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Weber & Weber Art Gallery: Internship Report

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Master in Art Markets

Supervisor:

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History Department

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Abstract

This dissertation was written to report my experience at Weber & Weber Art Gallery. As one of the oldest galleries in Turin, that mainly works with young and upcoming artists, its name is considered a guarantee of quality. Thanks to the experience of its founder, Alberto, and the innovation brought in by his son, Carlomaria, the gallery managed to be at the top of its field for the city of Turin for decades. Today the gallery is facing a difficult time due to the hard economic environment, but not only.

The reading begins with a general explanation of the art world, different studies made about it, and how it is structured. The Art Market and Art Galleries subchapters should help the reader get a more precise idea of how this industry works, its main players, and its dynamics.

The second chapter will explain the history and the current situation of the art market in Italy, and more specifically in the city of Turin, which has a peculiar art scene.

All of this will help the reader understand the global rules of the art market and the national context in which Weber & Weber Art Gallery is in.

The last two chapters will be dedicated to the gallery and my experience working with them.

Keywords: Weber & Weber Art Gallery; Art Market; Art World; Turin contemporary art

Resumo

Esta dissertação foi escrita para relatar a minha experiência na Weber & Weber Art Gallery. Sendo uma das galerias mais antigas de Turim, que trabalha sobretudo com artistas jovens e emergentes, o seu nome é considerado uma garantia de qualidade. Graças à experiência do seu fundador, Alberto, e à inovação trazida pelo seu filho, Carlomaria, a galeria conseguiu estar durante décadas no topo do seu campo na cidade de Turim. Hoje a galeria enfrenta um momento difícil devido ao ambiente económico, mas não só.

A leitura inicia-se com uma explicação geral do mundo da arte, dos diferentes estudos realizados sobre o mesmo e de como está estruturado. Os subcapítulos Mercado de Arte e Galerias de Arte deverão ajudar o leitor a ter uma ideia mais precisa do funcionamento desta indústria, dos seus principais players e da sua dinâmica.

O segundo capítulo explicará a história e a situação atual do mercado de arte em Itália, e mais especificamente na cidade de Turim, que possui um panorama artístico peculiar.

Tudo isto ajudará o leitor a compreender as regras globais do mercado de arte e o contexto nacional em que a Weber & Weber Art Gallery se insere.

Os dois últimos capítulos são dedicados à galeria e à minha experiência de trabalho com a mesma.

Palavras-chave: Weber & Galeria de Arte Weber; Mercado de Arte; Mundo da Arte; Arte contemporânea de Turim

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Introduction

The Art world is a complex and multifaceted industry that offers a lot of opportunities and challenges. Navigating this intricate landscape involves understanding the roles and dynamics that shape it. Today, the art world encompasses a vast array of professional actors and entities, from artists and curators to collectors and gallerists. It operates within both cultural and economic dimensions, with the art market playing a pivotal role in the valuation and distribution of art. Understanding this market involves recognizing its unique nature compared to other economic markets.

One of its characteristics is its geographic designation, each state has its art market that depends on the general economy, history, bureaucracy, and legislation. Regarding Italy, we can see from the annual Art Basel Report, that despite being quite important for its culture and art history, when it comes to contemporary art and its market, it is never in the top countries. There are different reasons for this: the first one is the long bureaucratic processes and legislation that make it difficult for artworks to circulate easily.

Another problem is the economic situation, due to the increase in expenses people don't buy art as they used to a few decades ago. There is a big difference in the different cities as well: nowadays Milan is the only city where things move for the contemporary art market, together with Venice thanks to the Biennale. Rome and Florence have their core business in history. Turin in this panorama comes as a "second place" city, even though it is full of cultural institutions and important art fairs.

Weber & Weber art gallery, with its long history, is still one of the best galleries for quality art pieces; but during the last decade, the general crisis involved the gallery, now stuck in a stationary situation.

In the pages to follow, firstly I will analyze the art world and the different theories that have been studied by many scholars over the centuries; I will then go into the art market from a more technical point of view, with a focus on art galleries: how they are structured and how they function.

The second part is dedicated to the Italian market and the city of Turin: its cultural institutions and how it is positioned in the national panorama. At the end, there is an in-depth report about my internship at Weber & Weber art gallery, from its history to the problems that they are facing today.

Theme

The subject of study of this work is the Weber & Weber Art Gallery. It is a modern and contemporary art gallery based in Turin, Italy, that mainly works with young and upcoming artists. It was founded in 1976 by Alberto Weber, who is an art expert and entrepreneur. In 2006 Carlomaria entered the management of the gallery, but things got worse within a decade due to the economic instability and some internal issues.

In this dissertation, I analysed their work through my internship experience, trying to give a critical study of what they could do to better their situation.

This is not intended to talk badly about the gallery or give pieces of advice to much more experienced people, but to explain what in my opinion could work for them, thanks to my outsider and student eye.

Objectives

I decided to do an Internship Report because I felt like I needed practical experience in the art market, to directly grasp what it means to work in such an industry, which has its own rules.

I chose a smaller activity to start with because I thought it could be easier to work in a quieter environment. Plus, the fact that in the gallery there were no departments, allowed me to see a bit of everything.

Structure

Below I present the structure of this work, briefly describing the content of each chapter. The dissertation could be divided into three parts: the first part is dedicated to a more theoretical and general idea of the art market; the second part is dedicated to the art market in Italy and the city of Turin; the last part is dedicated to the gallery and can be divided into two parts: the first one is the presentation of the gallery, the second one is the report of my internship.

The first chapter explains at first the art world as a whole, what it is, and all the studies made by different scholars during the centuries. What we can learn from this is that there is no right or wrong way to see the art world, it all just depends on the time that each scholar was working. Following this, there is a deeper explanation of the Art Market in general: its structures, dynamics, and the different players. The important thing in this subchapter is understanding the different rules that apply to this type of industry compared to other markets (stock market). Then there is a focus on art galleries, a bit of the history from the Wunderkammers to the galleries, and how we know them today. Adding to this there are

different types of galleries' classification and hierarchy made by different scholars. At the end of this first chapter, there is an analysis of the current global situation of the art market.

The second chapter is dedicated to Italy and Turin. It starts with a general overview of the art market in Italy, its strengths and weaknesses, and some realities that are trying to change the system for the better. After this, the reading goes into focus on the city of Turin, which may be less known than other Italian cities. It starts with a brief historical overview from ancient times until now: Turin during the Roman Empire, during the different stages of Italy's unity process; Turin as Italy's Capital, and during the two world wars, and what came after. This subchapter is important to get an idea of the cultural importance of this city. This is reflected in the next subchapter dedicated to Turin's cultural institutions, which are many, and some of them very important on the national and international art scene.

The third chapter is all about Weber & Weber Art Gallery. It starts with its long history, it goes on with the presentation of Alberto and Carlomaria. After this, I presented a few of the artists that they represent and the work that they do with their communication and management. At the end of this chapter there is a critical thought about the gallery today, why, from personal opinion, it is facing this period of crisis after decades of high-quality work.

The fourth and last chapter is the report on my internship, where I explain why I wanted to work in such an environment, my expectations, my objectives, and all the activities carried out by me during these four months.

Methodology and Sources

The main sources of this dissertation are all the information collected during my internship period from January to May. During this time I asked a lot of questions which I noted all on paper. I collected all the answers and at the end put them all together.

I found that direct interviews with Alberto and Carlomaria were less effective than asking them "random" questions during each day. This applies mainly for the last two chapters. For the first two, I had to do more theoretical research mainly on the internet where I found a lot of different texts. Some of them were also advised to me by my supervisor.

At first, I read a lot of different sources, but everything got clearer as the dissertation got more structured. Other than the main texts I read a lot of articles online from different magazines; old papers from previous exams; and the main reports on the art market.

The methodology of this dissertation is mixed both in data collection and in its analysis. Even though for this thesis I mainly used a qualitative approach to get a better understanding

of the art market phenomena through the collection of non-numerical data. I aimed to gain insights into people's attitudes, behaviours, and cultures that are part of this industry. On the other hand, mainly for little parts of the first chapters, I used a more quantitative approach, for example, the research done on the current global situation of the art market.

1. The Art World

The Art World is a dynamic and creative hub that brings together millions of people globally, but, at the same time, it is a broad and complicated concept to grasp. The term was born in the 19th century and since then many scholars from different backgrounds tried to give their definitions.

For some, the art world is an intellectual ecosystem that involves only highly educated individuals; for others, everyone involved in producing, consuming, teaching, and transporting art is part of this particular world.

The “Art World” concept described by Arthur C. Danto as a response to the changes in the aesthetic theories during the fifties and sixties and appeared in the 1964 article *The Art World*, will be one of the first attempts to formulate one essentialist definition of art. In the article, he gives different examples to state his idea that not everything can be art, like the one of the *mimesis*: for Socrates mirrors reflect what we can already see, and so does art, but for Hamlet, reflecting surfaces can show us what we could not otherwise perceive. (Danto, 1964, :571)

For the scholar being able to recognize and describe a work of art meant being able to place it within a historical and social context generated by changes in the practices and conventions of art, the content of the works, the intentions of artists, and from the writings of critics, which taken together constitute precisely the art world.

The theory of Danto has been revised by Dickie who in 1969 wrote: “a work of art in the descriptive sense is an artifact upon which society or some sub-group of a society has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation”. (Dickie, 1969, :252)

Dickie focuses more on the artists who make works of art, which are material objects modified by humans and given the status of work of art, so the artist is the person who can transform an artifact into something subject to aesthetic appreciation.

In 1982, Howard S. Becker published *The Art World*, where he studied the art world from a sociological perspective and the point of view of the interaction between individuals. He stated:

aesthetic value arises from the consensus of the participants in a world of art. To the extent that such consensus does not exist, neither does the value in this meaning: value judgments that are not supported unanimously by the members of an art world do not constitute a basis for collective activity and therefore not affect it. (Becker, 1982, :152)

Becker in his work encompassed the totality of people involved in the different art worlds¹, and the way they interact with each other. He also expanded the notion of the art world beyond just the intellectuals and scholars, by bringing in every person directly or indirectly involved with it.

Even though Becker's theory is the closest to today's idea of the art world, sometimes there is, still, a rather negative connotation attached to this term, as it is often associated with elite circles, exclusive events and venues, and the billion-dollar industry evoking mixed feelings in public opinion once more regarding the ambiguous relationship of art and money. In *Seven Days in the Art World*, Sarah Thornton writes about the art world as a dimension that transcends class differences, but that nevertheless is not a democratic environment, since art production is based on experimentation and the exchange of ideas, which also implies excellence and exclusivity. But later in the book, she observes another point of view and states that "important works of art aren't born alone", meaning that important works are made by the artists and their assistants, curators, gallerists, etc. (Thornton, 2009, :8)

As a result of these different theories, the art world is a broad and vague container concept used in different contexts with different connotations and meanings, so it has become increasingly more challenging to define its content specifically.

Today the art world can be defined as an umbrella concept referring to all the professional actors and entities working in the field of art. Every venue and activity where art is present is part of this concept. Everyone from professionals to amateurs, from artists to artisans to art critics and collectors, and from buyers to sellers is part of this big ecosystem.

As a conclusion is possible to say that the art world represents all formal and informal networks that unite professionals dedicated to the production, consumption, and distribution of art and their audiences. It is often given geographic and chronological designations: the New York art world, or the XV-century Italian art world.

Under this big umbrella lies the concept of art industries (or art businesses), which refers to the economic dimension of art. It includes services and activities that have economic relevance that feed from art directly or indirectly. It covers activities carried out by auction houses, galleries, and artist's studios, but also activities like insurance companies, financial entities associated with arts, academic programs, transportation, storage, conservation and restoration companies, publishers, and consultant services.

¹ For him there is not one singular art world, but different ones that interact with one another to create the consumption of art.

This term covers the whole range of supporting economic activities and the art market. It can be divided into two different forms of consumption: the experimental consumption of art, and the ownership consumption of art. The first one is largely patronized by non-profit organizations, state-owned museums, and public art collectors.

The second form of consumption of artworks can be identified as the art market, which is where the transfer of ownership of artworks occurs through galleries, art fairs, or private sellers. But the art world can't just be described as a big circle of the art market and art business, it has also a lot to do with a sociological and philosophical discussion on aestheticism.

1.1. The Art Market

Let's see now how the concept of art practically applies to the market and its social, cultural, and economic values.

With art, there is a different relationship between its qualitative value and commercial value: quality is a necessary condition, but quotations do not always directly follow it.

Francesco Poli in *The System of Contemporary Art*, describes three different values of the visual arts. The first one is the aesthetic one, which every work of art has always had, from classical paintings and sculptures, as well as all the installations and performances of today. Artistic products also have extra-aesthetic values, especially in the case of contemporary art which is strictly connected to cultural and economic dimensions. There is a symbolic value, for which the work of art is like a status symbol for the owners; and there is also an economic value that considers art as a good, an asset for investments. From an economic point of view, the work of art is a peculiar product: it doesn't apply to the rule of a product's value determined by how much work goes into making it, their value is mostly justified by rarity. (Poli, 2011, :53-54):

artistic production, distinguishing itself on the one hand from artisanal production, and on the other from industrial production, has created the conditions for its own very particular market, based on the rarity of objects bearing irreproducible values deriving from individual genius. a luxury goods market that falls within what Pierre Bourdieu defined as symbolic goods. (Poli, 2011, :54)

The prices that are present in the market are not imposed by intermediaries such as galleries and auction houses, but are prices that emerge almost spontaneously from the willingness of some individuals to pay very high sums for works of art, with the aim of have good notoriety and cultural prestige as a reward. (Thompson, 2010, :345)

From a structural point of view, the art market functions as a set of ecosystems in a process of continuous adjustment. All of these partially overlap with each other and have different degrees of interaction between them but at the core of each of these, there are works of art.

The latter represents all the players who are involved in the art market. Particularly, the first one is the government of each state: it is the more stable element, its presence it's above all the others and it has the legal and legislative power. Another two elements are the ones of sellers and buyers. It encompasses all sales channels: auctioneers, dealers, art fairs, private sellers, and artists. All these categories can choose to have a more specialized or generalist position. In the case of auctioneers, they have two types of clients: buyers and sellers. The second element of this big ecosystem is the one of the buyers: without them, there is no market. They can be organizations or people, collectors, occasional buyers, or speculators. They are usually called high-net-worth individuals because of their economic status. Being art a luxury good they are the main clients in this market.

The term Art Market can be divided into two distinctly different markets: the primary art market and the secondary art market. The first one refers to works of art that are being sold for the first time, normally it only works for living artists who sell their work or through primary market galleries; the second one refers to all following sales, which are usually made through different retailers depending on what art they sell: usually gallerists for contemporary art and antique dealers for antiques. It is much more relevant for the sales volume than the primary market. Acquisitions in the secondary market also hold fewer financial risks, because the artists' quotations, liquidity, and financial potential have been already tested over time.

Another important part of the art market and its functioning are the canons and conventions of the different cultures where each art market developed. Conventions are the values that predominate in a given moment and are very dependent on the aesthetic and artistic preferences and choices of the agents. The strongest conventions become canons, that represent what a particular cultural tradition recognizes as "the most perfect" in a particular artistic genre. It is the result of the combination of the application to artistic production of a set of artistic conventions.

Because of this peculiar structure, the art market functions differently from other markets, what separates these realities is the way an art object is created compared to how stocks or other kinds of goods are generated: a work of art is the result of years of analysis and study. For this reason, its dynamics are different from different points of view, especially if compared with the stock market: first of all works of art are not interchangeable goods that exist in large quantities, like shares or bonds, they are all unique pieces; the value of each work of art is very subjective

and strictly linked to that one work, while shares hold a value given by the performance of a company on the market ruled by the law of supply and demand; another important factor is the ownership aspect, while for works of art, the owner is a singular individual, for stocks there can be several different investors; also time works differently for these two realities, if financial markets are in a permanent state of operation, works of art can spend years out of the market, and only have occasional periods of high function, like art fairs or big auctions; another important difference is maintenance costs of works of art, like insurance, storage, transport or documentation. Beyond these expenses, there are the commissions charged by intermediaries like gallerists or auction houses.

Some people are willing to spend different amounts of money on a watch, but at least we can all agree on what a watch is. In the world of art, this concept is not so clear. That is because the line between what can be considered art and what can't be is very liable. Since ancient Greece intellectuals tried to give a classification but nothing ever lasted, and theories always changed.

Poli in his work *The Contemporary Art System*, explains how artistic production differentiated itself from industrial production and artisan production, creating conditions for its peculiar market, specifically when we talk about contemporary art because, for antiques and ancient art, there is an objective rarity factor. For contemporary art, dealers and galleries play a big role in deciding what kind of art and artists they want to represent to get them into the market. (Poli, 2011, :56)

1.2. Art Galleries

During the Renaissance, the galleries were large rooms embellished with collections and art objects, which served to connect different environments. At the same time, later they became real reception rooms used to house the collections of artworks. Today, however, in the most recent meaning, an art gallery means a room for the exhibition and sale of works of art, which also carries out the function of promoting emerging artists or displaying artists already established in the artistic scenario. The ultimate purpose of the galleries, which has developed over the years, is twofold in that they have as their objective both cultural promotion, through the organization of events and exhibitions - with the drafting of catalogs and critical texts that obtain visibility in specialized magazines - and commercial promotion. The works on display are treated to all intents and purposes as products to be sold and therefore their promotion must also follow the marketing logic used for any other good put up for sale. (Guenzi, 2014, :4-5).

The choice of artists, exhibitions, and promotion normally falls to the figure of the gallery owner, who is the one who creates and maintains contacts between artists and collectors and presents himself as an intermediary between the producer, as well as the artist, and the public at which it is proposed.

Raymonde Moulin, one of the most important intellectuals in the art market, once wrote: “The international organization of current artistic life is founded on the articulation between the international network of galleries and the international network of cultural institutions”. We can easily comprehend the dynamics of the art system are strictly linked to what happened in the art gallery scene indeed. (Poli, 2011, :66)

We can divide art galleries into primary and secondary market galleries as Taylor does in his research. In his work *The Art Business*, he gives a broad description of different types of gallery models from the past centuries until now: firstly he describes the “Two Agent-Model”, which is the oldest kind, involves only two agents, and functions through a contract with a pre-agreed price to be paid for the artworks. It works through simple commissions between collectors and artists. The “three agent-model”, which developed during the XVI and XVII centuries, has a new figure in the structure: the dealer. Before, everything needed for a painting, from making the wood supports to creating the colors, was made in the artist’s studio, but during these centuries there were professionals and suppliers for each of these steps. Artists ended up owing money to these suppliers, so to redeem the cash for the artworks, they started to use their workplaces as galleries with paintings on sale. These galleries sold different types of goods such as books and prints, and these merchants saw themselves only as dealers of pictures, not of artists, so the relationship between a gallerist and the artists was not developed yet. During this period an artist’s career was made in the Salons, which were very popular around Europe. They gave out medals and scholarships to artists, and the possibility to make lithographs out of the most popular paintings; they took 10/20% of the sale and announced publicly the imminent sale of an artwork. For these reasons artists preferred these realities rather than galleries: because they could get more recognition. The Salon system lasted for a little more than a century, by the middle of the twentieth century they disappeared for the most part. There was a new type of dealer on the market who supported artists financially and used galleries for mainly solo exhibitions, which gave each artist more space for experimentation. (Taylor, 2024, :18-20)

Taylor, in the same book, also gives a categorization of galleries that exist nowadays. “Alpha Galleries”, which have the most impact on the market. They have venues all around the most important cities for the art market; they represent important artists like Picasso or Warhol and they work both with contemporary art in the primary market but also deal in secondary

sales. They usually represent thirty to fifty artists and pay them a regular salary (to the contemporary ones) and each of them gets a solo exhibition every year. These galleries have complex structures, and many employees and professionals. They participate in all major art fairs during the year and keep a hierarchy between their main collectors.

“Chelsea-type Galleries” take their name from the dominant New York neighborhood for art galleries, once very cheap and highly functional. Now it has become quite expensive causing many people to move to cheaper places like Brooklyn. But Chelsea supremacy remains and the expansion caused by the moving of many art people created a big area of an “art amusement park”. Different galleries are usually on top floors of buildings and use this to their advantage to create big events each week. They usually represent 18-24 artists with exclusive contracts and keep 40 to 60 % of the works’ revenues. They have contemporary art as their primal focus.

“Regional Galleries” are galleries opened by artists to show their work but invite other artists to exhibit there. Their collector base is transient, they are usually located in very tourist areas and tourists are the main clients.

“Artist-led Gallery Models” are similar to the regional model, but in this case, the artist only shows his work. They are found in the main art districts. The gallery is often used as the artist’s studio as well. (Taylor, 2024, :21-25)

This is his categorization of primary art market galleries, in the second chapter he talks about secondary market galleries, which emerge more than the primary market ones because there is an intersection of art history knowledge and economic interests. (Taylor, 2024, :34)

Different authors gave different categorizations of art galleries, Thompson, like Taylor, in *The \$12 million Stuffed Shark*, gave a hierarchical categorization, based on the power that different activities have on the market, from the small ones to the big players. he particularly focuses on the role of the dealers.

At the peak of the galleries pyramid, there are the “branded galleries”, which represent successful artists who make up 1% of all contemporary artists. They are located in the biggest centers for the art market and usually have more than one location. (Thompson, 2010 :41). These realities are what Winkelman calls “Mega-Galleries”: “The term refers to an influential gallery with multiple international locations, deep pockets, a roster of at least forty artists, and a public perception that they are continuing to expand their enterprise”. (Winkelman, 2015, :48). But before arriving in one of these galleries, Thompson explains, artists usually start exposing their work in studios or small galleries that are usually visited by collectors and other dealers. The next step would be to be discovered by a “mainstream gallery”, found in the major cities for the art market (New York, London, Berlin, Los Angeles, Paris), which represents the

first step in becoming a professional artist that can work in this market. They organize a show for the artists every eighteen months and expect to lose money for the first three exhibitions for every new artist. For this reason, these galleries need a wealthy patron. Artists who aren't living in these big centers need the "High-street galleries" that can take their work to international art fairs. These realities are a step below the mainstream ones, but function as an important passage to the big cities for art.

At the bottom of this hierarchy there are the "vanity galleries" where artists often pay a fee to exhibit their work. These usually sell very little and are not seen well by the other galleries. (Thompson, 2010, : 40-45)

Moreover, intellectuals also studied different kinds of galleries based on the managing point of view. In recent times, relevant studies in this regard sense emerged in the research work of M. B. F. Resch. The author expresses clearly the importance of including the degree of professional management among the fundamental criteria since, according to him, the higher it is, the better the gallery's performance will be. On this basis, Resch therefore distinguishes the galleries according to two different perspectives: one internal and one external. From one point of internal view, we have two characteristics, the internal structure of the gallery and the characteristics of the founder. As in other small businesses, the success of the gallery is dictated by the figure of the founder and a refined management structure for the promotion of artists. The external perspective, on the contrary, takes into account internal characteristics but looks outwards; it is based on the selection of artists and the ability to create a network of clients, industry experts, and partners. (Resch, 2011, :52-54)

Art galleries play a crucial role in the art market turnover and the artists' lives, so it is important to know how they are currently working and the trends in terms of where they are and what they are selling.

1.3. Current Global Situation

When analysing the implications of trends in the art market for different players, from the artists to the entire art ecosystem, it's important to consider how this impacts the players. Artists who align with popular trends may find it easier to secure support from galleries, collectors, and institutions. Galleries, that play a key role in the shaping of the cultural landscape by selecting artists to represent, can make different decisions based on the trends of the market. All of this can greatly impact the whole art world: trends in the art market reflect broader cultural dynamics, including shifts in aesthetic preferences, social values, and economic conditions.

Analysing these trends can provide insights into the evolving relationship between art and society². Each year different reports are published to give a picture of the trends and performances of the different players in the global art market. They are based on surveys so it is important to underline that they may not be 100% accurate.

Paul Donovan, Global Wealth Management Chief Economist at UBS reported that “the year 2022 was characterized by an extraordinary increase in spending on higher-priced goods, including luxury and art”. However, a report from Art Basel mentioned that “a shift appears to be underway, and in 2023, growing investment has shifted more towards services than goods. And even in art, trends are evolving, with collectors who are more astute in their decisions and in favoring significant connections and quality, rather than quantity”. (Art Basel Report, 2023)

From the data collected emerged a more prudent approach from buyers between 2022 and 2023. People are still buying art, but in a context of global uncertainty, they invest in financial assets with more liquidity. In general, there is a propensity towards safer investments: people buy less digital art and cheaper pieces, and investments in works of art worth more than \$1 million decreased from 2022. Collectors were still positive and planned to buy more art during 2023.

A significant growth was made by China, finally free of a new wave of Covid-19 and lockdown. The US market remains at the top of the global rank, with one of the most important sales of all time: Christie’s sale of Paul Allen’s remarkable collection in New York which realized more than \$1.6 billion in November.

In Europe, the UK and France remained the top two markets and were respectively second and fourth countries globally for their share of sales by value.

Online sales decreased in 2022, E-commerce sales are predicted to keep growing and they will not decrease to the pre-pandemic levels, but people still prefer buying in person. Also, art-related NFT sales decreased in 2022, after peaking in August 2021. 2022 was still a year of recovery for the dealer sector, but its hierarchical nature made the recovery different depending on the power of the dealers. The ones with the highest turnovers had more increase in sales. But the numbers are not accurate:

due to the criteria required to get into a fair or association, the sample therefore, by its nature, excludes very many small businesses and sole traders, and hence a large volume of lower-value sales (Art Basel Report, 2023)

² It is important to underline the fact that often artists, creators and dealers don’t want to cave to the market’s trends, but unfortunately they dictate their revenues most of the time.

Regarding auctions, even though important sales have been made in 2022, this sector's turnover was down by 2%. The US, China, and UK remained the top auction markets.

Thanks to the information recollecting in these reports we notice changes in the art market, and how it is evolving. They are important tools for collectors, artists, and dealers to know when and what to buy and where they can find what they are looking for.

2. Italy and Turin

Italy boasts a rich cultural and artistic heritage that spans millennia, influencing global aesthetics, traditions, and intellectual discourses. Italy has been a cradle of creativity and innovation from ancient civilizations like the Etruscans and Romans to the Renaissance. The country's cultural landscape encompasses various artistic disciplines, including painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, music, cinema, and cuisine.

Artistically, Italy is renowned for its contribution to classical art, exemplified by great masters' works. The Renaissance, which flourished in Italy during the XIV and XVII centuries, marked a period of profound artistic and intellectual revival, characterized by humanism, scientific inquiry, and artistic innovation. Florence, Rome, and Venice were significant centers of artistic patronage and creativity during this era.

Italy's cultural heritage spans from visual art to music, cinema, and food. Of course, Italy is still known today as one of the centers for art and culture. Still, regarding the art market and contemporary art the focus shifted from Italy during the Renaissance, to Paris and France during the XIX century, and today we are witnessing supremacy in the field of the United States as previously stated.

Despite having an immense historical and cultural heritage Italy generates a small percentage of the European turnover. The presence of Italian operators on the market is marginal, especially compared to other countries like the UK and France. In order to overcome this situation some measures were taken to promote a stronger art market in Italy. One of such efforts was made by the Apollo Group, an association whose mission is:

valorize and promote Italy's cultural heritage, encouraging collecting and enjoying art in Italy and Italian art abroad. The Association supports the art supply chain in dialogue with institutions, to promote the alignment of national regulations with those in force within the EU. It encourages the sector's digitalization.³

In 2022, it released a paper with Nomisma and the Italian bank Intesa Sanpaolo on the performance of the Italian art market and its problems. Even though is a few years old for the numbers reported, it is still valuable and helpful since many of the problems described are still the same today.

³ [Apollo Group Website](#)

First of all, there is regulatory uncertainty. Difficult and long bureaucratic processes are not favorable to the market, especially when it comes to foreign collectors and investors who prefer to buy art in countries where they are certain that their goods can circulate freely. In Italy, like in every other European country, some laws and rules establish boundaries on the circulation of movable property of artistic and cultural interest. It is called “declaration of cultural interest” (or notification), and it strictly binds the artwork. It was introduced in 1939 with the so-called Bottai Law: from the moment the value of a good was recognized, it was subject to considerable limitations on its export abroad, on its circulation within the Italian territory, and of course on its possible sale.

This law was then modified in 2004 with the law n. 42 of the *Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code*: the process was modified depending on whether the good was public or private property. In the first case, the cultural value is presumed, so the notification is only a formal matter; in the second case, there is instead an official declaration, with constitutive effects, of the status of cultural interest of the property in question. In both cases, the declarative deed must be notified to the owner, possessor, or holder of the thing.

The problem is that there is no indemnity for the owner, and the whole process with its strict boundaries and long timetables ends up decreasing the commercial value of the good. For that many people keep their objects hidden without any benefit to the public fruition.

Another problem is the high tax rate of 10% for the permanent import of works of art in Italy, which is one of the highest in Europe, compared to the UK with 5%, and France with 5,5%. Consequently, foreign collectors who might want to bring their goods to Europe will choose other countries rather than Italy, and this represents another negative point for its market.

Patronage is also not encouraged as much in Italy. From 2016 people can use the “Art Bonus”, a tax incentive that allows a deduction of up to 65% for those who donate to support the Italian public cultural heritage. The problem with this is that it only works for the public sector and the private collectors buying works from living artists in Italy are subject to an ordinary tax regime⁴.

The direct effect of these critical issues is expressed by the weakness of the economic-cultural Italian network and the flight of art world players abroad. The Apollo Group, in the same paper, gives also eleven proposals to relaunch the Italian art market. Some are the ones previously stated like the introduction of indemnity in the case of a notification; incentives for

⁴ This point can be a little controversial and there are different opinions about it. Private collectors indeed play a big role in the market, but many people don’t believe they should get reduced taxation since they are usually really wealthy people.

patronage also for private collections; and a lower tax rate for transitions, import, and export of works of art. They also talk about a “permanent table” for the circulation of art, already established in 2021 (but not permanently as part of the Code), a platform where all the different institutions and companies in the field can communicate to better the system. Another interesting idea is the introduction of an obligation of purchase in case of denial of export: if the state doesn’t let a private seller or just send its work abroad, it should buy it and pay the collector. Vice versa if the state doesn’t want to pay it should release a permit for the work to circulate.

The Italian art market is not a competitive one: inconsistent, uncertain, and oppressive regulations hold it back. That is why a work of art can cost ten times less in Italy than it does in the United States as stated in the conference *Constraints and Circulation of the Work of Art*, of the cycle organized by the Russo Gallery in Rome, in collaboration with the Montani- Tesei studio in 2023. (Apollo Group Paper, 2022)

Turin, specifically, in this vast and global scene doesn’t have a big role like Milan or Rome, but looking into it we can discover a vivacious and dynamic art scene. For its market is not a golden time, but art and culture permeate the streets of this thousand-year-old city.

2.1. History of Turin

Turin is an Italian province and the main city of the Piemonte region. It is located on the plain delimited by three rivers, opposite the mouth of some Alpine valleys: Val di Susa, which connects the city with France, Lanzo Valleys, and Sangone Valley. In addition to the three rivers mentioned above, there is one more, the Dora Riparia, which cuts the city from west to east, making Turin the so-called “city of four rivers”.

The history of this city is long and eventful, it starts in ancient times, more than two thousand years ago, in the prehistoric era. The few historical sources for this time talk about a Celtic population, Taurini, established in the Turin area in the III century b. C. There are a few hypotheses about this ethnic group and who they were, but historians are sure about the presence of a big village between the two rivers Po and Dora, where the city is today.

Turin have also been an important city during the Roman Empire, in 58 b. C. Giulio Cesare built a settlement on this territory called Iulia Taurinorum. In 28 b. C., under Augusto’s empire, it took the name of Julia Augusta Taurinorum. The settlement developed with the characteristic Roman urban layout. It probably had around five to seven thousand inhabitants and had walls around it by the I century.

Except for the theatre, whose foundations were discovered at the beginning of the 20th century, the most important remains of Roman Turin consist of the gate of one of the main streets, Porta Palatina, flanked by sections of walls; of the Porta Decumana incorporated into the castle of Castle Square; of the foundations of a corner tower and in a section of wall visible in underground rooms of the Egyptian Museum.

In this picture Turin, even though it didn't play a leading role, benefited from this context and the Cisalpina area became a place of heavy transit and especially military attendance. Here also started to arrive barbaric populations called Sarmatians. Following these conflicts, several thousand subjugated Sarmatians were welcomed into the territory of the empire as military settlers. During the following years, until the end of the Roman Empire in 476 and later, many events followed one another: Goths and Visigoths invaded the area; Roman-barbaric kingdoms started to grow; between the 5th and 6th century the Turin area (called Taurinum), was subject to many sacks, the Goth-Greek war happened and also the invasion of the Byzantine Empire.

In the second half of the 6th century, Lombards entered the Turin area, and the city regained strategic relevance because of its location on the border with the domination of the Franks, becoming an important duchy.

During the 10th century, the city became an important regional capital and from the 12th century, the city passed into the hands of the Savoy family, one of the oldest European dynasties, who governed the city and its area (and many others) until 1946 when democracy was proclaimed. During these centuries Turin was attached to the French Realm, and in 1563 became the capital and was fortified and redesigned. (Roda, 1997: 297-330)

On the 26th of June 1800, Napoleon passed through Turin after winning his second Italian campaign, and from here started the annexation process of the region of Piemonte to France. All the government institutions were abolished and the new French region got the name *Au delà des Alpes*. During this time also a lot of works of art (66 from Turin) made their way to France due to Napoleonic spoliations. With the Vienna Congress and the Restoration, many works were returned to Italy, and the Piemonte region got new territories, getting closer to the asset of Italy's union.

In the 19th century, the Savoy house placed itself at the head of the Italian national unification movement, which led to the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy on the 17th of March 1861, of which Turin was the first capital. From this date until June 1946, when the referendum on the institutional form of the state-sanctioned the abolition of the monarchy in favor of the republic, the House of Savoy was the royal family of Italy.

The institutional referendum of the 2nd of June 1946 sanctioned the abolition of the monarchy in Italy, with the consequent exile of Umberto II and his family in Portugal. In 1947 the 13th transitional and final provision of the Constitution of the Italian Republic ordered the exile of the former kings and their male descendants. In 2002, given the cancellation of the 13th provision, Vittorio Emanuele of Savoy and his son Emanuele Filiberto of Savoy swore in writing «loyalty to the Republican Constitution and our President of the Republic». In 2003 the male descendants of King Umberto II were able to return to Italy.

It is important to take a step back and see what Turin was in the 19th and 20th centuries and its position during the two world wars. The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century saw Turin develop as an important industrial city: in 1899 Giovanni Agnelli, together with other partners, founded FIAT there, and in 1906 Vincenzo Lancia founded the car factory that bore his name. Many other factories arose during these years like the coffee company Lavazza, or the famous liquor company Martini, making Turin one of the main centers of Italy's industrialization. (Mana, 1998: 38-72)

Italy's entry into the First World War severely affected the population. But if the end of the conflict undoubtedly marks the end of a nightmare for the people, the beginning of the post-war period, in no way represents the overcoming of that "armed truce" between the social classes. In 1919 Turin was one of the cities where protests against the rise of prices of goods were at its strongest and many factories were occupied by workers. In the elections of the same year, the socialist party won in Turin, going against the rise of fascism, but things changed in just one year, when in 1920 for the administrative elections for the city council the socialist deputies were defeated. Nonetheless, the left-side working class will characterize the political scene of the city in the next years⁵, even though the spread of fascism was getting stronger and stronger. (Mana, 1998: 109-296)

Turin was, and still is, an important university pole, and during these years political differences were strong in the different atheneums. This was until the end of the 1920s when the majority of rectors and teachers declared their adhesion to the fascist party. Turin therefore remains, on the eve of the conflict, a city marked by social divisions, internal separations, and a reserve that differentiates it from other cities.

The years of war, with heavy bombardments between 1942-43, and with the nazi occupation that lasted until 1945, will directly affect the civil population with many victims and

⁵ During these years many people moved to Turin from southern Italy and other regions to find a job in one of the many industries that developed in the city. This made the left-side working class the dominant one in the city.

heavy traumas. Many people left the city to seek refuge in the countryside. This is what Augusto Monti wrote in one of his essays in the aftermath of the liberation:

Turin is full of people: the uniforms of the partisans blend in with those of the allies; disarmed both from the first days; the fences removed the redoubts dismantled [...]. One of those mornings, in front of the main post office, I couldn't believe my eyes – lemons! – a stall is full; a Sicilian man sells them for 15 lire⁶ and says: «If there were trains, I would give them for three lire each» [...]. The “Famija Turineisa” is reborn, God bless it; one of these days Lupi will take Gianduja⁷ out with his puppets [...]. Soon, they say, the National Library will reopen to the public. (Tranfaglia, 1998: 39)

Thirty years is a limited and short period in the thousand-year history of a city, but it is worth underlining that the period of the two world wars has a non-negligible importance for Turin. (Sgambati, Mantelli, 1998:181-296)

After the war, Turin symbolized economic growth, and many other people from the south arrived here. The city was an important center also during the Sixty-Eight movement, a socio-cultural phenomenon that occurred in 1968, during which large socially heterogeneous mass movements, affected many states in the world with their strong youth protests against the dominant power apparatus and their ideologies. In Italy, this movement started in Pisa in 1965, in Trento in 1966, and in Turin in 1967 when students occupied the Campana Palace, the headquarters of the humanities faculty.

During the 1980s there was a big crisis: for over a century Turin was considered the main Factory town in Italy. This model collapsed because many people left and many factories were abandoned. So the city needed to animate and refresh its image and revalorize all the important heritage for its inhabitants. In the '90s, the city was remodeled thanks to a new city master plan, which requalified the historic center, and improved transportation and industrial fabrics. Over the last twenty years, the city of Turin has started an important process of change and investment in urban policies, qualifying itself for its ability to implement a series of innovative projects and experimenting with new, unprecedented development paths to activate relations between the public different. The candidacy for the Winter Olympics, the strengthening of mobility infrastructure, and the particular attention paid to the expansion of services and the qualification of the cultural offer project the city onto an international dimension.

⁶ The old Italian currency

⁷ A typical chocolate of the region

Today the city is still important for its culture and economy, but it has taken a backseat compared to Milan, where everything is happening at the moment, leaving Turin being called “just a very big village”.

2.2. Art Institutions

With this new city plan, the city became the cultural hub that it is today. Other than its cultural and historic heritage, contemporary art has a particular meaning for Turin, both in historical terms and for the widespread awareness of how art is an identity component of the city, to the point that constitutes a fundamental part of cultural life. Although the reevaluation of the role of contemporary art is a general phenomenon, there is no doubt that Turin has significant specificities, such as to justify a direct activity of the Association which monitors and enhances the objectives of the Strategic Plan of the city. A rundown of all the most important cultural institutions of Turin can help us identify the city in the global cultural panorama.

MUSEUMS

Among Italian cities, Turin offers the highest number of artistic, historical, and scientific museums. Many of these are of great importance both at a national and global level.

Starting with ancient and modern art museums, the first and maybe the most famous one is the Egyptian Museum, which is the oldest one in the world with its opening in 1824⁸, and considered the second most important one after the Cairo Museum. The building was built in 1679 for the first collection of antiquities bought by King Carlo Felice. It was then readapted in 1850 to become a museum open to the public.

The last rearrangement happened in 2015 and has radically functionalized the spaces, and the museum itinerary.⁹

The Museum of Oriental Art is another foreign art museum, it is a non-profit organization and was opened in 2008. It is made of five galleries that hold works from the south and the southeast of Asia. It has the largest collection of Chinese funerary art in Italy, religious and non-religious art from Japan, Himalayan works, and also Islamic art. Other than the permanent collection it also holds temporary ones.¹⁰

⁸ The Cairo’s Egyptian Museum opened in 1902.

⁹ [Egyptian Museum Website](#)

¹⁰ [Museum of Oriental Arts Website](#)

Another important institution is the Royal Museums of Turin, which holds one of the biggest Italian collections, with works of art from ancient times to the 20th century, that mirror the Savoy's taste during centuries. It is a large museum complex, located in the center of the city and includes the Royal Palace, the Royal Armoury, the Savoy Gallery, the Museum of Antiquities, the ground floor of Palazzo Chiabrese, and the Chapel of the Holy Shroud.¹¹

Palazzo Madama is the official residence of two of the royal ladies from the 15th century. Cristina of France, who lived there in those years, the palace was adapted to the taste of the time, and the staterooms were all painted and decorated with pomp.

The museum opened to the public in 1863. At first, the collection was mostly centered on Turin's history. The museum closed for almost twenty years from 1987 to 2006 for restoration. Now it holds different collections, from medieval art to a botanical garden. The last one of the historical museums is the Resurgence Museum, which retraces the history of the unification of Italy.¹²

Together with these historical institutions, Turin is an important pole for contemporary art. Many are its contemporary art realities. The most important Contemporary Art Museum of the city, and one of the most important in the country is the museum of Rivoli's Castle. The location, part of the UNESCO global heritage, is one of the Savoy residencies in the region and It's located on Rivoli Hill, from the Roman period. The first build dates back to the 9th century, but it was Amedeo IV of Savoy to build a real fortified structure in 1245. During the next centuries, it was the royal house and in 1863 it became a military barracks and in 1883 the civic library was moved here. During the 20th century, it was occupied, bombarded, and almost reopened as a casino. In the 1960s and 70s was restored, until 1984, when it opened as a Contemporary Art Museum.

The Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art promotes the understanding of our era through art and culture, involving the local and international public to promote the social and civil growth of the territory in which it operates. In addition to collecting and exhibiting works of art, the Museum is a center for creativity, research, education, and the development of culture especially in the field of contemporary art in a reflection on the present that passes through a dynamic relationship with the past.¹³

The second one that needs to be mentioned is the Civic Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art: it was opened at first in 1863, and in 1895 the collection was moved to

¹¹ [Royal Museums of Turin Website](#)

¹² [Palazzo Madama Website](#)

¹³ [Rivoli Museum Website](#)

another location, until 1942, when the building was destroyed due to the war. A new one was built in the same place as the old one and inaugurated in 1959. During the 80s it was restored and it reopened in 1993. Today its collections consist of over 45,000 works including paintings, sculptures, installations, and photographs, to which are added a rich collection of drawings and engravings and one of the most important European collections of artists' films and videos.¹⁴

Since 2003 it has been part of the Turin Museums Foundation, together with the Museum of Oriental Art and Palazzo Madama¹⁵.

The foundation's mission is to manage and valorize the city's art collections. Their mission is the connection through art:

Palazzo Madama, MAO, GAM, and Artissima are deeply connected realities, capable of relating the Past, the East, and the Future through their activities, just as the works they exhibit open up to dialogue with and between the people they welcome. For these reasons, we are convinced that art is the oldest form of connection.¹⁶

They also offer different educational projects, for children and adults; a research center; and collaborations between different cultural institutions. Pinacoteca Agnelli is another significant modern and contemporary art museum. It opened in 2002 and collects works from the collection of Gianni and Marella Agnelli, the main shareholder and top director of FIAT, and his wife. The museum has works of art from the 18th to the 20th century, among which stand out artists like Canaletto, Canova, Renoir, Manet, Modigliani, Balla, and Picasso. It also holds temporary exhibitions.¹⁷

The last contemporary art museum that opened in Turin in 2022 is the new venue of Italy's Galleries, a museum pole of the bank Intesa Sanpaolo, set up to make its artistic and architectural heritage accessible. It has four sites: Milan, Naples, Vicenza and Turin. In Turin, the museum is in San Carlo Square, in the center of the city. It is mainly dedicated to photography and the digital world but it also welcomes the photography archive *Publifoto* of Intesa Sanpaolo. The temporary exhibitions are mainly dedicated to contemporary discussions such as climate change, social differences, and tech evolution.¹⁸

¹⁴ [GAM Website](#)

¹⁵ It also partners with Artissima, the most important art fair in Turin, which will be talked about later in the chapter.

¹⁶ [Foundation Website](#)

¹⁷ [Pinacoteca Agnelli Website](#)

¹⁸ [Gallerie d'Italia Website](#)

Other than historical and contemporary art museums Turin is also famous for its theme museums among which is worth mentioning the Car Museum and the famous National Cinema Museum. This one is located in the Mole Antonelliana building, a monument symbol of the city. The museum develops as a spiral on different levels, where it is possible to find iconic props and costumes from famous movies, but also a lot of history of this art media. This one also holds temporary exhibitions; the most recent ones have been on Dario Argento and Tim Burton's work.¹⁹

FESTIVALS

Talking about festivals, many events unfold during the year, especially during summer and autumn (Turin Art Week). They are dedicated to different cultural aspects and interests like art, photography, music, food, cinema, etc.

Exposed is the new Turin Photography Festival that this year will have its first edition, called *New Landscapes*. It collaborates with different institutions, and from May to June the city's cultural panorama will be dedicated to photography: all the galleries will have photography exhibitions, as well as some museums like Italy's Galleries. It is promoted by the City of Turin, the Piedmont Region, the Turin Chamber of Commerce, Intesa Sanpaolo Bank, the Company of San Paolo Foundation, CRT Foundation, and the Turin Culture Foundation organizes it:

Exposed envisions itself as a cutting-edge presence in the international photography panorama, complementing the existing offerings. Therefore, the festival's artistic direction is focused on an inclusive approach to attracting diverse audiences—both local and international—through a diverse program that encompasses different approaches to photography: from classic to contemporary, cross-media, installation, and performative.²⁰

Another important event in the city is the so-called *Artist's Lights*, started by the municipality of Turin in 1998. During the Christmas period, some city squares and streets are decorated with lights designed by contemporary artists, which stand out for their high scenographic value or highly symbolic and conceptual values.

¹⁹ [Cinema Museum Website](#)

²⁰ [Exposed Website](#)

Turin's Film Festival proposes itself as a metropolitan festival on one hand related to the more technical and critical elaboration, and on the other to the evolution of cinema. The first edition was in 1982.

Some of the more important festivals are dedicated to music, from jazz to techno, and are among the most important in the country.

FOUNDATIONS

Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, established in 1995, is committed to the valorization and spreading of contemporary art. It is a non-profit organization and one of the first private foundations opened in Italy. It has two sites in the city, the second one opened in 2002. The Foundation has its roots in the Collection of Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, who started the collection in 1992 and wanted to make it public. Today she is the president of the Foundation and a member of the most important museums' boards such as the MoMA of New York and the Tate Gallery in London.²¹

One of its partners is *CRT Foundation*, another non-profit reality dedicated to art, culture, and research on environmental protection, since in Italy the cultural and landscape heritage are under the same code. Born in 1991, it is the third bank foundation in the country for net worth of assets. It has disbursed more than 2 billion euros for over 42.000 projects for art, culture, research, welfare, environment, and many others.

Another foundation CRT supports is the *Merz Foundation*, which opened in 2005 as a center for contemporary art to host exhibitions, events, and educational activities. Its main mission is to make this a place where art is not a monumental and static object:

The place of the works of art, which has gone from being an "artist's house" to a "house for artists", has inevitably matured its role over the years, changing from an original impulse of survival, and has become a player aware and pro-active about new opportunities.²²

The 107 Foundation, opened in 2009, is another similar reality, a non-profit organization dedicated to contemporary art that hosts site-specific projects realized in direct contact with the artists.²³

²¹ [Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation Website](#)

²² [CRT Website](#)

²³ [107 Website](#)

Turin also boasts various art magazines, the most important one is *Il Giornale dell'Arte*, which covers everything that happens in the art world nationally and globally and also gives daily updates regarding different events or news. It talks about the market, and the cultural places, and gives focuses on artists and works of art.

Together with all of these important institutions, there are dozens of other smaller ones that contribute to making Turin's cultural life very vivacious and dynamic. Many events, openings, meetings, and book presentations happen every day of the week, and with a lot of attendees. But despite being a hub for cultural life, Turin is falling behind regarding its cultural market.

2.3. Turin's Art Market

Contemporary art has a particular meaning for Turin, both in historical terms and for the widespread awareness of how art is an identity component of the city, to the point of constituting a fundamental part of cultural life. Although the reevaluation of the role of contemporary art is a general phenomenon, there is no doubt that Turin has significant specificities, such as to justify a direct activity of the Association which monitors and enhances the objectives of the city's strategic plan.

After taking a look at the most important cultural institutions of the city, there is a whole other world of cultural institutions that make up the great art market scene in Turin. Analyzing these players can help to understand the status of the city art market.

GALLERIES

The most important art galleries in Turin are all part of the TAG (Turin Art Galleries) association. It was founded in 2000 and has as a goal the promotion and diffusion of art, with particular attention to contemporary art. It functions as a reference for all the local authorities, curating projects and collaborating with them.²⁴ Among the more important galleries, there are:

- Tucci Russo Gallery, is an international contemporary art gallery established in 1975 by Antonio Tucci Russo, who inaugurated a solo exhibition of Pier Paolo Calzolari, an artist born in Bologna but who today lives and works in Lisbon. They participate in important art fairs like Art Basel.
- Another international art gallery is Franco Noero, founded in 1999. Alongside the organization of exhibitions and participation in the main international art fairs, the

²⁴ [TAG Website](#)

gallery collaborates with important cultural institutions of the city, promoting the publication of books supporting the production of its artists' work.

- The other galleries from the association are A Pick Gallery, Crag Gallery, Febo e Dafne, Gagliardi e Domke, Umberto Benappi Gallery, Giorgio Persano Gallery, In Arco Gallery, Luce Gallery, Metroquadro Gallery, Photo & Contemporary Gallery (only dedicated to photography), Recontemporary Gallery, Riccardo Costantini, Roccatre, Simondi Gallery and Weber & Weber Gallery.

To be part of this reality a gallery has to make a request that will be analyzed by the galleries and the association's president in their monthly meetings. Each of these galleries will then deposit a fixed amount of money every year, which will be used to organize different events, to spread and valorize contemporary art in the city.

A very important gallery, probably the most important in Turin, but that is not a part of TAG, is Mazzoleni Art Gallery. It was founded in 1986 by Giovanni and Pia Mazzoleni to have a space for their art collection started in the 1950s. In 2014 they also opened a space in London.

Over the past three decades, Mazzoleni has organized solo and group exhibitions of more than 200 prominent Italian and international artists with a museum-caliber exhibition program focused on Post-War Italian Art, working in close cooperation with artists' estates and foundations. Under the leadership of Davide and Luigi Mazzoleni, the gallery has expanded its activity forging new collaborations with leading contemporary artists and promoting Italian art on a global level.²⁵

They participate in the most important art fairs in the world and collaborate with important cultural institutions worldwide.

ART FAIRS

These galleries, from the middle tier ones to the top tier, all participate in some of the art fairs that the city of Turin offers during the year.

The most important art fair, that takes place during Turin's Art Week, usually on the first weekend of November, is *Artissima*. It is one of the most important contemporary art fairs in Italy, founded in 1994, it brings together galleries from all over the world with great attention to research and experimentation. Together with the fair exposition, which is divided into four (Main Section, Monologue/Dialogue, New Entries, Art Spaces & Editions), the event also offers three sections curated by a board of directors and curators dedicated to young emergent

²⁵ [Mazzoleni Website](#)

artists (Present Future), to contemporary art pioneers (Back to the Future), and to drawings (Disegni). These sections have monographic stands and on the platform *Artissima Voice-Over*, it is possible to find dedicated insights. As mentioned before, the fair is curated by Artissima Srl, the company that belongs to the Turin Museum Foundation.²⁶

But during Turin Art Week many other collateral fairs take place in the city dedicated to different types of art. *Apart Fair* is the number one antiques fair in the region, with sections dedicated to archeology, and Asian and African art. This event is organized by the Association of Piemonte's Antiques, a member of the Italian Federation of Art Dealers, which brings together the most important antique galleries.²⁷

Flashback Art Fair is part of the Flashback project, born in 2013, that organizes different events in the city during the year. It is mainly focused on contemporary art.²⁸

The Others Art Fair "is born with the aim of intercepting the language of the new generations and promoting emerging realities". It is an independent fair and it is all about the youth: young artists represented by emerging galleries from all over the world. There is particular attention to young curators.²⁹

Paratissima is another independent fair born in 2005 and it also wants to valorize emerging galleries and artists in the contemporary panorama.³⁰

ThePhair is the youngest fair in the city, born in 2019, and only dedicated to photography. They aim to create an event like *Artissima* for only this art media. Despite its youth, this fair has already reached international galleries, that will bring their photography offer. This fair is happening during *Exposed*, Turin's Photo Festival, which lasts one month from May to June.³¹

AUCTION HOUSES

Bolaffi is one of the two main auction houses from Turin. It was born in the 1990s as an actual auction house, but already a century before, in 1890, Alberto Bolaffi opened in Turin the philatelic activity. Today Aste Bolaffi examines, advises, and sells with the same passion and attention to detail, with the addition of a careful eye toward the international market, the solid expertise proven in decades of studies and important sales, attention to current trends in the most varied sectors of collecting and the use of the most advanced digital technologies.

²⁶ [Artissima Website](#)

²⁷ [Apart Website](#)

²⁸ [Flashback Website](#)

²⁹ [The Others Website](#)

³⁰ [Paratissima Website](#)

³¹ [The Phair Website](#)

Throughout history, there have been important sales, and today it specializes in all the luxury markets, from jewelry to cars, furniture, and art.³²

Sant'Agostino is the oldest in Turin, founded as an auction house in 1969 together with an art gallery. Its success grew especially after 1993 when the founders bought a building constructed for an auction house, because before they were itinerant. From there the auction house kept growing, making important sales like the one of Sironi's *Engineer* sold for 450.000 euros in 2003. Today they are still mostly specialized in paintings and sculptures from the 19th and 20th centuries, but they also expanded their work on design, jewelry, cars, silvers, and watches.³³

Other than these two main ones, there are other smaller auction houses in Turin, that usually are, at the same time, galleries. One of them is *Incanto*. They work with modern and contemporary art, photography, design, and glasses.

As it is possible to understand, with all the galleries (international and not), auction houses, and the important art fair that is *Artissima*, Turin could be considered one of the main centers of the art market in Italy, and it certainly is under some points of view. There are a lot of places to buy and sell art in the city, but living it, it feels like in the last few years a lot has changed. If during the last two decades of the 20th century, people bought a lot of art, today, only wealthy collectors buy a few pieces a year. But even these people stopped buying a lot because their collections were already too big. Dealers say that is because the consumption of art has changed. In an interview from 2019 (so even before covid), from *Collezione di Tiffany*, the gallerist Alberto Peola talks about how galleries are in a crisis right now, because the majority of transactions are made during the fair *Artissima*, but for the rest of the year the city falls back in a kind of numbness. Art fairs work because they allow the public to see works of art more immediately and rapidly and this, in the age of social media, works better than the meditative environment of art galleries.

Peola in the interview blames these problems on a lack of taste and education in schools and society in general. Most gallerists can still influence the taste of the market, but the problem is way beyond them, it is a cultural problem: people are not open to it nowadays, as they were, for example, during the 60s, when in Turin there was an extraordinary cultural fabric that educated generations of collectors in taste. For these reasons, and to keep the art scene alive

³² [Bolaffi Website](#)

³³ [Sant'Agostino Website](#)

and make Turin a real art pole, the city and the region of Piemonte usually engage in different initiatives.

Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, former director of Rivoli's Castle Museum, in an article made by *Il Giornale dell'Arte*, talks about how she saw the city changing and how important the relationship between Turin and Piemonte is. She says:

There is a potentially huge opportunity for tourism growth. Today we are looking for lesser-known places, not everyone wants to go to Florence, Venice, or Rome. However, this is a potential that does not only concern Turin but also the relationship between the city of Turin and Piedmont. Current tourism trends are dictated by eco-friendly travelers, looking for a new and better balance between nature and culture that can solve the problems of climate change and mitigate the associated sense of guilt. However, creating new and better relationships with the environment does not necessarily mean decentralizing a museum but creating new elements linked to art outside the city.

This year, part of the Piedmont region will be the protagonist of the *Panorama* project from ITALICS. *ITALICS Art and Landscape* is a consortium of seventy of the most influential galleries in Italy, with the mission to talk about the Italian landscape and valorize it. Each year they choose a place in the country for the Panorama: a diffuse and itinerant exhibition that brings together art, architecture, and Italian landscapes with their communities.

3. Weber & Weber Art Gallery

Weber & Weber Art Gallery is a historical gallery in Turin, which offers a great variety of artists specializing in modern and contemporary art. Their main focus is on young and upcoming artists, launching them on the market and creating a valuable career with them. All the years of experience gave Alberto and Carlomaria great taste in art and deep knowledge, and the gallery became a safe place for good investments and beautiful pieces. This chapter will give a general panorama of its history and work and analyze some of the gallery's difficulties today.

3.1. History of the Gallery

The history of Weber & Weber starts with Alberto, its founder, born in 1948 in the Trentino Alto Adige region. His passion for art and entrepreneurial spirit made him move to Turin at seventeen, where he started working different jobs. At the same time, he got to know the city's artistic panorama more and more. He met several artists, writers, collectors, art experts, and critics. In 1976 he decided to open the gallery and after a few years, he left his other job to dedicate himself only to art.

From here the activity started to grow, and all the people who Alberto met during the years created the perfect network for the gallery to thrive. From the beginning, he decided to concentrate on young artists, so much so that he launched now-established artists with their first exhibitions, such as Carol Rama, Bice Lazzari, Vasco Bendini, Sergio Ragalzi, and Salvatore Astore. Carol Rama's pieces, for example, sell today at hundreds of thousands of euros.

During the '80s and '90s, the gallery was in its golden age: Alberto was (and still is) one of the main personalities in Turin's art scene, and thanks to a flourishing economy a lot of people were interested in art and used to buy a lot of pieces. What made a difference were all those people from the middle bourgeoisie that, even though weren't super rich, they still could buy art. In 1982 he founded the art magazine "Color" directed by Maurizio Calvesi. Since 1996 he has been a scientific collaborator of the new contemporary art section of the Landscape Museum of Pallanza-Verbania. On behalf of the Municipality of Gioia Ionica (RC) he has been developing, since 1997, the scientific project for the new Museum of Contemporary Art in the Locride district. He is also a very important curator, so many institutions collaborated with him at important exhibitions all around the country.

In 2000 the gallery changed location and moved to the city's heart in an old and characteristic neighborhood full of artist studios and folkloristic shops. In 2006 Alberto's son

Carlomaria started working in the gallery that changed its name to Weber & Weber. With his entrance, Carlomaria brought new ideas for the management of the activity with a younger and more dynamic perspective: he started collaborations not only with big city institutions but also with local activities like restaurants and shops to promote a healthy network between cultural and tourist realities. He also brought the gallery to important fairs like Artissima and, with his experience in the curatorial world, he also helped to renew the approach for their exhibitions, while always keeping the elegance and simplicity that have always characterized their works. Today the space is made of two spacious rooms with big windows, that make the space very luminous, and connected by two small arches.



Figure 1 Detail of the Gallery

The location is not like other contemporary art galleries white cube-like, but has a warm atmosphere. The studio behind is full of art and books, making the gallery a “lived-in space” and not only an aseptic room for exposing art. Walking in it is possible to see and feel all the history and the culture that this place holds.



Figure 2 Detail of the Gallery

3.2. Artists

As priorly mentioned Weber & Weber Gallery mainly focuses on young artists who catch Alberto and Carlomaria's attention for their originality and talent. Alberto's experience, trained eye for art, and Carlomaria's young perspective create the perfect criteria for deciding which artist to represent. The choice is made by looking at an international context, they choose artists that they consider interesting at that moment. Plus, the choice is oriented toward whom work can add something to the exhibition themes usually treated by the gallery. They look for new ways to approach the classical media and they don't base their decisions solely on market performance and positioning of the artists.

Taking a look at their collection it is possible to see how these criteria are applied. Among their photographers, for example, we can find different approaches. Their top-selling artist, Ugo Ricciardi, a Swiss-Italian photographer, creates images which he calls *Nightscares*, shot at night in remote places with the help of a drone.



Figure 3 Icebergs And Circle of Light 1, Iceland, 2021



Figure 4 The White Tree, Madeira, 2023

In his case, it is visible a high technical capacity, but together with that, what interested the gallery above all, was the process through which Ugo creates his shots: traveling the world, waiting for a full moon to have the perfect natural light and adding the detail of the circle of

light with the drone shot in long exposure, gives the pieces the history and originality that the gallery seeks.

Another important photographer is Roberto Kusterle, the protagonist of their last exhibition, *Chiaro di Luna*. He is a sculptor, painter, and stage photographer from Gorizia (northeast of Italy). His shots use all these media to create the perfect landscape for his images. This is what makes his work so special. He is already forward in his career and his quotations are quite high.



Figure 5 Lo schermitore solitario, 2004

He creates all the details in the picture and the shot is the last part of his process. In his images, he is able to create an imaginary and almost surrealistic world that wants to reflect on the relationship between man, body, and nature.

Moreover, if we look at the painters that the gallery represents, there is a theme of contemporary ideas, with the beauty and depth of classical art. Their second to last exhibition, for example, was dedicated to Rodrigo Blanco, an Italian artist from Latina, who reflects, in his works, on different places, like a swamp close to his hometown, but through playing with color and light, where the figures are nuanced and rarefied. Other important artists are Federico Guerri, Horiki Katsutomi, Sylvie Romieu, Gillian Lawler, Colm Mac Athlaoich, Bruno Lucca, and Damien Flood.

It is safe to say that the most important thing for the gallery is the quality of the work, in technical talent and originality. The message usually comes after that. Some of the artists represented by Weber & Weber Gallery, and others collaborated with it for a few exhibitions but didn't work with it permanently. They usually curate their exhibitions, but sometimes they collaborate with freelance curators who bring interesting artists and together they decide if it is worth doing an exhibition. In the last few years, for example, they collaborated with different Irish artists thanks to an Italian curator who lives and works in Dublin. In these cases, they usually keep a few pieces after the exhibition, and if they sell anything they give 50% of the proceeds to the artist, 10% to the curator, and they keep 40%. Instead, if the artist is represented by them, they keep 50%. In both of these cases, they don't usually create any particular contract. Their exhibitions are always characterized by simplicity and elegance. The gallery has white walls and they usually hang one piece per wall, depending on the size. Their style is always clean and sleek and they never modify the structure or color of the place.

3.3. Communication

When it comes to the approach taken for their communication platforms and programs, matches one of their exhibitions. On their website and their social media, they always choose a classic, simple, and sophisticated design, that never changes, to also create a strong and recognizable image for the gallery through time.

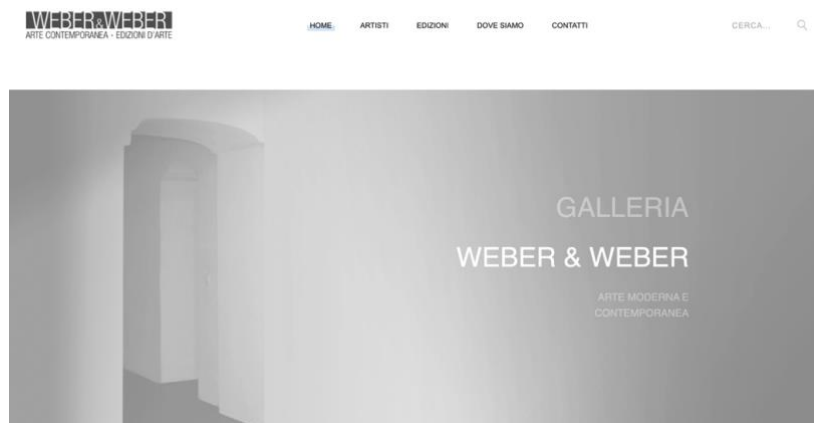


Figure 6 Gallery's website's home

The home of their website can give a general idea of what they like regarding their image online. Their main concern is to give an idea of professionalism and seriousness. Everything needs to be very clear and straightforward, with everything a client might need on the top of

the page without too much color or distractions. They are really serious in their business and this website perfectly reflects their core values. This *modus operandi* also applies to their social media. They use Instagram and Facebook to update their followers on future exhibitions and events. When it comes to the communication process for a specific exhibition they first choose the guide image for that exhibition; after that, they update their website with that image and all the details like the opening date and the duration; they then repeat this for all their social media. A few weeks before they send the exhibition details to different art magazines which put them on their websites, and a few days before they send an e-mail to their main clients with the same details. Together with online communication they also print a little invitation with the main image of the exhibition for the people that attend to take with them.

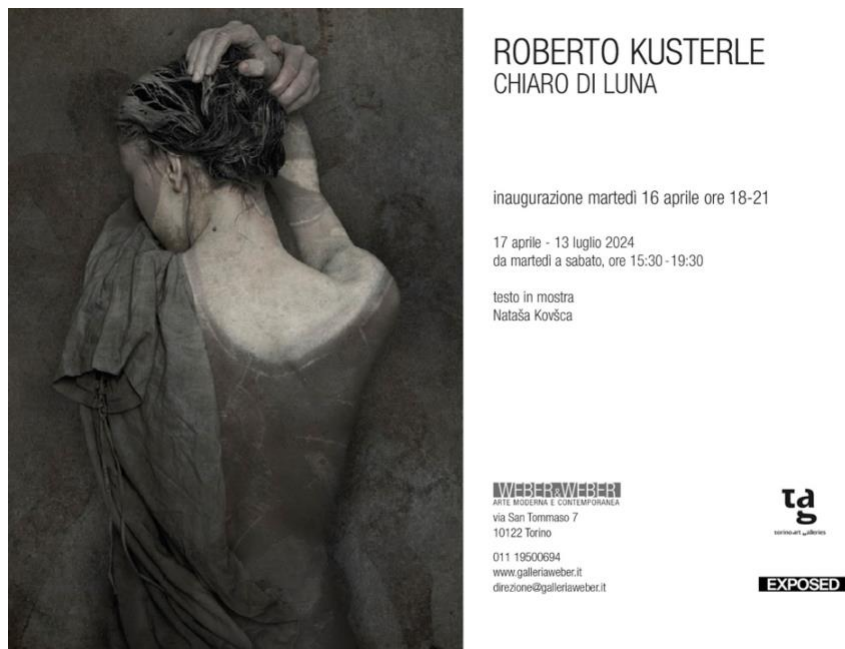


Figure 7 The online version of the invitation tickets for their last exhibition

For all of this program, they collaborate with a web designer for their website; and a graphic for the invitation tickets, posters, and labels for captions. For their social media, Carlomaria is the one who takes care of everything, but since they try to always have an intern with them, usually a young person, they leave some parts of the communication to them.

3.4. The reality of today

After its “golden age” in the ‘80s and ‘90s, the gallery started to suffer a bit of a crisis. During the early two-thousands things were still moving, the change of location and entering of

Carlomaria gave the gallery a great boost. Having said that, since then there have been external and internal factors that contributed to putting the gallery in this decadent period.

The goal of this subchapter is not to talk badly about the management of Weber & Weber Gallery, but it is to give a critical analysis of the reasons why today the gallery faces difficulties and what could be done differently based on personal experience working inside their activity. External factors that impacted the gallery are mainly two and somehow linked to one another: the first one is the economic crisis that the entire world is in right now, which caused a big growth in inflation that consequently bumped up the prices for everything. In the case of the gallery, they not only have to pay more for their assets and things they need to keep the activity going; but, at the same time, they saw a huge decline in clients. As briefly mentioned above, before all of this, a lot of people bought art, not only the super wealthy individuals and collectors but also ones who used to buy randomly a piece that they liked. The so-called “middle bourgeoisie” that almost doesn’t exist anymore, took away a big chunk of clients. Plus, Turin itself doesn’t have a lot of young and new collectors, the majority are old and wealthy people who already own such big collections that don’t buy any more pieces. Some new collectors are brought into the city by the different events, especially Artissima, but this is an occasion limited to the days of the fair only.

The other important external factor, underlined by Alberto, is the fact that people are not interested in art anymore. Most of the collectors buy for speculation and investments, but less and less for passion and love of specific artists. Alberto, even though he didn’t study art, knows everything about it, and he wrote a lot about it too. In the gallery, during the work days, he notices that the people who come in are more interested in the positioning in the market of a certain artist, more than in the pieces. This gives him a cynical perspective on the present, making him think that people don’t know art as they used to, even the ones involved in the art world.

Internal factors also hold back the gallery’s performance, starting from the cynical perspective mentioned above. Even though they are probably right, and there isn’t a great artistic culture and knowledge anymore, this mindset tends to drag the gallery into a stagnant situation. Consequently, they don’t try new things and don’t invest in a change of the branding for the gallery. A big discussion for today’s companies is to remain up-to-date, in a fast-paced environment, that constantly changes, it is difficult to keep up with trends. The majority of the galleries have a timeless and classical style, especially when it comes to social media, websites, and general branding. If not done right, this can result in a poor and ineffective aesthetic.

In the case of Weber & Weber Gallery the marketing and publicity they do for themselves may not be right to attract new clients. After doing the same things for almost fifty years it could be beneficial to invest in young people who can create a new and catchier image, even though they already try to incorporate new perspectives with their interns. All these details are easy to see, but it is difficult for them, at the moment, to modernize their company: the environment is challenging, and the possibilities are limited. All of this doesn't take away the fact that the quality of their collection and their artists is rare to find.

4. Internship Report

My internship at Weber & Weber Gallery began on January 9th and concluded on May 12th, 2024. The gallery's atmosphere was consistently tranquil and silent, creating a meditative space. Alberto's studio at the back, filled with books and artworks displayed like an old Wunderkammer, perfectly embodied the ambiance I had always envisioned for a gallery.

I joined the gallery during a period of "crisis," when it was often empty. Despite this, Alberto and Carlomaria were incredibly welcoming and eager to share their extensive knowledge of the technical, practical, and theoretical aspects of gallery management. The initial days were dedicated to an in-depth introduction to their activities, collaborations, the artists they represent, and their works. We also discussed mutual expectations for the internship.

I primarily worked with Carlomaria, who handled the gallery's bureaucratic, communication, and networking responsibilities. Alberto provided valuable insights, recommending books, artists to study, and showing me their old catalogs. Overall, my relationship with them was friendly and relaxed, fostering a positive and educational experience.

4.1. Internship Objectives and Expectations

My studies allowed me to work in the art world, more specifically this internship was dedicated to the art market. I chose to try the environment of the gallery because out of all the realities of this industry, it was the one that felt more aligned with what I was looking for: a slow-paced environment, where I could work with a few people and learn from them. Some of the benefits that I was expecting from working in an Art Gallery are:

- Direct exposure to the art world: in a gallery, you can interact daily with diverse artworks and artists. Having the opportunity to meet them personally could give you a wholesome perspective of their work, deepen your understanding of the context in which they live and work, and give you insights into their creative process. With this, you can study the contemporary art market from its source.
- Networking opportunities: having direct interactions with collectors, critics, curators, and many other professionals. In the state of my internship, I wanted to meet them to learn about their jobs and their lives, and to build ideas of what I would like to do.

- Talking to these people was important for me, not only for building professional relationships but mainly for learning a practical approach to roles that I only studied in books.
- New skills development: as mentioned above, I was expecting to learn, from a practical point of view, some of the activities inside a gallery.
- I wanted to learn about curatorship and gain some curatorial skills like selecting and organizing exhibitions; enhancing skills in art sales, client relations, and gallery marketing strategies; and getting to know the planning and executing of these art events like openings and participation in art fairs.
- With this in mind, I wanted to try different roles and jobs inside the gallery. I thought that being in a small gallery could help me engage in various tasks.
- I was also expecting a creative environment, a stimulating place that fosters innovation and artistic expression. I expected a dynamic work environment that could offer changes for each exhibition to learn the creative process behind them and not only the technical parts.
- New theoretical knowledge: together with practical skills I wanted to deepen my art history knowledge. I knew that I needed a deeper awareness of contemporary artists and the different lines of thought of today's art.
- Professional growth: I wanted to start to open pathways for me to careers in art curation, museum management, art conservation or even owning a gallery.
- Gaining problem-solving skills: developing creative solutions for exhibition design, space utilization, and audience engagement.

I thought that working in an art gallery could offer a blend of cultural immersion, professional development, and personal satisfaction, making it an attractive career choice in the art world.

4.2. Activities

The gallery was open from Tuesday to Saturday from 3 to 7:30 pm. I used to arrive in Turin at 10 am and leave around 6 pm, sometimes, during busier times, at 7/7:30 pm. During the morning we usually responded to e-mails and sorted out all the bureaucratic work for the day, as well as moving around the pieces from or to storage when needed. In the afternoon we usually waited for visitors to come and this was also the time to call or meet with artists and curators.

These were the activities carried out during my internship, and with all of them, I was helped or supervised by Carlomaria.

- E-mails. This included two main tasks: the first thing I did every morning was sort out all the e-mails, highlight the ones that could interest them, and delete all the useless ones, and when needed I designed their e-mail campaigns to send to their collectors and followers for openings or other type of events: e.g. they participated in the Turin photography festival EXPOSED in May and on that occasion, TAG (Turin Art Galleries Association) organized breakfast in each of their galleries. For this, they sent out a particular e-mail to publicize this event. The guidelines for these e-mails were simple and always the same. Another task in this regard was sending e-mails with all the details of new exhibitions to art magazines so that they could publicize them. We used to include: a guide image (which also appeared on the invitations), and a press release that explained the exhibition. My task was also to translate press releases into English. I learned how to use Mailchimp and how to be effective in the communication of such events.
- Portfolios Analysis. Part of the e-mail work was to highlight all the jobs/internships/collaboration requests that got sent to the gallery daily. They had pre-wrote e-mails for everyone: people aiming to work in the gallery or artists who wanted to collaborate with it. If they were artists, my job was to look at their portfolios and decide if could be worth saving them and let Carlomaria and Alberto see them, or not. They have a quite high standard for their artists, so most of the time it was a no for them. In a few cases, they liked the works, but In the months that I was there, they didn't decide about these people. This job, even though it was quite simple, gave me some confidence in my skills thanks to those who gave me this responsibility.
- Communication. Together with e-mails, I also had to help Carlomaria in the whole communication program for each event, specifically openings. A few weeks before the opening of a new exhibition, they started creating events on different platforms and social media. Once again, the template and guidelines were always the same so after explaining it to me, Carlomaria trusted me to do the rest. They wanted an event created on Facebook, and Google, and a post on Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- Hospitality/ Gallery exhibitions tour. This was the task that scared me the most out of all of them. Having to interact with people and explain to them the vision of the artists felt like a big responsibility for me. During the afternoons, if someone came into the

gallery my job was to welcome them and offer my availability to explain to them the exhibition. Some people preferred to just look around, but others asked questions and wanted to get a better understanding of the work. I usually gave them an introduction to the more technical part, and then Alberto usually stepped in to talk to them.

- Mediate discussion with artists and curators when In English. When they had to talk to artists or curators who didn't speak English it was my job to talk to them. This applied to clients as well. I was always with Carlomaria who told me what to say before and then I would talk to them. This was a job that I expected to do, and it was quite easy for me Carlomaria was always happy with the results of these calls or discussions.
- Help them with the curatorial part. A few days before the opening they set up the exhibition, if they can with the help of the artists. Sometimes they collaborate with curators, but most of the time they do everything by themselves. The day usually started earlier, around 9 am and we started deciding how to distribute all the pieces, usually, Alberto has the last word on that. Then me and Carlomaria hanged all the pieces. Sometimes they also have little tags beside each piece with the name and details of the artwork, but not always. In this case, my job was just helping them, I didn't have much word on the creative process, but it was interesting and helpful seeing Alberto decide. He has done this for so long that he didn't take long to decide. It was then our job to take all the measurements and hang the pieces.
- Openings. On the day of an opening, I arrived usually around 4 pm, set up food and drinks, and waited for the people to arrive. Once the guests started to arrive my job was to always greet them, offer them something to drink, and, If they wanted, an explanation of the work. The main thing in this situation was to make the people feel welcome, if they asked about prices I called Carlomaria and left them with him. Sometimes the artists were also present so people could meet them directly.
- Packaging and Exchange works from gallery to storage when needed. Before a new exhibition, me and Carlomaria used to remove all the pieces from the previous one and package all of them. This was more of a practical task, and I learned how to pack works of art and how to store them close to one another. Once everything was packed the works of art that they may need stayed in the mini storage in Alberto's studio, all the others were either sent back to the artist or put in the bigger storage close to the gallery. They told me that in the past they used to buy the whole exhibition and keep all the pieces

after to sell, but now they just take the pieces for the exhibition and then send them back. Sometimes they keep a few.

- Press review. After the exhibition, my job was to collect all the information that I could find online and put together a press review for them to keep. I would look for all the articles online in the magazines that covered the event. With this work, I got to know the different Italian art magazines, and I got more skilled in doing such research. I put the links with the name of the magazine, the title of the article, and the date. They wanted this for each exhibition so that they could keep track of their publicity.
- Fill out and read documents for requests for authenticity. On a few occasions happened that they needed to sell pieces that didn't have the authenticity certificate yet. When they needed to sell them my job was to look for the documents or ask for the archives of the artists. Once I found them I needed to read everything that they needed for the certificate (photos of the piece, money, and how to send everything). Before this, I didn't know about this process, so I was pleased to have learned how to get an authenticity certificate for an artist who isn't alive or who is not represented by the gallery. For the artists represented by the gallery, they did all the authenticity certificates, with, of course, theirs and the artist's sign.
- Going to other openings and events. Carlomaria each Thursday brought me to one opening in different galleries, to let me see the work of the other galleries in the city. It was interesting to see the different approaches and meet different people. I could see, after a while, that Turin's art scene was quite small because at these events there were always the same people, more or less. In May opened ThePhair, the fair dedicated to photography, and with him, I got the chance to visit the place during the opening.
- Watching auctions. This wasn't an actual task, but it was something that happened a few times, during the less busy days. If we saw that there was an auction we would watch it together and Alberto e Carlomaria would explain to me a bit about the artists and the pieces. They told me what they thought about them, their best works for the market (which sometimes didn't match with what they preferred), and it was interesting to listen because a lot of the times Alberto met them in the past and told stories about them. What I gained from this kind of experience was mostly theoretical knowledge about contemporary art.

After four months and a half, I'm quite happy about the experience and what I learned from it. As I said before, Alberto and Carlomaria were always available and open to my questions and happy to teach me about their world. One defect of this experience, which was nobody's fault, is that most of the days were quite boring and still. All these activities weren't for every day, except for e-mails. So most days I ended up just sitting at the computer, but it is part of the job. In general, I would say that it wasn't a dynamic environment. Unfortunately during my internship, they didn't participate in any art fair, and that is something that I would like to see in my next experience.

4.3. General evaluation of the work

This subchapter provides a general evaluation of my work both in terms of professional growth and the organization of the training course. The application of university knowledge in daily practice, the new skills I have developed, and the feedback received from my tutors.

During my time at Weber & Weber Gallery, I found various skills gained during both my bachelor's and master's degrees to be particularly useful. During my bachelor's, I studied museography, which helped me in the curatorial part of the job, primarily with technical issues such as the appropriate height for hanging pieces or creating a narrative path for the exhibition that made sense chronologically, technically, or according to the artist's vision.

Other helpful skills learned from my bachelor's included using WordPress to assist in modifying the gallery's website and using SketchUp to create a simple model of what their stand at a potential fair could look like. The skills learned during my bachelor's degree were mainly theoretical regarding how this market works, but both the internship and university complemented each other. During the internship, I learned the practical application of what I had studied, for example, in marketing or management. However, what interested me most was discussing the art market with my tutors, asking them about its dynamics, and receiving feedback on the reality I had studied. My studies enriched my internship, and at the same time, my internship enriched my professional training course. This was my first work experience in the art market and was the perfect way to start. It wasn't a big name or institution, but this gave me the space and time to learn.

In conclusion, the internship experience at Weber & Weber Gallery represented a fundamental meeting point between academic theory and professional practice. The skills acquired during my university studies proved to be extremely valuable in the workplace, while the on-the-job experience enriched my educational background with practical and applicable

knowledge. This internship solidified my understanding of the art market and provided a solid foundation for my future career, demonstrating the importance of an integrated approach between academic training and practical experience.

Conclusions

This thesis set out to explore the art world, and more specifically the art market, through the experience of my internship at Weber & Weber art gallery. Getting a first-hand view of how this industry works and learning from experienced people the reality of it.

After four months, from January to May, of work and observation, different key findings have emerged. Firstly, how the art market changes from city to city: as mentioned before, Turin, even though it is and has been one of the cultural focus points for Italy, nowadays is in a bit of a crisis for its art market, while Milan, a few kilometers away, is thriving. Having said that, Italy in general is not going strong in this industry at the moment due to its legislation and bureaucracy.

Another interesting fact was learning about the management of a smaller gallery, which was not as structured as one can learn while studying. Alberto and Carlomaria did things their way without falling into seasonal trends. An important lesson here was to learn how important it is to equilibrate a timeless and elegant image, with a modern style that can attract clients. The most important and interesting thing for me was to learn about contemporary art and artists. During my academic career, I mainly learn about ancient art, modern art, and some contemporary art until the 20th century. Working in the gallery allowed me to meet and study new and interesting artists. This, other than gaining pure knowledge, allowed me to develop a more specific taste when it comes to contemporary art.

The only limitation of this experience, as mentioned before, has been the crisis period in which the gallery has been in for a few years now. For my next one, I will look for a more dynamic environment, that will teach me to work with different things to do and in a more structured activity. This personal project of mine shed light on my idea of the art world. Some things were as I expected them to be; some surprised me, and others left me with a bitter taste, for example, the relationship between galleries in Turin.

Overall it has been a positive experience and Weber & Weber Art Gallery will probably always be my unit of measure for high-quality works of art.

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