

art
market
studies .org

The Image
of the
Art
Market

Just What Is It that Makes the Art Trade Look
so Different, so Alarming?

The 2022 TIAMSA Conference
12-13 September 2022

Technische Universität / Liebermann Villa, Berlin

Titian: Portrait of Jacopo Strada, 1567/68. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. KHM-Museumsverband©

Session 4 – Pulling the Strings

Chair: Kim Oosterlinck (Université libre de Bruxelles)

15:30

GABRIELE ZÖLLNER AND DOROTHEE WIMMER | Technische Universität, Berlin, DE

“Rembrandt Glamour” in Germany: Provenances, Markets, and Museums around 1900

The Cultural Property Protection Act, which was amended in Germany in 2016, obliges the art trade, but not museums to conduct provenance research. With this highly interesting distinction between the art market and museums in mind, our presentation goes back to the period of the scientific professionalization of German art museums at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century and interrogates the image and correlated actions of the art market at the time of the economic, political, and cultural "Rembrandt Glamour" in Germany.

Our contention is that the art market in general and art dealers as a professional group are by no means viewed as negatively by these new, professionalizing museum experts as it often appears from today's perspective. Quite the opposite: the art market and the German museum experts around 1900 were closely intertwined – both in the empowerment and “manipulations” as well as in the legitimations of Rembrandt provenances. In times of an increasing market dominance of a new type of collector – the American industrial multimillionaire that (often) builds up art collections with methods from the business world –, two different interests were combined with the simultaneously emerging art historical connoisseurship and expertise, for which Wilhelm von Bode stands symbolically and power-politically as one of the central figures: On the one hand the aim was to sell masterpieces attributed to Rembrandt for rapidly rising prices on the international art market and on the other hand to purchase them at the same time at low prices for German museums like the Königliche Museen zu Berlin (Royal Museums of Berlin).

After a brief outline of the Rembrandt fever around 1900, our presentation will therefore first show how differentiated the contemporary evaluation of the image of the art market, the art dealers, and the art business were at the beginning of the 20th century, using contemporary publications and correspondences of museum experts and Rembrandt connoisseurs such as Wilhelm von Bode, Abraham Bredius, Hans Posse, and Max J. Friedländer. Then, two case studies – one in the auction business and one at the Royal Museums in Berlin – will illuminate how these complex and intertwined interests, including their lines of conflict and networks, affected and were affected by actors on both sides.

This historical network between the art market and museum experts would have almost been forgotten today, were it not for efforts like the digitisation of the “German Sales” auction catalogues between 1901 and 1945 as well as contemporary press documents and art dealers’ archive stocks, which open new possibilities for qualitative and quantitative research and shed an intriguing new light on the political distinction between the art market and museums in the government's new version of the Cultural Property Protection Act in 2016.

Dorothee Wimmer is director of the Forum Kunst und Markt / Centre for Art Market Studies (fokum.org), which she founded in 2012 together with Bénédicte Savoy and Johannes Nathan at Technische Universität Berlin. She studied art history, Romance studies, history, and German studies in Freiburg i. Br., Paris, and Berlin, and received her PhD from the Freie Universität Berlin on the image of man in French art, literature, and philosophy around 1960. From 2011 to 2017 she was chair of the Richard-Schöne-Gesellschaft für Museumsgeschichte e.V., in 2015 she received a Library Research Grant at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, and in 2017 she was part of the DAAD's Franco-German University Teacher Exchange Program in cooperation with the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. She researches and publishes on the interrelations and dynamics between art, politics, law, and economics.

Gabriele Zöllner has been a student assistant at the Forum Kunst und Markt / Centre for Art Market Studies at Technische Universität Berlin, where she has been studying culture and technology sciences as well as art history. She is currently working on her master's thesis, in which she is conducting a quantitative data analysis on

Rembrandt in the German-speaking auction market using digitized auction catalogues between 1901 and 1918. Her study interests include the dynamics and relations of the European art market from its beginnings to the present, as well as digitization processes in art history studies, especially data visualization.

g.zoellner@tu-berlin.de

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Susanna Avery-Quash, National Gallery London, UK
Meike Hopp, Technische Universität Berlin, DE
Veronika Korbei, Independent, Vienna, AT
Johannes Nathan, Nathan Fine Art / TU Berlin, DE
Olav Velthuis, Universiteit van Amsterdam, NL
Lucy Wasensteiner, Liebermann Villa, Berlin, DE

CONFERENCE MANAGERS

Sharon Dowley, TIAMSA Coordinator
Inna Schill, TIAMSA Coordinator

CONFERENCE VENUES

12 September
Technische Universität Berlin, Hauptgebäude, Straße des 17. Juni 135, 10623 Berlin

13 September
Liebermann Villa am Wannsee, Colomierstr. 3, 14109 Berlin

CONFERENCE CONTACT

Inna Schill
inna.schill@artmarketstudies.org

ABOUT TIAMSA

Launched in July 2016, TIAMSA – The International Art Market Studies Association is a rapidly growing association with more than 400 members globally. Our membership base is made up of individual members (collectors, art world professionals, scholars and students from a wide range of disciplines), as well as corporate members, institutional members, association members and donors.

TIAMSA encourages the study of art markets of all regions and periods and provides an infrastructure which supports both research and networking among art market professionals and scholars.

artmarketstudies.org
[@ArtMarketStuds](https://www.instagram.com/ArtMarketStuds)
[#tiamsa](https://www.facebook.com/tiamsa)
[#artmarket](https://www.facebook.com/artmarket)
[#artmarkets](https://www.facebook.com/artmarkets)