collectors to explore what drives the final decision to purchase. However, these studies often generalize across diverse demographics, focusing on broad categories like investment potential, aesthetic appreciation, or an artist's reputation. There's a notable gap in the literature regarding how these motivations might vary across different generations. As societal norms and values evolve, it stands to reason that Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials might hold distinct motivations for art acquisition.

## **2.3 Generational Theory and Segmentation**

Understanding generational preferences is central to developing targeted engagement strategies. This research uses generational theory to analyze the traits, values, and behaviors of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (Gen Y), particularly in relation to cultural consumption. Each group exhibits distinct patterns in terms of communication preferences, trust in institutions, attitudes toward technology, and spending habits (Strauss & Howe,

1991). Parment (2013) and Valentine & Powers (2013) offer useful insights into how these differences affect marketing strategies, especially in sectors like the arts where personal identity and symbolic meaning play critical roles in purchasing behavior.

### *2.3.1 Generational Preferences in Communication, Technology Use, and Purchasing Values*

Each generational group demonstrates distinct preferences in how they communicate, engage with technology, and make purchasing decisions. These preferences influence how cultural institutions and commercial entities alike must tailor their outreach and value propositions. Baby Boomers came of age in an era of post-war optimism and rapid industrialization; therefore, they typically prefer face-to-face or telephone communication. They are late adopters of technology and tend to engage with digital media in functional rather than immersive ways primarily using email or reading news online (Williams & Page, 2011). Their purchasing behavior is generally shaped by loyalty, trust in long-established brands, and ideological alignment with causes or values (Parment, 2013). Generation X, often described as self-reliant and skeptical, bridges the analog and digital worlds. They tend to favor hybrid communication modes via email and websites for practicality, but also value in-person experiences. Their purchasing decisions are influenced by a balance of status-consciousness and pragmatism, seeking clear product benefits, good service, and value for money (Williams & Page, 2011; Parment, 2013). They also exhibit a preference for privacy and autonomy in brand engagement, avoiding overt marketing or push tactics. Millennials, also referred to as Generation Y, are digital natives who prefer fast-paced, interactive communication through social media, instant messaging, and peer-to-peer platforms. They expect brands to maintain an active online presence and to engage in real-time, authentic dialogue (Leask et al, 2013; Noble et al, 2009). In terms of consumption, millennials are highly value driven. They seek experiences over possessions, emphasize ethical production, and use purchasing as a form of self-expression (Parment, 2013; Solka et al, 2011). Unlike their predecessors, they are less brand loyal and more responsive to peer reviews, user-generated content, and social proof, often using digital channels to validate their choices. The following table provides an overview of the different generational behaviors discussed above.

Table 2.3: Overview of Consumer Behaviour by Generation

Generation	Communication Preferences	Tech Use	Purchasing Values
Baby Boomers	Face-to-face, phone, formal	Late adopters, email, print media	Quality, service, ideology
Gen X	Email, hybrid traditional/digital	Tech-literate, independent	Practicality, price-conscious, status-driven
Millennials	Text, social media, interactive content	Digital natives, multi-platform	Identity, experience, ethics, peer influence

Table 2.3: Overview of Consumer Behaviour by Generation

Understanding the context for generational preferences is vital in shaping marketing strategies and audience development in the arts, especially in contexts where symbolic value and personal identity play a central role in purchasing behavior. Recognizing the nuances within and across cohorts can help avoid overly broad assumptions and enable more precise segmentation efforts. Recent research and reports within the art market highlight millennials as the next fastest-growing generation of art collectors (McAndrew, 2023b, 2025; Hiscox, 2023). However, due to their relatively recent entrance into the art market, compared to their predeceasing generations, there is little research of millennials preferences. Therefore, this study will continue to explore the differences in generational preferences in art consumption.

## 2.4 Art Consumer Behavior Theories Across the Generations

Drawing from art consumer behavior theories, this framework will now examine how collectors from different generations approach art buying, with attention to factors such as social influence, prestige, aesthetic preferences, and investment potential. Taste formation, as discussed by Velthuis (2005), and market trends, as reported in McAndrew's (2022, 2023a, 2023b, 2024, 2025) Art Market Reports, provide insight into how collectors shape and are shaped by the art market. Additionally, these factors manifest differently across generational cohorts, influenced by their respective socio-economic contexts, technological fluency, and how trust and long-term loyalty are cultivated in the gallery-collector relationship.

### 2.4.1 Decision-Making Models in Art Buying: Rational vs. Affective

The decision-making process of art collectors is influenced by both rational evaluation and emotional resonance. Traditional models of rational consumer behavior, where choices are based on logical evaluation of investment potential or resale value, tend to align more closely with Baby Boomers and Generation X (Zolfagharian & Cortes, 2011). These collectors often engage with galleries and auction houses for expertise, seek

established artists, and emphasize long-term value and prestige in acquisitions (McAndrew, 2025; Leavell, 2016). Boomers, in particular, tend to approach collecting as a form of cultural legacy or philanthropic contribution, while Gen Xers are more financially pragmatic but still informed by institutional validation. In contrast, Millennial collectors are driven by affective consumer behavior, when emotional engagement, authenticity, and alignment with personal values are the basis for decision making. They often bypass traditional gatekeepers by using online platforms, social media, or direct interaction with artists (Schreiber, 2022; Hiscox, 2023). McAndrew (2025) notes Millennials are more likely to experiment with digital formats, fractional ownership, and art with social or political relevance. Their purchases are not typically rational decisions but expressions of identity, community, and lifestyle.

#### *2.4.2 Taste Formation, Collector Identity, and Social Influence*

Taste formation in the art market is profoundly influenced by cultural capital and peer environments (Velthuis, 2005). While Boomers may have developed taste through formal education and elite cultural exposure, Millennials and younger Gen Xers are increasingly shaped by digital curation, social networks, and algorithm-driven platforms like Instagram or Artsy (Schreiber, 2022; McClure, 2012). Their predisposition for comfort with technology, as shown in Table 2.3, likely contributes to their method of taste formation. Furthermore, the rise of omnichannel gallery strategies reflects this shift, with galleries increasing use of a mix of online viewing rooms and in-person activations to engage diverse audiences (Ouwerkerk, 2014; Schreiber, 2022). Millennial collectors also prioritize values-based aesthetics. They are drawn to underrepresented artists, eco-conscious practices, or works that reflect social justice themes. This represents a shift from positional taste, where ownership signals elite status, to relational taste, where collecting reflects community, shared values, and personal meaning (Rojas & Lista, 2022).

Social proof plays a central role in the art market, where collectors often rely on perceived peer consensus to validate artistic and financial value (Velthuis, 2003). However, the mechanisms differ generationally. Boomers and Gen X tend to rely on institutional validation among galleries, curators, fellow collectors, or cultural associations they are a part of when making purchasing decisions. Their trust lies in legacy institutions and expert endorsements to ensure preservation of status among fellow collectors (Velthuis, 2005; McAndrew, 2025). Millennials, by contrast, are more influenced by digital peer networks, influencer collectors, and direct artist engagement. They value social media visibility, user-

generated content, and platforms that foster transparency, such as Artsy, Instagram, and fractional ownership services (Hiscox, 2023; McAndrew, 2025). Peer-to-peer recommendations and online reviews often carry more weight than gallery catalogues or auction results in younger demographics' decision-making processes, more interested in the sense of community and relationship building.

Recognizing these distinctions is crucial for galleries and institutions aiming to develop long-term relationships with diverse generations of collectors. Whereas Boomers and Gen X may value exclusivity and stability, millennials are driven by a blend of authenticity, experience, and participatory culture, a shift that requires adaptive engagement strategies across digital and physical channels.

## **2.5 Gallery Engagement Strategies**

Engagement strategies in the gallery sector have evolved well beyond transactional encounters. As the art market has become more competitive and digitally mediated, galleries increasingly invest in diverse outreach methods to attract, convert, and retain collectors. This section outlines the principal strategies employed by galleries to foster audience engagement, drawing from cultural participation theory and art market research (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2011; McAndrew, 2025; Hiscox, 2023).

### *2.5.1 Traditional Engagement Funnels: From Discovery to Loyalty*

Galleries increasingly view engagement as a multi-phase process, often described as a funnel that moves from awareness > interest > participation > conversion > and finally loyalty. Initial discovery may occur through an art fair, a social media post, or a word-of-mouth recommendation. Galleries then guide potential clients toward conversion using tools such as personalized emails, informal walkthroughs, or invitations to special events (Schreiber, 2022). Retention strategies focus on continuity and value creation. These include offering early access to works, personalized follow-ups, and consistent communication throughout the year. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, though still unevenly adopted across the sector, are sometimes used to track client preferences and strengthen long-term relationships (McAndrew, 2025). At the most developed stage of the funnel, galleries foster loyalty through more exclusive offerings: access to high-demand artists, advisory services, and sustained contact over time. As McAndrew (2025) notes, loyal collectors often account for a substantial share of a gallery's revenue and play a role in artist career development and institutional connections.

In-person experiences remain a cornerstone of gallery engagement. Traditional strategies such as vernissages, private previews, and artist talks offer opportunities for collectors to connect directly with artworks, artists, and the gallery team in an intimate and curated environment. These events serve both social and educational functions, reinforcing trust and building cultural capital (Ouwerkerk, 2014; McAndrew, 2025). Hospitality-driven events such as dinners, guided tours, and artist studio visits are used to deepen these relationships, particularly with established clients. Art fairs also play a key role in outreach, offering concentrated visibility to large and international audiences. As noted by McAndrew (2025), fairs function as powerful conversion points for galleries seeking to reach new clients outside their immediate networks. Even with rising costs and growing saturation, participation in fairs remains central to many galleries' engagement strategies due to their potential to introduce work to first-time collectors, build brand recognition, and generate sales through high-volume foot traffic (Ouwerkerk, 2014).

Loyalty and long-term relationship building are one of, if not the most, crucial aspects of gallery engagement. It is through these relationships connections to new clientele are created, growing a collector base for repeat clientele, and increasing reputation overall. Building such trust and relationships among various generations of collectors requires various approaches. For Boomers, loyalty is cultivated through personal relationships with dealers, long-standing trust, and exclusivity. This is consistent with a traditional clientelist model in the gallery sector (Velthuis, 2005; Leavell, 2016). While Generation X values trust and professional service, their loyalty is more conditional based on consistent value delivery and professionalism rather than interpersonal ties alone (McAndrew, 2025). Their collecting is often a hybrid of passion and pragmatism. Millennials, however, demonstrate less conventional loyalty. They are open to discovering new galleries, artists, and platforms, and often spread purchases across both traditional and alternative channels. Yet when they feel emotionally or ethically aligned with a gallery or artist, they tend to form strong bonds and become advocates, sometimes even collaborating in promotional efforts or community-building events (Schreiber, 2022; McClure, 2012). Galleries that successfully engage younger demographics do so through transparency, responsiveness, and purpose-driven messaging.

### *2.5.2 Current Digital Tools and Innovation in Gallery Strategies*

Digital communication has become indispensable to gallery operations. Email newsletters, virtual exhibition previews, and curated online catalogues serve as key vehicles



for regular contact and inventory promotion. These channels allow galleries to build a sense of continuity and anticipation around new exhibitions, artist developments, and available works (Schreiber, 2022). However, the rapid acceleration of digitalization within the gallery sector was not purely evolutionary; it was reactive. The outbreak of COVID-19 served as a turning point, pushing even the most traditionally operated galleries to reconsider the role of technology. With physical spaces shuttered and art fairs cancelled, digital platforms were no longer optional; they became essential lifelines for visibility and sales (Habelsberger & Bhansing, 2021). Social media platforms, especially Instagram, have transformed how collectors discover art and follow artists. Some galleries now rely on digital storytelling to shape their identity, often sharing behind-the-scenes content, installation processes, or artist features. Hiscox (2023) reports that social media remains one of the most influential channels in shaping art buying decisions, with Instagram serving as both a marketing tool and a discovery platform. Moreover, the emergence of Online Viewing Rooms (OVRs) and partnerships with platforms like Artsy, Artsper, and Catawiki has expanded the possibilities for global exposure. These became vital for showcasing inventory during lockdowns, and while their initial popularity has since tapered off, they remain embedded in many galleries' hybrid strategies (McAndrew, 2025; Sidorova, 2019). These formats offer buyers increased transparency around pricing, artist background, and availability, features increasingly expected in digital-first engagement environments (McAndrew, 2025; Hiscox, 2023). Art sales platforms helped facilitate the digital transition by offering standardized infrastructure for online sales (Vitkauskaitė, 2017). However, the presence of an additional intermediary can introduce significant costs for small and medium-sized galleries, making the visibility and reach these platforms offer more accessible to larger or more established players.

Beyond digital platforms, some galleries have begun experimenting with innovative technologies such as augmented and virtual reality, blockchain for provenance tracking, and even tokenized digital art. However, adoption remains modest. Studies suggest that these technologies hold more promise for younger or emerging galleries and buyers than for the established core of the traditional art market (Sidorova, 2019; Masiero, 2022). The skepticism often stems from concerns about quality control, transparency, and the potential erosion of expert-driven valuation hierarchies (Blumenthal, 2013; Hegner, 2020). Nonetheless, digitalization is increasingly linked to business model innovation. Galleries are exploring new value propositions by offering lower-priced editioned works suitable for online audiences, targeting younger collectors through curated drops or digital storytelling (Hegner, 2020; Kanellidi, 2019). The Business Model Canvas framework has even been

applied to identify how digital tools can reshape customer relationships, distribution channels, and revenue streams (Vitkauskaitė, 2017).

Despite these shifts, many galleries still prioritize physical presence. Habelsberger and Bhansing (2021) found that while galleries are integrating digital channels into communication and sales, most continue to view in-person experiences as central to building trust and artistic legitimacy. This hybrid model reflects the dual imperatives of reaching broader audiences while preserving exclusivity and intimacy. Looking forward, the strategic challenge lies not only in adopting new tools but in aligning them with the gallery's brand, audience, and artistic mission. Innovation in this context is not purely technological, it is relational, experiential, and deeply contextual. The most resilient galleries will be those that can combine physical and digital engagement into a coherent, responsive model that accommodates both legacy clients and new generations of collectors.

Drawing from the literature discussed, this study expects to observe meaningful differences in how Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials engage with galleries, shaped by distinct values, communication preferences, and purchasing motivations. Theoretical distinctions between relational and transactional marketing strategies, along with models of rational versus affective consumer behavior, suggest that older collectors (Boomers and Gen X) are more likely to engage through traditional, in-person channels and emphasize long-term trust and institutional credibility. Millennials are expected to favor digital discovery, transparency, and values-driven collecting, often guided by social influence and identity expression. These expectations inform the study's hypotheses, which examine generational variation in collector identity, motivation, platform preference, purchase frequency, gallery engagement preference.

The theoretical framework directly supports the study's mixed-methods design. Insights from sections 2.1 to 2.4, particularly on the symbolic value of art, generational segmentation, and consumer decision-making, provide the foundation for the quantitative survey instrument, which measures how different cohorts behave and perceive engagement strategies. Meanwhile, concepts explored in sections 2.2 and 2.5, such as marketing approaches, omnichannel strategies, and gallery engagement funnels, guide the qualitative interviews with gallery representatives, allowing for an exploration of how these strategies are implemented and adapted in practice. Together, the dual empirical approaches will test whether gallery efforts align with generational differences in consumer behavior and identify where disconnects or opportunities for innovation remain. This integrated framework thus

provides both a conceptual lens and practical roadmap for investigating how galleries can more effectively engage across generations in a rapidly evolving market.

### **3 Methodology**

The following section will outline the methodology used to conduct this research. This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies to explore the following research question:

To what extent, and in what ways, do contemporary art galleries need to adjust engagement strategies across different generations of art collectors?

In order to gain a more complete understanding of art collector behavior the following sub-questions were developed and will be answered by survey data to further support the findings from the qualitative interviews.

How do engagement preferences differ between Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial art collectors?

What specific gallery engagement strategies are perceived as most effective by the next generation of collectors?

How do these strategies align with the motivations, expectations, and behaviors of different generational cohorts?

A mixed-methods design is essential for understanding the interplay between subjective experiences and objective trends in the art market. As Bryman (2016) highlights, mixed methods capitalize on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, addressing their respective limitations. By using this integrated approach, the study ensures a comprehensive exploration of the topic and enhances the reliability of its findings (Bryman, 2016). The specific mixed-methodological design that will be used to answer the aforementioned research questions is a sequential exploratory design. This approach is best suited for this research because it begins by gathering in-depth qualitative insights from industry professionals through semi-structured interviews followed by testing consumer preferences through quantitative survey data. Given the evolving nature of gallery business models and collecting habits, starting with qualitative data ensures that the survey questions are grounded in relevant industry perspectives. This method also allows for flexibility. If unexpected themes emerge in the interviews, they can inform the survey design (Doyle et al., 2009). Overall, this approach strengthens the research by combining rich, exploratory

findings with quantifiable evidence, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of how galleries are adapting to attract the various generations of buyers (Doyle et al., 2009)

### **3.1 Qualitative Interviews: Data Sampling & Collection**

The qualitative component involves 11 semi-structured expert interviews with art gallery owners or representatives based in the western art market. The interviews uncover insights into the strategies employed to engage various generations of collectors, the challenges encountered in understanding younger generations, and the innovative approaches in development to foster engagement and loyalty. To ensure detailed and valuable data, the study prioritizes gallerists with a minimum of five years of industry experience. These interviews are classified as *expert interviews*, as the participants possess specialized, experience-based knowledge of the contemporary art market and offer professional, insider perspectives on gallery practices and engagement strategies (Bryman, 2016, pp. 469–471). Additionally, the sample of galleries falls within the “low-end” art market segment, defined as operating primarily within the valuation range of €800–€50,000 (McAndrew, 2022). This range was selected due to the higher likelihood of engaging a broader and more generationally diverse clientele, including Generation Y, Generation X, and Baby Boomers (Hiscox, 2023).

As Bryman (2016) notes, expert or elite interviewees may pose distinct methodological challenges. They may attempt to steer the conversation, resist certain lines of questioning, or present institutionally polished narratives. At the same time, they offer invaluable insight into organizational strategies, professional norms, and sector-specific decision-making. To account for these dynamics, interviews in this study followed a semi-structured format, providing enough flexibility to allow experts to elaborate on topics they deemed important while ensuring consistency across key themes (Bryman, 2016). Follow-up questions and probes were used to encourage reflection beyond rehearsed responses, and where possible, responses were triangulated with publicly available data such as gallery websites, press features, and fair participation records. This approach allowed for a rich, context-sensitive understanding of how galleries navigate generational engagement in a competitive and evolving art market.

The participating galleries were selected through criteria, snowball and convenience sampling, a technique well-suited for the close-knit art market, where reputation and professional networks facilitate access to key informants with limited time and availability. Through personal industry experience and additional insights from methodologies of similar

related research, the difficulty of securing interviews with gallerists was anticipated. The highest chance to gain interviews was through recommendations by other gallerists. The first round of sampling began by reaching out to galleries that fulfil the prerequisite criteria via email or cold call, to which some were able to connect the researcher with additional participants. An additional round of sample inquiry came from attending several international art fairs in person to connect with galleries suitable for this study. A total of 40 galleries were contacted, of which 16 were willing to participate and a final total of 11 interviews were conducted. Interviews were conducted with professionals across the US & The Netherlands to capture a diverse range of practices and strategies. If possible, the interviews were conducted in person in the gallery space to gain further insights when discussing in-person events during the interview process. Otherwise, the interviews were conducted online through Teams. The interviews lasted 45-60 minutes to ensure a thorough explanation of the topics discussed. Each interview was recorded, with the participants' consent, and detailed notes were taken to capture essential insights. A comprehensive interview guide was created to gain the interviewees' most insightful and detailed responses, while still allowing for comfortability and flexibility, two important factors for the subjects when answering questions and provide the interviewer an opportunity for follow-up questions and probing as needed (Bryman, 2016, p.392). The interview guide consisted of 24 questions divided into sections corresponding to the concept themes (see Appendix B: Interview guide). The interviews were conducted in March and April 2025 reaching a total of 9 ½ hours (565 minutes) interview time, with 9 of 11 interviews held in person.

### **3.2 Qualitative Interviews: Data Analysis**

All interviews were recorded, transcribed using Otter.ai (2025), and checked by the researcher. Reviewing the transcriptions already allowed the researcher to gain familiarity with each respondent's answers. A systematic coding process was followed to minimize researcher bias. A hybrid of inductive and deductive coding was most appropriate (Bryman, 2016, p.585). Deductive coding states predefined themes derived from the theoretical framework and existing literature on art collector behavior and gallery engagement strategies (see Appendix C: Concept Map). Inductive coding was then employed to identify new themes and sub-themes emerging directly from the data during the various review processes. This open coding process involved examining the transcripts to capture significant quotes related to the research question. As new insights were discovered, they were added to the coding framework. This ensured that the analysis remained connected to the actual experiences and

practices being utilized. See Appendix D: Codebook for the exact code categories, including subcodes, utilized for each interview transcript. During the coding process, the researcher began to make connections between categories and concepts. Finally, once all coding was complete, the researcher could find overlapping themes across all data relevant to the research question and sub-questions. The qualitative thematic analysis method was utilized to identify said recurring themes and patterns. The thematic analysis was conducted with Atlas.ti, which uncovers common patterns and actionable insights while maintaining the flexibility to capture unique perspectives from the participants. The data was organized according to key themes and sub-themes in the codebook, derived from the theoretical framework.

### **3.3 Quantitative: Data Sampling & Collection**

The second phase of this study involves surveying art collectors of various levels and generations about their art consumer behavior, preferences, gallery engagement and online art purchases. The generations of focus are Baby Boomers, birth years 1946–1964, Generation X, birth years 1965–1980, and Millennials, also known as Generation Y, birth years 1981–1996; ages 61 to 79, 45 to 60, and 29 to 44, respectively, as of 2025. Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, will be considered for the framework, however due to their youth and minimal involvement in the art market, as they are in the age bracket of 13-28 years in 2025, it was not expected to get a large sample. Furthermore, it is important to distinguish within each generation segmentation and be aware that they are not all the same. For example, Millennials share some similar values across nationalities, but they differ in regard to culture, ethical, religious, and moral reasoning. Therefore, this study will only attempt to provide a general description of collectors based on their age and art market-relevant aspects.

The survey was created in Qualtrics with 19 questions. The questions from the survey are based on research provided in the theoretical framework and themes brought up during the interview process. Due to expected difficulty in gaining a large enough pool of survey respondents, the survey was distributed through multiple channels to maximize the sample of collectors. The participating galleries in the interviews were asked to distribute the survey through their mailing lists to ensure active collectors are providing the data, of which only two galleries were comfortable doing so. The survey was posted on relevant platforms, such as LinkedIn groups related to the arts industry, and forwarded to art industry professionals to send to collectors in their network. Additionally, a QR code was printed and posted at

exhibitions with contemporary artworks for sale in the same “low-end” price range as the interviewed galleries.

This survey collects data on purchasing habits, consumer behavior, and demographic information to analyze generational differences in art collection. By identifying preferences regarding purchase frequency, budget allocation, and preferred purchasing channels, the quantitative analysis highlights key trends among younger collectors in comparison to older generations. Additionally, the survey will explore factors influencing purchase decisions, such as price transparency, digital accessibility, and brand trust. The survey component of this study yielded 110 valid responses from self-identified art collectors. While not statistically representative of the broader collector population, the sample is sufficient for the purposes of this mixed-methods design. As the primary data source consists of 11 expert interviews with gallery professionals, the survey is intended to serve a supporting role, offering empirical validation of themes emerging from qualitative insights and enabling generational comparisons across key engagement variables. In mixed-methods research, it is common to employ small-to-moderate quantitative samples to triangulate findings and increase interpretive depth (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Additionally, Bryman (2016) emphasizes that when quantitative elements are embedded within a qualitatively-driven design, the goal is not statistical generalization but theoretical elaboration. Furthermore, similar studies exploring art collector motivations and behavior have employed comparable sample sizes. For instance, Rojas and Lista (2022) used a sample of 122 collectors alongside interviews to identify motivational typologies, while Zolfagharian and Cortes (2011) relied on fewer than 150 responses to explore rational versus affective motivations. Schreiber (2022) likewise adopted a small sample to pilot digital engagement trends among millennial collectors. These precedents support the use of a moderately sized sample in the context of exploratory, mixed-method research within the visual arts sector.

### **3.4 Quantitative: Hypotheses & Data Analysis**

In addition to exploring the research questions through qualitative and quantitative data, this study tests a series of hypotheses derived from the literature on generational consumer behavior, arts marketing, and symbolic value. These hypotheses aim to identify statistically significant generational differences in collector identity, preferences, and gallery engagement.

H1 Generation vs. Collector Identity: Younger participants are more likely to identify as emerging collectors.

H2 Parental Influence vs. Collector Identity: Younger collectors are more likely to start collecting if their parents did.

H3 Generation vs. Engagement Platform: Younger collectors are more likely to engage through social media platform, such as Instagram.

H4 Generation vs. Purchase locations: Older buyers prefer in person purchases through galleries, while younger collectors source online.

The survey data was analyzed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to identify patterns in collector behavior across generational cohorts. Descriptive statistics were first generated in Qualtrics to provide an overview of the demographic composition of respondents and general trends in purchasing behavior, engagement preferences, and collector identity. See Appendix E: Survey Response Overview and Table 4.2A. The dataset was then imported into SPSS, where statistical tests were conducted to examine generational differences and test the hypotheses outlined above. This study primarily employed chi-square tests to examine associations between categorical variables such as generation, collector identity, engagement preferences, and purchase behaviors. This choice is appropriate given that most survey variables were nominal or ordinal in nature and designed to explore differences across generational cohorts. Chi-square tests are well-suited for testing relationships between non-continuous variables, allowing the study to identify statistically significant associations without assuming causal relationships. As such, chi-square analysis served as a method to validate whether generational differences observed in the interviews were also reflected in the survey responses.

Within the results of the chi-squared tests, a statistically significant result ( $p < .05$ ) indicates that the variables are not independent of each other, the distribution of responses for one variable (for example purchase location) differs meaningfully across categories of another (generation). In this context, significance suggests that generational cohort is associated with a particular behavior, motivation, or engagement preference. In addition to the standard Pearson chi-square, linear-by-linear association tests (Linear trend) were conducted where ordinal variables were involved, such as generational order or Likert-type rankings. This test identifies whether a trend exists across the ordered categories. For example, whether the likelihood of using social media for new art discovery increases consistently from older to younger respondents. A significant linear trend supports the interpretation that there is not just a difference across groups, but a directional pattern in the data. Non-significant results indicate that any variation observed across groups could be due to chance, and therefore no reliable association can be established between the variables



tested. In cases where initial associations were found to be significant or suggested meaningful trends, some regression analyses were introduced to further investigate these relationships, particularly where directionality or strength of effect was relevant.

This sequential approach aligns with the logic of embedded mixed-methods design, where the quantitative data serves to support and expand the qualitative findings rather than act as the primary explanatory model (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This combination of statistical techniques enabled a robust examination of two research sub-questions: (1) how engagement preferences differ between generations, and (2) which engagement strategies are most effective for the next generation of collectors. Together, the findings provide empirical support for evaluating the extent to which galleries need to adapt their practices to reach new audiences while maintaining relationships with established clientele.

### **3.5 Overall Mixed-Methods Analysis**

Bringing together insights from both qualitative and quantitative phases, this study assesses the extent to which gallery strategies align with actual consumer behavior. The analysis will focus on collectors' spending trends, preferences for engagement in art dealers, and the correlation between engagement strategies and sales performances of the galleries. This approach enables a thorough exploration of how galleries are adapting to the various generations of collectors' preferences, ensuring findings are both actionable for industry stakeholders and academically robust. The qualitative interviews will provide an understanding of the methods galleries employ to engage younger and older buyers, while the quantitative findings will reveal whether these efforts resonate with said collectors. The mixed-methods design allows for triangulation, where the convergence of qualitative and quantitative data enhances the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions (Bryman, 2016). By juxtaposing these perspectives, the study will highlight gaps between industry strategies and consumer preferences, identifying areas where galleries may need to adjust their approaches. This integrated analysis will offer a holistic perspective on the evolving art market and provide concrete recommendations for galleries seeking to enhance their appeal to the millennial demographic. Overall, this methodology ensures contributing valuable insights to both the art market and cultural economics.

### **3.6 Cautions**

Integrating mixed methods requires careful alignment between qualitative and quantitative approaches to ensure a cohesive analysis by combining in-depth insights from

interviews with measurable trends from quantitative data. However, challenges may arise if the findings from one method contradict or overshadow the other. To address this, integration will be planned early, with qualitative and quantitative components designed to complement each other in addressing the research questions. Ethical considerations are also paramount in both phases of the research. Confidentiality and data security is strictly upheld, particularly when dealing with sensitive business strategies or sales records. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with clear communication about the study's purpose and data usage. The study ensures credibility, transparency, and respect for participants' contributions by prioritizing ethical practices and thoughtful integration.

## **4 Results**

This chapter presents the findings from both qualitative and quantitative data collection. It begins with a thematic analysis of the 11 semi-structured interviews conducted with experts in the gallery industry highlighting the key strategies, perceptions, and challenges that emerge in their profession. These are followed by the statistical results from the online survey, completed by 110 art collectors of varying age, socioeconomic status, and collection engagement. The two methods are presented separately to maintain methodological clarity, which will then be brought together for comparison in the following discussion and conclusion section. This structure sets the stage for deeper interpretation by outlining where gallery strategies align with, or diverge from, the preferences and behaviors of different generational cohorts, in direct response to the study's research question.

### **4.1 Thematic Analysis of Interviews**

The following section reviews the thematic analysis of the interviews conducted with the participating galleries. There are five main themes of analysis categorized as relationship-based engagement, differences in generational behaviors, strategic use of digital platforms with caution, gallery reputation and visibility, and finally looking forward with the various innovations used to attract younger collectors. Prior to each interview an overview of each of the galleries location or locations, year founded, social media attention and market focus were collected to gain a better understanding of their general physical and online presence.

Table 4.1: Participating Galleries Preliminary Information

	GALLERY	LOCATIONS	YEAR FOUNDED	SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS	MARKET
1	Nunu Fine Art	New York/ Tiwan	2014	7.9K	Primary
2	Sargents Daughters	New York	2014	80k	Primary
3	GRIMM	NY, The Netherlands, London + Consultant in Hong Kong	2005	84K	Primary & Secondary for represented artists
4	KochxBos Gallery	The Netherlands	2005	6.4k	Primary
5	Kyas Art Salon	The Netherlands, Japan	2016 in EU	1k	Primary
6	Jaski Gallery	The Netherlands, Bangkok	1972	6k	Primary & Secondary for represented artists
7	Heejsteck Gallery	The Netherlands	2007 & 2021	1.8k	Primary
8	Gallery Vriend Van Bavink	The Netherlands	2010	7k	Primary
9	Galerie Caroline OBreen	The Netherlands	2015	9.1k	Primary
10	Martin Van Zomeren	The Netherlands	2005	5.7k	Primary
11	Stigter van Doesburg	The Netherlands	2001	5.7k	Primary

Table 4.1: Participating Galleries Preliminary Information

#### 4.1.1 Relationship-Based Engagement as Core Strategy Across Generations

Across all interviews, galleries emphasized the importance of cultivating lasting relationships with collectors as the foundation of their engagement strategies. Rather than focusing on one-off transactions, gallerists described their role in managing long-term connections based on trust, familiarity, and shared investment in an artist's trajectory. These findings directly reflect the concept of relational marketing, in which loyalty and emotional connection are prioritized over immediate sales, a particularly relevant model for markets like art, where symbolic and experiential value are central (Bourdieu, 1984; Colbert, 2020; Velthuis, 2003). Galerie Caroline O'Brien provided a clear indication of this practice when the owner said "We always aim to work with collectors over the long term. It's really about trust, not just about selling a piece." [Interview 9 - Galerie Caroline O'Brien]

In 9 out of 11 interviews, gallerists noted that their relationship-building involved regular updates, invitations to previews, informal walkthroughs, and even artist studio visits. During the discussion on this topic with GRIMM Gallery they noted "It's not just about one artwork. It's about following the artist, the gallery, and feeling like part of something." [Interview 3- GRIMM] This emphasizes how personal gestures serve to make collectors feel valued and provide them with privileged access, elements that reinforce both exclusivity and cultural capital. To provide a further sense of community around the gallery, 9 out of 11

galleries mentioned hosting events other than the usual exhibition opening, such as Kyas Art Salon hosting tango nights in connection with a presenting artist. It was noted the events hosted in the gallery spaces do bring in a variety of visitors depending on the showing artist or event type, however there was typically a core group of clientele who consistently come to each event and have followed the gallery for years.

I have a lot of repeating customers. And I also think in the Netherlands, maybe also worldwide, that every gallery needs like 10 repeating customers... You need those because that's the backbone of your gallery. [Interview 6 - Jaski Gallery]

While this opinion was applied broadly, gallerists also described tailoring their approach to create long-term connections with clients depending on generational differences. For example, Baby Boomers were often seen to value ongoing in-person engagement and deep personal rapport, reflecting their preference for institutional trust and status-based collecting. Meanwhile, Millennials were more likely to engage through a mix of digital and in-person channels yet still responded positively to feeling seen and included in the gallery's inner circle. The owner of Jaski Gallery notes "with younger collectors, it's more about access and feeling involved - being offered a preview, an invitation. That still matters." [Interview 6- Jaski Gallery] This supports the idea that across generations, collectors respond to strategies that make them feel part of a trusted network, even if the form of engagement varies. As such, preview invitations, exclusive events, and informal communication serve as key mechanisms for conveying symbolic value, not just of the artwork, but of the relationship itself (Velthuis, 2005). These efforts were seen as particularly vital for galleries representing emerging artists, whose work may not yet be institutionally validated. In such cases, the gallerist's personal credibility and client relationships were critical to building confidence in the artist's market trajectory. Furthermore, despite increasing digital pressures, most gallerists emphasized that relationship-building remained a slow interpersonal process that could not be easily scaled. The majority of the interviewees noted that while digital platforms offered useful tools for outreach, the depth of trust needed to secure high-value or repeat purchases still depended on direct, personalized engagement.

Overall, this theme highlights that while modes of communication may evolve across generations, the underlying principle of exclusivity and trust remains central to gallery-collector relationships. These findings reinforce the continued relevance of relational marketing frameworks and suggest that personalization and symbolic inclusion remain critical in an increasingly hybrid market.

#### *4.1.2 Differences in Generational Behavior*

Generational distinctions in collector behavior emerged as one of the most notable themes across interviews. While gallerists cautioned against overgeneralizing, they frequently observed clear differences in how Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials approach art collecting, particularly regarding their motivations, communication preferences, and socio-economic positioning. These insights directly support the second sub-question on the alignment between gallery strategies and generational expectations, and tie into theories of generational segmentation (Parment, 2013; Williams & Page, 2011).

For the majority of interviewees, collecting motivations are one of the most generationally distinct features. Older collectors, primarily Baby Boomers, were often driven by legacy-building, status, and the symbolic value of ownership, consistent with Bourdieu's (1984) concept of cultural capital. These collectors typically entered the market through personal networks, museums, or elite social circles. Vriend van Bavink Gallery noted the distinction between how older and younger collectors discover their gallery, "Older collectors often already know the game. They're not on Instagram. They know who we are or are introduced by someone." [Interview 8 - Vriend van Bavink] In contrast, Millennial collectors were often framed as more value-driven and emotionally motivated. 7 of the 11 galleries noted that younger buyers prioritize transparency, ethical alignment, and personal connection with the artist over traditional markers of prestige. Younger collectors were also described as more likely to buy art as part of lifestyle expression or interior aesthetics, emphasizing visibility and fit within the home rather than long-term storage or financial speculation. Heejsteck gallery along with six other interviewees also highlighted that younger buyers tend to purchase smaller works and prefer flexible payment plans due to their more limited financial means. "It's not that they're not serious, it's just a big purchase for them. They ask about payment plans a lot more." [Interview 7- Heejsteck]

These patterns illustrate how consumer behavior theories in the arts intersect with generational life-stage and socio-economic differences (Velthuis, 2005; Rojas & Lista, 2022). Boomers and older Gen X collectors, typically more financially established, approached art buying as a matter of taste, education, and connoisseurship. Millennials, on the other hand, were still building their identity as collectors and sought greater inclusivity and transparency. Medium preference also played a subtle role. While not uniformly discussed, four galleries noted that younger buyers showed interest in photography, editions, or mixed media, partly

due to affordability and digital shareability, while older collectors leaned toward painting and sculpture.

Despite these differences, many galleries pointed out that preferences are fluid and shaped by multiple factors, including geography, education, and personal exposure. Still, generational theory offered a useful framework for galleries to understand overall patterns in engagement, particularly in how to communicate and build trust with different age groups.

#### *4.1.3 Strategic Use of Digital Platforms (with Caution)*

All interviewed galleries had adopted some form of digital engagement, from Instagram to Online Viewing Rooms (OVRs), but the majority expressed reservations about their effectiveness in generating meaningful collector relationships and engagement. While these tools were widely recognized for enhancing visibility, gallerists consistently cautioned against mistaking visibility for engagement. Digital platforms were continuously described as tools for the early stages of engagement, such as discovery, awareness, validity, but rarely as primary sales drivers. For example, 4 of the 5 galleries that use Artsy stated its main benefit is visibility, not sales, as serious collectors contact the gallery directly or they already know them. This aligns with omnichannel marketing theory, which emphasizes the importance of combining digital and in-person touchpoints to support a full consumer journey (Schreiber, 2022). Galleries reported that while Millennials may initiate contact through Instagram or web forms, significant purchases typically required follow-up in person or over direct, personalized communication. When discussing Instagram management with Sargents Daughters Gallery, their representative noted how “digital helps you reach out, but it won’t replace the in-person experience.” [Interview 2- Sargents Daughters]

As hypothesized, Baby Boomers and older Gen X collectors were less engaged with digital channels. Gallerists described these clients as preferring email, phone calls, or in-person previews, and in some cases, actively avoiding social media. To manage this range of preferences, most galleries adopted hybrid approaches, using digital media to maintain momentum but relying on face-to-face relationships to convert interest into trust and sales. “Our strategy depends on who we’re talking to. Some people DM us, others would never even look at Instagram.” [Interview 3 – GRIMM] Digital tools were also seen as useful for storytelling and brand building, aligning with symbolic marketing approaches, but only when they were tied to strong curatorial narratives or artist visibility (Velthuis, 2003). Gallerists warned against using digital tools superficially, as it could dilute perceived seriousness or alienate older, more traditional clients.

Overall, while digitalization was embraced as a necessary part of gallery strategy, especially post-pandemic, its role was clearly bounded. Successful galleries integrated digital tools into broader relationship-building frameworks to target younger clientele rather than using them as standalone sales channels. Furthermore, growth in online visibility sparked an interesting debate for the more established galleries as they communicated concerns for becoming “too visible” with risk of cheapening their brand or driving away wealthier clients who value privacy and discretion, a theme that will be further explore in the following section.

#### *4.1.4 Gallery Visibility and Reputation as Gatekeeping Tools*

Another major theme that emerged was the importance of cultivating a gallery’s visibility and reputation, not just to increase sales, but to position the gallery within the symbolic economy of the art world. This ties directly into Bourdieu’s (1984) concept of cultural capital and Velthuis’s (2005) observations on the semiotic function of gallery branding. For all but one of the interviewees, visibility through participation in fairs, coverage in press, and strategic collaborations was seen as essential to gaining credibility. Galleries noted that being “seen in the right places” [Interview 10-Martin Van Zomeren] could validate their programs, attract institutional attention, and serve as a proxy for quality among collectors. When discussing this topic with Galerie Diana Stigter they said, “Fairs are not just for sales. It’s about being seen, being taken seriously.” [Interview 11- Galerie Diana Stigter] It was made clear, not only by this gallery, the importance in the decision of which fairs to attend, as not all fairs are considered to function at the same level or attract the same clientele. For example, Jaski Gallery typically attends fairs such as TEFAF, along with high priced artworks bought by high-net-worth individuals (HNWI). However, to become more accessible and introduce a younger clientele group they also attend the Affordable Art Fair Amsterdam, a fair with a good reputation but functions at a lower level in terms of monetary value. The galleries working with emerging artists noted the challenge of balancing visibility with selectivity. Being too commercial or overly present on social media could, in some cases, backfire, especially with older collectors who associated exclusivity with discretion. This concern was made especially clear for 5 of the 11 interviewees including the representative of Nunu Gallery: “If you’re too visible online, some clients assume you’re not high-end or that you’re selling too aggressively.” [Interview 1 - Nunu Gallery] This concern links to symbolic pricing and reputation management theories, where gallery behavior itself becomes a signal of value (Velthuis, 2003). For many, maintaining a refined curatorial

identity and avoiding overexposure was part of a long-term reputation strategy. Simultaneously, younger collectors expected transparency and accessibility, creating a tension between traditional forms of symbolic capital and emerging expectations of openness. In this light, galleries operate as gatekeepers not only of artworks but of cultural legitimacy. Their strategies to balance visibility with credibility reflect a deep awareness of how different generations, and different parts of the art world, interpret symbolic cues.

#### *4.1.5 Innovations for Attracting Younger Collectors*

A final and future-oriented theme reviewed how galleries are adapting or experimenting with new approaches to engage younger and first-time collectors. Recognizing that Millennials often face financial and cultural barriers to entry, several gallerists discussed strategies to lower the perceived threshold for participation. These included offering smaller works, prints, or editioned pieces at more accessible price points, often presented through digital platforms or informal pop-up contexts. “We did a pop-up with a DJ, it brought in a crowd we wouldn’t normally see.” [Interview 7 - Heejsteck] Other galleries described programming designed to deconstruct the perceived elitism of the gallery space. This included events like artist talks, DJ nights, or collaborative exhibitions with themes outside their norm, intended to bring new audiences into contact with contemporary art in less intimidating formats. These initiatives align with broader trends in cultural participation and experiential consumption, in which Millennials engage with cultural goods as part of broader lifestyle and identity-building practices (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2011; Valentine & Powers, 2013). However, several galleries noted that they were careful not to dilute the curatorial strength or perceived value of the work. Establishing a balance between accessibility and artistic seriousness was described as one of the most delicate aspects of innovating within a traditional market structure. “We want to be more open, sure, but we also want people to take the work seriously.” [Interview 9- Galerie Caroline O’Brien] Ultimately, these efforts reflect a recognition that emerging collectors operate with different expectations, habits, and limitations. Galleries that succeed in reaching this audience are those that combine traditional expertise with new forms of flexibility, digital fluency, and participatory engagement. See Appendix F: Interview Data By Theme and Gallery for an overview of the total number of galleries identified with each theme.

## **4.2 Survey Results**



This section presents the findings from the survey distributed across multiple channels to art collectors from different generations. The aim is to provide insight into current consumer behavior and preferences when it comes to purchasing art and engaging with galleries within the low-end art market. These results offer a quantitative complement to the qualitative interview data and contribute to a fuller understanding of generational dynamics in the contemporary art market.

To contextualize the survey sample, descriptive statistics were calculated for key demographic variables, including generation, gender, income level, place of residence, frequency of art consumption, and budget. Table 4.2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution for each category. The sample consisted primarily of Millennials, with near equal representation between Gen X and Baby Boomer. Gender distribution was relatively balanced still with a majority of collectors identifying as female. Respondents were primarily based in Europe and income levels varied, with the largest proportion reporting 86k-110k. Furthermore, respondents purchasing frequency of art is relatively balanced as well, with an average of “once a year” and an average budget of 1k-5k. These characteristics provide a foundational understanding of the sample composition and inform the interpretation of subsequent analyses. A further detailed overview of the survey responses organized by question is available in Appendix E.

Table 4.2A- Overview of Survey Descriptive/Frequency Statistics of Sample [N=110]

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	% of n
<b>Generation</b>	Gen Z	15	13.6
	Millennial	49	44.5
	Gen X	24	21.8
	Boomer	22	20.0
<b>Gender</b>	Male	46	41.8
	Female	61	55.5
	Non-binary	3	2.7
<b>Primary Residence</b>	North America	40	36.4
	Europe	68	61.8
	Latin America	1	0.9
<b>Income (Euros)</b>	Below 35k	10	9.1
	36–55k	17	15.5
	56–85k	17	15.5
	86–110k	20	18.2
	111–200k	19	17.3

	201k+	27	24.5	
<b>Art Purchase Frequency</b>	Multiple/year	28	25.5	
	Once/year	30	27.3	Mean
	Every few years	32	29.1	
	Less often	20	18.2	
<b>Price Range</b>	Below €1k	56	50.9	
	€1k–5k	41	37.3	Mean
	€6k–20k	8	7.3	
	€21k–50k	4	3.6	
	€51k+	1	0.9	

Table 4.2A- Overview of Survey Descriptive/Frequency Statistics of Sample [N=110]

Chi-squared tests were employed to examine associations between categorical variables, such as generation and collector identity. The following table shows the results of the Chi-Squared tests run to assess whether there is a significant association between one's age and various categorical outcomes related to preferred purchasing channels, art discovery methods, and gallery engagement preferences. This non-parametric test evaluates whether the observed distribution of responses across age groups differs significantly from what would be expected by chance, thereby indicating whether generational identity is linked to specific art-collecting behaviors or attitudes.

Table 4.2B: Chi-Square Test Results - Age x [Various variables]

<b>Variables Compared</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math> (df)</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Significant?</b>	<b>Linear Trend?</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Age × Collector Identity (Emerging)	7.212 (3)	.065	✗	✓ (.008)	Trend suggests younger collectors are more often emerging
Age × Online Platforms Purchases	14.604 (3)	.002	✓	✓ (< .001)	Younger collectors more likely to purchase online
Age × Gallery Purchases	14.402 (3)	.002	✓	✓ (< .001)	Boomers are most likely to purchase from galleries
Age × Art Fair Purchases	2.656 (3)	.448	✗	✗ (.151)	No significant difference across age groups

Age × Purchases Direct from Artists	8.349 (3)	.039	✓	✗ (.483)	Millennials more likely to buy from artists
Age × Auction House Purchases	23.238 (3)	< .001	✓	✓ (< .001)	Older generations prefer auctions
Age × Art Discovery: Social Media	22.450 (3)	< .001	✓	✓ (< .001)	Younger collectors strongly favor social media
Age × Art Discovery: Gallery	14.732 (3)	.002	✓	✓ (.002)	Older collectors prefer in-person discovery
Age × Art Discovery: Online Art Platforms	5.471 (3)	0.14	✗	✗ (.102)	No significant difference
Age × Art Discovery: Recommendations	.093 (3)	.993	✗	✗ (.894)	Uniform across age groups
Age × Art Discovery: Art Fairs	4.222 (3)	.238	✗	✗ (1.000)	No significant pattern
Age × Motivations: Artistic Appeal	8.999 (12)	.703	✗	✗ (.569)	No difference - all groups rated it highly
Age × Motivations: Investment Potential	25.611 (15)	.042	✓	✗ (.402)	Some generational differences in valuing investment
Age × Motivations: Artist Reputation	15.961 (15)	.385	✗	✗ (.310)	Not significant
Age × Motivations: Gallery Recs	10.379 (15)	.795	✗	✗ (.658)	Not significant
Age × Motivations: Peer/Social Validation	22.167 (15)	.103	✗	✓ (.017)	Slight trend: younger groups more peer-influenced
Age × Gallery Engagement: Online Preview	26.392 (15)	.034	✓	✗ (.652)	Gen Z places more value on online previews
Age × Gallery Engagement: Payment Options	34.923 (15)	.003	✓	✓ (< .001)	Younger collectors prioritize this more
Age × Gallery Engagement: Gallery Events	19.555 (15)	0.19	✗	✗ (.189)	No significant difference

Age × Gallery Engagement: Immersive Engagement	22.842 (15)	.088	✗	✗ (.137)	No significant trend
Age × Gallery Engagement: Personalized Service/ Relationship	18.505 (15)	.237	✗	✗ (.056) Marginal	No significant difference but close linear trend: Baby Boomers prioritize
Age × Gallery Engagement: Transparency in Pricing	5.281 (3)	.152	✗	✓ (.046)	Trend: Younger collectors more influenced by pricing transparency
Age × Gallery Engagement: Payment Plans / Installments	3.407 (3)	.333	✗	✗ (.104)	Younger collectors show more interest, but not significant
Age × Gallery Engagement: VR/AR Previews	8.170 (3)	.043	✓	✗ (.873)	Gen Z and Millennials far more receptive than older generations
Age × Gallery Engagement: NFT-backed Ownership	4.488 (3)	.213	✗	✗ (.126)	Low interest overall; no meaningful difference
Age × Gallery Engagement: Immersive Experiences	4.383 (3)	.223	✗	✗ (Trend Approachin g) (.064)	Slight trend toward younger interest; not significant
Age × Gallery Engagement: Personalized Advisory Services	1.622 (3)	.654	✗	✗ (.856)	Even distribution across age groups

Table 4.2B: Chi-Square Test Results - Age x [Various variables]

*\*Note: Table created with Claude.ai (2025)*

#### 4.2.1 The Collectors Consumer Behavior

The survey data supports distinct generational engagement patterns, offering clear answers to two sub-question: How do engagement preferences differ between Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial art collectors? How do these strategies align with the motivations, expectations, and behaviors of different generational cohorts?

The respondents were predominantly Millennial, Gen X, and Baby Boomers with Gen Z offering a small sample of comparative perspectives. When selecting how they identify as a collector most respondents identified as *occasional buyers* (n=70), however younger

participants were more likely to describe themselves as *emerging collectors* (n=22), aligning with chi-square findings ( $\chi^2(3)=7.212, p=.065$ ; linear trend  $p=.008$ ).

When selecting their purchase frequency and budget most respondents purchased art *every few years* or *once a year*, and only 26 stated they purchase artwork *multiple times a year*. Younger collectors (especially Millennials) primarily purchased works under €5,000 with 55 choosing under €1,000, reinforcing interview findings about pricing sensitivity and the appeal of smaller works or editions.

#### 4.2.2 Collectors Gallery Engagement Preferences

The channels to which collectors purchased artwork were nearly equal in preference, gallery (n=39), art fair (n=42), and online platforms (n=37), illustrating the importance of hybrid presence. Chi-square tests showed Millennials are significantly more likely to buy online ( $\chi^2(3) = 14.604, p < .001$ ) but also more likely to make gallery purchases ( $\chi^2(3) = 14.402, p < .001$ ). This duality supports an omnichannel strategy.

52 respondents cited galleries and 47 cited social media as primary tools to discover new artists or artworks. Millennials especially leaned on social media and online platforms, echoing the importance of symbolic digital storytelling from interview themes. When asked about their top motivation to purchase an art piece, 94 respondents named artistic appeal/personal taste, while only 5 cited investment potential. This affirms theories on affective and symbolic consumption (Velthuis, 2005; Bourdieu, 1984) being central for younger audiences.

The *most* important gallery engagement features were personalized service (n=34) and online preview options (n=34), and followed by events (n=30). This reinforces the value of both digital facilitation and human relationship-building. Very little (n=2) expressed interest in interactive experiences and immersive formats, including VR previews and digital transparency, however each of those respondents were Millennials, aligning with the final interview theme on innovation. These test and results provide the foundational data to answer the four hypothesis based from the theoretical literature to enhance the qualitative interview data. Below are the results to answer each hypothesis:

H1: Generation vs. Collector Identity A chi-square test examining the relationship between generation and collector identity approached significance,  $\chi^2(3, N = 110) = 7.21, p = .065$ . A significant linear trend ( $p = .008$ ) was observed, indicating that younger participants were more likely to identify as emerging collectors, therefore confirming this hypothesis.

H2: Parental Influence vs. Collector Identity A linear regression model was used to test whether generation predicted having parents who collected art. The model was marginally non-significant overall,  $F(3,106) = 2.50$ ,  $p = .064$ ,  $R^2 = .066$ . However, Gen Z respondents were significantly more likely to report having parents who collected ( $B = 0.412$ ,  $p = .011$ ), suggesting a meaningful intergenerational effect.

H3: Generation vs. Engagement Platforms Generational segment was significantly associated with preferred platforms for art engagement. Social media discovery showed a strong association with age,  $\chi^2(3, N = 110) = 22.45$ ,  $p < .001$ , with a linear trend ( $p < .001$ ) indicating that younger collectors strongly preferred discovering art through social platforms confirming this hypothesis.

H4: Generation vs. Purchase Locations Significant relationships were found between age and both online platform purchases,  $\chi^2(3) = 14.60$ ,  $p = .002$ , and gallery purchases,  $\chi^2(3) = 14.40$ ,  $p = .002$ . Linear trends confirmed that younger collectors were more likely to buy online ( $p < .001$ ), while older collectors favored gallery purchases ( $p < .001$ ). No significant difference was found in art fair purchases across age groups, but these results still confirm this hypothesis as well.

## **5 Discussion & Conclusions**

This chapter summarizes the research findings, highlights theoretical and practical contributions, and proposes recommendations and future research directions. The study examined how contemporary galleries adapt engagement strategies to accommodate generational differences among art collectors, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative survey data to provide a mixed-methods perspective. The results are evaluated through the lens of arts marketing theory, generational segmentation, and symbolic value frameworks, directly addressing the study's central research question: To what extent, and in what ways, do contemporary art galleries need to adjust engagement strategies across different generations of art collectors?

Both qualitative and quantitative findings confirm that generational distinctions significantly influence art collecting behaviors and gallery engagement preferences. However, despite differences in how collectors prefer to interact, a consistent desire for personalization, trust-building, and access emerged across all age groups. Millennials favor hybrid engagement (digital discovery, in-person confirmation), value transparency, and are more price-sensitive, often identifying as emerging collectors. Generation X and Baby

Boomers prioritize personal relationships and curatorial authority, relying less on digital tools and more on institutional trust or personal networks. Galleries already recognize these distinctions and adjust their strategies accordingly, although the level of adaptation varies by gallery size, market position, and clientele. These patterns suggest that galleries must implement nuanced, multi-channel strategies that respond to both life-stage realities and generational values.

The research findings provide a robust answer to the main research question by identifying two key types of adjustments galleries must make: Strategic adjustment by channel and medium and tactical adjustment by tone, access, and price sensitivity. When considering strategic adjustments, galleries must blend in-person relationship-building with digital touchpoints. The younger generations are significantly more likely to engage initially through online platforms (Instagram, Artsy), but still place high value on exclusivity, previews, and artist access once trust is established. Galleries that use digital tools for discovery but convert interest through personalized interaction are more successful at engaging this cohort. This finding aligns with theories on Millennial consumer behavior, which emphasize the importance of transparency, accessibility, and ethical clarity in shaping purchasing decisions (Parment, 2013; Rojas & Lista, 2022). Therefore, when considering tactical adjustments Millennials expect transparency, inclusivity, and informal access, which requires galleries to rethink how they present both themselves and their artists. Initiatives like informal pop-ups, transparency in pricing, or flexible payment plans are tactical responses that make art collecting more accessible without undermining curatorial integrity. The study also confirms that these adjustments are not purely technological or generational they reflect broader shifts in consumption patterns, especially as symbolic value and emotional connection become more central to collecting behavior.

Generation X occupies a transitional space in the art market, bridging analog traditions and digital conveniences. While they are comfortable navigating digital platforms, they are more selective in their use of such tools for collecting. The data shows that Gen X respondents favor a hybrid model but differ from Millennials in the tone and structure of engagement they expect. Their preferences are less shaped by identity politics or peer visibility and more by professionalism, service quality, and curatorial credibility. Qualitative interviews confirm that galleries perceive Gen X collectors as relatively self-directed and private, often building long-term relationships quietly and without the need for overt digital engagement. From a strategic perspective, Gen X respondents respond well to clear communication, consistent value, and efficient service, whether online or in person. Unlike

Millennials, who may appreciate informal pop-ups and peer-oriented social content, Gen X tends to engage with more curated, information-driven touchpoints, such as online viewing rooms, newsletters, and personal outreach from trusted staff. Tactically, they are less price-sensitive than Millennials but more cautious than Boomers, often weighing aesthetic value with perceived return on investment or collectability. Therefore, galleries can best engage Gen X collectors through discreet personalization, educational content, and a stable rhythm of curated communication. This group rewards reliability, connoisseurship, and trust, and their continued relevance in the mid-to-high-end segments of the market makes them a key demographic for relationship-based gallery strategies.

Baby Boomers represent the most traditional segment of the collector base, favoring in-person engagement, long-term relationships, and curatorial authority. Both interview and survey data confirm that Boomers value direct connections with gallerists, exclusivity, and artist legitimacy, often cultivated over time through repeat contact and institutional endorsement. This generation is the least reliant on digital tools and exhibits low interest in online discovery channels such as Instagram or Artsy. Instead, they continue to frequent gallery spaces, attend previews, and maintain relationships with advisors or dealers, operating within a clientelist model rooted in trust, loyalty, and shared taste. Strategically, galleries engaging with Boomers must prioritize personalized service, exclusive access, and face-to-face interactions, whether through private previews, studio visits, or fair invitations. Tactically, this group expects professionalism and discretion, with little tolerance for overly informal communication styles. Boomers are the most financially stable of the three cohorts, and their collecting is often motivated by a sense of cultural stewardship or legacy, rather than experimentation or identity signaling. As such, traditional tools, such as print catalogues, private dinners, or art historical framing, continue to be effective. While not resistant to change, Boomers expect innovation to be framed within the values of quality, authenticity, and longevity. Galleries that maintain a strong offline presence while providing personalized care and access will continue to retain this loyal and influential demographic.

## **5.1 Contributions to the Field Theoretical & Practical**

This study contributes to the fields of cultural economics and arts marketing by integrating generational segmentation theory with empirical research on contemporary gallery practice. Building on foundational work by Colbert (2020) on cultural marketing, and Velthuis (2005) on symbolic value in the art market, the study advances current



understanding by exploring how perceptions of value and preferred engagement strategies vary across generational cohorts. While previous studies, such as Zolfagharian & Cortes (2011) and Rojas & Lista (2022), have investigated collector motivations, they often treat generations as secondary. This research adds nuance by showing how gallery practices must adapt to generationally distinct expectations, particularly around transparency, digital discovery, and trust-building, and links these expectations directly to strategic decision-making in galleries. Methodologically, the use of a mixed-methods approach, combining expert interviews with survey data, provides a more grounded and practice-oriented contribution to the literature.

On a practical level, the study offers actionable insights for gallery practitioners navigating intergenerational shifts in the collector base. It provides guidance on tailoring engagement strategies to distinct generational values without compromising curatorial integrity. Specifically, it emphasizes the importance of combining exclusivity and relationship-building with transparency, flexibility, and digital fluency, particularly when cultivating relationships with younger or first-time collectors. By bridging theoretical perspectives with the lived realities of galleries and collectors, the study offers a timely contribution to both scholarship and professional practice.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The findings of this study yield several actionable recommendations for contemporary galleries navigating generational shifts in collector engagement. First, galleries are advised to adopt hybrid engagement models that strategically combine digital discovery tools, such as Instagram, Online Viewing Rooms (OVRs), and curated newsletters, with personalized in-person follow-ups, such as studio visits, private previews, or informal events. This approach allows galleries to meet the expectations of digital-native younger collectors while preserving the intimacy and trust valued by older generations. Secondly, the implementation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools can support more tailored outreach by allowing galleries to track collector preferences, past purchases, and engagement history. These systems not only enhance efficiency but also strengthen relational marketing efforts by enabling more personalized communication. Additionally, galleries should consider offering greater transparency around pricing and introducing flexible payment options, such as installment plans. These measures are particularly attractive to Millennials and emerging collectors, who often operate within tighter financial constraints but remain eager to engage

meaningfully with the art market. Moreover, the creation of accessible entry points, such as smaller editioned works, experimental pop-ups, or crossover cultural events, can help lower the threshold for first-time collectors without undermining curatorial seriousness or exclusivity. By innovating around presentation and access while remaining grounded in artistic quality, galleries can expand their audience while maintaining brand value and trust. From a policy perspective, cultural institutions and funding bodies could support this shift by offering resources that enable smaller galleries to develop digital infrastructure or training.

### **5.3 Limitations of the study and Future Directions for Research**

While this study offers valuable insights into how galleries adjust engagement strategies across generations, several limitations must be acknowledged. The overall survey sample size (N=110) was modest, while sufficient for exploratory, mixed-methods research, a larger and more demographically balanced sample would increase the reliability of generational comparisons and allow for deeper statistical analysis. Additionally, the qualitative data was drawn primarily from low-end galleries based in The Netherlands and the United States. While this segment was intentionally selected for its accessibility to a broader range of collectors, it limits the findings across the full spectrum of the western art market. Engagement strategies, motivations, and buyer expectations likely differ substantially between lower-end and high-end (blue-chip) galleries, where exclusivity, institutional validation, and different pricing logics dominate. Likewise, geographic location plays a critical role. Collectors in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East may exhibit very different behaviors, shaped by distinct cultural norms, market infrastructures, and digital adoption patterns. Therefore, while the findings provide a focused and timely view of Western, low-market gallery practices, they should not be interpreted as generally representative of the global art ecosystem. It is also important to note that collector motivations are complex and multifaceted. While generational segmentation provides a useful analytical lens, it should not be interpreted deterministically. There is considerable behavioral overlap among collectors, particularly among those who are more culturally embedded or highly engaged, regardless of age. These nuances call for caution in overgeneralizing from generational labels alone.

While this study provides a timely and detailed account of gallery engagement strategies across generational lines, several areas remain open for further exploration. Most notably, the study did not adopt a clear stance on Generation Z due to their limited current

representation in the collector market. However, as this cohort matures, future research should investigate how their digital fluency, social values, and economic realities shape their art consumption patterns. Expanding research into non-Western markets would also provide a more globally representative view, particularly given the rising influence of collectors in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Additionally, longitudinal studies that track collector behavior and gallery engagement strategies over time would offer valuable insight into how relationships evolve and which tactics prove sustainable. These studies could also examine the life cycle of collector development, from initial purchase to long-term patronage. Finally, future research may benefit from a deeper focus on the economic dynamics of engagement, particularly how symbolic value, pricing strategies, and affordability interact across collector demographics. By understanding not only what drives engagement but also what enables financial commitment, researchers and practitioners alike can contribute to a more inclusive, resilient, and responsive art market.

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**Appendix A: Table 4.1: Participating Galleries Preliminary Information**



	GALLERY	LOCATIONS	YEAR FOUNDED	SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS	MARKET
1	Nunu Fine Art	New York/ Tiwan	2014	7.9K	Primary
2	Sargents Daughters	New York	2014	80k	Primary
3	GRIMM	NY, The Netherlands, London + Consultant in Hong Kong	2005	84K	Primary & Secondary for represented artists
4	KochxBos Gallery	The Netherlands	2005	6.4k	Primary
5	Kyas Art Salon	The Netherlands, Japan	2016 in EU	1k	Primary
6	Jaski Gallery	The Netherlands, Bangkok	1972	6k	Primary & Secondary for represented artists
7	Heejsteck Gallery	The Netherlands	2007 & 2021	1.8k	Primary
8	Gallery Vriend Van Bavink	The Netherlands	2010	7k	Primary
9	Gallerie Caroline OBreen	The Netherlands	2015	9.1k	Primary
10	Martin Van Zomeren	The Netherlands	2005	5.7k	Primary
11	Stigter van Doesburg	The Netherlands	2001	5.7k	Primary

## Appendix B: Interview Guide

### Introduction

- Thank them for their time and explain the purpose of the study.
- Confirm consent for recording the interview and form is filled out.
- Briefly explain the topics to be covered and emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers.

### Background & Context

Can you tell me about your role in this gallery and how long you've been in the industry?

How would you describe your gallery's positioning in the market (e.g., primary vs. secondary market, emerging vs. established artists, pricing range)?

About how many works do you sell per quarter?

What percentage of those sales would you estimate are from repeat clients?

What is the average price range of the artworks you sell?

what demographic group do you consider to be your main clientele?

### Consumer Behavior & Millennial Buyers

Have you noticed any shifts in the demographics of your buyers in recent years?

How do millennial collectors differ from older generations in terms of:

Purchasing frequency and price sensitivity?

Art preferences (medium, style, emerging vs. established artists)?

Decision-making process (impulse vs. research-based)?

Do you see any other differences not mentioned?

Do you believe millennials approach art more as an investment or as a lifestyle purchase?

### **Engagement & Marketing Strategies**

What are the main marketing strategies you use for the gallery and artwork?

What strategies has your gallery used to attract millennial collectors?

Have you incorporated experiential marketing (e.g., events, immersive exhibitions, pop-ups)?

If so, how effective has this been?

What role does social media and digital marketing play in your gallery's engagement with younger buyers? How many times do you post a week?

Have you explored online sales platforms (Artsy, Instagram, NFT marketplaces)? If so, how has this impacted sales?

How important are alternative payment options (e.g., installment plans, fractional ownership) for millennial buyers?

### **Challenges & Opportunities**

Do you think traditional galleries should adapt to new consumer habits? Why or why not? And How?

What are the biggest challenges in attracting and retaining millennial buyers?

Are there any specific strategies that have failed or underperformed in engaging millennials?

How do you see the role of technology (e.g., virtual galleries, AR/VR, blockchain) shaping the future of art sales?

### **Closing & Additional Insights**

If you could implement one major innovation to attract more millennial buyers, what would it be?

Is there anything else you would like to add based on all the questions so far?

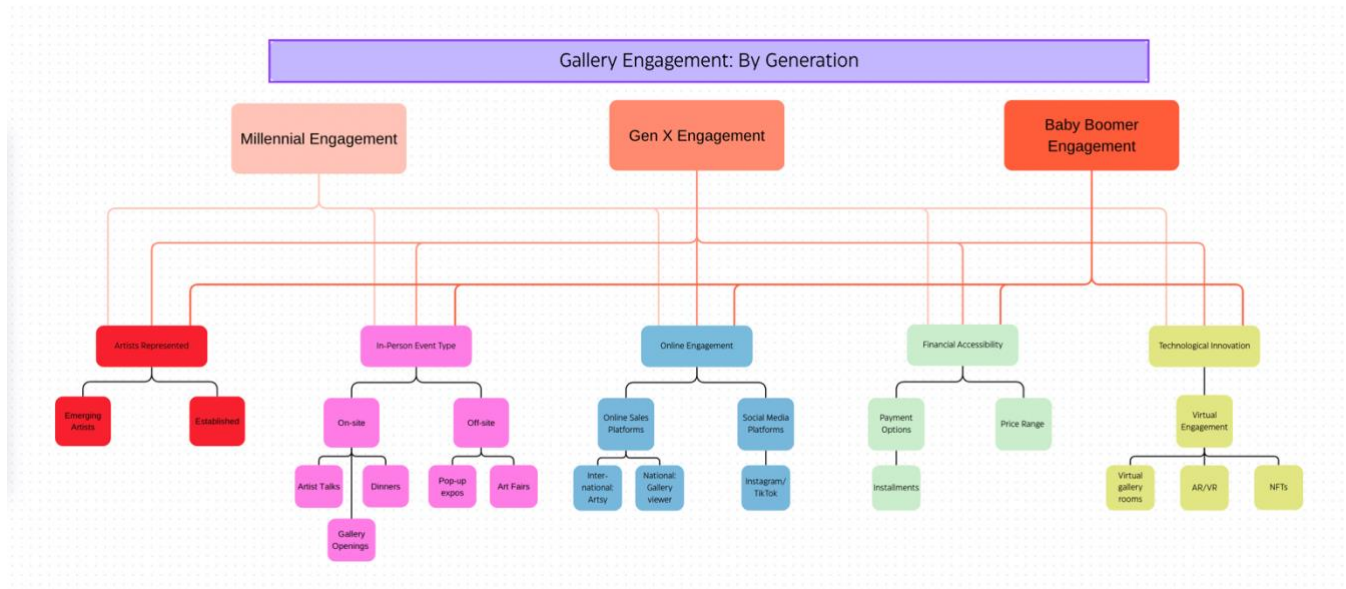
**Would you be open to sending my survey out to the clients on your mailing list?**

It is anonymous

It will ask about their consumer behavior and preferences

- The results will potentially be useful for designing strategies moving forward and I would be more than happy to share my findings with you

## Appendix C: Concept Map



## Appendix D: Codebook

Code Theme	Sub-code	Definition	Examples From Transcript
Art advisor guidance		When a collector receives guidance from a third party on what artworks to purchase	if you're a new collector, where to start, and then an advisor can really help. So I do think, yeah, a lot of younger collectors who are serious about this work with an advisor to help them, yeah, shape the collection
Art dealer guidance		When a collector receives guidance from the gallery on what artworks to purchase	But it's really funny, they also listen to what you have to say, and you can persuade them to buy this or buy that, and then create their collection. Okay, so they take my advice sometimes,
Gallery Reputation		Concerns about the gallery reputation, positive or negative.	so we do participate in international art fairs, and once we're there people, they use mainly artsy as like, a validation check, basically to just check, Does this gallery exist outside of this art fair
International Expansion		The gallery shows intention for international expansion	I joined in February and in May 2017 we got the keys of our first gathering New York. By now, we've also changed locations in New York, but

			yeah, so we've had that location there since 2017 and in 22 we opened a third international venue in London as well. Yeah, so, by the Yeah, by now, we've three international operating
Market Growth		Techniques to grow within the market the gallery currently stands in.	I joined in February and in May 2017 we got the keys of our first gathering New York. By now, we've also changed locations in New York, but yeah, so we've had that location there since 2017 and in 22 we opened a third international venue in London as well. Yeah, so, by the Yeah, by now, we've three international operating
	Gallery Perspective: Art gallery practices	The functional practices of the individual gallery. IE, market segmentation, price range, average # of artworks sold, etc.	Yeah, it's not, like, put it in your basket. Yeah, we don't do that because I don't think that's very art gallery, like, maybe it's a little bit old fashioned, but I don't like it.
	Gallery Perspective: Visibility Concerns	Concerns about being too public, or seen as mainstream.	think also, the more visibility we get through social media and technology, people with money are more cautious of their visibility, because typically, people Do not want you to know what they buy.
Art market			
	Art market: Art market dynamics	Patterns related to the fluctuation to the art market	But things really changing, technology, the pandemic, technology, there has been a lot of unusual disruptions to the market.
	Art market: Primary Market	Gallery functions in the primary art market	Yes, it's almost exclusively primary market. Yeah. So we are for like, young and up and coming artists, mainly,
	Art market: Secondary Market	Gallery functions in the secondary art market	And if you look at the secondary market, also, the prices are way higher. A painting behind me is like 400,000 euro. So obviously the market there, they are a little bit more mature.
	Art market: Trends in collecting	Patterns related to trends within the collectors preferences	What changed, for example, in the 90s and early 2000s we made a lot of additions, an addition of 150, or 200 and the artist assigned it and numbered it and easy. Now that's it is a bit gone, but the So nowadays, people really want originals. They want one offs, or just really special it is, or lower edition.
Artist Represented			
	Artist Represented: Emerging artists	Gallery represents emerging artists new to selling their work in the gallery-sphere	So we are for like, young and up and coming artists, mainly, so also, if you look at our exhibitions, like we have, like exhibitions in the gallery, but I

			think the main avenue for our like business model is doing the art fairs.
	Artist Represented: Established Artists	Gallery represents established artists who have a solid following	We represent by now, almost 40 international artists, both emerging and established.
Audience engagement		Methods to create audience engagement	Yes, there is, I think, in every location, there's like a core group of visitors who just come to every opening. Yeah, yes, but then there's also a fan of the artist. So for example, the young, hot artists from New York attract a whole different crowd there than they would here, because here they're unknown to some people, and that's and vice versa. So we bring some Dutch artists to New York for their first show. No one knows him. It's a different yeah, those are different openings,
Buying Experience		Mentions of buyer experience for collectors in general	The only experience we've had so far with millennial buyers is that they come to the booth and they say, that one, yeah, we would like to have that one. And then they get presented with the buying contract. They sign it, they take pictures of themselves making the purchase. They're very happy about it, yeah, you know. So it's really like the buying experience, like the buying itself is an experience
Collector Behavior		Patterns seen with collector behavior	So example, for example, on the affordable offer, we only do the primary market, and of course, that's still 10,000 euro. But those people, they just, you. Buy it because they like it, yeah, yeah, and not necessarily for an investment or for a collection they're making.
Decision Making		Decision making process when collectors purchase artworks	
	Decision Making: Decorative Aspect	When collectors purchase art for the functional decorative aspects	Yeah, it's more a decorative aspect. But yeah, there are also collectors who really have a taste and really fall for something specific. And yeah, but the majority
	Decision Making: Impulsive	When collectors impulsively buy art	They're very easy to buy because they probably think, okay, I want to make, I want a beautiful couch, and I want an artwork so they buy very easily,
	Decision Making: Quality Assurance	Collectors looking for or researching the quality of the art	It's not people look like I need something from my hallway. I take anything. People do tend to do their research. Yes, still, if they love it, they want to make sure that it's that the price is fair, because it's, of course, it's a very subjective thing.

	Decision Making: Research driven	When collectors take time and do their due diligence	if a baby boomer collector, okay, needs eight reference points from me, yeah, for the figure, then the millennial needs four.
Repeating Customers		Collectors who have previously purchased art from the gallery	we sold most expensive works to repeating clients and but we sort a lot of what more affordable works to new clients
Social engagement		Social engagement aspect of the art dealer industry	Yeah, I don't think they would go crazy and they will never, ever compete with real in person. Buy, no, I mean buying. I mean because when you buy a piece of art, you also buy a story, you also buy an experience, meeting the dealer, meeting the artist, maybe going to the artist studio. You know, that's all in it.
Financial Accessibility			
	Financial Accessibility: Payment options	Gallery provides various payment options	so now I do, just in terms Okay, and it's my own risk. Yeah, it's actually quite, yeah, not as still. Able system, but it works, and I have some clients who are really happy with that.
	Financial Accessibility: Payment Plans	Gallery provides monthly payment plans	
	Financial Accessibility: Price range higher level	Price range of artwork sold in the gallery lands on the higher end of the scale within the "lower end" portion of the art market: around 50,000	We've worked with him from the beginning of the gallery so over 20 years, and his canvases is surprised at 350,000 to, \$100,000
	Financial Accessibility: Price range lower level	Price range of artwork sold in the gallery lands on the higher end of the scale within the "lower end" portion of the art market: around 1,000	affordable for the affordable, yeah, I can only talk about the Affordable Art Fair.
	Financial Accessibility: Price range Mid level	Price range of artwork sold in the gallery lands on the higher end of the scale within the "lower end" portion of the art market: around 20,000	yeah, and like the quarter before, normally, I think it's about 30 to 50 per quarter, but it's all price range, diverse from 300 euros to 20,000 euros.
	Financial Accessibility: Price range of art	General price range the gallery sells in.	yeah, and like the quarter before, normally, I think it's about 30 to 50 per quarter, but it's all price range, diverse from 300 euros to 20,000 euros.
Financial perspectives			
	Financial perspectives: Concerns about profitability	Gallery discusses financial risks and concerns about profits	You don't make a lot of money because you have to pay the artist. So you pay your booth, half of the money goes to the artist after you pay the booth. That usually go home with some money. But it's, it's more of promotional things,
	Financial perspectives:	Gallery discusses their financial considerations as a	but it was a bit too big. Again, it's very hard. It it's a very good, I think

	Financial considerations	business, choices in pricing, considerations for the market etc.	it's a very good business model for somebody who's handy with Instagram to do all the smaller companies. Because if you, if you hire like a huge Instagram company who's was doing that for you, it's like a huge amount and you cannot afford it
	Financial perspectives: Investment perspectives	Opinion of Collectors with an investment mindset.	I think there has been like a little shift where a lot of people started to view art as like an asset, as like an investment, as like, you know, something they hope would might go up in in value over time.
	Financial perspectives: Socioeconomic factors	Acknowledging socioeconomic factors effect the purchase behavior of the collectors	But then there's the other portion that are like frequent buyers, and they are usually the ones who have come from a lot of money and come from a collecting family, yeah, I feel like that is a huge portion of millennial collectors. Or like, Oh, my parents have this enormous collection, and now my mom or dad or both want me to start my own collection,
	Financial perspectives: Wealth distribution	Wealth distribution between generations of the collectors	But then there's the other portion that are like frequent buyers, and they are usually the ones who have come from a lot of money and come from a collecting family, yeah, I feel like that is a huge portion of millennial collectors. Or like, Oh, my parents have this enormous collection, and now my mom or dad or both want me to start my own collection,
Demographics		The general demographics of the gallery consumer base.	it sounds like, I don't want to answer the question, but it's really everybody, yeah, I got young people. It's mixed. It's a mix.
Generational dynamics			
	Generational dynamics: Age-related dynamics	Age related dynamics of engagement	Yeah, so the primary market, people tend to be a little bit younger, because it's also from now. It's the artist from now. And if you look at the secondary market, also, the prices are way higher. A painting behind me is like 400,000 euro. So obviously the market there, they are a little bit more mature.
	Generational dynamics: Baby Boomer	Mentioning of boomer collectors	A painting behind me is like 400,000 euro. So obviously the market there, they are a little bit more mature.
	Generational dynamics: Demographic shifts	Change in demographics in terms of age over the years	Generation X and Boomer, yeah, okay, that is the main group, yeah, yeah. I do see a growing number of millennials. Okay, yeah, I do see that, but that is, and I really like that change. And that also that group is

			really nice because they're, yeah, well, they could become big buyers
	Generational dynamics: Gen X	Mentioning gen x collectors	Generation X and Boomer, yeah, okay, that is the main group, yeah, yeah. I do see a growing number of millennials. Okay, yeah, I do see that, but that is, and I really like that change. And that also that group is really nice because they're, yeah, well, they could become big buyers
	Generational dynamics: Generational Collectors	Collectors with a family history of collecting	But then there's the other portion that are like frequent buyers, and they are usually the ones who have come from a lot of money and come from a collecting family, yeah, I feel like that is a huge portion of millennial collectors. Or like, Oh, my parents have this enormous collection, and now my mom or dad or both want me to start my own collection,
	Generational dynamics: Generational differences	Collector behavior differences by generation	Generation X and Boomer, yeah, okay, that is the main group, yeah, yeah. I do see a growing number of millennials. Okay, yeah, I do see that, but that is, and I really like that change. And that also that group is really nice because they're, yeah, well, they could become big buyers
	Generational dynamics: Generational identity	General aspects of a specific generations behavior	
	Generational dynamics: Generational influence	Influence of the art market by generations	So I would say that like, a good chance that we have, like, a millennial collector who's especially like a frequent collector, is because their parents also, like, have taught them this skill, essentially, and they have the generational wealth to afford it.
	Generational dynamics: Millennial clients	Mentioning Millennial collectors	Generation X and Boomer, yeah, okay, that is the main group, yeah, yeah. I do see a growing number of millennials. Okay, yeah, I do see that, but that is, and I really like that change. And that also that group is really nice because they're, yeah, well, they could become big buyers
In-Person Event			
	In-Person Event: Art Fairs	Participation in art fairs	We do, we we have, we work with a quite with a small group of artists, maybe 15 to 20 artists. We do the major art fairs in the Netherlands, like TEFAF and pan. We also do the Affordable Art Fair in Amsterdam to reach a younger audience.
	In-Person Event: Artist Talks	Hosting artists talks	I do a lot of extra things, but that is well, for new people to come into, get into the gallery. Fairs are the best.



			Fairs are the best. Okay, yeah, and then, but to engage with your collective also, yeah, yeah. That is more. I do a lot of extra events, like artist talks and then combined with some kind of, yeah, walking dinner, or we do studio visits.
	In-Person Event: Dinners	Hosting collector dinners at the gallery	Yeah, we'd have a big table. We'll be sitting here at first with our mouth caps, and then, because it was a big space, champagne. And then the Mars caps went off. We're like, Yeah, we have enough distance now. And then they were like, Oh, I like to have that painting, and they will buy it and we sell.
	In-Person Event: Event promotion	Actively promoting in person events	We do, we we have, we work with a quite with a small group of artists, maybe 15 to 20 artists. We do the major art fairs in the Netherlands, like TEFAF and pan. We also do the Affordable Art Fair in Amsterdam to reach a younger audience.
	In-Person Event: Exhibition Opening	Hosting exhibition openings at the gallery space	Four to five. Four to five. Yeah, this year we have four.
	In-Person Event: Off-site Event	Hosting events outside the gallery space	We do, we we have, we work with a quite with a small group of artists, maybe 15 to 20 artists. We do the major art fairs in the Netherlands, like TEFAF and pan. We also do the Affordable Art Fair in Amsterdam to reach a younger audience.
	In-Person Event: On-site event	Hosting events in the gallery space	I do a lot of extra things, but that is well, for new people to come into, get into the gallery. Fairs are the best. Fairs are the best. Okay, yeah, and then, but to engage with your collective also, yeah, yeah. That is more. I do a lot of extra events, like artist talks and then combined with some kind of, yeah, walking dinner, or we do studio visits.
	In-Person Event: Pop-up event	Hosting pop-up events in collaboration with an off-site space	I like to do that, especially in Asia, because we don't really we have a very small venue there, but it's really small. So if we want to go bigger, we do, like, pop ups. I know a lot of Rich Asians with hotels, office buildings, so that's what we do
Marketing & Sales			
	Marketing & Sales: Collaboration	Utilizing collaborations as a marketing strategy	
	Marketing & Sales: Collector engagement	Marketing and sales strategies specific to engaging new and past clientele	I do a lot of extra things, but that is well, for new people to come into, get into the gallery. Fairs are the best. Fairs are the best. Okay, yeah, and then, but to engage with your

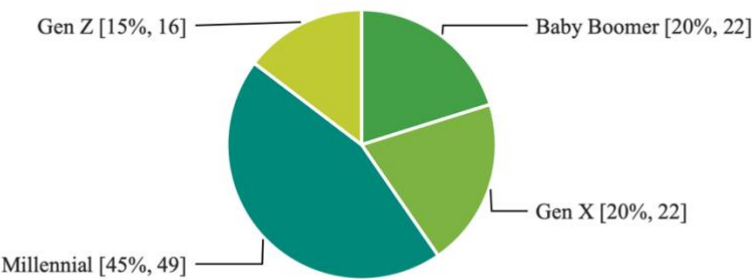
			collective also, yeah, yeah. That is more. I do a lot of extra events, like artist talks and then combined with some kind of, yeah, walking dinner, or we do studio visits.
	Marketing & Sales: Event participation	Utilizing events as marketing and sales strategies	I do a lot of extra things, but that is well, for new people to come into, get into the gallery. Fairs are the best. Fairs are the best. Okay, yeah, and then, but to engage with your collective also, yeah, yeah. That is more. I do a lot of extra events, like artist talks and then combined with some kind of, yeah, walking dinner, or we do studio visits.
	Marketing & Sales: Marketing strategy	Marketing and sales strategies general	Uh, we are on artsy and art net, okay, but I must say that's more for advertising. The actual sales happen through our own channels.
	Marketing & Sales: Merchandising	Marketing and sales strategies specific to ancillary services like merchandise	We do make art books. I think they're very important, because if you make a sale, people like to see a book as well. You know, those are the kinds of things we do.
	Marketing & Sales: Peer relationships	Utilizing social circles and peer relationships to grow sales	I mean, I have so many friends who work in galleries I can think of like four people right now who'd be really good. I would say that two of them are definitely on the higher end of things, but are still like amazing people and actually work way more in sales than I do
	Marketing & Sales: Preference for human interaction	Gallery has a preference for conducting business in person	I think I do still, because we talking about digitalization, I'm an honest believer in the physical space of the gallery. I think online can never replace the physical experience.
	Marketing & Sales: Sales interaction	Gallery's general sales communication preference	I think online can never replace the physical experience. Yeah, it only works as a marketing tool to lower the bar, but in the end, not for sales, necessarily people, if they already, like, know the artist or they'll buy it anyway, but coming to the gallery.
	Marketing & Sales: Sales strategy	Strategy specific to increase sales	I think online can never replace the physical experience. Yeah, it only works as a marketing tool to lower the bar, but in the end, not for sales, necessarily people, if they already, like, know the artist or they'll buy it anyway, but coming to the gallery.
	Marketing & Sales: Sales volume	How many works the gallery sells	So hard, I know I think, I think we sell between 100-200 artworks a year.
	Marketing & Sales: Social engagement	Social engagement and promotion through word of mouth and referral	So we might host like a Tango dancing evening, or for a while we had a collaboration with Airbnb experiences where we hosted, like,

			live music concerts with a very beautiful grand piano in the gallery space. So then you bring people from different worlds into the art space.
	Marketing & Sales: Targeted marketing	Marketing and sales strategies with a targeted audience	We do, we we have, we work with a quite with a small group of artists, maybe 15 to 20 artists. We do the major art fairs in the Netherlands, like TEFAF and pan. We also do the Affordable Art Fair in Amsterdam to reach a younger audience.
Online Engagement			
	Online Engagement: Instagram/TikTok	Gallery opinion on Instagram engagement	we have by far the biggest, the widest reach on Instagram. I think there's 80,000 followers. We've never done paid advertising. So these are all organic, actual followers. And yeah, that's by far the biggest reach that we have to either announce new shows.
	Online Engagement: International Sales Platforms	Use of international sales platforms, i.e. artsy	I am, I am on art net, for example, that's the only one. I used to do first dibs and artsy and all those. But it costs a lot of money, yeah, and I didn't see any results with it, so we don't do that anymore.
	Online Engagement: National sales platforms	Use of local/national sales platforms, i.e. gallery viewer	gallery viewer, that's the only one I do. Okay, because artsy is in my price range. It's not that interesting, and I'm also not international enough,
	Online Engagement: Online Sales Platforms	Experience with online sales platforms in general	I am on art net, for example, that's the only one. I used to do first dibs and artsy and all those. But it costs a lot of money, yeah, and I didn't see any results with it, so we don't do that anymore. And what we do ourselves, of course, we have website to social media.
	Online Engagement: Social media management	Gallery's methods of social media management	We should be more active, but I'm also I don't like to post. I can do it, but I don't like to post every day or every other day an artwork, because it's also quite flat. So we when we have a new exhibition, there's a new exhibition coming in next week, we make a video.
Technological Innovations			
	Technological Innovations: AI influences	Opinion on AI influences on the art market	I feel that the pandemic and technology, you know, we're talking about the online platforms to talk about AI and this is still just happening, or just AI for just starting has caused much, really, more major or, yeah, I think more structural, more fundamental changes, yeah, and I don't think any of us sees where this is going.

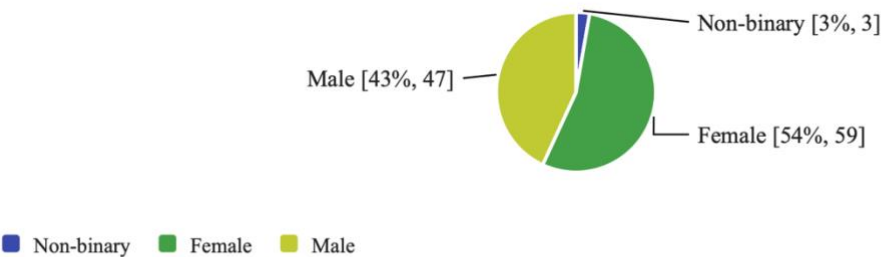
	Technological Innovations: Interest in innovation	Showing interest in innovative business practices with advancing tech	We have an artist that we showed some digital AI made videos. Yeah, then for me, a video, this is video art. Doesn't necessarily mean that it's digital art. Yeah, of course, all video nowadays is normally digital, okay, but we don't really have, like online, digital images that you can this kind of stuff.
	Technological Innovations: NFTs	Opinion on NFTs	So the NFT won that night from the painting. But I think now, since it's all collapsed now, so it's now, it's worth nothing anymore
	Technological Innovations: No interest/hesitation	Either no interest or hesitation about incorporating tech innovations in their business practices	got a lot of offers on those things last week, actually, again, that you can zoom in and walk around. And I don't, I don't believe, yeah, I don't believe in it.
	Technological Innovations: Use of technology	Actively using technological innovations now	so open a little bit to the tech, but it has to be good, yes, exactly the quality. The quality has to be good.
	Technological Innovations: Virtual gallery rooms	Opinion of virtual gallery rooms	got a lot of offers on those things last week, actually, again, that you can zoom in and walk around. And I don't, I don't believe, yeah, I don't believe in it.
	Technological Innovations: VR/AR	Opinion of AR/VR use in gallery industry	Well, we had like ideas about, like, virtual galleries, even with like, really, like virtual reality, yes, and those type of things like there, there are many avenues that you can can walk down. But it's not like on our main agenda,

## Appendix E: Survey Response Overview

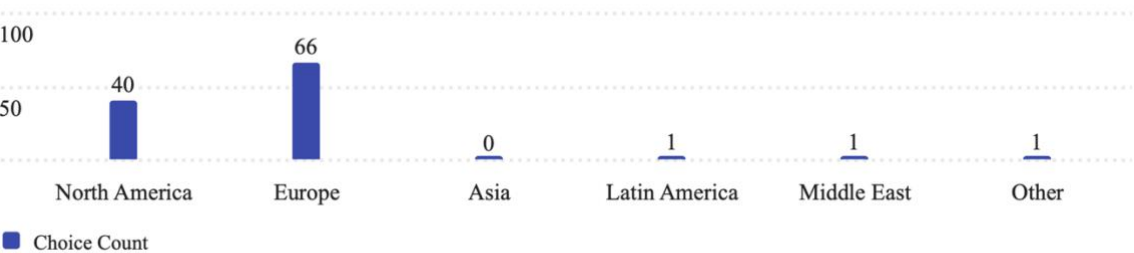
Q1 - Please select your age range



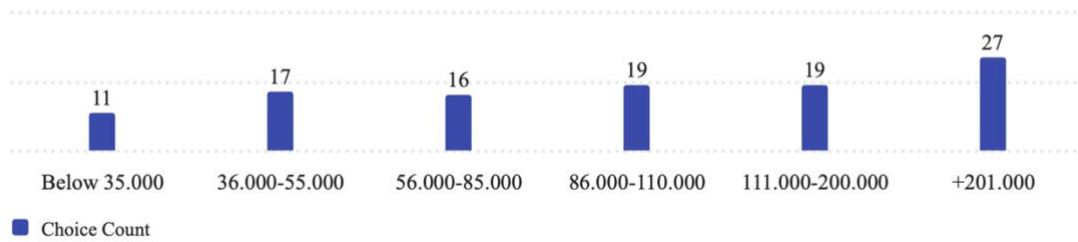
Q2 - What is your gender?



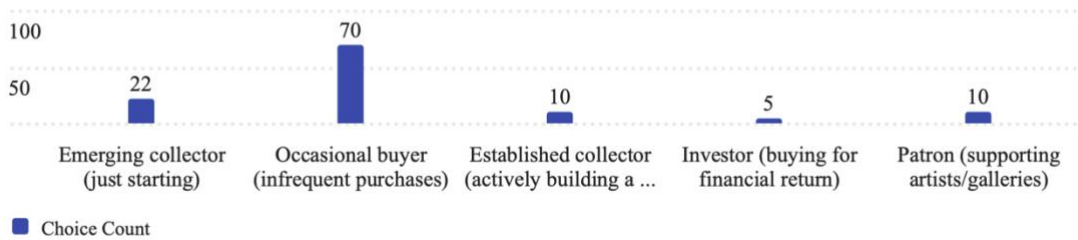
Q3 - Where do you primarily reside?



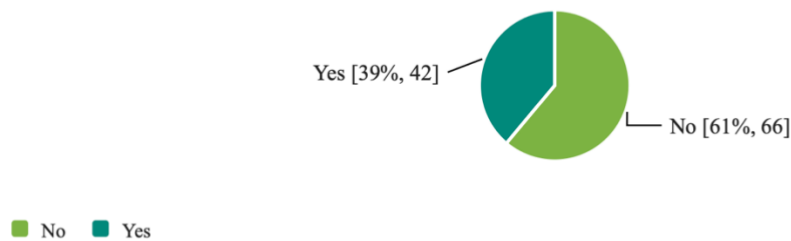
#### Q4 - What is your estimated annual income in Euros?



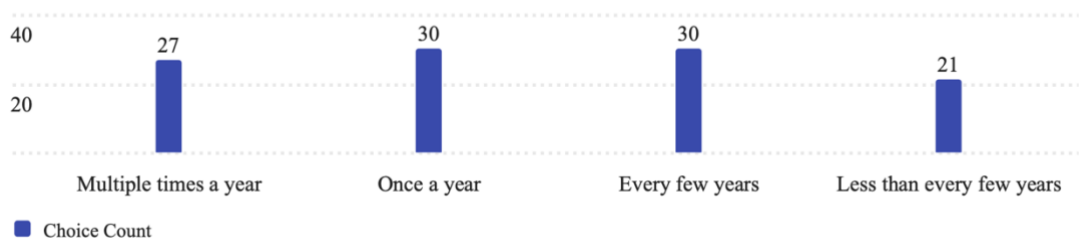
#### Q5 - How do you primarily identify as an art buyer? (Select all that apply)



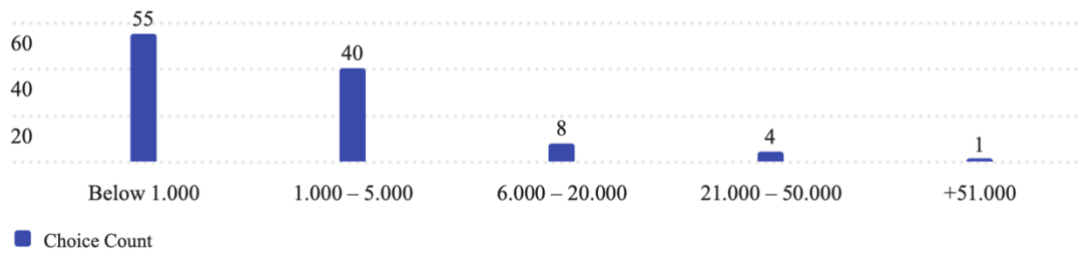
#### Q21 - Did one or both of your parents collect art?



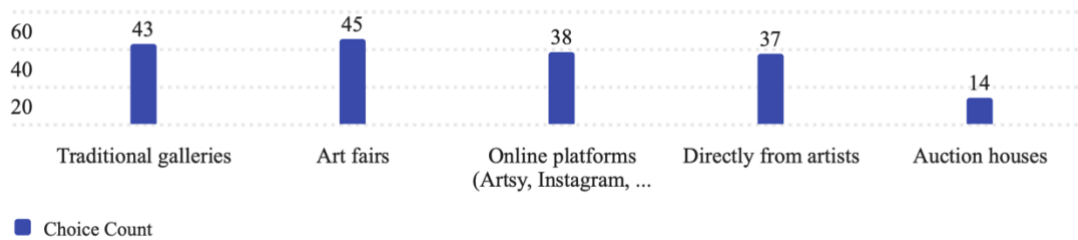
#### Q6 - How often do you purchase art?



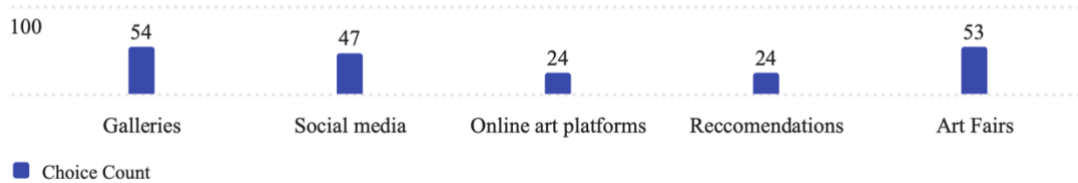
### Q7 - What price range do you typically purchase within (Euros)?



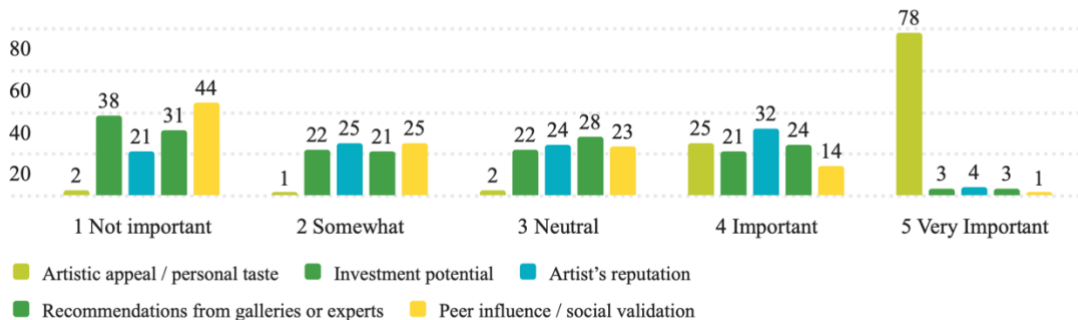
### Q10 - Where do you primarily purchase art? Choose all that apply.



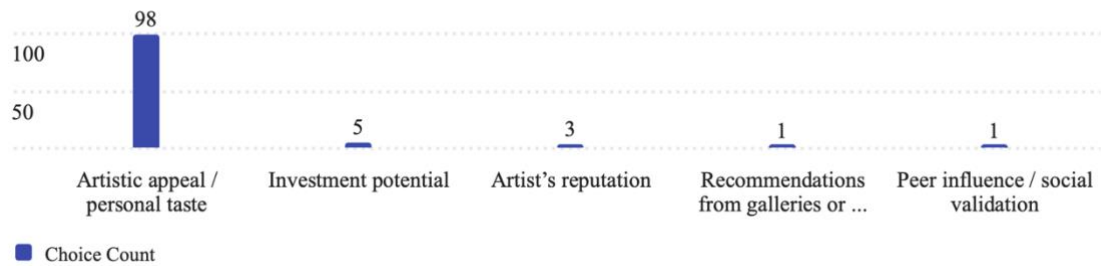
### Q11 - How do you typically discover new artworks or artists? (Select all that apply)



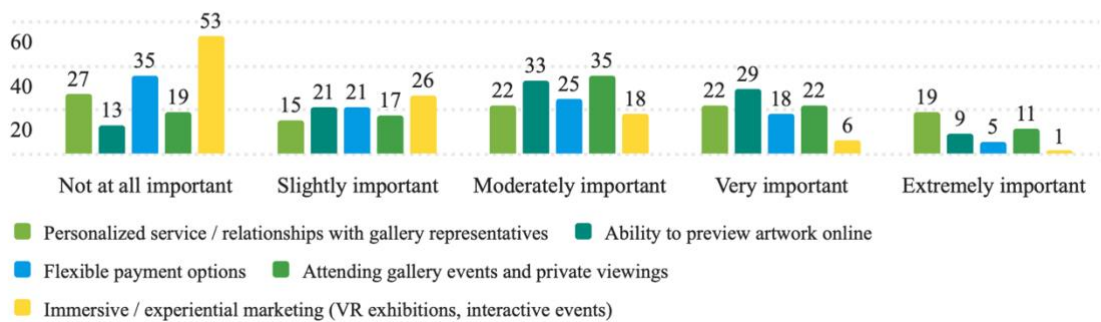
### Q9 - To what extent do the following influence your decision to purchase art?



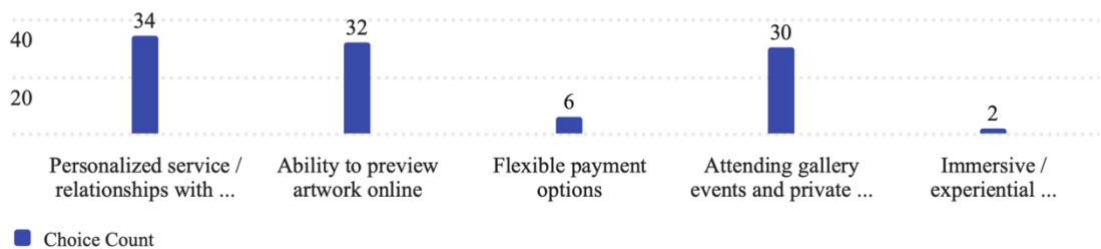
### Q19 - Which of the above influences are most important to you?



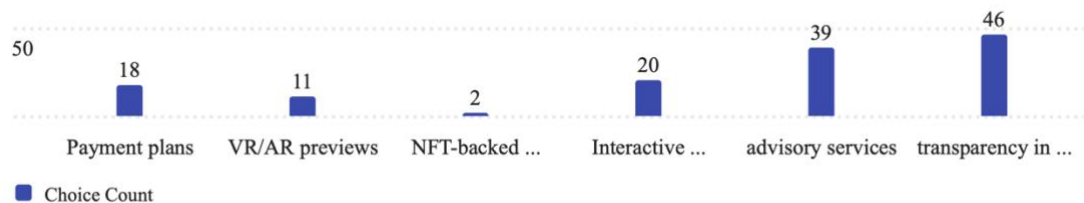
### Q12 - How important are the following factors when engaging with a gallery?



### Q20 - Which above factor is the most important overall?

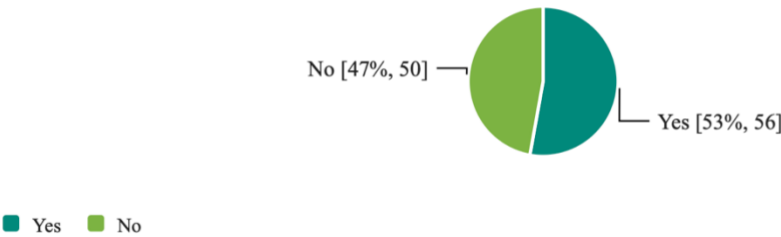


### Q15 - You would be more likely to purchase art from a gallery that offers the following.. (Select all that apply)

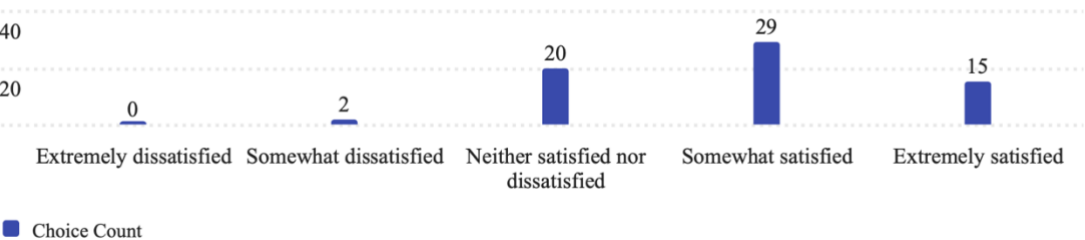




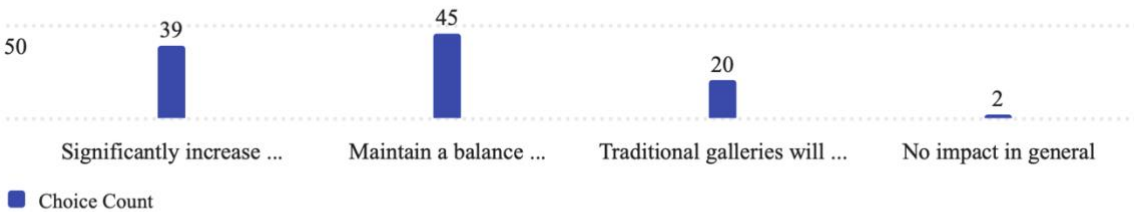
Q13 - Have you ever purchased art through an online platform?



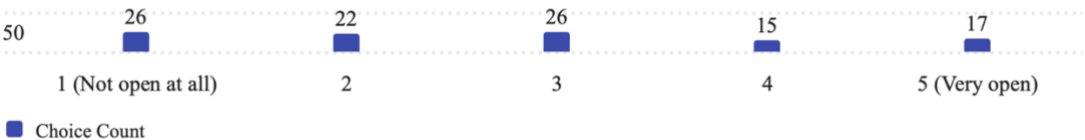
Q14\_ If Yes, how satisfied were you with with the purchase experience?



Q16 - How do you think technology will impact the future of art collecting?



Q17 - On a scale of 1-5, how open are you to exploring new ways of collecting art (e.g., blockchain, digital ownership, AI-curated recommendations)?



## Appendix F: Interview Data By Theme and Gallery

Theme	Brief Description	# of Galleries (out of 11)	Gallery Numbers
<b>1. Relationship-Based Engagement</b>	Core strategy emphasizing trust, long-term relationships, exclusivity	11/11	1–11
Includes previews, artist visits, walkthroughs	Personalized gestures used to build loyalty	9/11	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Hosting community-building events	Social/cultural gatherings to deepen engagement	9/11	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
<b>2. Generational Behavior Differences</b>	Recognition of varying motivations & habits between Boomers, Gen X, Millennials	11/11	1–11
Millennials more ethics-, access-, and experience-driven	Prefer transparency, artist connection, aesthetics	7/11	3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Boomers prefer in-person, reputation, connoisseurship	Driven by legacy, cultural capital, elite access	7/11	3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11
Younger buyers prefer smaller works or payment plans	Indicates financial constraints and different purchasing logic	7/11	3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
<b>3. Strategic Use of Digital Platforms (with Caution)</b>	Digital tools used for visibility, storytelling, and initial contact	11/11	1–11
Artsy used for exposure, not primary sales	Sales still happen via direct relationships	4/5 using Artsy	2, 3, 6, 7,
Millennials use Instagram for discovery	Initial entry point, followed by direct engagement	6/11	1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10
Boomers prefer non-digital contact	Phone, email, or in-person	5/11	2, 3, 6, 8, 10
<b>4. Visibility &amp; Reputation as Gatekeeping Tools</b>	Fairs, press, and exclusivity as symbolic capital & quality indicators	10/11	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11
“Too visible” may harm exclusivity	Larger concern for well-established galleries	3/11	3, 10, 11
Strategic fair participation for validation	Not all fairs seen as equally beneficial	5/11	3, 6, 10, 11

## Appendix G: Consent Form Template

### CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

**STUDY TITLE:** Understanding the Engagement Strategies of Millennial Art Collectors

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

Margaux Benoist d’Eteveaud  
Erasmus University Rotterdam  
Email: [695456mb@eur.nl](mailto:695456mb@eur.nl)

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### DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

You are invited to participate in a research study on the engagement of millennial art collectors. The purpose of this study is to explore strategies used to engage millennial buyers within the art market and assess their effectiveness. Your participation will involve a semi-structured interview, during which I will ask questions related to marketing strategies, digital engagement, purchasing behavior, etc.

With your permission, the interview will be audio and/or video recorded for documentation purposes. The collected data will be used solely for academic purposes, including research, academic conferences, and publications.

---

### RISKS AND BENEFITS

Participation in this study involves minimal risk. The recorded data will be securely stored and will not be publicly accessible. If you agree, your name and the name of the organization you represent may be referenced in the study. If you prefer to remain anonymous, a pseudonym will be used instead.

While there is no direct financial compensation for participation, your insights will contribute to valuable research in the field of cultural management and art market engagement strategies.

---

### TIME COMMITMENT

Your participation will require approximately 45–60 minutes. You are free to discontinue participation at any time without any consequences.

### PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to:

- Withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.
- Refuse to answer any specific questions.
- Choose whether your identity is disclosed or remains confidential.

If you opt for anonymity, your privacy will be strictly maintained in all study-related reports and publications.

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#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions regarding the study, please feel free to contact me at the email provided above.

For concerns regarding your rights as a participant, you may contact the Ethics Review Committee at Erasmus School of History, Culture, and Communication:  
[info.acs@eshcc.eur.nl](mailto:info.acs@eshcc.eur.nl).

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#### **CONSENT FOR RECORDING**

Please indicate your preference regarding audio/video recording:

- ☐ I consent to being recorded during the interview.
- ☐ I do not consent to being recorded during the interview.

---

#### **AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE**

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read and understood this consent form, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Gallery Name:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

If you prefer, you may provide verbal consent instead of signing this document.

## Appendix H: Survey Questions

### Art Consumer Behavior

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#### Start of Block: Introduction

**Q18 Art Buyers Purchasing Habits and Gallery Engagement** Purpose: This survey is part of a study to investigate the determinants of art buyers' engagement with galleries. Your responses will remain anonymous and contribute to research on evolving consumer trends in the art market. By continuing this survey you are providing consent to use this data for the aforementioned study.

#### End of Block: Introduction

---

#### Start of Block: Preliminary information

Q1 Please select your age range

- ☐ 18-28 [Gen Z] (1)
  - ☐ 29-44 [Millennial] (2)
  - ☐ 45-60 [Gen X] (3)
  - ☐ 61-79 [Baby Boomer] (4)
-

Q2 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
  - ☐ Female (2)
  - ☐ Non-binary (3)
  - ☐ Prefer not to say (4)
- 

Q3 Where do you primarily reside?

- ☐ North America (1)
  - ☐ Europe (2)
  - ☐ Asia (3)
  - ☐ Latin America (4)
  - ☐ Middle East (5)
  - ☐ Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_
-

Q4 What is your estimated annual income in Euros?

- ☐ Below 35.000 (1)
  - ☐ 36.000-55.000 (2)
  - ☐ 56.000-85.000 (3)
  - ☐ 86.000-110.000 (4)
  - ☐ 111.000-200.000 (5)
  - ☐ +201.000 (6)
- 

Q5 How do you primarily identify as an art buyer? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Emerging collector (just starting) (1)
  - ☐ Occasional buyer (infrequent purchases) (2)
  - ☐ Established collector (actively building a collection) (3)
  - ☐ Investor (buying for financial return) (4)
  - ☐ Patron (supporting artists/galleries) (5)
- 

Q21 Did one or both of your parents collect art?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

End of Block: Preliminary information

---

Start of Block: Purchasing Behavior

Q6 How often do you purchase art?

- ☐ Multiple times a year (1)
  - ☐ Once a year (2)
  - ☐ Every few years (3)
  - ☐ Less than every few years (4)
- 

Q7 What price range do you typically purchase within (Euros)?

- ☐ Below 1.000 (1)
  - ☐ 1.000 – 5.000 (2)
  - ☐ 6.000 – 20.000 (3)
  - ☐ 21.000 – 50.000 (4)
  - ☐ +51.000 (5)
-



Q9 To what extent do the following influence your decision to purchase art?

	1 Not important (1)	2 Somewhat (2)	3 Neutral (3)	4 Important (4)	5 Very Important (5)
Artistic appeal / personal taste (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investment potential (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Artist's reputation (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recommendations from galleries or experts (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer influence / social validation (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19 Which of the above influences are most important to you?

- ☐ Artistic appeal / personal taste (1)
- ☐ Investment potential (2)
- ☐ Artist's reputation (3)
- ☐ Recommendations from galleries or experts (4)
- ☐ Peer influence / social validation (5)

Q10 Where do you primarily purchase art? Choose all that apply.

- ☐ Traditional galleries (1)
- ☐ Art fairs (2)
- ☐ Online platforms (Artsy, Instagram, marketplaces, etc.) (3)
- ☐ Directly from artists (4)
- ☐ Auction houses (5)

End of Block: Purchasing Behavior

---

Start of Block: Engagement

Q11 How do you typically discover new artworks or artists? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Visiting galleries in person (1)
  - ☐ Social media (Instagram, TikTok, etc.) (2)
  - ☐ Online art platforms (Artsy, Saatchi Art, etc.) (3)
  - ☐ Recommendations from friends/collectors (4)
  - ☐ Art fairs and exhibitions (5)
-

Q12 How important are the following factors when engaging with a gallery?

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Personalized service / relationships with gallery representatives (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to preview artwork online (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible payment options (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending gallery events and private viewings (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Immersive / experiential marketing (VR exhibitions, interactive events) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 Which above factor is the most important overall?

- ☐ Personalized service / relationships with gallery representatives (1)
- ☐ Ability to preview artwork online (2)
- ☐ Flexible payment options (3)
- ☐ Attending gallery events and private viewings (4)
- ☐ Immersive / experiential marketing (VR exhibitions, interactive events) (5)

---

Q13 Have you ever purchased art through an online platform?

☐ No (1)

☐ Yes (2)

---

Q14 If yes, how satisfied were you with the experience of purchasing art through and online platform?

	Extremely dissatisfied (1)	Somewhat dissatisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Somewhat satisfied (4)	Extremely satisfied (5)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Q15 You would be more likely to purchase art from a gallery that offers the following..

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Payment plans / installment options (1)
  - ☐ Virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) previews (2)
  - ☐ NFT-backed ownership or digital art options (3)
  - ☐ Interactive exhibitions / immersive experiences (4)
  - ☐ Personalized advisory services (5)
  - ☐ More transparency in pricing (6)
  - ☐ None of the Above (7)
- 

Q16 How do you think technology will impact the future of art collecting?

- ☐ Significantly increase online and digital purchases (1)
  - ☐ Maintain a balance between digital and physical engagement (2)
  - ☐ Traditional galleries will remain dominant (3)
  - ☐ No impact in general (4)
-

Q17 On a scale of 1-5, how open are you to exploring new ways of collecting art (e.g., blockchain, digital ownership, AI-curated recommendations)?

☐ 1 (Not open at all) (1)

☐ 2 (2)

☐ 3 (3)

☐ 4 (4)

☐ 5 (Very open) (5)

End of Block: Engagement

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# Appendix I: AI Declaration Form

Erasmus School of  
History, Culture and  
Communication

## Declaration Page: Use of Generative AI Tools in Course Assignments

### Student Information

Name: Margaux Benoist detiveaud

Student ID: 695456

Course Name: Masters Thesis

Instructor Name: Dylan Thompson

Assignment Title:

Bridging the Gap: How Contemporary Galleries Adapt Engagement Strategies Across Generations

Date: 13-06-2025

Declaration:

### Acknowledgment of Generative AI Tools

I acknowledge that I am aware of the existence and functionality of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, which are capable of producing content such as text, images, and other creative works with limited user input.

GenAI use could include, but is not limited to:

- Generated content (e.g., ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Quillbot)
- Writing improvements, including grammar and spelling corrections (e.g., Grammarly)
- Language translation (e.g., DeepL)
- Research task assistance (e.g., finding survey scales, qualitative coding, debugging code, Gemini Deep Research)
- Using GenAI as a search engine tool to find academic articles or books. (e.g. Perplexity AI)
- 

For any GenAI task, 1) it must be permitted by the course and 2) you are responsible for verifying the accuracy of the outputs used in any submission. Improper use of sources obtained from GenAI could constitute academic fraud.

Also, 3) the requested prompts/logs (under Extent of AI Usage below) may be either screenshots or textual copies. The appendix can be included as part of the main submission or submitted as a separate document. Check with your lecturer.

☒ I declare that I have used generative AI tools, specifically **Otter.ai**, Calude.ai & Grammerly, in the process of creating parts or components of my course assignment. The purpose of using these tools was to aid in generating content or assisting with specific aspects of the assignment. (Transcripts & one results Table)

☐ I declare that I have NOT used any generative AI tools and that the assignment concerned is my original work.

Signature: [digital signature]

Date of Signature: [Date of Submission]

### Extent of AI Usage

Classification: Internal

## Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

☒ I confirm that while I utilized generative AI tools to aid in content creation, the majority of the intellectual effort, creative input, and decision-making involved in completing the assignment were undertaken by me. I have enclosed the prompts/logging of my GenAI tool use in an appendix.

### **Ethical and Academic Integrity**

☒ I understand the ethical implications and academic integrity concerns related to the use of AI tools in coursework. I assure that the AI-generated content was used responsibly, and any content derived from these tools has been appropriately cited and attributed according to the guidelines provided by the instructor and the course. I have taken necessary steps to distinguish between my original work and the AI-generated contributions. Any direct quotations, paraphrased content, or other forms of AI-generated material have been properly referenced in accordance with academic conventions.

By signing this declaration, I affirm that this declaration is accurate and truthful. I take full responsibility for the integrity of my assignment and am prepared to discuss and explain the role of generative AI tools in my creative process if required by the instructor or the Examination Board. I further affirm that I have used generative AI tools in accordance with ethical standards and academic integrity expectations.

Signature: Margaux Benoist d'Etiveaud

Date of Signature: 11-06-2025

Appendix A: prompts and explanations of use for the ai tools.

Otter.ai: there is no prompt for this tool. You upload the audio files used for the interviews and it will provide a transcript of which you can edit. After each transcript was made by the ai I hand checked the results.

Claude.ai: this tool was used to take my notes and make a table of the information. I then still made edits after. This tool was used because my notes of each test were compiled in several documents and saved time when making the actual table. The content is from me and my tests run with SPSS.



"Here are the results from some chi-squared tests I ran with notes about their significance. Please make a table of these results in the corresponding themes with a column for the variables compared,  $X^2$  (df), p-value, if I labeled it significant or not, if it has a linear trend and my interpretation in that order."

"make it all in one table"

"make the table in a format compatible with word"

Grammarly:

There is not prompt for this software, I used it to help my editing process. While conducting final edits I used the Grammarly plug-in in Word to help check spelling and grammar. I did not use it to reformulate whole sections. I did this because I am dyslexic and wanted to make sure I did not have simple mistakes. The content is my own still, this was a tool used to ensure there were no simple errors.