

# Explore the Employment Prospects of Art Management in the Gallery Industry in the Contemporary Chinese Society

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**Abstract.** Since the 21st century, the Chinese economy has been developing rapidly. People's demand for life is no longer limited to food, clothing, and warmth. More people have begun to pursue spiritual fulfillment. The increased demand for art has led to a diversification of the market and laid the foundation for a thriving art market. However, the development of China's art market is still imperfect, the problem of market sensitivity and vulnerability has not been solved, which also makes the market show instability. As part of the primary art market, galleries also suffer from incomplete development. This paper analyzes the current situation of China's gallery industry from its strengths and weaknesses. It points out that some galleries need to refer to and follow the development of excellent foreign cases, such as the Leo Castelli Gallery. The abilities needed by art management jobbers to work in the gallery industry are given and analyzed in detail. The basic qualities needed for art management talents to enter the gallery are analyzed, such as practical ability and connoisseurship.

**Keywords:** Gallery market; gallery employment; ability demand.

## 1. Introduction

After China entered the 21st century, the art industry welcomed the spring once again. Up to now, the Chinese contemporary art market has experienced 20 years of growth and accumulation. The market has gradually developed from nothing to relatively completion. The prosperity of the art industry has given birth to the major of art management. Under the background of the increasing importance of art and culture, society has a more urgent demand for professional art management talents. At the same time, compared with the foreign art markets, the Chinese art market still has many difficulties in the market environment which means that it is not perfect. This phenomenon also shows that there is a huge gap for excellent art management talents in today's Chinese market. The talent market has an urgent demand for art management talents.

The current employment directions of art management in the market include working in museums, acting as a curator in art institutions, and working in auction houses. Based on the analysis of the Chinese art market and the gallery industry, this paper combines the excellent cases of the development of foreign galleries. This paper also analyzes the employment prospects of art management talents in the gallery industry in China. The ability requirements for art management talents will be given work in galleries.

## 2. Gallery Industry Market Status

Art galleries are the primary market in the art market. Art galleries are places for the collection, display, appreciation, and sale of artworks. Compared with art museums, galleries are more targeted at works or art schools. Galleries are also important intermediaries between painters and collectors which has important economic and academic value. Galleries are classified as the primary market of the art market due to the stable, direct, and long-term nature of their trading [1].

### 2.1. Strength

More artists. From the perspective of China's single market, the main problem in society since the reform and opening up has been the contradiction between the people's ever-growing needs for a

better life and unbalanced and inadequate development. With the satisfaction of material life, people now begin to focus on filling the spiritual and ideological void. This leads to an increasing demand for works of art on the market. Moreover, with the increase in the number of art education institutions and the release of the national policy to encourage schools to cultivate art students, the number of undergraduate and graduate students majoring in art has increased rapidly. In 2023, 634,000 students will take the art college entrance exam. It is not hard to imagine that today's art market must artworks to provide galleries with quality supplies.

Museums increased. Art is one of the ways to convey the spiritual needs of human beings. With the increase of art students, the artworks flood the market. These current situations have put forward requirements for art infrastructure and art museums have become necessary facilities in cities. For example, the number of museums in Shanghai has reached 4,178. So many museums continue to show the charm of artworks to the public, cultivating and molding people's artistic sentiment, so that people are able to know art, feel art, and desire art. This creates a lot of potential customers for the gallery since most museum exhibits are refused for sale. Buyers who want paintings but can't get them are likely to turn their attention to galleries.

### **2.1.1. The media booming**

With the emergence of 5G, people's access to information will not be limited to magazines, illustrated newspapers, etc. More and more people will choose to search for things they are interested in on the network. According to the survey data, 84.62% of galleries in China have strengthened their own publicity and promotion through the self-establishment of new media public accounts, video accounts, TikTok accounts, official Weibo accounts, etc. Many galleries have maintained their voice and popularity in the market by launching online exhibitions, salon videos, or text pictures of agent artists. In addition, in terms of gallery promotion channels, 73.08% of galleries chose other art online new media platforms, and 42.31% chose traditional print media [2]. This means that galleries can create a dedicated platform to hang paintings from their inventory on the gallery's official website for buyers to select. If a buyer needs to buy a painting from the gallery, he can also communicate with the gallery staff directly through the network so that he may understand the gallery's works and these works' prices. If the transaction is successful, the gallery will directly send the works to the customers through express delivery. That means buyers don't have to go to the gallery in person. This convenience directly breaks the geographical restrictions of gallery customers, making it possible for galleries to have potential customers whenever and wherever they are.

## **2.2. Weakness**

In recent years, the market turnover of the gallery industry has been in a very awkward position. According to the report, the total turnover of the gallery industry accounted for only 36% of the art market in 2011. The following year's report noted that in 2012 again, profitable galleries accounted for only 7% of the total. Loss-making or barely operating galleries accounted for about 35% of the total [3]. This is mainly due to the increasingly unbalanced development of the art market. It can be seen that the current art market has not formed a reasonable and stable order. The main problems that exist at present are as follows:

### **2.2.1. Small market share**

As the primary market in the art market, art galleries play a key role in the whole art festival. Art fairs are common sales venues for art galleries, which are inseparable from the gallery industry. Theoretically, the primary market galleries art fairs, and secondary market auction houses should be an orderly division of labor. The art market and other markets should also meet the "law of two or eight [4]. However, in the Chinese mainland market, auction houses have been squeezing the market share of galleries and art fairs for a long time. The primary market and the secondary market have been swapped. There has been no common development between the primary and the secondary market which has led to a deformed trend in the development of the art market as a whole.

### **2.2.2. Gallery costs are constrained**

Whether the gallery industry grows or not depends on the gallery's sales status, cost control, and risk control. The gallery's cost is mainly divided into basic cost, exhibition cost, and service cost. Under the gallery rent, utilities, and other necessary expenses, the gallery can only control costs by controlling labor and exhibition expenses. That is to say, the gallery must expand the exhibition cycle, and reduce the number of exhibitions, so as to minimize the expenditure. However, exhibitions are an important means for audiences and buyers to contact artworks. Galleries organizing exhibitions are an important means for contemporary art to face the market and academics. The weak sales base of contemporary art is also due to the fact that collectors' aesthetics need to be guided by art galleries. Nowadays, galleries think that they can cut costs by reducing exhibitions, which in turn puts the primary market into a vicious circle.

### **2.2.3. Private transactions**

Chinese artists fail to understand enough about the rules and ethical knowledge of the art market, and some artists directly skip the gallery to cooperate with collectors because China's primary market matures late. Such behavior breaks the market rules, leads to market price confusion, destroys the normal order of the primary market, and greatly hinders the gallery's promotion of the artist. This not only affects the gallery's development but also combats the artist's own development.

### **2.2.4. Gallery market positioning**

As the art market is a primary market, galleries should have a clear position in their own tone and style. However, the current Chinese gallery blindly follows the trend of the situation [5]. There are high-end artworks and mass culture mixed together so that the image of consumers is difficult to unify, unable to carry out a clear and effective positioning sales strategy. What's more, Gallery managers do not judge clearly about the art style of good or bad. They also are not enthusiastic about digging up emerging artists. Such phenomena lead the gallery works to homogenize.

## **3. Market Demand Analysis**

A very important function of a gallery is to incubate and promote artists, which requires professional and visionary art broken. A talent like that is very scarce in China [6]. Most of the galleries on the market today are inexperienced and eager to make quick profits so they cannot be down-to-earth. Many of today's gallery operators have low cultural levels, and a lack of artistic vision, resulting in the loss of many outstanding works. These phenomena show that there is a lack of excellent art management expertise in the market. After the industrialization of art in China, the market of art museums, museums, auction houses, and other art markets is becoming increasingly prosperous. Therefore, art brokers, curators, and other professional art industry management personnel appeared a serious shortage of talent. This shortage even affects the development of the cultural industry. This situation means that excellent art management graduates have fewer difficulties in employment in the current Chinese market, and do not have to worry about the form of unemployment upon graduation for the time being.

### **3.1. Employment Salary Analysis**

Art Management employment salaries are related to the area of size average-sized gallery has 4-5 staff. The approximate functional division is the gallery owner, gallery director, curator, gallery assistant, and administrative cashier. Art management graduates who enter the gallery generally will be engaged as gallery assistants. The salary level of gallery assistants in first-tier cities is within the range of 4000-8000 RMB. For interns, the common salary is 100-150 RMB a day.

## 4. Art Management Case

Castelli Gallery artists include Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg, Salvatore Scarpitta, Johns, John Chamberlain, Tombly, Higgins, George Segal, Lee Bontecou, and Jim Dine; The collectors need to contact: Scull, Victor Ganz, Robert Scull, Victor Ganz, Panza, David Rockefeller, Philip Johansen, etc.; media to contact: The New Yorker, Art in America, Temps Modernes, Art Forum, etc. Museums to collaborate with: Whitney Museum, Jewish Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art. Museum; critics to meet: John Russell [7]. The Castelli Gallery is a place where people want to spend time, mainly due to the way it is run.

### 4.1. Leo's Personal Charisma

First of all, the president of Castelli Gallery- Leo Castelli's personal charisma is inseparable from the gallery's artists. According to the collector Nelder Marlowe, Leo had been courteous and polite, without the didactic way to let people understand the artwork. As an erudite man, Leo was fluent in four languages, English, French, German, and Italian. He was the Director of Collections at the Museum of Modern Art Barr's guide in contemporary art. Secondly, Leo valued the relationship with the artist and offered attentive service to the artist. No matter what the artist told of the need, Leo would do his best to fulfill it and always put the artist's credit first after success. In front of collectors, Leo is efficient. He could recommend works to collectors at short notice.

### 4.2. Leo's Approach to Artists

The success of the Castelli Gallery was also inseparable from the contribution of many outstanding artists, why so many outstanding artists were willing to join the gallery? This was inseparable from Leo's own dedicated service to artists and reasonable forms of cooperation. Leo and the artist's form of cooperation with other galleries in the United States was different. For example, Janus Gallery selected the artist's work to sell and extracted a commission, but Leo was used in the form of a combination of monthly salary and share. The painter at the Castelli Gallery once said that Leo never paid him in advance. Leo owed the painter a large sum of money. Because the painter didn't need it urgently, he asked Leo to hold it for him and pay him monthly. It started at \$1,000 a month, then \$2,000, and the agreement was kept. Leo's lack of tactics tightened the gallery's cash flow, but even when the gallery's finances advised him to cut back on the artist's salary, Leo stuck to his initial choice. Leo's business strategy of monthly salary not only guaranteed the basic cost of living for the artists but also deepened his relationship with his painters and increased their loyalty to the gallery.

### 4.3. Leo's Publicity and Promotion of Artists

Castelli Gallery's publicity for artists mainly relies on exhibition promotion and sales promotion.

Exhibition promotion is divided into exhibitions organized by the gallery for artists and large-scale exhibitions in which the gallery participates in museums and biennials. Leo's gallery has six solo exhibitions and two group exhibitions every year on average. He introduces artists to the market through these exhibitions. In addition to exhibitions in Caux's own country, the Castelli Gallery also presents exhibitions by other represented artists who can be found in galleries in modern cities such as Paris and London [7].

In addition to this, the Castelli Gallery continued to market the artists to the American market. This act reversed the dominant notion of collecting in the United States. Particularly the act that Leo's internationalization of the artists which reversed the prevailing one-way importation of art and culture from Europe to the United States.

## **5. Arts Management Orientation Employability**

### **5.1. Practical Experience**

The managers of arts institutions are often recruited from the artistic field itself. The chief executive of a theater may be an active stage director, art historian, a museum director [8]. Practical experience can skillfully master the relevant elements of culture and art management from practice. From the preliminary planning of the project, the organization and coordination of the artwork creation team, marketing and operation team, government resources, etc. to the formulation and implementation of the organizational system, the presentation of the artwork, and ultimately the presentation of excellent artwork to the audience. Art management students can attend more lectures organized by art market insiders and industry experts to understand the career choices and career planning of artists and the nature of different exhibitions and learn to deal with the communication skills of people from different organizations and the rules of the industry. In addition, art management students should also learn to recognize and transform the professional identity of artists and participate in art practice actively while creating art.

### **5.2. Appreciation**

When art management students have some appreciation of artworks, they can evaluate artworks from a professional point of view and assess the value of artworks correctly. Therefore, students should visit art exhibitions to learn different painting techniques and artists' creative concepts. Through active understanding and exposure to art, students can gradually develop a love and appreciation for art. At the same time, works of art are often rich in details and imagery. Through careful observation and reflection can understand the artist's intention and creative intent. For example, when appreciating a painting, students can pay attention to the use of color, composition, and details in the picture, and think about the emotions and themes that the artist wants to convey. By practicing observation and reflection, the appreciation ability will be enhanced. In their daily lives, students can take art classes, read books, or participate in art communities to communicate and share with others who are interested in art. Through discussions and exchanges with others, students can notice different perspectives and insights, thus broadening their horizons and ways of thinking. At the same time, learning about art history and cultural background is also an important way to enhance appreciation, which can help to better understand the backstory and cultural connotations of artworks. In terms of individual students, they should keep an open mind and be patient. Art is diverse, and everyone has a different understanding and preference for art. Qualified art management students should respect and accept different artistic perspectives and styles, continue to expand their aesthetic horizons, and be willing to spend enough patience and time to appreciate the works.

### **5.3. Cognitive Thinking**

The frequency and description of emotional intelligence competencies in art job ads indicated that the profession demands arts leaders to have some level of emotional intelligence. There are 165 statements (forty percent) related to emotional intelligence, appearing in 62 job ads (seventy-eight percent). When comparing these data to Goleman's (1998) categorization of emotional intelligence, job ads for arts leaders prioritized social-emotion intelligence (empathy and social skills) more than personal competencies (self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation) [9]. It means Arts management graduates need to learn to think and solve problems in a personified way. The so-called personification is to take things as people, consider all things in the world to have life, face, character temperament, etc., in order to treat the way to think about the non-life way of thinking. Equal, straightforward, sincere common growth is the future trend of brand interaction with people, there is no better business model than the "people to people" model. With the continuous development of society, people need to be respected, understood and cared for more and more. At the same time, they should pay more attention to the realization of self-worth. The personality approach can make the brand value better perceived, with more temperature, extensibility, and sustainability [10].

## 6. Conclusion

The article studied the current situation of the industry of Chinese galleries and the employment prospects of art management talents. In the context of rapid economic development, from the beginning of the exploration of China's art market so far not more than 40 years, compared with the foreign contemporary art market, China's market development time is too short. Therefore, the art market still exists behind the very deep problems. According to the article's analysis of the art market as a whole, it can be concluded that the state of development of China's art market institutions is immature, including galleries as the primary market. However, this phenomenon indicates that the industry is in its early stages of development and has enormous potential for growth. As China's economy continues to develop steadily, people will have spiritual needs beyond material needs after satisfying their basic needs, and culture and art can precisely fulfill such needs. Cultivating art management talents needed by society is now the top priority for the development of art education in colleges and universities. In the future, the development of art management majors will inevitably receive widespread social attention and strong support. If art management graduates choose to enter galleries and other art organizations in recent years, after accumulating relevant experience, they will occupy a huge talent advantage when the art market is booming in the future.

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