

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

*XXV LESSON – CIRCULATION
OF WORKS OF ART*

CIRCULATION OF WORKS OF ART

The works do not remain static in the places of origin, but actively circulate through various distribution channels. This circulation was facilitated by dealers, collectors and intermediaries who operated locally and internationally. The mobility of the works, facilitated by dealers, galleries and auctions, together with the crucial role of intermediaries, demonstrates the complexity and liveliness of the art market of that period. Furthermore, the active involvement of collectors not only in the possession, but also in the promotion of art, underlines the social and cultural importance of the art collection in the eighteenth century.



Peter Paul Rubens, Romulus and Remus,
1612, Rome, Pinacoteca Capitolina



Peter Paul Rubens, Romulus and
Remus, 1612-1615, Vienna,
Schwarzenberg Palace

Private collections: artworks often passed from the hands of private collectors to new buyers through auction sales or private transactions.

Art dealers: dealers such as James Byres and Thomas Jenkins played a key role in the buying and selling of works of art, often acting as intermediaries for foreign collectors. In addition to being a cicero, Byres was a well-known intermediary for English collectors. He not only guided tourists through Rome's artistic treasures but also advised them on purchases and helped them deal directly with artists and dealers. One of the most active art dealers in Rome, Jenkins was known to sell artwork to English aristocrats during the Grand Tour. Jenkins facilitated the purchase and transport of works to England, often acting as an advisor to the British aristocracy.

Distribution Channels: artworks moved through various channels, including auctions, art galleries, and exhibitions. These channels were crucial for the visibility of artists and the trade of their works.

Auction sales:

Operation: auction sales were a popular method for selling artwork. These events attracted collectors and dealers from all over Europe, creating a competitive environment that could drive up the prices of the works.

Example: the auctions organized by merchants such as Pasquale Peparelli were important events that attracted the attention of many buyers. A well-known auctioneer, his sales were well-attended and included a wide range of artwork, from ancient to contemporary paintings. Peparelli was known for his ability to create suspense and competition among bidders, thereby increasing selling prices.

Art galleries:

Role: the galleries served as meeting points for artists, dealers and collectors. They exhibited new and old works, facilitating sales and promoting new artists.

Example: Giuseppe Subleyras' gallery was known for its exhibitions of paintings by contemporary artists. He exhibited not only works by local artists but also by foreigners. Subleyras organized regular exhibitions that attracted an international audience, acting as a bridge between artists and collectors.

Intermediaries and Agents

Intermediaries, such as art dealers and cicerones, were crucial figures in the art market. They not only facilitated sales, but also provided advice to buyers, helping them make informed choices.

Ciceroni

Role: cicerones accompanied foreign visitors, especially those traveling on the Grand Tour, and helped them navigate the complex Roman art market.

Example: James Byres, a well-known cicero, not only guided tourists, but also assisted them in purchasing works of art, using his extensive network of contacts.

Pier Leone Ghezzi,
James Hay depicted
as a bear guide,
1704-1729



CIRCULATION OF WORKS OF ART

Collectors' Motivations

Eighteenth-century art collectors were motivated by various factors, including social prestige, interest in culture, and financial investment. The collection of artworks was seen as a sign of status and sophistication.

Example:

•**Cardinale Alessandro Albani:** Albani's collection was famous not only for the quality of its works, but also for its role in promoting art and culture. His collection was renowned for the quality and importance of the works. Albani not only acquired works for their aesthetic value but also to consolidate his social and political status. His villa, full of sculptures and paintings, was a reference point for collectors of the time.



Anton Raphael Mengs, Apollo and the Muses, 1761,
Rome, Villa Albani (fresco)



Hestia Giustiniani,
formerly Albani and
now Torlonia
(470-460 B.C.)

Impact of Private Collections

Private collections profoundly influenced artistic taste and trends. Collectors played a crucial role in promoting new artists and preserving ancient works.

Example:

Borghese Collection: the Borghese collection was an important source of inspiration for artists and collectors, and its public exhibitions allowed the public to admire works by great masters such as Caravaggio and Bernini. This collection not only showcased the opulence of the Borghese family but also served as an example for other collectors. The practice of opening the collection to the public on special occasions helped to educate and inspire other potential collectors.

Intermediaries such as cicerones played a crucial role in the purchase and sale of works of art, offering valuable advice to collectors. Private collections not only reflected the prestige of their owners, but also influenced artistic trends and the market as a whole. Figures such as Thomas Jenkins, Pasquale Peparelli, Giuseppe Subleyras, James Byres, and Cardinal Alessandro Albani were instrumental in shaping the eighteenth-century art market in Rome, making it one of the most dynamic and influential centers of the art world.