

espo

the glitch in the art system

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daisuke miyatsu

1. I'm keenly aware that the art world is influenced by the market like never before. I don't wholeheartedly agree with what's happening, but perhaps the extent of the situation lies in parallel to the controversy of developing countries having to bear the burden of mitigating climate change. Current market leaders are China, other countries in Asia, and oil-producing nations in the Middle East. We have to acknowledge that their time has finally arrived. When museums in Europe, the United States, and Japan actively collected modern art works such as the Old Masters and Impressionists, they were not active participants in the economic sphere or in cultural maturity. This issue should not only be discussed from an economic angle, but also from the perspective of Eurocentrism and the global south.

2. Acquiring art works via image data and social media was not unusual even before covid. Art fairs, however, play an important function for various players worldwide, allowing them to meet face to face and exchange information. Also, unlike video or new media works, paintings and sculptures have a unique aura and atmosphere that can only be experienced in person. This is why people travel to museums and galleries overseas.

3. For video works, if blockchains and smart contracts become widespread, dramatic developments can be expected in terms of proof of authenticity, transfer of ownership, inspection, associated micropayments and distribution of profits. On the other hand, for painting and sculptures—sharing services such as divided sales and purchase of ownership using blockchains will be established. Nonetheless, while online proofs are semi-permanent and tamper resistant, the physical work themselves are always in danger of deterioration and damage.

4. The 20th century was the era of commercial galleries. The first 20 years of the 21st century, just before the covid pandemic, was the era of art fairs. I'm hopeful for all that will happen, now onwards.



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1. The risk with a market driven art world is the decline of creativity and energy. It is always hard to balance 'commercial' pieces and 'statement' works. Recently we have seen a large number of new collectors and private initiatives in the market, offering a new dynamism to the art world, but I worry it could become oversaturated. The pandemic has had many negative aspects, but as a positive it has given us time; time to think, time to search, time to be. I wonder if it may offer time for the market to breath, a sense of slowing and to allow appreciating art for its true creativity.

2. We have to see, experiment, touch and feel art. A good synergy can be created between online and offline, however it's dangerous to separate them and see them as unconnected. The answer is almost in the question, it's all about the experience. Online must be a tool to jump into the offline and to go see art and live it! Visual desire is the key, but physical emotion is the purpose.

3. We are starting to see shared ownership. I am still learning to understand this system, but it is an interesting way of acquiring art, especially when you have limited means. It can be a good introduction to collecting. The true question is how will the notion of collecting evolve? It is not really about how you acquire art, but about the reason and the intention behind it. Things have changed a lot. A market driven art world has brought a large number of investors compared to true collectors.

4. Creativity is key. Artists should feel free in their work. As long as creativity is preserved, I only have hopes for us, for the world.



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