

ART MARKET

DAMS (L-3)

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*XV LESSON – THE ECONOMICS OF
PAINTING AND THE DEMAND FOR
WORKS OF ART*

Artistic production in Rome in the seventeenth century was closely linked to the structure and organization of the artists' workshops. The workshops were not only places of artistic production, but also spaces for learning and cultural exchange.

The artists were organized in workshops that served as centers of production and training. These workshops were often crowded places where masters worked side by side with apprentices and assistants. The organization of the workshop was hierarchical, with the master at the top directing the work of the apprentices and assistants.



One of the examples discussed is that of Giovanni Lanfranco, a painter who worked closely with his apprentices, teaching them not only painting techniques, but also how to manage commissions and client relationships. Lanfranco's workshop was a dynamic center of activity where numerous paintings were made on commission.

Giovanni Lanfranco,
Assumption of Mary
Magdalene, 1615-
1618, Naples,
Capodimonte
Museum, from
Rome, Camerino
degli Eremiti



The contracts and commercial agreements entered into between artists and patrons. These legal documents were crucial to secure payment and define working conditions. Artists often had to negotiate favorable terms to protect their economic and creative interests.

For example, the contract between the painter and the client could specify not only the price of the work, but also the materials to be used, the delivery time and other detailed clauses. These agreements were essential to avoid misunderstandings and legal disputes.

Peter Paul
Rubens, Santa
Maria della
Vallicella, Rome,
Santa Maria della
Vallicella



Relationships between artists and art dealers played a crucial role in the distribution of works. Merchants acted as intermediaries, facilitating the sale of works of art and often influencing the artistic trends of the time. Their knowledge of the market and customer preferences was indispensable to the artists' commercial success.

Caravaggio, the Death
of St. Mary, Paris,
Louvre



An interesting case study is that of Orazio Borgianni, a painter who has been able to skillfully navigate the Roman art market. Borgianni collaborated closely with merchants to promote and sell his works, demonstrating considerable entrepreneurial ability. This example illustrates how an artist's success depended not only on artistic talent, but also on business skills and professional relationships.

The examples of Giovanni Lanfranco and Orazio Borgianni highlight how artists had to be not only skilled painters, but also astute businessmen to succeed in a competitive market governed by intricate economic and social dynamics.

Orazio
Borgianni,
Holy Family,
Rome,
Galleria
Nazionale
d'Arte
Antica,
Barberini

