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Temporary Markets in a Global Economy: An Example of Three Basel Art Fairs

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Abstract: Trade fairs are increasing in importance. The literature on the geography of markets examines their global expansion, but not how geographic proximity might be more vital for some of them. Studies on temporary clusters argue that trade fairs are beneficial for their particular knowledge ecologies, but would lose their function as markets as a result. We investigated trade fairs as markets. We especially looked at how objects, such as market devices that help to assess the value of things, intervene in the construction of these markets. Comparing three art fairs in Basel, our study shows the following: trade fairs are particular events shaped by a proliferation of market devices that do not exist outside the fairs; market devices act to differentiate fairs and create a hierarchy between them; trade fairs produce market devices that connect fairs. Global markets are built upon sequences of temporary, localized markets.

Keywords: temporary clusters, market construction, market devices, judgment devices, art

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Introduction

There is increasing awareness that an understanding of markets and the way they are constructed are needed to understand spatial economic fragmentation and inequality (special issues in *Economic Geography* (2019, 94/3) and *Environment and Planning A*, (2015, 47/9)). Studies have examined how markets are established on a global scale (Berndt and Boeckler 2009), how the construction of markets affects relations between the industrialized North and underdeveloped South (Berndt and Boeckler 2010), and how global markets affect local economies (Ouma et al. 2013).

While these studies focus on the global expansion of markets, the increasing global significance of localized events like trade fairs (e.g., Maskell et al. 2006) has been less explored. Of course, many case studies, such as those by Garcia-Parpet (1986, 2007) on the Fontaines-en-Sologne strawberry market and Caliskan's (2007) work on the Izmir cotton market, have described the construction of local markets. These studies have provided valuable insights into the general creation of markets. What they have missed is how geographical proximity can be a key element in that process.

The literature on temporary clusters reviews these elements from a knowledge perspective and argues that the rising presence of trade fairs derives from the increasing importance of knowledge processes (Maskell et al. 2006). In this vein, trade fairs are conceptualized as places for particular knowledge processes like learning, information exchange and buzz (Bathelt and Schuldt 2010), as well as centers where global relations are fused and consolidated (Li 2014). Although contracts and sales consummated at fairs demonstrate the critical nature of such gatherings (e.g., Moeran 2010; Andrae et al. 2013), the temporary cluster perspective considers not trade but knowledge processes as the crucial functions of trade fairs (Bathelt and Cohendet 2014). When trade is analyzed, market exchanges are considered primarily as products of social relations (e.g., Bathelt et al. 2017). That said, scholars like Caliskan and Callon (2010) or Muniesa et al. (2007) emphasize that markets are not just socially, but physically constructed and exist outside social relations.

Our intention is to investigate trade fairs as markets. Using insights from the literature about trade fairs' knowledge ecosystem, we argue that due to these knowledge processes, trade fairs represent a unique type of market. The centrality of knowledge to the functioning of markets has already been

described by Akerlof (1970). We combine this perspective with ideas from studies that emphasize the importance of “market devices” (Muniesa et al. 2007). Market devices at fairs can take the form of catalogs, awards, and prices, among others, that contribute to the valuation of objects. In so doing, they help define what creates value and how to enumerate it. Thus, market devices are an integral part of the trade fair ecosystem. We argue that, at fairs, market devices infuses abundance of information that would not otherwise exist.

We take as examples three Basel contemporary art fairs : Art Basel, LISTE, and SCOPE. Art Basel is one of the top fairs (Thompson 2011), while LISTE and SCOPE represent lower tier fairs.

Contemporary art is particularly suited to such analysis. First, works of art are traded directly at the fair (Quemin 2013). Second, in no other sector is the value of goods so vague and hard to codify (Beckert and Rössel 2013). Thus, market devices that define value are especially visible in this field (Karpik 2010). Third, at least for the highest price segment, contemporary art can be considered to be global. That is, works of art would attract the same price in different parts of the world (Velthuis and Curioni 2015, Renneboog and Spaenjers 2015). We based our study on 49 interviews with artists, art critics, curators, gallery owners, and fair organizers as well as fair-related documents.

The next section describes the knowledge perspective of the temporary cluster literature. The third section describes a knowledge perspective on markets and how market devices integrate knowledge (Muniesa et al. 2007, Karpik 2010). The fourth section provides a market perspective of trade fairs and traces them to a proliferation of market devices. The fifth section describes the particularity of market devices at art fairs. The next two sections outline market processes before, during and after the fairs. The eighth section summarizes and concludes the study.

Temporary Clusters as Knowledge Perspective on Trade Fairs

There are several forms of temporary clusters, such as trade fairs, conferences, exhibitions, and conventions.¹ All are periodic gatherings of professionals for limited times in delimited spaces (e.g.,

¹ Other studies investigate the importance of temporary gatherings in the development of their respective fields. For example, Entwistle and Rocamora (2006) show how London Fashion Week serves to reproduce the

Bathelt et al. 2014). As we are interested in their role as markets, we focus on trade fairs. Trade fairs assemble sellers and buyers in a particular field “with the primary goal to showcase, promote, and/or market their products and services to buyers and other relevant target groups” (Bathelt et al. 2014, 4).²

Trade fairs have already been studied as markets. They have been demonstrated to reduce transaction costs for search processes and to offer their participants dense information on various market elements, such as product differentiations and prices (Florio 1994). The temporary cluster literature deviates from this perspective by adopting a knowledge perspective with respect to fairs. Given that, the temporary cluster literature is part of a general change regarding economic activities that view innovation rather than price as a crucial element in competition. As Lundvall and Johnson (1994) put it, “Knowledge is the crucial resource and learning is the most important process.” This knowledge perspective has also been used to explain the increasing importance of local clustering of economic activities (Malmberg and Maskell 2002). Geographical proximity between firms, it claims, enhances interactive learning processes and the development of localized capabilities (Maskell and Malmberg 1999) that are hard for firms elsewhere to copy. The same perspective on clusters was adapted to trade fairs (Maskell et al. 2006) and especially social relations. Fairs connect distant social actors, and in so doing, “connect knowledge pools that are spatially, culturally, and institutionally (more or less) distant from each other” (Bathelt and Cohendet 2014, p. 877). Flagship fairs, in particular, connect whole industries and enable participants to network with visitors and exhibitors from different parts of the world. In this vein, fairs serve as places of “global buzz” (Bathelt and Schuldt 2010). The term “buzz” describes the manifold planned and unplanned interactions at fairs that serve to diffuse and evaluate information. The term “global buzz” describes the connections those fairs’ make between actors from

field of global fashion, its boundaries, relations, and hierarchies. The literature on field configuring events provides a more dynamic perspective and emphasizes that such events can transform and configure a field (Lampel and Meyer 2008). For example, Skov and Meier's (2011) study on fashion shows in Copenhagen and Berlin illustrate that those shows are used to introduce sustainable fashion. While these studies focus more generally on the relations between event and their particular fields, we focus on the knowledge perspective in geographies of marketization and the growing role of local fairs in global markets.

² It should be noted that Bathelt et al. (2014) explicitly exclude art fairs from their definition of trade shows. They argue that art fairs are cultural events targeted to consumers, whereas trade shows are commercial events targeting professionals. However, professionals comprise a large share of art fair visitors, including representatives from auction houses, museums, or collectors.

different parts of the world (Bathelt and Schuldt 2010). Via global buzz, participants gain information on market developments, products, services, customers, and competitors. Additionally, this “buzz” serves to share attitudes and understandings, evaluate information and facilitate the decision to buy or not buy a particular good. In addition to the “buzz,” fairs are a means of forming global pipelines (Li 2014) and can serve to structure a global network (Yogev and Grund 2012).

Power and Jansson, in their study of global circuits in furniture trade fairs (2008), argued that knowledge processes in temporary clusters depend on long-term relations. Participants have to regularly participate in the constantly renewing temporary clusters in order to benefit from the knowledge processes. The interactions at these gatherings produce knowledge processes that do not take place over distance or in permanent clusters. Power and Jansson (2008) suggested that we consider trade fairs as “cyclical clusters.”

While the literature emphasizes the knowledge process at fairs (Maskell et al. 2006; Bathelt et al. 2014), studies also include market exchanges. Exhibitors at fairs gain knowledge about the needs of global markets, consumer tastes, and requirements of users, which allow them to adjust their competencies and products to those needs (Bathelt et al. 2014). For example, Bathelt et al. (2017) describe how the social relations that form at fairs lead to market exchanges. In this perspective, markets exist only by their social relations. Social networks and fairs facilitate the respective coordination actors, and the market is taken for granted (Çalışkan and Callon 2010). A survey of fairs-as-markets should also consider the environments, infrastructures and objects that shape those relations. Cochoy (2007, p. 109) describes the problems of a network perspective on markets as follows: “Since it tends to reduce market realities to their human dimensions (networks, ideas, and institutions), however, this perspective ends up neglecting the role of objects, technologies and other artifacts in framing markets.” In this vein, scholars in economic sociology, like Callon and Caliskan (2010) or Muniesa et al. (2007) suggest that markets are not only socially, but physically constructed and thus also exist outside social relations. A perspective on trade fairs as markets should investigate how they are constructed outside social relations and how the knowledge ecologies at trade fairs result in particular forms of markets.

Knowledge in Markets

Actors depend on knowledge for their innovative activities as well as markets. The importance of knowledge and information in the functioning of markets has already been described by Akerlof (1970). He offered an example of “information asymmetry” in the used car market, whereby a seller is privy to information about the quality of his car that the buyer lacks, leading to a market where good- and bad-quality used cars are both sold for the price of bad ones. A key point is that no mechanism exists for a good car’s owner to demonstrate its worth. The seller of the good-quality car would not sell it, since they could only expect to get the price of a bad car. As a result, “Bad cars drive out the good” (Akerlof, 1970, p. 490), and a market for good cars does not emerge.

Actor Network Theory describes the information upon which buyers and sellers make their calculations, using the connections an object has to other entities (Callon, 1998). Thomas (1991) showed gifts and goods differ not by their physical qualities, but by their connections. He wrote, “Gifts are inalienable things which move between people who are mutually entangled in an array of rights and obligations” (Thomas, 1991, p. 14). These “entanglements” of the gift assumes a calculation: Who gave the gift, or in what context was the gift given, serves as a basis to calculate who owes and who shall receive a gift.³ Comparable to the gift, calculation of a good’s value takes place upon its manifold connections, references, and associations to standards (Boltanski and Thevenot 2006), other actors (Aspers 2009), or symbols (Reckwitz 2018).

“Market devices” (Muniesa et al. 2007) help to make these calculations. Examples are pricing models, indicators or ranking lists. They are “material and discursive assemblages that intervene in the construction of markets” (Muniesa et al. 2007, 2). Market devices integrate knowledge about how and what to include in evaluations. They are thus both constructed upon the values of a particular field and

³ Some scholars strongly differ between calculation (i.e. quantitative, based on numbers and algorithms) and judgment (based on qualitative assertions). Cochoy (2008) introduced the term “qualculation” as “quality-based rational judgements (Cochoy 2008, 17) to describe something between judgement and calculation. Callon and Muniesa (2005) tried to solve the dichotomy between calculation and judgement as follows: “Calculation starts by establishing distinctions between things or states of the world, and by imagining and estimating courses of action associated with those things or with those states as well as their consequences.” (Callon and Muniesa 2005, 1231). We accept their definition of calculation with the following: As calculation allows comparing and evaluating entities on common principles (Callon and Muniesa 2005), it enables social actors to make selections. As markets require selection, either by the buyer or the seller (Aspers 2009), calculation is a fundamental process in markets.

intervene by either defining what is of value or being deployed to produce value. In so doing, market devices transfer objects into a calculative space, enabling a concordance of evaluation criteria between buyer and seller, and are therefore necessary for a market to emerge (Beckert and Rössel 2013).

The introduction of the Black-Scholes formula to calculate prices for stock options at the Chicago Board Options Exchange gives a respective example (MacKenzie and Millo 2003). Prior to the formula, options trading was considered gambling and therefore forbidden. The Black-Scholes formula suggested a predictability to options prices. Yet, it predicted prices only after it was used by traders. Thus, it not only transferred information into the market (Akerlof 1970), but also integrated in the market knowledge about how markets should function. Other examples of market devices are supermarket aisles (Cochoy 2007) that guide customers, or prices that give indications for one's own calculations (Caliskan 2007).

Market devices take the form of “judgment devices” for the evaluation of “singularities” (Karpik 2010), i.e., unique and incommensurable goods that cannot be measured by standard methods. Examples are works of art, but also wine, music or films.. Karpik (2010) argues that evaluations of singularities require particular devices to provide assessments of goods and “offer buyers the knowledge that should enable them to make reasonable choices” (Karpik 2010, 44). Examples of judgment devices are networks that provide buyers with information, appellations, guides, critics, and/or rankings.

Calculations can differ between social actors, even if they have access to the same information. Markets provide an environment for negotiating contradictory valuations of goods, i.e., what and how to include into a calculation (termed “framing” by Callon 1998). Negotiations are especially important for evaluations involving different orders of worth (Boltanski and Thevenot 2006). Aspers (2009) stated that such negotiations are also important when there is no scale or accepted standard to evaluate a good and knowledge about the social status of those involved is required. Beunza and Stark (2012), for example, describe how derivatives traders check their pricing models against stock prices, which they use as estimates for their competitors' assessments. If they find differences vis-a-vis their own

models, reasons for the deviations were disputed. Thus, negotiations generally take place when there are uncertainties about how to appraise something (Çalışkan and Callon 2010; Callon 2016).

Accordingly, the necessity to negotiate is connected to the prevalence and abundance of market devices.

Marked Devices in Temporary Markets

The construction of markets has a particular geography. For example, research suggests that markets are constructed using a spatial relation, e.g., between the Global North and the Global South (Ouma et al 2013; Berndt and Boeckler 2009). Berndt and Boeckler (2009) establish a particular geographical perspective on markets by arguing that their ordering is done via bordering, i.e., drawing geographical borders around what belongs to the market and what does not (Berndt und Boeckler 2009). Less investigated is why certain markets require a particular geographical proximity between market agents. This is astonishing, as many insights about the functioning of markets have been derived from case studies about localized markets, as indicated above. Garcia-Parpet (2007) described the intentional construction of a perfect neo-classical market at the Strawberry Auction in Fontaines-en-Sologne. Caliskan (2007) described how market prices at the Izmir Mercatile Exchange resulted from different “prosthetic prices,” which are used by actors to make a calculation. . Yet, these localized markets were used for pragmatic reasons to show how markets are socially and technically constructed, not if and how geographical proximity makes them special.

The literature on trade fairs shows that they are shaped by the density of different forms of market devices, without naming it as such (Bathelt et al. 2014, Rinallo and Golfetto 2011). In many ways, these devices are either inherently part of the fair, e.g., via the fair’s organization (Rinallo and Golfetto 2011) or produced especially, like catalogs, flyers or public talks. In the following, we categorize the marked devices at a fair around three classifications. The first describes the physical arrangement of things, the second are judgment devices, and the third one prices.

The first form, market devices, refers to the physical arrangement of things. Cochoy (2007) has described how the physical arrangement of supermarket aisles and the products within the aisles guide

the customer. Trade fairs exhibit some similarities to supermarkets, in that they are functional spaces; the physical arrangements of both booths and objects within the booths indicate the value of things; the arrangements take place on different scales; fair organizers curate the fair space (Rinallo and Golfetto 2011) and booths are smaller or larger, and placed in central or peripheral areas of the fair; the spatial structure serves to describe the position of the exhibitor in the global market. Furthermore, the booth is connected to its immediate physical environment, i.e., mostly the neighboring booths, which also affect the exhibitor's standing. Skov (2006, p. 764) described this relation between neighboring booths. "Trade fairs," she said, "constitute a kind of 'neutral ground' onto which exhibitors inscribe their relative positions vis-a-vis other exhibitors." At the level of the booth itself, there are possibilities to decorate and refurbish. Thus, both fair organizers and exhibitors curate the space. The spatial arrangements create an order of rank between exhibitors and exhibited objects.

A second form takes the shape of judgment devices. Studies show that trade fairs include media coverage, workshops, talks, newspapers, catalogs, awards etc. that introduce additional information (Entwistle and Rocamora 2006). This accounts especially for flagship fairs, which are also visited by journalists who write about them (Bathelt and Schuldt 2008). Thus, judgment devices are built that would not exist without the fairs and exist in addition to other, already existing judgment devices. Additionally, the effect of judgment devices is enhanced by the buzz at fairs. Buzz and judgment devices mutually reinforce each other, as journalists and other multipliers also participate in the fairs (Entwistle and Rocamora 2006).

A third form of market device is price. Çalışkan and Callon (2010, 17) describe the functioning of price-as-market device as follows: "The price of any particular transaction [...] is always calculated on the basis of other prices." These other prices are known as "prosthetic prices." Information about prices and contracts are circulated at fairs (Thompson 2011). Thus do fairs produce information about other trades as well as the means to circulate it.

Besides their creation of market devices and the buzz to reinforce the working of market devices, fairs provide an environment for interactively negotiating value, i.e., what and how to include something in

a calculation. The context for these negotiations differ, however, as do the resulting prices. Hutter and Stark (2017) argue that different situations result in varying calculations of the same object, just as different assemblages of technologies, devices and people lead to different types of valuations. In Caliskan's (2007) example of the Izmir Mercantile Exchange (IME), a commodity market for cotton, the exchange itself consisted of different places where different prices were produced. Although the prices all referred to cotton, they had different meanings, depending on how the prices were decided.

Additionally, the prices produced at fairs create a possible link between the temporary localized market and the global market. Caliskan (2007) described the connection between the IME and the global market. When the cotton trade is finished for the day, a committee sets a closing price based on that day's trade. This is considered to be the market price and is "closely watched by other traders around the world." (Caliskan 2007, 244). At fairs, information about prices and contracts are announced via press release or published by journalists. Thus, a price produced at a particular place affects prices elsewhere.

To conclude, we expect that market devices affect fairs-as-markets in the following ways. First, trade fairs are shaped by a proliferation of market devices. This proliferation results in an abundance of knowledge about how to evaluate goods that makes fairs unique. Second, trade fairs differ in market devices and in the quantity and quality of information they introduce into the fairs. These differences create a hierarchy of fairs. Fairs with most market devices present the top level fairs, and vice versa. Third, trade fairs produce prices that are used as market devices elsewhere.

Market Devices in (Temporary) Art Markets

This section details to what extent valuations in the field of art are introduced into fairs via market devices. Artwork is a particular economic good. It differs from homogenous or qualified economic goods, as there are few standards to assess its value (Aspers 2009), which makes pricing in that market insecure and volatile.

Contemporary art is particularly suited for such analysis. First, works of art are traded directly at fairs (Quemin 2013). Second, in no other sector is the valuation of goods so vaguely definable and hard to codify (Beckert and Rössel 2013). Thus, market devices that define and evaluate a price are especially visible in this field (Karpik 2010). Third, the highest price segment of the art market, contemporary art, can be considered to be global, i.e., pieces of art in different parts of the world would receive the same price (Velthuis and Curioni 2015, Renneboog and Spaenjers 2015).

Works of art receive their value from their relation to particular entities as well as practices that assign value to those relations (Velthuis 2003). The artwork is connected to the artist by the physical practice of creating the work, including the workmanship and the materiality. Via this link, it is also connected with other pieces by the same artist. For example, Velthuis (2003) discovered that gallery owners price different works of art by the same artist, but of varying quality, in the same way. Additionally, a work is connected to the whole history of art and various references are weaved into its materiality. As Prior (2005, p. 126) states, “Successful reception only occurs if there is a fit between the works’ codes and those possessed by the beholder.” Without understanding these codes, relations, and associations, a work of art would be just a picture.

Additionally, works of art have a particular “social life” (Appadurai 1988), as they move from their places of production to galleries, collections, or museums. These places give an indication of the work’s value, which is especially obvious for world-class museums like the Museum of Modern Art, New York (MOMA). Giuffre (1999) describes this effect using the example of galleries with different reputations. He shows that “[g]alleries are considered prestigious when they show the work of prestigious artists, and vice versa” (Giuffre 1999, 817).

These evaluation criteria constructed in the field of art (Pardo-Guerra 2013) are transferred into a calculation with the help of market devices (Muniesa et al. 2007). Market devices take particular forms in the art market. First of all, art fairs are market devices themselves. There is a distinguished hierarchy. Those like Art Basel, Art Miami, or Frieze are considered the top rung. Being exhibited at these top-ranked fairs usually increases the price of an artwork (Thompson 2011). Therefore, gallery

owners and exhibitors try to exhibit at the most prestigious art fairs. However, these prestigious fairs limit admission, making exhibition space there a scarce resource. In addition to these top fairs, there are smaller ones that select the kind of art exhibited at the fair and fairs whose sole selection mechanism depends on the price for the booth that the exhibitor is willing to pay. Due to these different forms and intensities of selection mechanisms, art fairs send strong signals regarding the value of the works to be exhibited (Skov 2006). In doing so, art fairs are a prime example of what Berndt and Boeckler (2009) call “ordering by bordering” (Berndt and Boeckler 2009) to construct and structure a localized market.

Also, other forms of market devices, e.g., physical arrangements, judgment devices and prices, take particular forms at art fairs. The physical arrangement at art fairs also have particularities. Within the fair, the arrangements of exhibitors and works of art lend additional indications of their value.

Exhibitors can be placed at central or peripheral locations, allowed to occupy more or less space, and placed between more or less renowned galleries. Within the booth, the exhibitor selects and arranges works of art. The arrangement of artwork and the decoration of the booth are the means of a gallery to imprint its aesthetic vision into a plain space and to position itself, as well as the exhibited works, into the market (Skov 2006).

Judgment devices are important for evaluations in the field of art (Karpik 2010). They can range from descriptions of a work to reviews by critics and experts, to naming the work (or other entangled pieces) in reports and “stories,” as well as awards and catalogs (Pardo-Guerra, 2013). The effects of such judgment devices on the work is demonstrated by Beckert and Rössel (2013): the more a work of art is covered in the media, the more its price will increase.

The environment of art fairs consists of several different judgment devices. Media cover particular events at fairs. Public talks, workshops and discussions contribute to transmit the often tacit values of the field of art to a wider audience. Awards are presented, catalogs disseminated by fair organizers, exhibitors provide further information about the featured pieces of art. Pardo-Guerra (2013, 201) describes the example of art auction catalogs which also appear at art fairs, how these judgment

devices indicate the value of a piece of art: “[...]every catalog entry is, in this sense, a microhistory of art, a reconstructed element of a larger network of narratives, normativities, and associations, of the larger imaginaries of material culture that embed and are attached to artistic production” (see also Herrero 2010).

In addition to the arrangement of space and judgment devices, prices are a third form of market device. Pieces of art are often sold several times. Therefore, prosthetic prices (Caliskan 2007) can refer to previous sales of the same work or to prices of related artworks that serve to appraise and legitimate calculations. In the primary market where pieces of art are sold for the first time, prices of works by the same artist, “school,” or era give an indication of the value of an artwork. In the secondary market, where pieces of art are sold for at least the second time, the price of a prior sale indicates its value. These prices are strong indicators. Prices do not fall, because social norms prevent gallery owners from decreasing the price for an artwork (Velthuis 2003). Fairs provide a particular environment for the dissemination of prosthetic prices as sales are either announced publicly and via media or buzz or via “sold” stickers (Thompson 2011). Thus, prosthetic prices proliferate in the art fair environment.

Method and Data Collection

Our analysis focuses on how market devices distinguish and differentiate temporary localized markets. This intention requires a comparative case study approach (Yin 2011; Eisenhardt 1989), which we conducted using three contemporary art fairs that take place in Basel every year in June: Art Basel, LISTE, and SCOPE. Additionally, market construction is a temporal process (MacKenzie and Millo 2003), one that is especially evident at trade fairs. Therefore, the analysis does not only cover the processes at the fair, but also the preparations prior to and afterwards. This temporality requires a process study approach. In a process study, the temporal order of events is important in order to explain the evolving phenomena (Langley et al. 2013). Therefore, process studies take into account that the existence of something (e.g., markets) does not explain how it evolved.

Langley et al. (2013) suggest “temporal bracketing” as analytical heuristics for qualitative process studies. Temporal brackets “are constructed as progressions of events and activities separated by

identifiable discontinuities in the temporal flow” (Langley et al. 2013, 7). This bracketing allows for the comparison of different temporal sequences that can be distinguished via their particular process dynamics. Therefore, we distinguish between the processes taking place before, during, and after the fair.

We used the framework of market devices to describe exhibitors’ calculations, the construction of a market at the fair, and the production of prosthetic prices. The main source of this information was exhibitors. They were able to explain how they calculated prices and negotiated with potential buyers. Additionally, they provided information about their sales as indicators of how the three different markets functioned, i.e., to what extent did supply meet demand. Finally, as many exhibitors not only sell, but also buy pieces of art, they could also offer buyers’ perspectives.

We conducted 42 qualitative interviews with exhibitors at three different art fairs in Basel, which took place in June 2014 and 2015: 13 at Art Basel, nine at LISTE, and 20 at SCOPE. Interviews conducted at the fairs lasted between a few minutes to an hour or more. There were only brief opportunities for interviews; potential customers or colleagues occasionally interrupted. Our experience reflected those of others conducting research there. Andreae et al. (2013, p. 197) described it as follows:

“For social scientists accustomed to deploying the usual repertoire of research methodologies, the trade show performance presents a fleeting target that does not always lend itself to lengthy interviews, focus groups or even detailed qualitative surveys. In consequence, normal research methodologies may not be practical, depending on the nature of the show itself.”

Potential interviewees did not refuse to talk to us when we revealed our intention. However, everything that made it look like a standard interview (recording, notetaking, completing a questionnaire) would result in its breakup. Therefore, the interviews usually took the form of discussions about particular works of art on exhibit. We embedded our questions in these discussions, e.g., about the value of a piece, why it was selected, the histories of particular works, the location of the gallery and its artwork at the fair, as well as negotiations and sales. Most interviews were conducted by both of the study authors. Minutes were recorded during or directly after the interview.

The interviews were complemented by seven additional meetings with experts responsible for construction of the fair and the art market, like the fair organizers, critics and curators, and representatives of auction houses. The interviews served to give detailed information about particular processes, e.g., how value is created in the art field, how fairs select galleries, or how larger institutions turn art fair sales into prosthetic prices. The setting outside the fair allowed a more structured procedure than inside. The 30-to-70 minute interviews followed a semi-structured questionnaire and were recorded and transcribed.

We used information gathered during different discussion sessions, and participated in informal talks during the fair and at evening events. Many market devices could be observed, experienced, or investigated by desk research. As a result, we appended documents published by the fairs or related organizations to own observations. Thus, our corpus was based upon interviews at the fair with exhibitors, outside experts, our own observations, and desk research.

Basel Art Fairs as Temporary Markets

Compared to other trade fairs, art fairs are rather new phenomena. The first art fair was the Kunstmarkt Köln, held in Cologne, Germany in 1967. From the beginning, the Kunstmarkt Köln had restrictive criteria for the selection of galleries and many art dealers felt slighted (Blochmann 1996). In response, three Basel art dealers started a comparable fair in 1970. Today, Art Basel, with approximately 300 galleries and 90,000 visitors, is considered as a premier international art fair (Thompson 2011). It is a prominent example of a secondary market fair, but also includes works of art offered for sale for the first time.

Art Basel itself exerts a restrictive selection process for galleries. As a reaction, LISTE opened a parallel fair in 1996 with the aim of promoting new galleries. In contrast to Art Basel, LISTE is a primary market and exhibits artwork that has not been sold before. Yet, even LISTE developed tight restrictions over the years. As a reaction, a third contemporary art fair, SCOPE, was established in

Basel in 2006.⁴ SCOPE sister fairs were founded in New York in 2000 and later extended to Miami Beach and Basel. Compared to Art Basel and LISTE, the entry barriers of SCOPE are lower. Galleries mainly present original artwork that has never been exhibited before. Thus, SCOPE has both primary and secondary market activities.

In the field of the arts, fairs are strongly connected to the development of a global market. While the overall sales volume of artworks nearly doubled from \$35.9 billion in 2005 to \$63.8 billion in 2015 (TEFAF 2016), the number of art fairs worldwide tripled from 68 to 220 (O'Mealley 2015). Additionally, their share turnover increased from 15% to 20% between 2010 and 2015.⁵

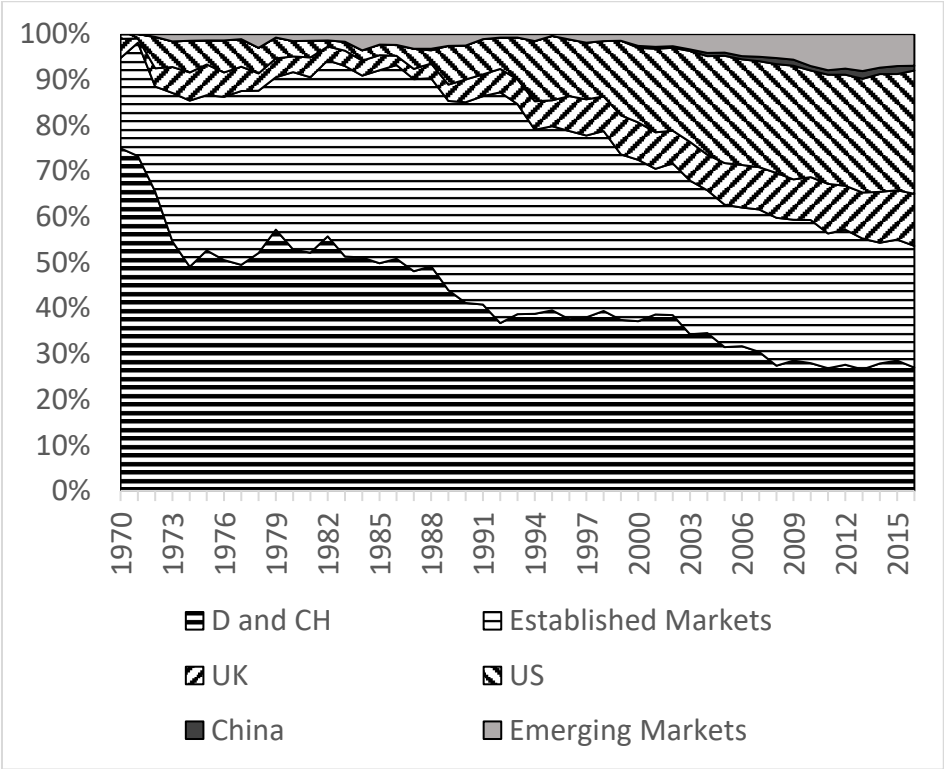


Figure 1: Share of galleries and art dealers per country at the Art Basel in Basel 1970-2016 (own calculations, based on www.artfacts.net)

The growing importance of fairs coincides with their internationalization. Figure 1 describes the origins of exhibitors at Art Basel. The chart includes numbers for galleries from Switzerland and

⁴ Since 2005, other satellite fairs like Volta located in Basel. As we are interested in differences between art fairs and not in Basel as a location for art fairs, we restrict our analysis to SCOPE, LISTE, and Art Basel.

⁵ Data from TEFAF Art Market Reports from 2011 to 2016.

Germany (which founded the fair), established art markets (mostly Western and Northern European), the three largest markets (US, UK and China, which accounted for 83% of the global market in 2015 (TEFAF 2016)), and emerging markets (mostly South and Central America as well as Asia and Africa). Figure 1 also shows Art Basel's local origin and transformation into an international fair for established markets in the 1990s. From 1990 on, the share of US galleries grew, indicating the connection between Art Basel and the US as the world's largest art market. Around 2000, the share of exhibitors from emerging markets, which had fluctuated around 2% since the early days of the fair, rose to 8%. The later internationalization of the fair saw branches in Miami Beach in 2002 and Hong Kong in 2013. As the art market grew, fairs received larger and larger shares and became geographically diverse.

Before the Fairs: Selection Procedures and Calculations of Exhibitors

The three fairs we investigated are shaped by a hierarchy that stems from the way they select galleries. This section describes the selection procedures of the three fairs as well as the artwork exhibited.

Selection Procedures at Basel Art Fairs

The hierarchies of the three fairs is demonstrated by the ways the fairs select their exhibitors. For all fairs, galleries have to submit a dossier that contains their concept and philosophy, and which artworks and artists they plan to exhibit. Yet, the selection procedures differ. At Art Basel, a committee consisting of esteemed international gallery owners selects approximately 300 galleries for the Art Basel from a pool of 1,000 to 1,500 applicants. Being selected as an exhibitor considerably increases the chance to be selected for the next year. Therefore, once chosen, galleries continually exhibit year after year and most keep their booths for decades. As a result, approximately only 10-to-15 booth spaces are granted to new galleries each year, which increases their scarcity.

At LISTE, a committee comprising art critics and museum curators selects approximately 80 galleries out of 350 applicants each year, of which 18 are first-timers. The selection process focuses on young galleries with the potential to be Art Basel galleries in the future. One fair organizer described LISTE as a “spring-board for young galleries that want to be under the future top galleries of the world.” To

provide a sustainable recognition in the global art market, LISTE grants selected exhibitors a booth for at least three years. Indeed, its function as an incubator for young galleries that it seeks to place at Art Basel is one of LISTE's main objectives.

Accordingly, the boundaries between Art Basel and LISTE are permeable and organized. Forms of presentation like "Statement" or "Feature" take place at Art Basel but are decisively considered as being located between Art Basel and LISTE, as they are the first steps into the former. At "Features," galleries can exhibit several artists, while the "Statement" is dedicated to just one. The access to "Statement" or "Feature" is granted for one year. Each year, the Art Basel committee chooses to present 18-to-20 galleries from some 400 applications. Two-thirds are LISTE alumni.

The selection committees are crucial to gain access to Art Basel and LISTE. The modalities under which the selections occur often appear opaque to outsiders. For the insider, though, they're obvious. As one member of the LISTE selection committee said, "It is pretty clear for us as art critics to choose what is of value and what is not."

The selection process at SCOPE for the 80 booths is much less rigid. In contrast to Art Basel and LISTE, the selection mechanism is less about the quality of the exhibited art (however one defines quality), but the price of the booth. Nonetheless, there is a selection committee at SCOPE consisting of curators, program managers, etc. SCOPE receives 10-20% more applications than it has exhibit space to show them. Exhibiting at SCOPE is considered important. In the words of one gallery owner, "It is important to just be at a fair and in Basel." The presence offers visibility of the gallery and the exhibited works and allows one to meet collectors who are not visiting the SCOPE.

The different selection procedures lead to different degrees of diversity. Figure 2 describes the Herfindahl Index for the number of galleries per country. The Herfindahl Index is the sum of the squared shares and measures concentration (Jacquemin and Berry 1979). The index is one (1) if all exhibitors come from one country. The index approaches zero (0) with increasing number of countries and equal distribution of exhibitors per country. The figure shows that although the Art Basel exhibitor origins became more diverse = over time, LISTE and SCOPE exhibitors are far more diverse. The

values for SCOPE would be even lower if they did not focus on particular countries each year, e.g., on Korea in 2015. The selection process at Art Basel creates homogeneity with a focus on Europe and North America. However, Curioni et al. (2015) show that this homogeneity is less pronounced on the artist level, as artists from Africa, Latin America, or Asia manage to get access to Art Basel via European and North American galleries.

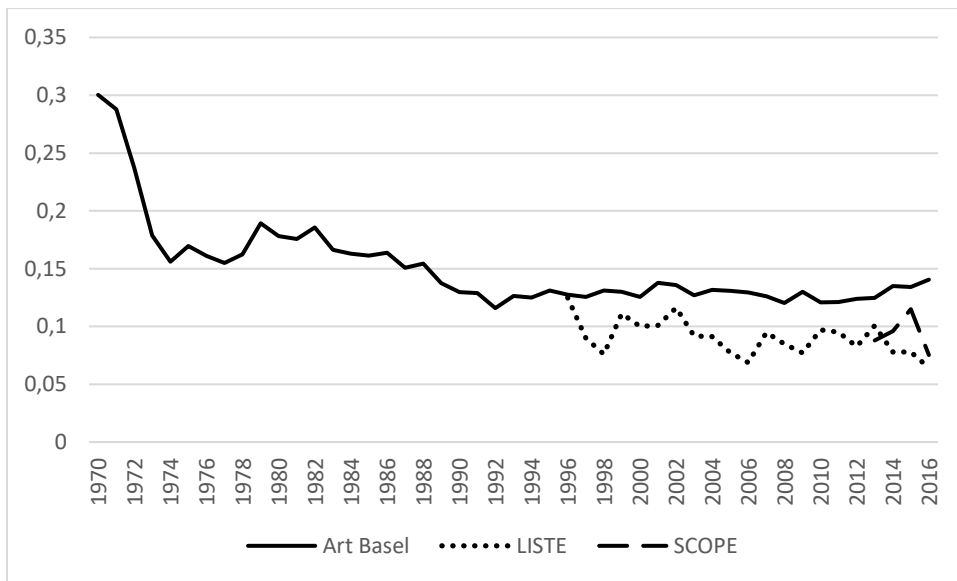


Figure 2: Herfindahl-Index for Number of Galleries per Country at Art Basel, LISTE and SCOPE (data for Art Basel from www.artfacts.net, data for LISTE and SCOPE from fair organizers)

Price calculations of exhibitors

Artwork prices at the fairs were fixed and did not change. Exhibitors made their calculations beforehand upon the embedding of the piece into the market devices. The “social life” of artwork, i.e., their previous exhibition at museums, collections, or galleries, affected the value for artwork at all investigated art fairs. However, works at Art Basel had often been exhibited at numerous venues, many of them quite renowned. At LISTE, we found works that had been exhibited at famous museums like MOMA. The same did not necessarily hold true at SCOPE. In most cases, being exhibited at SCOPE, LISTE, or Art Basel was already included in the price calculations.

We found comparable differences between the three fairs regarding their coverage with judgment devices. Pieces of art were more strongly covered by media at Art Basel as compared to SCOPE and

LISTE; artwork exhibited at SCOPE garnered the least attention. As a result, awards were important for price calculations at SCOPE.

Differences could also be observed regarding prices. An important indicator for calculating the price for an artwork was its price announced or achieved at previous fairs. As prices tend to rise between fairs, even if the artwork was not sold, previous fairs (also auctions and sales) sent a price signal for the next exhibition. Previous prices exist mainly at Art Basel, to a lesser extent at SCOPE and not at all at LISTE. Additionally, we found works of art whose prices differed considerably from the price in their home market at SCOPE. In one example, the price at the fair was higher than in the domestic market due to low local income. In another, the price was lower than the home market, as the home market was a hot spot for this particular piece. The latter case was an exception to the rule that prices are not lowered (Velthuis 2003). This exception was justified by the interviewee to promote pieces of art in a new market, which increase reputation and prices on the long run. We did not find these adjustments of prices to the fair at LISTE and Art Basel.

Exhibitors calculated prices according to the relation a piece of art has with other works by the same artist in all three fairs. However, missing previous sales, media coverage, and places of previous exhibitions made calculations based on the work of art and the artist especially important elements at LISTE and SCOPE. In these fairs, we found several examples where the price was set according to the normative impetus described by Velthuis (2003), as gallery owners set the price to appreciate the artist's value. Furthermore, we found examples at SCOPE where weak embedding into market devices led to two particular reactions. First, gallery owners mentioned taking the craftsmanship and materials of an artist into account when setting a price. This form of calculation was not found at the other two fairs. Second, the artwork exhibited at SCOPE was often specially produced for that fair. Buyers were usually unfamiliar with the artist's other works and were therefore unable to evaluate a particular work within their oeuvre. SCOPE gallery owners and artists take potential buyers' missing knowledge into account when they produce an artwork for a fair. As a result, artists will produce more accessible and comprehensible artworks for SCOPE. These could be evaluated without being deeply involved in the

field of art and without the help of judgment devices, as. for example, artisanship or knowledge of pop cultural references.

At the fairs: constructing a market

When exhibited at a fair, art works are integrated into a new environment. The physical display, the talks at the booth, the workshops and documentation, the sheer amount of exhibited works, all create a milieu where different calculations of buyers and sellers are tested against each other. While exhibitors made their price calculations before the fair, buyers use the information they get at the fair to make or refine their calculations (Rinallo and Golfetto 2011). For the sums of sellers and buyers to match, they should be based on the same criteria. This section describes how three fairs differ in market devices and how these differences affect calculations, and as a result the functioning of these three markets.

Market Devices at the Fairs

The three fairs differ in the environments they provide. We used market devices in the form of physical arrangements, judgment methods, and prosthetic prices to describe their differences in market constructions. First, the physical arrangement of booths and artwork, i.e., the position of the galleries within the fair, the size of the booths, their relation to the immediate environments, and the arrangement of artworks within the booths, all indicated their calculated values. Fair organizers deliberately position galleries, especially at Art Basel. The size and location of the booth expresses the status of the gallery in terms of reputation and importance in the global art market. Accordingly, a change in a gallery's reputation is reflected by repositioning it within the fair space. One gallery owner told us the following:

“At the beginning, we had a bigger booth. Now we have a smaller one. We actually would have liked to have had a bigger one but in order to preserve continuity we took it so that we did not lose the booth next year.”

Additionally, the gallery, which had exhibited at Art Basel for decades, saw its decreasing importance through its shift to a peripheral position at the fair.

The immediate environment of the booth was also important. Interviewees mentioned that the quality of art presented in neighboring booths had an effect on the “charisma” of the art that they were presenting. They appreciated that neighboring galleries exhibited art they liked and that matched the art they were themselves exhibiting. The following quote of a gallery owner indicated this relation:

“It is important where you are located in the art fair. If you have a neighbor that is of low quality, it hinders your own prestige and it also has an impact on prices [that buyers are willing to accept].”

At the booth, exhibitors try to build environments that fit the artwork. They arrange the art in relation to structure of the booth and its neighbors. The possibilities are framed by a modular exhibition space at Art Basel and SCOPE, where booths can differ in size and form, but not height, light and color. LISTE is located in an old and twisty industrial building, which offers less freedom in this respect, but more possibilities for connecting the design of the booth to its built environment.

Within the booth, exhibitors use the space to highlight the connections between the different pieces of art as well as the artist. Exhibitors at SCOPE and LISTE mentioned that they selected artwork for the fair that fit together and arranged it accordingly. Exhibitors at SCOPE showed only a few artists, sometimes only three or four, and in one case just one. This selection allows for exhibiting a larger number of pictures from each artist, which helps to make connections between the different works visible. To a lesser extent, we found these forms also at LISTE. In contrast, galleries at Art Basel usually exhibited up to ten artists and often showed only one or two pictures from each.

Judgment devices consist of public talks, discussions, catalogs, and fair-related publications. Art Basel provides a catalog with an overview of participating galleries, which includes artists and pictures of all exhibited works. Additionally, the fair hosts a talk series where artists, curators, critics, collectors, and art journalists offer insights on recent art issues and the functioning of the market. Furthermore, the Baloise Art Prize, one of the most highly remunerated art awards worldwide, is presented at Art Basel.

In addition to these devices provided by the fair, Art Basel is covered by several blogs (e.g., Sotheby's, which offers a private blog for their customers), and newspapers dedicate special sections to the fair (e.g., <http://www.nytimes.com/topic/subject/art-basel>)

LISTE also provides an art catalog. While the focus of the Art Basel catalog is on the art, the catalog provided by LISTE focuses on the artists, their work, and their past exhibitions. At LISTE, the Helvetica Art Prize is given, which is dedicated to graduates of Swiss colleges of visual arts and media. There are no talks or panel discussions. Additionally, some newspapers and art-related blogs and websites (e.g., <http://blog.artbinder.com/orbit-liste-basel/>) report on LISTE.

At SCOPE, we did not find this extensive coverage. No talks or panels were held, nor awards given, and the fair did not publish a catalog on the art presented. Yet, it is mentioned by some blogs as well as the regional newspaper (Basler Zeitung). Therefore, the number and density of judgment devices decreases from Art Basel to LISTE to SCOPE.

Finally, fairs are market places where supply meets demand. The three Basel art fairs draw galleries and collectors from different parts of the world. Interviewees emphasized that the size of the market created by the fairs enable galleries to contact collectors who are interested in art that is difficult to find in smaller markets. Large fairs enable galleries that represent artists at the fringe of the field to sell their art. The sheer size of the market allows for variety and density.

While all fairs provide an environment where buyers can see and use prosthetic prices, the three fairs differed in the visibility of their supply and demand. At Art Basel, exhibitors and buyers usually knew each other, and had been in touch beforehand. Gallery owners usually know who to expect and send catalogs containing art to be exhibited to well-known collectors and museum curators. As collectors, art dealers and curators receive catalogs from several galleries, they gain an overview of works of art and their prices before the fair actually starts. This overview exists to a smaller extent at LISTE. At SCOPE, buyers are sometimes collectors, but often people that do not regularly buy art, which makes for volatile demand.

To conclude, these judgment devices, physical arrangements, as well as prosthetic prices exist in addition to non-fair-related market devices and are further condensed by the temporal and spatial limitations of the fair. Thus, trade fairs represent a proliferation of market devices. This proliferation is especially visible at Art Basel. At SCOPE, this environment is less distinct. Exhibitors substitute this missing environment by booth base strategies, e.g., their arrangements of art.

Negotiations about Value

Booths are the primary place for negotiations. There, exhibitors describe the artworks, their histories and receptions, their relations to works by other artists as well by the artists themselves, all of which give the buyer additional information to evaluate the work. The previous sections showed that the three art fairs offer different environments for these negotiations. First, pieces of art are variously connected to judgment devices, decreasing from Art Basel to LISTE to SCOPE. Second, the fairs differ in selection procedures. Selection procedures at Art Basel and LISTE limit the turnover of galleries. This helps stabilize the number of sellers in the market. As a result, most sellers and buyers know each other, which helps to assess supply and demand. Third, the three fairs provide different environments for market devices. Art Basel provides a complex environment where art pieces are evaluated during talks, within catalogs and via physical representation. At SCOPE these processes mainly take place at the booths.

These conditions affect negotiations between sellers and buyers. We found two differences between the three fairs in this respect. The first pertains to time, i.e., the duration of negotiations and the day when the galleries made their most sales. At Art Basel, artwork was sold quickly. Galleries already expected many sales and the majority we interviewed conducted most of those during the first two days of the fair. At SCOPE, interactions between gallery owners and artists on one side and buyers and collectors on the other were more extensive and sales usually took place on the last day of the fair. Buyers visited galleries several times to discuss an artwork, its background, the gallery, the artist, and which collectors had already collected them. Exhibitors used these days to describe the artwork and its

various, but often weak, connections to the larger world of art. Fairs enable these lengthy forms of communications, during which potential buyers receive information with which what they are seeing.

Only at SCOPE did we find galleries where artists were actually present. When we talked to these artists about their intentions to be at the fair, they said they were interested in seeing the reactions of visitors to their art and talking with them about it. Of course, there may be a bias. Around 15% of the artists whose work is exhibited at Art Basel are already dead (Curioni et al. 2015), which reduces the likelihood of physical presence. However, this example fits into an overall picture where galleries at SCOPE rely on the setting at the booth to enhance how the value of the artwork warrants its price.

Regarding the time and timing of sales, LISTE is located between Art Basel and SCOPE.

The second difference between the three fairs was the volatility of turnovers. Galleries at Art Basel and also LISTE sold most of their works. At Art Basel, when a work of art was sold, it was replaced by a new work from stock. Galleries exhibiting at SCOPE showed more variety in sales. Some sold most of their works and replaced those from stock; others sold almost nothing. Actually, the latter were in the majority. At all three fairs, exhibitors tried to sell their artwork to buyers with reputation in the art field. As values for works of art depend on the place of exhibition and prior ownership, exhibitors tried to place their works of art with famous collectors or museums. Such prominent placements of the sold artwork would in turn affect the reputation of the gallery and the works of art it represents. While exhibitors at all three fairs have this strategy, the strong demand at Art Basel allows exhibitors to even select between buyers. Therefore, also potential buyers are evaluated regarding their value.

To conclude, of the three Basel art fairs, Art Basel produces the closest fit between supply and demand, while SCOPE represents the most volatile market. The proliferation of market devices at Art Basel not only leads to higher prices, but aligns price calculations of buyers and sellers.

After the Fairs: Dissemination of prices

After the fair, information about sales were collected and published via platforms like www.artnet.com and www.artmarketmonitor.com. Of the three Basel art fairs, we found only sales made at the Art Basel on these platforms. On a global level, fairs whose sales prices are collected and published are FIAC, The Armory Show, Art Basel Miami Beach, or Frieze. Public art auction prices are also published and collected by websites like www.artprice.com. Furthermore, art organizations like auction houses collect prices of sold artwork themselves.

Date	Art Fair	Auction	Place
10-12 February		Christie's and Sotheby's	London
5-8 March	Armory Show		New York
12-14 May		Christie's and Sotheby's	New York
18-21 June	Art Basel		Basel
30 June-2 July		Christie's and Sotheby's	London
14-17 October	Frieze		London
10-12 November		Christie's and Sotheby's	New York
3-6 December	Art Basel Miami		Miami Beach

Table 1: Sequence of Important Temporary Markets for Contemporary Art in 2015

Interviewees stated that prices in one temporary market influence the prices at subsequent markets. For example, the large auctions that take place in New York influence prices at the Art Basel one month later, while these prices in turn affect auction prices in London ten days later. Therefore, these prices are prosthetic prices that are produced in one temporary market and used for price calculations in subsequent temporary markets. These connections mostly refer to the most important temporary markets.

Table 1 describes this sequence of temporary markets. We included Art Basel, Art Basel Miami Beach, Frieze, and the Armory Show, which are the art fairs for which most prices are reported.⁶ The list coheres to the fairs that interviewees suggest as the most important in the art market. It shows that the global significance of a temporary market does not result from the number of visitors, but from its place in the infrastructure of the global market. We included auctions with the most sales of the two dominant auction houses Sotheby's and Christie's.⁷ As fairs and auctions cover the largest part of global sales—21% for fairs and 47% for auction houses in 2015 (TEFAF 2016), the global art market is predicated upon these temporary markets.

Table 1 shows two things. First, the large auctions and fairs are alternately scheduled. Secondly, the locations also alternate, often between continents (with the exception of The Armory Show and the May auctions, which both take place in New York). These temporary markets differ in the prices they produce. The price that an artwork receives is usually higher at a fair than at an auction. By alternating between temporary markets that differ in how they produce prices, yet relate to each other by including respective prosthetic prices in calculations, this sequence of temporary markets contributes to the construction of a single, global market. Yet, this single market might be refined to that segment of the most recognized and most expensive works of art (Renneboog and Spaenjers 2015).

Conclusion

Markets require knowledge (Akerlof 1970; Aspers 2009). We have focused here on market devices (Muniesa et al. 2007, Çalışkan and Callon 2010, Karpik 2010) that integrate knowledge about how to value something, and investigated three different temporary art markets. Our study contributes to the literature on the geography of markets by emphasizing that the temporal and spatial “bordering” (Berndt and Boeckler 2009) of markets causes particular knowledge processes that do not exist outside

⁶ www.artmarketmonitor.com collects prices for artwork sold at fairs. The following list shows for how many pieces of art prices were collected for 2015 fairs with the largest number of visitors: Art Basel: 59, Art Basel Miami: 69, Frieze: 30, Armory: 20, FIAC: 9, Art Cologne: 2, ARCO: 0, Art Chicago: 0, Fiera di Bologna: 0.

⁷ These large auctions at these houses were held at the same place at the same time and were accompanied by smaller auctions. The concentration results at four large auction events in February, May, June/July and November 2015, with sales of \$385 million, were \$1.242m, \$366m, and \$814m, respectively (data from www.sothebys.com and www.christies.com).

the borders and are vital to the functioning of markets. Our study also contributes to the literature on temporary clusters (Maskell et al. 2006; Bathelt et al. 2017; Power and Jansson 2008) by emphasizing that the knowledge ecologies at trade fairs and the connections between fairs not only depend on social interactions, but also on objects and “market devices.”

In particular, our study revealed three things: First, the temporal and spatial limitations of trade fairs led to a proliferation and condensation of market devices (Muniesa et al. 2007; Karpik 2010), which would either not exist without the fair or would be distributed over larger temporal and spatial distances. This condensation is enhanced via “buzz” (Bathelt and Schuldt 2010), which makes fairs a particular form of market. The proliferation of market devices not only led to higher prices at art fairs compared to other markets, like art auctions, it explains why art fairs also serve as primary markets. While Velthuis (2003) argued that social norms prevent galleries and artists from selling new works of art at auctions, we would argue that this occurs for economic reasons. Thus, the geographical and temporal limitations of fairs create markets that would not otherwise exist.

Second, market devices differ between fairs. As markets require knowledge (Aspers 2009), knowledge differences resulted in hierarchies between fairs. As a top tier fair, Art Basel did not only exhibit higher-priced artworks. It was also the only fair where supply met demand and most of the artworks were sold. Fairs that were to a lesser extent covered with market devices were more volatile. Several studies have already shown that there is a differentiation between fairs. Rinallo and Golfetto (2011), for example, distinguished trade fairs according to their market foci, i.e., either import or export orientation. Our study showed that differentiation between fairs also resulted from the knowledge that is goes into them.

Third, we showed how fairs contribute to the construction of a global market. All fairs connect galleries and artists from different parts of the world, and in doing so create a “localized global market.” This function of trade fairs is well described in the temporary cluster literature (e.g., Maskell et al. 2006; Li 2014). Our case study additionally showed that temporary markets in the field of art were themselves connected via prices, which were produced at one temporary market and used in the subsequent temporary market. Therefore, a single global market for art was created upon a sequence of

temporary markets, and temporary markets were infrastructures in the construction of global markets. For a temporary market to have this function, however, depends on how it is constructed. In our case, only Art Basel had this function.

The field of art is a special case (Aspers 2009). Though goods traded at art fairs share similarities with goods traded at fairs in other fields, what is traded at a fair is not a homogenous product. Instead, it is a batch of products, which are tailored for the specific need of the customer and differ in size and characteristics from other batches. Prices for these unique batches can be additionally affected by certain strategies, e.g., entering a particular market or selling to a customer with a strong reputation. Comparable to works of art, these batches represent singularities whose values cannot be estimated according to standard measures (Aspers 2009, Karpik 2010). Instead, evaluations are facilitated or even made possible via the proliferation of market devices and fairs providing the respective environments (for fashion see Entwistle and Rocamora 2006). Thus, not only art fairs, but fairs in general are markets for singularities. The temporal and localized construction of fairs enables their trade.

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