# ART MARKET

# DAMS (L-3)

# University of Teramo

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*XVIII LESSON – INTRODUCTION*

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## PREMISES

- The **Grand Tour** was a journey across Europe.
- Rome was the ultimate destination:
    - Ruins of antiquity
    - Renaissance masterpieces
    - Baroque magnificence
- Art Market: producing city views and engravings specifically for foreign travelers.

Johann Zoffany, *The library of Charles Townley*, 1782, Burnley, Townley Hall Art Gallery and Museum

## *STAGES*

- **Turin**, first stop after crossing the Alps.
- **Venice**, already a must-see.
- **Florence**, especially after the opening of the Uffizi to the public in the 1730s.
- **Rome**, the true center of antiquity and Christian heritage.
- **Naples**, especially after the discoveries of Herculaneum (1738) and Pompeii (1748).
- In the late eighteenth century, even **Sicily** was added, thanks to its Greek ruins and the attraction of Mount Etna’s eruptions


# GRAND TOUR

# *TASKS CONSEQUENCES*

- Objects like souvenirs:
  - ancient statues, books, archaeological fragments, or items ‘in the antique style.’
- Social distinction and a political identity
- Portraits made in Rome
- In Britain the industrial revolution was changing the world of art
- Italy, lacking an industrial base, remained outside this transformation

Pompeo Batoni, *Portrait of a young english grand tourist*, 1760-1765, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

## *FEATURES*

- Prestigious scholarship established in France in 1663.
- The competition was open to young artists trained in the Académie Royale.
- Winners received funding to live and study in Rome, at the Villa Medici, the seat of the French Academy.

Théodore Géricault, *Riderless Racers at Rome*, 1817, Baltimore, Walters Art Museum

**The Historical and Social Context**

In the eighteenth century, Rome represented an important cultural and artistic center, attracting artists, dealers and collectors from all over Europe. This period was marked by a series of dynamics that influenced the art market:

•**Growing demand**: the city saw a growing demand for artwork, fueled by both local nobility and foreign visitors. The newly appointed cardinals, for example, often tried to adorn their residences with picture galleries, thus increasing the demand for paintings.

•**Foreign Artists**: Rome was a point of reference for many European artists, who went there to study and sell their works. Figures such as Gavin Hamilton and James Byres, Scottish artists and dealers, were active in the art trade in Rome, helping to create a cosmopolitan market.

The painting market in Rome was characterized by a variety of professional figures and different sales methods:

•**Merchants and Quadrari**: there were specialized merchants, called "quadrari", who dealt exclusively with paintings. Some of them catered to a larger, less wealthy clientele, while others traded in high-value works and offered services such as painting rentals to temporarily furnish the homes of newcomers to the city.

•**Auctions and Lotteries**: public auctions and lotteries were common methods for selling artwork. These events not only made the works accessible to a wider audience, but also helped to set market prices. Lotteries, in particular, were managed and controlled by the Papal States and often included prizes consisting of paintings or other art objects.

## Examples of Transactions and Collectors

•**Foreign Collectors**: an example is given by the British nobles who, during their Grand Tour, bought views, prints and sculptures to take home as souvenirs of their trip. These purchases not only enriched their personal collections, but also helped to spread Italian art in Europe.

•**Ecclesiastical clerk**: many of the works of art were commissioned by clergymen and religious orders, which represented a vast pool of patronage. This sector stimulated the market, creating a constant demand for religious-themed works.

Giovanni Antonio Canal (Canaletto), St. Mark's Basin to the East, c. 1730, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

*INTRODUCTION*

**Role of Intermediaries**

The art market in Rome was made complex and dynamic also thanks to the presence of numerous intermediaries:

- **Cicerones and Mediators**: these individuals played the role of guides and intermediaries for foreign visitors, facilitating their acquisitions. They provided advice, helped with bargaining and often had in-depth knowledge of the works and their authors.
- **Restorers and Counterfeiters**: the market also included figures such as restorers, who were responsible for maintaining and restoring works of art, and forgers, who sometimes created copies or fakes of famous works to meet demand.

Bernardo Bellotto, Capriccio with Capitoline Hill, c. 1742, Parma, National Gallery



**ROLE OF INTERMEDIARIES**

## Criticism and Perspectives

•**Michael Baxandall**: the text quotes art historian Michael Baxandall, who discussed the demonization and exaltation of the market. Baxandall suggested that the market could be seen as a medium through which society communicated its needs and values to artists, who in turn could choose how to respond to these demands.

Francesco Guardi, Capriccio with port, 1760-1770, Washington, National Gallery of Art