

ART MARKET

DAMS (L-3)

University of Teramo

Cecilia Paolini

University of Teramo



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI TERAMO

Department of Communication Sciences



DIPARTIMENTO DI
SCIENZE DELLA
COMUNICAZIONE

*XIX LESSON – MARKET
PLAYERS*

Quadrari: the quadrari were the salesmen who specialized in the sale of paintings. They had an in-depth knowledge of the market and often collaborated directly with artists and collectors. An example of a quadrario mentioned is Belisario Amidei, who had a shop in Piazza Navona, known for being a place of great tourist and cultural attraction.

Second-hand dealers: second-hand dealers were sellers of second-hand objects, including paintings. They were not as specialized as the quadrari but still played an important role in the art market. Their activity was often characterized by the sale of works of lower value than those dealt with by the quadrari.

Shopkeepers: painting dealers operated through physical stores, often located in strategic areas of the city. They used various methods to boost sales, including subscription, a system where customers paid upfront for works they would receive in the future. This method, widespread in Holland and England in the seventeenth century, had been consolidated in Italy in the eighteenth century.

Belisario Amidei: one of the best-known quadrari was Belisario Amidei, who operated in Piazza Navona. Amidei not only sold paintings, but was also involved in restoration and evaluation of works of art. His shop attracted an international clientele, including collectors and tourists, who found in Amidei a reliable expert for their purchases.

Other Quadrari: in addition to Amidei, there were other quadrari that operated in different ways. Some had shops near the Spanish Steps, an area frequented by foreign travelers. They often offered paintings by local artists, but also copies of famous works requested by visitors as souvenirs.



Giovanni Paolo Pannini, Gallery of Views of Modern Rome, 1759, Paris, Louvre

MARKET PLAYERS

Miscellaneous Activities: second-hand dealers, although they did not specialize in paintings, traded in a wide range of goods, including paintings. They operated mainly in markets and fairs, where it was possible to find bargains and pieces of lesser value. They represented an important part of the market for less wealthy collectors or for those looking for affordable furniture pieces.



Giovanni Paolo Pannini, Gallery of Views of Ancient Rome, 1758, Paris, Louvre

Subscription: a significant example of the use of subscription is provided by retailers who offered series of prints or reproductions of famous works. Customers paid an advance and received the works over time, a practice that facilitated access to art even for those who could not afford large immediate outlays.

MARKET PLAYERS



Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Arch of Constantine

Some artists, in addition to producing works of art, also dedicated themselves to their sale, thus becoming a sort of art dealers.

Role of Merchant Artists: artist dealers had the advantage of knowing the value of works of art well and often sold their work directly to collectors. This allowed them to make a higher profit than selling through intermediaries.

Examples and strategies: an example of a merchant artist mentioned is Don Francesco Preziado, who in addition to being an academic painter, was involved in the evaluation of drawings and prints. Merchant artists often used their technical skills to restore and improve works before selling them, thus increasing their value.

Don Francesco Preziado, Spanish painter: Preziado is an emblematic example of a merchant artist. In addition to being a well-known painter and academic, he was involved in the sale of drawings and prints. He used his artistic skills to evaluate and improve works before selling them, thus ensuring the quality and authenticity of the pieces.

Anton with
Maron,
Portrait of
Francisco
Preciado de
la Vega,
1749, Rome,
Accademia di
San Luca



DON FRANCESCO PREZIADO

Gavin Hamilton: another example is Gavin Hamilton, a Scottish artist who settled in Rome. Hamilton was not only a successful painter, but also a very active art dealer. He organized expeditions of works of art to Great Britain, responding to the growing demand for Italian paintings among British collectors. Hamilton acted as an intermediary, facilitating sales and earning a commission on transactions.

Archibal
Skirving,
Portrait of
Gavin
Hamilton,
1788, private
collection



Restoration and Improvement: many merchant artists restored damaged or worn works, improving them before sale. This process increased the value of the works and allowed artists to sell at higher prices. In addition, some artists created copies of famous works, thus responding to collectors' demand for reproductions.

International Connections: merchant artists exploited their international networks to export works of art. For example, James Byres, another Scottish artist, acted as a guide for foreign visitors and facilitated the purchase and shipment of artwork abroad.

Hugh Douglas
Hamilton,
Portrait of
James Byres, c.
1782,
Aberdeen, Art
Gallery



Merchant artists were individuals who combined artistic practice with commercial activity. They did not just sell their own works, but often also marketed works by other artists. This role was crucial for the development of the art market in Rome in the eighteenth century.

Functions and Activities

Merchant artists performed various functions:

- **Production and Sales:** they made works on commission and sold both their own creations and those of other artists.
- **Restoration:** they were often involved in the restoration of ancient works, an activity that increased the value of the works and their marketability.
- **Intermediazione:** they acted as intermediaries between collectors and the market, facilitating the circulation of works.

Works and Activities: Panini was renowned for his architectural views of Rome, which captured the interest of foreign visitors and collectors. His works, often featuring depictions of ancient monuments and ruins, were in high demand. Panini sold his creations directly to visitors on the Grand Tour, a phenomenon that brought young European aristocrats to Rome to complete their cultural education.

Collaborations and Networks: Panini collaborated with other artists and dealers to expand its market. For example, he associated with local dealers to sell not only his own paintings but also those of fellow artists. This approach allowed them to diversify their offerings and increase sales.

MERCHANT ARTISTS



Giovanni Paolo Pannini, View of Snowy Rome, 1730, private collection

MERCHANT ARTISTS

Portraits and Clients: Pompeo Batoni was famous for his portraits, especially those of nobles and prominent European figures. His portraits were considered a symbol of status among the aristocracy. His ability to capture the personality and prestige of subjects made him very popular.

International Clientele: Batoni had an international clientele, thanks also to the Grand Tour. Many British aristocrats commissioned portraits during their stay in Rome. Batoni, like Panini, exploited the networks of contacts to sell his own works and those of other artists.

Pompeo Batoni,
Portrait of Prince
Abbondio Rezzonico,
1766, Rome, National
Galleries of Ancient Art



POMPEO BATONI

Merchant artists not only produced art, but also helped shape the market through various mechanisms:

- **Restoration and Conservation:** many merchant artists dedicated themselves to the restoration of ancient works of art. This not only improved the aesthetics of the works, but also increased their commercial value. The ability to restore damaged paintings made these works more attractive to collectors.
- **Creating Copies:** merchant artists produced copies of famous works to meet the growing demand. This allowed those who could not afford the originals to still buy high-quality works. Copies were often sold at lower prices, but still contributed to the spread of the style and prestige of the original artists.
- **Sales and Auctions:** artist dealers organized private sales and participated in public auctions. These events were crucial for establishing market prices and attracting the interest of potential buyers. Auctions, in particular, were key moments in which works of art could reach very high values thanks to competition between buyers.



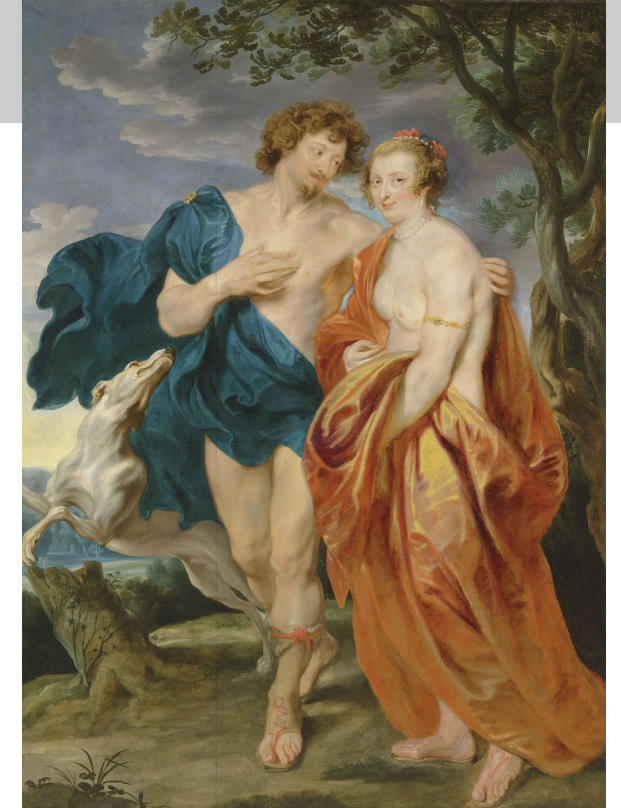
MERCHANT ARTISTS

Direct Sales and International Trade: many merchant artists sold their works directly to foreign collectors. For example, James Byres, a Scottish cicero and dealer, facilitated the purchase and shipment of artwork to Britain. Byres, like Hamilton, was well connected with British collectors and used these connections to sell Italian works abroad.

Cultural Influence: merchant artists influenced artistic tastes and trends. By promoting certain styles and artists, they helped define the aesthetic preferences of the period. This was particularly evident in the case of Batoni's portraits, which set new standards for aristocratic portraiture.



Joshua Reynolds, Portrait of Lady Munster, 1782, London, Kenwood house



Antoon van Dyck, Sir Georges Villiers e Lady Katherine Manners, in Venere e Adone, 1620-'21, John Paul Getty Museum, Malibu