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Contemporary Visual Art Scene: Conditions of the Market and its Effects on
Emerging Artists in Australia and Estonia

Master thesis

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TARTU 2014

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the thesis *Contemporary Visual Art Scene: Conditions of the Market and its Effects on Emerging Artists in Australia and Estonia*, is to explore through research the art field of the two countries.

The current paper focuses exclusively on the emerging contemporary visual artists and institutions specific to them in Australia and Estonia. The study aspires to investigate the advantages and disadvantages early career artists face. The thesis stems from the author's previous research on contemporary markets and the position of emerging artists in the context.¹ The focus of the latter was on the Estonian art scene, concentrating on the emerging artists and the conditions they were subject to.

The past research indicated that the contemporary art is, to some extent, affected by the economics. To gain a better overview of the relationship of these two, arguably polar entities, the author decided to continue investigating the topic in the current paper.

In addition, the undergraduate research argued that the art market and the effects it imposes on the members of it, are in correlation to its age. The younger the market, the better were the chances for a newcomer to attract attention. On the other hand, the more established markets were subject to 'unwritten rules' and code of conduct, implemented by the arts elite.²

¹ Tonts, M. (2009). *Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland*: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu.

² *Opt. Cit*, p. 29.

The brief exploration of the art markets during undergraduate studies showed that the market consists of two parts – primary and secondary. As the latter is mainly related to mid-career and established artists, the focus of this research is not on the secondary market.

The contemporary art is preoccupied with primary market. This is where the initial interaction between the artist, the artwork and the consumer happens (consumer does not always equal buyer). As this is the initial relationship the artist develops, the primary market is the playing field of emerging artists.³ In the current research paper, the Australian and Estonian art markets are explored solely from the perspective of primary markets.⁴

The aim of this research is not to investigate nor establish a correlation between the market and artistic value of the work. Therefore, the paper will not touch upon the prices of artworks.

In 2010, the author attended the Emerging Art Markets Conference in London and was first introduced to the Australian art scene. The latter was described as rare and exclusive, mainly due to its location. During the same year, the author had an opportunity to assist two commercial galleries [Sutton Lane (presently known as Campoli Presti Gallery) and Rob Tuffnell Gallery] at the international Frieze Art Fair in London. The discussion around Australian art scene seemed to be the topic of choice at the fair - '*the contemporary art in Australia is going to be the next big thing*' (Dorment 2012)⁵.

³ *Opt. Cit.*

⁴ Tonts, M. (2009). Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu, pp. 6-10.

⁵ Dorment, R. (2012). Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney: can you guess where the next big thing will be? - *The Telegraph*, 25th April, para. 3, viewed 15th June 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-features/9227049/Museum-of-Contemporary-Art-in-Sydney-can-you-guess-where-the-next-big-thing-will-be.html>>.

When the opportunity arose for the author to supplement art history studies by undertaking a postgraduate course overseas, the directional change from researching European art markets towards the Australian art scene, took place. Hence, the main focus of this study is on Australia, supplemented by the continuous research on the Estonian art scene. The experience and knowledge gained from the educational institutions, working in the art scene of both countries and personal relationships with art scene members, have had an impact on the thesis.

In order to give a concise overview, the author has examined the Australian art scene and its characteristics, looked into the market conditions and its relationship to arts and conversed with a number of art world members.

The current study focuses exclusively on the emerging contemporary visual artists and investigates the advantages and disadvantages they face. In the first part of the thesis, the author gives an overview of the relationship between the artist and the market, scrutinises it and aims to establish the effects of the market in contemporary setting.

Whilst researching the art markets during the undergraduate study, it became evident to the author that economic thinking enhances the negative emotions, mistrust and a distorted views between the arts and market.⁶ In order to understand this opposition, the relationships between arts and economics as well as arts and business, are explored.

Secondly, the author examines the importance of artists and their position in society. To fully understand the conditions one faces when entering the market, is to understand what they are signing up for as their lifelong practice. These findings are further explored focusing solely on early career practitioners. The

⁶ Tonts, M. (2009). Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu, pp. 50-51.

term *emerging* in relation to artists is explored in depth as they are the main participants of the primary markets this study is focused on.

To research these aforementioned areas, the author has conducted semi-formal conversations with a number of artists, many of them also active within art related institutions or organizations. In addition, specialized literature and arts research papers have been analysed in the context of this study. Cultural policies, art institutions mission statements and marketing materials have also been scrutinised to give the best possible overview of the conditions emerging artists face.

Additionally, the research for this paper found support in a visual outlet. The author has curated a group exhibition showcasing emerging artists works. The context and the concept of the exhibition draw inspiration and information from the direction of the emerging artists career path/options. The author curated and produced the exhibition with the help and guidance from supervisor Dr. Malcom Bywaters. The exhibition complements the research and is included as a case study.

The author would like to offer gratitude to Dr. Malcom Bywaters. The knowledge and skills gained from the exchange year at the University of Tasmania were largely in thanks to his teaching. Similarly, the support and opportunities provided by University of Tartu and its faculty members, are greatly appreciated and valued by the author.

I ART AND MARKET

1.1. The history of art market

All creative areas are affected by the economical influences of the present day society. Popular belief, that art world has and will remain outside the reach of markets influences, has been confuted by a number of art historians, practitioners and researchers.

In the lecture Economic Basis of Culture, professor Paul Cantor argues that fundamentally, art is an exchange. Cantor proposes a hypothesis – artists have always been using artworks to gain something. He claims that the pre-historic artist potentially used his or her drawings as a commodity. Cantor argues that regardless of the reasons for these cave drawings in the first place, one might speculate that due to the time consuming nature of creating the images, the author(s) did not actively participate in securing the means of survival within the tribe. He proposes that the 'artist' exchanged the drawings for food, shelter or alike, creating the world's first art market situation.⁷ The author of this thesis does not confirm to this hypothesis completely, but finds Cantor's proposition intriguing in the context of this research paper.

Visual image has been a tool of communication throughout the history of man kind. The rulers of the world as well as variety of religions, have used imagery to convey ideas and instil respect, fear and admiration toward the authority;

⁷ Cantor, P. (2006). *The economic basis of culture*, Le Quebecois Libre, [Online Video], viewed 1st April 2014, <http://www.quebecoislibre.org/commerce_and_culture.htm>.

gods or otherwise. Historically, artists (craftsmen) have been working for an individual or a group on a commission base.

1. 1. 1. The patron and the artist

'Patron (noun)– originates from Latin patronus 'protector of clients, defender', from pater, patr - 'father'. Is a person who gives financial or other support to a person, organisation, or cause'⁸.

The concept of the patron dates back to the ancient Rome where the term was used to describe a Roman citizen who acted as a protector (*patronus*) to a foreigner settling in Roman territories (*cliens*). In the medieval and Renaissance period, this concept was extended to mark various nobles and merchants who were offering protection and financial support (through commissioning works) to artists of their times.⁹

The Medici family are considered to be the most famous art patrons. They dominated the Florentine politics as well as presided over the cultural achievements of the area for over two centuries.¹⁰ Originally from the Mugello territories, the Medicis arrived to the areas of Florence near the end of the 13th century. The head of the family, Giovanni di Medici, was a wealthy merchant who came to establish the Bank of Medici. Wealthy and generous, he supported the rebuilding of the Basilica San Lorenzo, with architect Filippo Brunelleschi being in charge of the project.¹¹

⁸ Oxford Dictionary. (2014a). The Oxford Dictionary, [online edition], viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/patron>>.

⁹ Erlandson, C. (1992). *The lost age of patronage*, Arts Reformation, viewed 15th March 2014, <<http://www.artsreformation.com/a001/ce-patronage.html>>.

¹⁰ Helden, A van. [ed.]. (1995). *The Medici family*, The Galileo Project, viewed 15 March 2013, <<http://galileo.rice.edu/gal/medici.html>>.

¹¹ Malaguzzi, S. (2004). *Botticelli*. Milan: Giunti Editore.

Giovanni's son, Cosimo the Elder, continued in his father's footsteps and surrounded himself with contemporary intellectuals, writers and artists. Lorenzo di Medici (Lorenzo the Magnificent), the eldest son of Pater Patriae Cosimo, became the best known supporter and patron of the Florentine Renaissance artists.¹²

The patronage of the Quattrocento greatly differs from what we consider essential for arts to flourish today – it lacks the independence of the artist. Micromanagement of the arts was a common practice. Arts were a business for serious men and its function was not merely to provide material for religious contemplation or aesthetic pleasure, but to showcase the importance and the socioeconomic position of the patron, maintain the image of the city, and win, what could not be won with strength of arms.¹³

'Renaissance patrons were often intimately involved in the smallest details of the works they commissioned. In their own eyes they were the true agents of the work of art, and they regarded the craftsmen they employed, at best, collaborators, and at worst skilled servants whose role was simply to carry out the vision of their employers'.¹⁴

The position of the artist was likened to manual labour. To cement this understanding, initially artists did not sign the commissioned artworks – these were to bare the stamp of the patron(s). Gradually, the artists started inscribing their initials on the artworks to set them apart from copies made by inferior craftsmen.¹⁵ However, not all artists were surely micromanaged the same. Lorenzo the Magnificent supported and nourished some of the great Florentine

¹² *Opt. Cit*, p. 33

¹³ Unger, M. J. (2008). *Magnifico: The Brilliant Life and Violent Times of Lorenzo de' Medici*. New York: Simon & Schuster Publishing.

¹⁴ *Opt. Cit*, p. 39.

¹⁵ Greffe, X. (2002). *Arts and Artists From an Economic Perspective*. Paris: Unesco Publishing.

Renaissance artists, including Botticelli, Michelangelo and Leonardo. One can imagine these outstanding artists took some direction in themes and synopsis of their works, but their skill and talent as individual artists cannot be reduced to pure craftsmanship.

The Renaissance artists paved the way for modern day practitioners by insisting that unlike craftsmen, they were practicing a liberal art born from imagination of the mind. Nonetheless, until the prominence of aesthetics amongst philosophers of the 18th century, artists were not regarded in a way the public thinks of the profession today.¹⁶ The emergence of an increasingly independent artist is a result of external circumstance – improved economic, social and technological advancements, all had an effect on their lives.¹⁷

1. 1. 2. The bohemian artist and modern market

The Age of Reason or Enlightenment of 18th century Europe, brought with it new ideals and changed the views of modern men. The philosophers and scientists of Enlightenment argued for the case of natural world and the faith in human progress; these ideals were primarily brought to focus in literature. Some of the period's artists became preoccupied with trying to encapsulate the order and beauty of the ideal natural world. However, majority of the practitioners were following the Rococo tradition, often depicting the aristocracy in flattering ways.¹⁸

In his quest for reason and following the ideals of natural world, Diderot declared: *'At the moment when artist thinks of money, he loses his feeling of*

¹⁶ Mattick, P. (2003). *Art in Its Time: Theories and Practices of Modern Aesthetics*. London: Routledge Publishing, pp 106-118.

¹⁷ Hagoort, G. (2003). *Art Management: Entrepreneurial Style*, [3rd ed.] Delft: Eburon Publishers, p. 21.

¹⁸ Hackett, L. (1992). *The Age of Enlightenment: the European dream of progress and enlightenment*, History World International, viewed 1st April 2014, <http://history-world.org/age_of_enlightenment.htm>.

beauty'.¹⁹ His views were not singularly aimed at arts but rather on the values of his contemporaries and scrutinised the French economy, where money was seen to be a measure of everything.²⁰

Similar views were supported by the 18th-19th century philosophers and sociologists. Nowadays, these views should be taken with a grain of salt. For example, Johan Winklemann's view of the arts could be described at best as philosophically naïve when stating that the modern day artists were compelled to create out of necessity rather than do it for honour.²¹ The artists of the past, present and theoretically of the future, will always continue the creative process as this is something they are compelled to do, income or no income attached. However, the autonomous status of art and artists was made possible by the (commercial) market.²²

'It is therefore not surprising that the "delightful illusion" of art's separateness from the commercial culture which in fact produced it in its modern form has proved impossible to sustain, and that the history of this institution to the present day has seen artists alternate between claims to a higher calling and complaints of insufficient payment for their practice of it'.²³

The opposition of these two notions – artistic creation as a mean to express an inner knowledge or an emotion and the ability of using the production as a commodity in the cultural marketplace – has been thoroughly researched by

¹⁹ Mattick, P. (2003). *Art in Its Time: Theories and Practices of Modern Aesthetics*. London: Routledge Publishing, p. 33.

²⁰ Stanley, A. S. (2012). *The French Enlightenment and the Emergence of Modern Cynicism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 124.

²¹ Mattick, P. (2003). *Art in Its Time: Theories and Practices of Modern Aesthetics*. London: Routledge Publishing, p. 40.

²² *Opt. Cit*, pp. 106-107.

²³ *Opt. Cit*, p. 44.

academics around the world. Pierre Bourdieu explores in depth in his *The Field of Cultural Production* the relationship of the two.

He viewed all participants in the cultural field through their position in the hierarchy of the particular field they belonged to. On the one hand, there is the 'bourgeois art' that produces something with economic and/or political weight as opposed to the modern 'art for art's sake', where the artwork was measured in its intrinsic value. Bourdieu identified the two as 'enemy agents' both in constant struggle to gain the dominant position in the artistic field. The understanding that popular or economically valued product would simultaneously be considered less worthy is the reason for the constant fight for domination.²⁴

This opposition helped create the romantic image of an artist. Formed over time and strengthened by literature, visual media as well as psychological studies of artists in general. Artists are expected to be financially unstable, constantly suffering misunderstood geniuses.²⁵ Henri Murger's amusing short stories *Bohemians of The Latin Quarter*²⁶ gained symbolic importance for many contemporaries who adhered to the image of the artist depicted in the novel. '*Today, as of old, every man who enters on an artistic career, without any other means of livelihood than his art itself, will be forced to walk in the paths of Bohemia*'.²⁷

Regardless of the importance of this journey, Murger insisted it should also be seen as a learning phase only and generally suitable for beginners. The bohemian lifestyle of a searching, suffering, poor and misunderstood artist, was

²⁴ Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*. Columbia: Columbia University Press, p. 41.

²⁵ Grant, D. (1996). *The Business of Being and Artist*, [rev. ed.]. New York: Allworth Press, pp. 160-162.

²⁶ *Scènes de la vie de bohème*

²⁷ Murger, H. (1888). *Bohemians of The Latin Quarter*, Project Gutenberg, [ebook], para. 3, viewed 1st May 2014, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18445/18445-h/18445-h.htm>>

to end in the Academia, from where the knowledge gained would help better the artist's career.²⁸

'The bohemian was not only the timeless artist but also a quintessentially modern social type whose activities were defined by the new commercial realities of the cultural marketplace'.²⁹

They influenced one another, perhaps not always in a positive manner, but the interaction between the two was acknowledged.

As a paradox, the overall desire of the art worlds members to distance themselves from the market and consider the value of the artworks from the non-economic viewpoint, ultimately gives art its social meaning as well as its market value.³⁰

1. 1. 3. Arts influencing market economy

Nowadays, some members of the art world are re-evaluating the relationship of art and its market. Instead of trying to distance the two from one another, the economists (not artists!) of today are in the process of trying to extend the usefulness of arts beyond their aesthetic value, claiming that in addition to arts being affected by the economy, they influences the latter just as much in return. Professor Xavier Greffe claims that: *'the aesthetic, development and activity values of an artistic good define the modern approach to the economics of an art'.³¹*

²⁸ Gluck, M. (2000). Theorizing the Cultural Roots of the Bohemian Artist. - *Modernism/Modernity*, vol. 7, no 3, p. 352.

²⁹ *Opt. Cit.*

³⁰ Mattick, P. (2003). *Art in Its Time: Theories and Practices of Modern Aesthetics*. London: Routledge Publishing, p. 4.

³¹ Greffe, X. (2002). *Arts and Artists From an Economic Perspective*. Paris: Unesco Publishing, p. 8.

The aesthetic value is usually seen as the main characteristic of fine art. Applied art on the other hand, belongs to an occupational tradition that is essential to the development and activity values of art. Fundamentally, fine arts and applied arts do overlap because *'even when art is devoted purely to aesthetic objectives it can have a practical side, and useful art can also seem to be produced with some concern for beauty'*.³²

The aesthetic values of art and how it affects society in general is a topic of much debate and deserves an in-depth research of its own. As the aim of this thesis is not to investigate the values of fine art and their role in society, the author will touch on the development and activity values. The latter are mainly characteristic to applied arts, influencing the relationship between the art and market in direct manner.

Development value of art is to:

'stimulate the creative talents of entrepreneurs, promote skills that benefit all sectors of the economy, contribute to the management of human resources within enterprises and enhance the attractiveness of a place for consumers'.³³

The competition for attention has become increasingly fierce in the contemporary market setting. In order to compete and prosper, one requires an air of novelty and originality to the service, product or experience offered.

³² Salmon, M. (1946). *Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers*. Chicago: VGM Career Books Publishing, p. 30.

³³ Greffe, X. (2002). *Arts and Artists From an Economic Perspective*. Paris: Unesco Publishing, p. 19.

Artistic activity assists in simulating visual senses, contributing to the attempts to triumph over competitors and secure market placement. Economists at Harvard stretch the value of applied art even further by claiming: '*Fifteen years ago companies competed on price; now it's quality; tomorrow it's design*'.³⁴

Sociologist Max Weber confirmed this belief, claiming that arts can be utilised to make consumption more attractive. In his theory of disenchantment, he explained how artists have the ability to transform dull places of consumption into something magical, therefore contributing to the increased sales.³⁵

Activity value of arts on the other hand is exemplified by the cultural tourism networks. Nowadays, tourism has become increasingly dependant on artistic activities and its resources. The increase of mixing culture with leisure activities, using heritage sites, art festivals, exhibition spaces and other creative outlets to attract tourism, art become a central part of income for communities. The activity values of art are partially responsible for the development of transport, hotels, restaurants, manufacturing souvenirs etc.³⁶

Working as an applied artist does not eliminate a career in fine arts and vice versa. Albeit, professionally they are fundamentally different. A person working in applied arts is working on (commissioned) projects, with a clear vision of what they are expected to produce and pre-determined means of achieving the set goals. They are filling a professional job according to its work descriptions.

³⁴ Jones, R. (2006). The Art Market. - *Frieze Magazine*, Issue 101, 1st January, <https://www.frieze.com/issue/article/the_art_market/>.

³⁵ *Op. Cit*, p. 26.

³⁶ *Op. Cit*, p. 37.

In contrast, an artist looking to embark on a career in fine arts, is taking on a profession of an independent entrepreneur³⁷, '*being an artist is a profession ... not a vow of poverty*'.³⁸

³⁷ Mattick, P. (2003). *Art in Its Time: Theories and Practices of Modern Aesthetics*. London: Routledge Publishing, p. 4.

³⁸ Battenfield, J. (2009). *The artist's guide: how to make a living doing what you love*, Richmond University, [online lecture], viewed 24th March 2014, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0DirIKbGzM>>.

II A CAREER IN ARTS

2. 1. Arts as a profession

Profession - *'a category of work that has basic characteristics that make it distinct from other ways of earning a living'*³⁹ with influencing factors being

'the length of training required as preparation for the profession; the theoretical as well as practical nature of that training; the development of it as a career, which increases in value over time; the freedom of practitioners from outside control over the practice of the profession; and the existence of associations that protect and promote the interest of the profession'.⁴⁰

Professional activity is usually assessable and taxable, separating it from hobby or recreational activities. In addition, professionals set goals that give purpose, meaning and direction to their activities.⁴¹

Being an artist was not considered a profession until modern concept of anonymous market was born. The premodern artist (craftsman) had a fixed trade and worked to order (much alike a contemporary applied artist), the subject matter and the means of creating artworks were largely under the control of the guild or Academia as well as the end customer (patron).

³⁹ Salmon, M. (1946). *Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers*. Chicago: VGM Career Books Publishing, pp. 26-27.

⁴⁰ *Opt. Cit*, pp. 26-27.

⁴¹ Anthes, C. (2013). Conversation between Connie Anthes and Merle Tonts, 25th April, Sydney.

In contrast, the modern artist produces 'freely'⁴², limited only by skill, imagination and means of production. Nowadays, artists are considered to be independent professionals, who generally work without much advice or assistance from anyone. However, this freedom to create independently, also comes with economic limitations. Artists are producing works that do not have a ready-made market for – the profession does not guarantee income.⁴³

Some artists reject the idea that their profession should be income orientated.⁴⁴ This nonchalance towards the economic issues is only an external attitude according to Bourdieu. He believes that artists are well aware of the importance of income as it enables them to keep producing works in the first place.⁴⁵ Recently, it seems that artists as well as art professionals have started to accept that the interaction between economic and the art world is inevitable.

The younger generation of artist seems to be welcoming the change by consciously trying to shake off the unflattering image of the 'starving artist'. An image that is most harmful to practitioners in early stages of their career as they are yet to prove '*I can deliver! I can achieve, what I have set out to do!*'⁴⁶

In the context of this research, professional visual artists are distinguished from non-professional by declaring themselves as artists and/or earning income from the sale of work, even if on part-time base.

⁴² Mattick, P. (2003). *Art in Its Time: Theories and Practices of Modern Aesthetics*. London: Routledge Publishing, pp. 106-107.

⁴³ Salmon, M. (1946). *Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers*. Chicago: VGM Career Books Publishing, p. 37.

⁴⁴ Carey, M. (2013). Conversation between Mat Carey and Merle Tonts, 24th April, Launceston.

⁴⁵ Mattick, P. (2003). *Art in Its Time: Theories and Practices of Modern Aesthetics*. London: Routledge Publishing, pp. 39-45.

⁴⁶ Team Textiles. (2013). Conversation between Team Textiles members (Abigail Tett, May Finlayson, Ashley Bird) and Merle Tonts, 9th April, Launceston.

2. 2. Art as a job

It echoed through from the talks the author had with artists that art practice is not considered equivalent to a 'job'. The same idea is supported by an entrepreneur Don Aikin who claims that both private and public funding for arts will not be on the rise until a public culture is created where *'arts have at least the same status in the political world as jobs'*.⁴⁷

This view on arts might come as a surprise if one looks at the educational statistics of visual artists – majority undertake formal training to become professionals (90% in Australia).⁴⁸ However, these arts degrees seem to have a dubious value in the eyes of the public, as they are not perceived sufficiently vocational or cost-effective.⁴⁹

'Thinking of art as the product of undisciplined or playful bohemians is an unfortunate stereotype that was perhaps created by people who went off to work in the morning, put in a hard day at their job, and came home tired at night. From their point of view, staying in an artist's studio and painting, drawing, or sculpting is not work'.⁵⁰

This view of artists and artistic careers seems to go hand in hand with an understanding, that being an artist is equivalent to being financially underprivileged. Not being able to rely on the sales of artworks has pushed

⁴⁷ Aitkin, D. (2013). *How much should governments spend on arts?*, artsHub Australia, 14th February, viewed 14th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/how-much-should-governments-spend-on-the-arts-194124>>.

⁴⁸ Artfacts (2013a). *Australia Council Provides Over \$15 Million Funding To The Visual Art Sector*, Artfacts: Australia Council for the Arts, viewed 13th May 2013, <<http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/visual-arts-support#post-1405>>.

⁴⁹ Hadley, B. (2012). *Do arts graduates get jobs*, artsHub Australia, 5th December, viewed 18th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/do-arts-graduates-get-jobs-193056>>.

⁵⁰ Salmon, M. (1946). *Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers*. Chicago: VGM Career Books Publishing, p. 13.

many to pursue a second career with long term employment and a pay packet attached⁵¹, as their principal income is inadequate to satisfy basic needs.⁵²

2. 3. Obstacles in artists careers

Modern day artists face challenges different to their predecessors. Considered to be independent entrepreneurs, self-employed or freelance professionals (87% in Australia)⁵³ they are expected to be able to clearly communicate who they are and what they do.⁵⁴ Competition for recognition is fierce. Failing to adapt to the market conditions, could result in constantly closing doors to potential benefits and becoming the biggest obstacle in their own personal, creative and financial well-being.⁵⁵

The unfamiliar terms and concepts of the business world can be daunting at first. The New York Foundation of the Arts (NYFA) encourages artists not to be alarmed by the unknown, explaining:

'if you have trained or focused on your art, you probably haven't had training in law or finance. Why would you? After all, investment bankers rarely sing arias or weld sculptures'⁵⁶.

NYFA considers the artists to be inherently entrepreneurial and equipped with skills to interweave arts and business. Artists are critical thinkers, problem solvers, creative, with strong work ethics and fiercely independent – a formula for

⁵¹ McDonald, S. R. (2013). Conversation between Stella Rosa McDonald and Merle Tonts, 15th April, Sydney.

⁵² Artfacts (2013c). *Visual arts practitioners often work in the wider cultural industries, and earn most of their income outside the core arts sector*, Artfacts: Australia Council for the Arts, viewed 30th May 2013, <<http://www.artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/visual-arts-creation-post-1271>>.

⁵³ Artfacts (2013c). *Visual arts practitioners often work in the wider cultural industries, and earn most of their income outside the core arts sector*, Artfacts: Australia Council for the Arts, viewed 30th May 2013, <<http://www.artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/visual-arts-creation-post-1271>>.

⁵⁴ Stroud, R. (2014). *A Brush With Success*, Education of Southern California, viewed 10th April 2014, <http://extras.latimes.com/extras/careereducation/brush_wsusuccess.html>.

⁵⁵ Klein, P. (2013). *How To Succeed As An Artist*, Tandem Press 25th Anniversary Conference, [online lecture], viewed 5th April 2014, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcTYhaA72iY>>.

⁵⁶ Cobb, P., Ball, S., L., Hogan, F [ed]. (2011) *The Profitable Artist: A Handbook for All Artists in the Performing*. Introduction, para 4. New York: Skyhorse Publishing.

success in any field. All one needs to acquire is knowledge in business – the easily learnable skills⁵⁷.

Nowadays, it is not sufficient for an artist to rely only on their artistic vision and talent to be noticed and recognized. There is a large number of people in the world who have artistic talent and who like to create artworks. The number of people who actively pursue artistic activities and turn them into a sustainable and viable career, is smaller. Talent is a factor that contributes to success, but it's not the deciding factor in one's career.⁵⁸ Becoming and being an artist requires a lot of determination and '*hard work involving sustained concentration and a fully conscious involvement of one's self in activities*'⁵⁹.

It is important to note that not all artists produce dimensional works of art. They happily opt for non-creation and feel no need to prove their status to anyone (Grefe 2002). The author of this thesis acknowledges that not all artists pursue the same goals and some are satisfied with creating only for their own personal pleasure. As these creatives come in conflict with the definition of practitioners that this thesis focuses on, in the context of this research their practices will not be taken into consideration.

2. 3. 2. Measuring success

In arts, it is incredibly difficult to define success as there are as many meanings to it as there are practitioners. If one was to measure the artistic success in terms of profitability, they would be considered to have low values⁶⁰. Wealth as

⁵⁷ *Opt. Cit.*

⁵⁸ Salmon, M. (1946). *Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers*. Chicago: VGM Career Books Publishing, pp. 15-17.

⁵⁹ *Opt. Cit, p. 14.*

⁶⁰ Schroeder, J. E. (2005). The Artist And The Brand. - *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 39, No. 11, pp. 1291-1305.

indicator of success is lowering arts to the dirty and unpleasant, money orientated commercial world⁶¹.

Art is perceived to be something with an intrinsic value, hard to measure in fiscal terms as well as inappropriate to be considered to have a quantifiable value to begin with. A number of art world member strongly believe that money is not the measure of everything and the economic data should not be confused with artistic achievements.⁶²

*'The separation of art and business – into high and low forms of communication and culture – has had a profound influence on how art is viewed by researchers, cultural critics, and consumers alike'*⁶³.

As recently as 1960s and 70s, commercially successful artists had to '*reckon with a loss of artistic credibility*'⁶⁴. Intriguingly, the 1960s also saw an artist openly pursue monetary values while achieving critical recognition. Andy Warhol is famous for his statements about art and market. '*Making money is art, and working is art and good business is the best art*'⁶⁵.

Warhol's line of thinking is becoming more and more acceptable. Nowadays, artists are required to take responsibility for all parts of the artistic practice, including facets that do not readily correlate to the creative process.⁶⁶ Having an arts practice is seen as equivalent to running their own business and

⁶¹ Bifield, A. (2013). *How art and money can enjoy getting into bed together*, artsHub Australia, 28th March, viewed 30th May 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/how-art-and-money-can-enjoy-getting-into-bed-together-194819>>.

⁶² Grant, D. (2010). 'Is There an Age Limit for 'Emerging Artists'?', *The Huffington Post*, 25th August, viewed 1st April, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/daniel-grant/is-there-an-age-limit-for_b_693780.html>.

⁶³ Schroeder, J. E. (2005). The Artist And The Brand. - *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 39, No. 11, pp. 1295.

⁶⁴ Graw, I. (2009). *High Price: Art Between the Market and Celebrity Culture*. German: Stenberg Press, p. 19.

⁶⁵ Broughton, D. P. (2012). *The Art of the Sale: Learning from the Masters About the Business of Life*. New York, Penguin Group, p. 165.

⁶⁶ Battenfield, J. (2009). *The artist's guide: how to make a living doing what you love*, Richmond University, [online lecture], viewed 24th March 2014, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0DirIKbGzM>>.

marketing their own brand, often without realising it and usually without any formal training.

Professor Schroeder proposes in his book *The Artist and the Brand* that the connotations between name recognition and value are dominant in the art market. He explains that the general public is acutely aware of the value of brands like Picasso, Van Gogh, Rembrandt, etc.

Schroeder illustrates the statement, claiming '*Warhol's Dollar Signs are brazen, perhaps even insolent reminders that pictures by brand name artists are metaphors for money, a situation that never troubled him*'⁶⁷.

In the last decades, another arguably (financially) successful artist, Damian Hirst, has made his mark in history books, while enjoying the lifestyle of a celebrity.⁶⁸ One might ponder, if commercial equals low and/or bad, why do so many aim for it and why does market success validate the profession in the eyes of so many?

As fascinating as the topic is, the aim of this research is not to define the measure of success in arts. However, questioning the dichotomy between art and the market, is central in understanding the conditions artists face upon entering the field.

'Creative self-actualization doesn't have much meaning without a concern for economic reality. Thus, artists need to be as concerned with the practical issues related to their careers as they are with issues of self-expression. These are not simply idle contemplations. They call

⁶⁷ *Opt. Cit, pp. 1306-1307.*

⁶⁸ Thompson, D. (2008). *The \$12 Million Stuffed Shark: The Curious Economics of Contemporary Art*. London: Aurum Press Ltd, pp. 67-78.

attention to the need to lead a creative, yet balanced and productive, professional life'.⁶⁹

If one is talented, highly-motivated and fully committed to the career choice, they most likely can also expect different kinds of success. It takes a certain type of a person with a lot of drive necessary to commit to the unconventional challenges of the profession.⁷⁰ Arguably, finding a way to get their art practice up and running, is the hardest part of being a contemporary artist.

⁶⁹ Salmon, M. (1946). *Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers*. Chicago: VGM Career Books Publishing, p. 36.

⁷⁰ Hennessey, R. (2013). *3 Keys To Making It As An Artist (Without Starving)*, Forbes, viewed 10th April 2014, <<http://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelhennessey/2013/04/02/3-keys-to-making-it-as-an-artist-without-starving/>>.

2. EMERGING ARTIST

2. 1. Defining emerging

Most commonly, an artist's career is seen to have three phases – emerging (starting a career; post college), mid-career (sound body of work; gallery representation) and established (national and international recognition; blue chip artist)⁷¹. Comprehensively defining any of these phases is not an easy task. As the author of the thesis is most interested in how one becomes a professional artist, this research focuses exclusively on the first phase of the artist's career – the emergence.

'Emerge (verb) - originates from late 16th century (in the sense 'become known, come to light'): from Latin emergere, from e- (variant of ex-) 'out, forth' + mergere 'to dip'. Meanings: move out of or away from something and become visible; become apparent or prominent; recover from or survive a difficult situation'.⁷²

Each organisation, art institution and other members of the arts define emerging differently as the meaning derives from their unique needs it caters for. While some might limit the first phase of the career according to the age of the person, others see the length of their practice as a measuring tool, or define emerging according to the level of recognition the art world has bestowed upon the artist.⁷³

⁷¹ EAM Articles. (2014). What is an Emerging Artist?, - *Emerging Artists Magazine*, viewed 10th March 2014, <<http://www.emergingartistmagazine.com>>.

⁷² Oxford Dictionary. (2014b). The Oxford Dictionary, [online edition], viewed 15th April 2014, <<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/emerge>>.

⁷³ Refshauge, A. [ed.]. (2012). *Serving Emerging Artists*, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, [online PDF], viewed February 2014, <<http://www.arrowmont.org/images/arrowmont/pdfs/neasurvey.pdf>>.

Label 'emerging' has caused confusion and excitement in the art circles for decades. One of the problems of defining it lies within its inherent meaning – emerging is considered to be in a process of becoming something. It suggests that an artist is *becoming* an artist not simply *being* one,⁷⁴ essentially highlighting their inexperience.⁷⁵

Paul Isbel, a former art teacher, claims in his article that being considered emerging in any other profession would be seen as not being quite ready for it yet. He draws a comparison between artists and doctors saying:

*'This is scary. Imagine. You're anaesthetised on the operating table, on the cusp of unconsciousness, when in walks all scrubbed up an emerging surgeon. Your last thought before you slip into a deep dark sleep is "but ... but ... wait ..."'*⁷⁶.

Nonetheless, being branded as emerging offers reassurance to the artist that at least they are being recognised for the decision of becoming a *bona fide* practitioner.

*'The emerging artist is no apprentice, no novice, nor is his or her emergence in any way a preparatory stage. Rather, this tag signals an alternative mode of artistic practice paradoxically flourishing within the neo-liberal economic landscape as a business entity that has allegedly ... chosen its market position'.*⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Munting, B. (2013). The Bar Has Been Raised. - *Art Monthly Australia*, Issue 257, p. 13.

⁷⁵ Turning, E. (2012). 'Young, emerging or ready? For early career artists, it's all in the labelling', *The Guardian*, 26th November, viewed 13th June 2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2012/nov/26/young-emerging-artists-label-problem>>.

⁷⁶ Isbel, P. (2012). *Emerging artists? Are you kidding yourself?*, artsHub Australia, para. 1, 9th April, viewed 10th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/all-arts/emerging-artist-are-you-kidding-yourself-188469>>.

⁷⁷ Colless, E. (2013). Emergency Ward. - *Art Monthly Australia*, issue 257, p. 16.

2. 1. 1. Young as emerging

Considered to be a fairly new phenomenon from the 1960s, emerging has been used to describe predominantly young artists. A number of critics argue, that in the last century, when an increasing number of tertiary institutions were churning out art graduates, the latter had to be distinguished from professionals due to economic reasons. The sheer volume of these emerging artists was threatening to devalue the quality of the artistic product on the market and hence pose a challenge to the established artists.⁷⁸ Therefore it became inevitable to form a new category where these new artists could be suited to without causing additional turmoil in the primary market.

If the artist was only to answer to one criteria – age – then a quick look at the birth certificate could easily determinate, which of them should be branded with the label. However, young artists who are by nature still solving creative problems, tend to experiment with new methods and/or mediums as well. The restless and fearless youth is always looking for something new and finding alternative ways to achieve their goals. Thus, emerging has a second meaning as it also describes experimental.

2. 1. 2. Experimental as emerging

During the 1980s and 1990s, the use of the term 'emerging' indicated that the artist was working in a new, risky or unestablished medium/method.⁷⁹ Emerging therefore resonated with notions of exploration, risk, inquiry and failure.⁸⁰ The artists were given the chance to experiment and be open to failure without fearing financial repercussions, as they were seen to still be in the process of

⁷⁸ Moodie, G. (2002). *Types of Australian universities*, Academia, [rev. ed.], viewed 14th June 2013, <https://www.academia.edu/310547/Types_of_Australian_universities>.

⁷⁹ Cormack, E., Glass-Kantor, A. (2013). Well-Merged: Emerging Artists at the End of their Era. - *Art Monthly Australia*, Issue 257, pp. 10-12.

⁸⁰ Donovan, A. (2013). *How Should OzCo Support Experimental Arts*, artsHub Australia, 3rd May, viewed 30th May 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/how-should-ozco-support-experimental-arts-195214>>.

negotiating the artistic field and not expected to create works with commercial value.

2. 2. The trouble with the definitions

Nowadays, the criteria of requirements a person needs to meet to be considered an emerging artist, varies greatly. As a rule, emerging artist is regarded as a professional on the brink of their career. More often than not, artist has obtained qualifications specific to the profession, continuously worked on their artistic practice for a period of time, and falls into a predetermined age group.⁸¹ However, the art scene seems to be hesitant to confirm these traits.

Most people in the arts agree that age should not be a factor in determining who is perceived to be emerging and who is not.⁸² Many see the tender age of an artist as an excuse for meagre achievements. In addition, this justification does not apply to the older demographic of early career artists. On the contrary, it seems to suggest that a person is more of an '*enthusiastic amateur*'⁸³ than a professional if they start their career later in life. Emerging artists, who are mature or older, seem to be less appealing to galleries/dealers focused on representing the segment. At large, emerging artists are young, and that has become they staple they are fashioned as.⁸⁴

Attempting to define the period of emergence according to the length of the artist's professional practices also poses challenges. The process of emergence

⁸¹ NAVA. (2013). *What is an emerging artist?*, National Association of Visual Arts, viewed 18th June, <<http://www.visualarts.net.au/advicecentre/emerging-artist-definition>>.

⁸² Jerome Foundation. (2014). *Definition of Emerging Artist*, The Jerome Foundation, viewed 10th April, <<http://www.jeromefdn.org/apply/travel-study/definition-emerging-artist>>.

⁸³ Grant, D. (2010). 'Is There an Age Limit for 'Emerging Artists'?', *The Huffington Post*, 25th August, viewed 1st April, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/daniel-grant/is-there-an-age-limit-for_b_693780.html>.

⁸⁴ Turning, E. (2012). 'Young, emerging or ready? For early career artists, it's all in the labelling', *The Guardian*, 26th November, viewed 13th June 2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2012/nov/26/young-emerging-artists-label-problem>>.

varies individually and no one can predict the pace of it. An artist can be chipping away at perfecting their body of work and networking for exposure and recognition for 20 years, as opposed to another, perhaps a discovered talent, who is nurtured to emergence in a drastically shorter period of time.⁸⁵

In addition, artists in all stages of their careers are constantly evolving, exploring new ideas and tend to work in interdisciplinary mediums.

'The work of most artists moves progressively forward, with each step along the way being a developmental consequence of the struggle to express ideas, explore them fully, and move on to new ideas'⁸⁶.

An American gallerist Joanne Bushnell offers her definition of emerging artist as someone *'about to make a step change in their career'*.⁸⁷ One could pose a question – if an artist makes a change in their practice, for example, from painting to video art, would that suggest that they become emerging video artists? Or would they be considered mid-career painters, investigating the means of video art to express the ideas they previously depicted in paintings? If experimenting in a new field is the definition of emerging artist, when or how do they emerge? This question was raised by many the author conversed with in the framework of the case study project.

⁸⁵ Frame and Reference. (2013). *Term time: what exactly does the term 'emerging artist' mean and is there a consensus?*, Frame and Reference: Contemporary Art is South East UK, viewed 12th March 2013, <<http://frameandreference.com/term-time-what-exactly-does-the-term-emerging-artist-mean-and-is-there-a-consensus/>>.

⁸⁶ Salmon, M. (1946). *Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers*. Chicago: VGM Career Books Publishing, p. 22.

⁸⁷ Frame and Reference. (2013). *Term time: what exactly does the term 'emerging artist' mean and is there a consensus?*, Frame and Reference: Contemporary Art is South East UK, viewed 12th March 2013, <<http://frameandreference.com/term-time-what-exactly-does-the-term-emerging-artist-mean-and-is-there-a-consensus/>>.

In addition, the label has become increasingly popular due to the marketing of contemporary arts. Emerging is new, exciting and suggests that the works of the artist in question will increase in value over time.⁸⁸ The term is used quite loosely in press-releases as a stock-in-trade to create hype and attract attention.⁸⁹ In this approach, emerging becomes a part of a sales pitch, flogging newness as an artistic trait⁹⁰.

In the context of this research paper, the author adheres to the combination of proposed definitions. Emerging artist is perceived as a person in the early phase of their career, who works independently but needs support related to *'professional development opportunities/skills, time, space, financial assistance, and community'*.⁹¹ An emerging artist is a person pursuing professional career by practicing arts, regardless of their age, and who's work involves risk, critically or physically. He or she *'has some evidence of professional achievement but not a substantial record of accomplishment, nor is recognised by other artists, curators, producers, critics, and arts administrators as an established artist'*⁹².

2. 3. Characteristics of emerging artists

The main characteristics of an early career artist tends to be unrealistic expectations, unawareness of the financial limitations they will face in their practice, lack of maturity in social situations, a sense of entitlement and self-

⁸⁸ Anthes, C. (2013). Conversation between Connie Anthes and Merle Tonts, 25th April, Sydney.

⁸⁹ Team Textiles. (2013). Conversation between Team Textiles members (Abigail Tett, May Finlayson, Ashley Bird) and Merle Tonts, 9th April, Launceston.

⁹⁰ Frame and Reference. (2013). *Term time: what exactly does the term 'emerging artist' mean and is there a consensus?*, Frame and Reference: Contemporary Art is South East UK, viewed 12th March 2013, <<http://frameandreference.com/term-time-what-exactly-does-the-term-emerging-artist-mean-and-is-there-a-consensus/>>.

⁹¹ Refshauge, A. [ed.]. (2012). *Serving Emerging Artists*, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, [online PDF], viewed February 2014, <<http://www.arrowmont.org/images/arrowmont/pdfs/neasurvey.pdf>>.

⁹² Jerome Foundation. (2014). *Definition of Emerging Artist*, The Jerome Foundation, viewed 10th April, <<http://www.jeromefdn.org/apply/travel-study/definition-emerging-artist>>.

importance, lacking professional skills and maintaining professionalism throughout their practice.⁹³

Some members of the art world propose that the reason why emerging artists are so poorly equipped for their professional practices is related to their education.

'Art schools do not teach how the art world functions and what you – the artist – should do. Or what you need to know. ... You need to know how it [the market] has worked, how it works currently and then you can make choices that fit your aspirations and goals'⁹⁴.

According to Randall Filer, the artists benefit 37% less from their university degrees when compared to managerial, professional or technical workers (musicians in comparison appear to benefit (0%).⁹⁵ Economist Caves suggests that in order to change the statistics, the art education should focus more on how to succeed as a practising artist.

Current curriculums are lacking market related subjects that would enhance the artist's ability to market themselves and successfully pursue opportunities to sell their work. He also outlines that *'the number of students graduating each year from qualified programs or specialised studies exceeds the number who can become income earning professionals'*⁹⁶.

The author of this research agrees that a shift towards marketing and communication in the arts education is necessary to give the early career artists the best possible means to shape their practices into economically and

⁹³ Refshauge, A. [ed.]. (2012). *Serving Emerging Artists*, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, [online PDF], viewed February 2014, <<http://www.arrowmont.org/images/arrowmont/pdfs/neasurvey.pdf>>.

⁹⁴ Schaller, R. (2010). *Get your work in an art gallery & sell it*, The Artbistro, para. 4, viewed 10th April 2014, <<http://artbistro.monster.com/benefits/articles/11642-get-your-work-in-an-art-gallery-sell-it>>.

⁹⁵ Caves, R. E. (2000). *Creative Industries: Contracts Between Arts and Commerce*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, p. 21.

⁹⁶ *Opt. Cit.*

creatively viable ones. The upside of the obstacles emerging artists face is that it also weeds out practitioners who are not cut out for the profession.

In visual arts, there are many unwritten rules one must follow. These rules have been set and are constantly monitored by intermediaries or gatekeepers as sociologists call them. Ultimately, their opinion will decide who is excluded at the (market as well as art history) gate and who gets to pass⁹⁷. Those with the most determination and perseverance will continue to hone their skills and make it through the first phase of their artistic journey – from emerging to mid-career practitioners.

2. 3. The importance of 'emerging'

It is estimated that roughly 35 million people globally are referred to as emerging artists⁹⁸. Emerging art has evolved into a business in its own right. Countless organisations, institutions, education providers and individuals are dedicated to improving the creative and economic lives of the artists.⁹⁹

The challenge of financing the artistic practice is central to all artists in any stage of their career. Artists, who do not have to worry about their economic circumstances, are able to increase their artistic activities, and usually turn to more experimental practices.¹⁰⁰ Hence, income security could be seen as the central issue affecting the creative output. By prioritising the funding for emerging artists, it becomes a necessity to define who deserves to claim these limited funds.

⁹⁷ *Opt. Cit.*

⁹⁸ Boys, J. W. (2014). A Note From the Editor, - *Emerging Artists Magazine*, viewed 1st May 2013, <<http://www.emergingartistmagazine.com/a-note-from-the-editor.html>>.

⁹⁹ Refshauge, A. [ed.]. (2012). *Serving Emerging Artists*, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, [online PDF], p. 3, viewed February 2014,

<<http://www.arrowmont.org/images/arrowmont/pdfs/neasurvey.pdf>>.

¹⁰⁰ Greffe, X. (2002). *Arts and Artists From an Economic Perspective*. Paris: Unesco Publishing, p. 123.

'An artist who receives subsidies will be able to devote himself to avant-garde art form, but this will make his work less sellable and he will ask for more subsidies in order to survive. He will thus find himself caught in a vicious circle whereby he cannot survive without subsidies'¹⁰¹.

Many contemporaries are trying to shed the image of the 'starving artist' and prove that they are valuable members of the society.¹⁰² Constantly relying on private or public funding, tends to work against this aspiration. Time spent on administrative tasks to secure these supplements also robs the emerging artist of their time potentially spent on creating art.¹⁰³

But what happens when the emerging period is up? Artists, who have been successful in securing funding over the years could suddenly find themselves in a situation where they are no longer seen as *hot*, the flush of youth has worn off and they become tarred by the notion that they never quite got it right in the given time-frame.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ *Op. Cit.*

¹⁰² Refshauge, A. [ed.]. (2012). *Serving Emerging Artists*, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, [online PDF], p. 2, viewed February 2014, <<http://www.arrowmont.org/images/arrowmont/pdfs/neasurvey.pdf>>.

¹⁰³ *Op. Cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ McDonald, S. R. (2013). Conversation between Stella Rosa McDonald and Merle Tonts, 15th April, Sydney.

IV AUSTRALIA

4. 1. Australian arts scene

Most countries in the world have in one form or another a common cultural concept, national ideals or characteristics that affect all fields of life within that region. The age of exploration and discoveries at the end of the 15th century saw the map of the world being divided in two – the old world (Europe, Asia, Africa) and New world (the Americas and later Oceania).¹⁰⁵ These borders can also be used to distinguish cultural spheres of the world.

Although Australia belongs to the New World, it has more similarities to the Old, especially when it comes to the country's national cultural policy. The New World tends to favour a combination of public and private funding as the private support base gives arts institutions freedom of action, allowing greater independence from government policies. The New World firmly believes in primacy of individual and is characterised by private efforts and volunteerism when it comes to supporting arts.¹⁰⁶

On the other hand, the European tradition mandates public support, cemented in the belief that art and culture are a nation's heritage and therefore must be supported by the government. This approach also argues that the funding for arts is crucial in relieving the pressures on art institutions to raise money, frees the artist from the pressures of the market place and allows the arts organisations and practitioners to pursue the artistic endeavours. This understanding is present in the Australian art scene.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Naimark, M., Rich, D. (2013). *The context for cultural policy – old world and new world*, ACPCultures, [online PDF], pp. 1-3, viewed May 2013, <http://www.acpcultures.eu/_upload/ocr_document/Naimakr-Rich_ContextCulturalPolicyOldAndNewWorld.pdf>.

¹⁰⁶ *Op. Cit*, pp. 1-7.

¹⁰⁷ *Op. Cit*, p. 2.

4. 1. 1. Australian Council for Arts

The Australia Council for Arts was funded in the 1968 under the leadership of John Gorton's party. The same year was the first to see the government officially supporting arts by distributing grants to selected art institutions and organisations. The aim for direct funding was to lead by example and encourage others (private and public entities) to follow lead as *'the arts belong to the whole community, and support for them should come from many sources'*.¹⁰⁸

Prior to Australia Council, the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust (AETT), established in 1954, functioned in a similar role. The need to replace AETT became apparent in its erratic supports to the sector. Controlled by the business and social elite of the country, AETT lacked stability and consistency required. An independent organisation to distribute the governmental funds was needed, and with Art Council achieving statutory independence in 1975, the cultural policy of Australia was established.¹⁰⁹

'The Australia Council for the Arts is the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body. We support Australia's arts through funding, strengthening and developing the arts sector. We collaborate to build new audiences, foster philanthropic support and deepen our understanding of the arts through research'.¹¹⁰

Australia Council seems to treat publicly subsidised arts institutions partly as business partners. Creating employment, using and providing services,

¹⁰⁸ Gorton, J. [Prime Minister]. (1968). *Australian Council for the Arts: grants for 1968-69*, Australian Government: Department of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, [media release], 11th December, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://pmtranscripts.dpmc.gov.au/browse.php?did=1966>>.

¹⁰⁹ Meyrick, J. (2014). *The Australia Council must hold firm on 'arm's length' funding*, *The Conversation*, 18th March, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://theconversation.com/the-australia-council-must-hold-firm-on-arms-length-funding-24460>>.

¹¹⁰ Australia Council. (2014). *What we do*, The Australia Council, viewed 10th April, <<http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/about>>.

incorporating marketing and branding activities, generating income through sponsorship and ticket sales – arts constantly turns over a vast amount of money for the country, hence justifying the governmental support to the industry. As the *'intellectual and creative capital generated by the arts remains desirable'*¹¹¹, all benefit from it on economic grounds.¹¹²

*'The problem with the arts industry is the perilous position of its primary producers, the artists. Artists are the lowest paid members of the arts industry (and the Australian workforce)'*¹¹³, causing turbulence within the art scene. The feeling of disempowerment has provoked debate around funding principles. The emerging and experimental arts have secured \$20 million dollars of the government funds, as opposed to mid-career and established artist being relatively unfunded. This creates tension in the art circles as more business savvy youth is seen to get the bigger slice of the cake.¹¹⁴

In order to better understand the creative industries, the council conducted a research interviewing members of art world and asking for their views and opinions to improve the support they offer. Surprisingly, many interviewees refused to confirm the expected opposition between arts and economics. On the contrary, they viewed the artists complying to this opinion as *'elitist and crude'*.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Pledger, D. (2014). *What Would A National Artists Strike Look Like*, The Conversation, 21st March, para. 2, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://theconversation.com/what-would-a-national-artists-strike-look-like-24533>>.

¹¹² Cunningham, S. D., Jaaniste, L. O., O'Conner, J. (2011). *Arts and creative industries: a historical overview; and an Australian conversation*, Australia Council for the Arts, [online PDF], p. 5, viewed 1st May 2014, <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/98431/Arts_and_creative_industries_FIN_AL_Feb_2011.pdf>.

¹¹³ *Opt. Cit, para. 4.*

¹¹⁴ Hindmarsh, L. (2013). Conversation between Laura Hindmarsh and Merle Tonts, 6th April, Launceston.

¹¹⁵ Cunningham, S. D., Jaaniste, L. O., O'Conner, J. (2011). *Arts and creative industries: a historical overview; and an Australian conversation*, Australia Council for the Arts, [online PDF], p. 4, viewed 1st May 2014, <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/98431/Arts_and_creative_industries_FIN_AL_Feb_2011.pdf>.

It has been outlined by many that the shift from practicing artists, who until the 1970s dominated the arts bureaucracy and mainly formed the body of different organisations (including Australia Council), to the new generation of university-trained professionals, has had an impact on the Australian art scene.¹¹⁶ The professionalisation and institutionalisation of the arts has disenfranchised it in parts. To the disappointment of many, new professionals did not oppose adapting to the socioeconomic changes, in fact they used marketing skills to lift the image of contemporary arts.¹¹⁷

Reservations towards these changes can be understood, as people tend to be resentful towards concepts they find hard to understand (culture/economics, art/market, intrinsic/instrumental).¹¹⁸ On the other hand, Australia Council aims to be more than a piggy bank of the government and is genuinely interested in providing the artists with all kinds of support they might need to ensure the viability of their practices.¹¹⁹

4. 2. Australian emerging artists

In early 2013, Australian government released the *Creative Australia: National Cultural Policy* that replaced the *Australia Council Act for Arts* from 1975.¹²⁰ The new policy will play a fundamental role in shaping the future of the Australian art scene through the budget it allows for arts and also the framework of allocating available funds. The new policy has been welcomed by the artsPeak (umbrella organisation for all Australian arts organisations) that has commended the

¹¹⁶ Team Textiles. (2013). Conversation between Team Textiles members (Abigail Tett, May Finlayson, Ashley Bird) and Merle Tonts, 9th April, Launceston.

¹¹⁷ Grishin, S. (2014). *Popularity versus prestige*, artsHub Australia, 26th March, viewed 1st May 2014, <<http://visual.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/visual-arts/popularity-versus-prestige-198561>>.

¹¹⁸ Cunningham, S. D., Jaaniste, L. O., O'Conner, J. (2011). *Arts and creative industries: a historical overview; and an Australian conversation*, Australia Council for the Arts, [online PDF], p. 30, viewed 1st May 2014, <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/98431/Arts_and_creative_industries_FIN_AL_Feb_2011.pdf>.

¹¹⁹ Meyrick, J. (2014). *The Australia Council must hold firm on 'arm's length' funding*, *The Conversation*, 18th March, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://theconversation.com/the-australia-council-must-hold-firm-on-arms-length-funding-24460>>.

¹²⁰ Creative Australia (2013). *Creative Australia: National Cultural Policy*, Creative Australia, [online PDF], para. 7.1.2, viewed 18th June 2013, <<http://creativeaustralia.arts.gov.au/full-policy/#m-258>>.

government for the recognition it gives to the sector as well as the funds. It is important to emphasise the impact of the Creative Australia, as the main funding for arts is provided by the government.¹²¹

Changes in the funding and policy have large-scale consequences as the state-level reshuffling of available financial support for arts have made the future uncertain for many artists and independent organisations. The Director of Regional Arts Victoria, Ester Anatolitis, argues that: *'it's only a small minority of artists and arts organisations who seek and secure public funding'*¹²² – a claim that according to Australia Council statistics is not true – she underlines the reason why regardless of the number of people receiving support, it is so important in the art scene. *'Work of funded artists tends to reach more artists, more critics, more audiences and more future collaborators'*.¹²³

4. 2. 1. Advantages of the label 'emerging'

Some art practices need more support and fostering than others due to the nature of the artwork (experimental and ephemeral works) and therefore cannot become the 'art market darlings'.¹²⁴ *The artist needing additional support tend to be in the first stage of their career – emerging.*

'They need to be cultivated initially in art schools, and then in the network of publicly funded contemporary art spaces, art school and university galleries, and developed through a system of grants, residencies and

¹²¹ Stone, D. (2013a). *Creative Australia: the sector responds*, artsHub Australia, 19th May, viewed 13th May 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/creative-australia-the-sector-responds-195390>>.

¹²² Anatolitis, D. (2013b). *Dealing with change: the arts in flux*, artsHub Australia, 1st May, para. 4, viewed 14th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/dealing-with-change-the-arts-in-flux-195205>>.

¹²³ *Opt. Cit, para. 4.*

¹²⁴ Grishin, S. (2014). *Popularity versus prestige*, artsHub Australia, 26th March, para. 3, viewed 1st May 2014, <<http://visual.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/visual-arts/popularity-versus-prestige-198561>>.

fellowships, before being acquired by institutional collections and presented in institutional biennale exhibitions'.¹²⁵

According to the economical study *Do You Really Expect to Get Paid?*, 29% of Australian visual artists applied for a grant, prize or government funding between 2004-2009 to support their practice.¹²⁶ Australia Council ArtFacts statistics website informs that during 2011–2012, the organisation invested 15.7 million dollars in visual arts and crafts – with almost \$1 million aimed at young and emerging visual artists through ArtStart.¹²⁷

In addition, the new cultural policy reveals increased support for emerging visual art practitioners (\$9.7 million to ArtStart) and to young community members pursuing creative and culture related (such as sports) careers (\$8.1 million to Creative Young Stars and \$3.4 million to ArtsReady programmes).¹²⁸

4. 2. 2. Disadvantages of 'emerging'

A large proportion of visual artists in Australia identify themselves as 'emerging'(16%) or 'mid-career or becoming established' (36%).¹²⁹ The period of 'emergence' is fixed whereas there is no set timeframe for mid-career or established artists. The definition of emerging artist varies but NAVA (National Association for Visual Arts) as well as some other organisations, limit emerging

¹²⁵ *Opt. Cit.*

¹²⁶ Throsby, C. D., Zednik, A. (2010). *Do You Really Expect To Get Paid?* Sydney: Australia Council Publishing, p. 10.

¹²⁷ Artfacts (2013a). *Australia Council Provides Over \$15 Million Funding To The Visual Art Sector*, Artfacts: Australia Council for the Arts, viewed 13th May 2013, <<http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/visual-arts-support#post-1405>>.

¹²⁸ Creative Australia (2013). *Creative Australia: National Cultural Policy*, Creative Australia, [online PDF], para. 7.1.2., viewed 18th June 2013, <<http://creativeaustralia.arts.gov.au/full-policy/#m-258>>.

¹²⁹ Artfacts (2013b). *Large proportion of visual artists are emerging or mid-career artists*, ArtFacts: Australia Council for the Arts, viewed 30th May 2013, <<http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/visual-arts-creation-post-1256>>.

practitioners within the first five years of their professional practice in a medium artist wishes to develop.

Some definitions also have age specifications, usually setting the border to under the age of 30,¹³⁰ therefore establishing a connection between young and emerging. The restrictions of age are not agreed by many, especially in the current Australian contemporary art scene, where participants of 55-64 years of age, is on the rise.¹³¹

4. 2. 3. The Emerging Issue

The debate has escalated to the level where Art Monthly (AM is nationwide art magazine) decided to focus their attention on the subject in *The Emerging Issue* published March 2013. One could argue that the need to clarify or explain the problems related to the definition and use of the term is a result of the new cultural policy where young and emerging artists have gained additional benefits, making the term appealing to a wider range of practitioners.¹³²

The Art Monthly guest-editor Dr. Adam Geczy explained that the idea for the special issue derived from a '*nagging concern that the term 'emerging artist' is tagged onto a rather shapeless multitude*'.¹³³ He also pointed out that another reason behind the issue was to tackle the situation where

¹³⁰ NAVA. (2013). *What is an emerging artist?*, National Association of Visual Arts, viewed 18th June, <<http://www.visualarts.net.au/advicecentre/emerging-artist-definition>>.

¹³¹ Isbel, P. (2012). *Emerging artists? Are you kidding yourself?*, artsHub Australia, 9th April, viewed 10th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/all-arts/emerging-artist-are-you-kidding-yourself-188469>>.

¹³² Boldkald, R. (2013). Conversation between Robert Boldkald and Merle Tonts, 1th May, Launceston.

¹³³ Geczy, A. (2013). Editorial, *Art Monthly Australia*, Issue 257, p. 3.

'emerging artists are used by curators as representatives of where things are now or as harbingers of the future, and then cast away once their use-by-date has expired'.¹³⁴

A number of critics debate around the meaning and use of this term, many claiming it functions as an excuse to the artist or a shield from criticism *'as if it was a note from mum to say you are not your best today but hope to get better soon'*.¹³⁵

4. 3. The profession of artists

The ArtFacts statistics confirms that nearly 40% of visual artists in Australia apply their creative skills in other industries – a trend that seems to be on the rise. The statistics also show that majority (61%) of visual artists income is non-arts related.¹³⁶ Even more alarmingly, nearly a quarter of the practitioners admit that they have made no arrangements for future financial security (24% in Australia)¹³⁷. It comes as no surprise – an artist working towards an exhibition tends to push aside issues related to superannuation/pension, tax, insurance, copyright laws and/or pays little attention to fair payment policies, artist rights, etc.¹³⁸

In recent years, the Australia Council seems to have focused their attention on these bleak statistics. Finding ways for artists to learn how to better manage their career and market their practice, is evident by looking at their publications. Although the titles seem to give support the over-exploited concept of 'starving

¹³⁴ *Opt. Cit.*

¹³⁵ Isabel, P. (2012). *Emerging artists? Are you kidding yourself?*, artsHub Australia, 9th April, viewed 10th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/all-arts/emerging-artist-are-you-kidding-yourself-188469>>.

¹³⁶ Artfacts (2013c). *Visual arts practitioners often work in the wider cultural industries, and earn most of their income outside the core arts sector*, Artfacts: Australia Council for the Arts, viewed 30th May 2013, <<http://www.artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/visual-arts-creation-post-1271>>.

¹³⁷ *Opt. Cit.*

¹³⁸ Winikoff, T. (2013d). *Peak Organisations: Who Ya Gonna Call*, artsHub Australia, 16th January, viewed 20th Feb 2014, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/peak-organisations-who-ya-gonna-call-193600>>.

artist' (*Don't Give Up Your Day Job*,¹³⁹ *Do You Really Expect to Get Paid*¹⁴⁰ and *What's Your Other Job?: A Census Analysis of Arts Employment in Australia*)¹⁴¹, they function as guides, helping to secure one's financial stability.

4. 3. 1. Additional support

In addition to published material, there is a privately and publicly funded organisation in Australia that specialises in getting the arts into gear. Established more than a decade ago and now amalgamated under the Creative Partnerships Australia, Art Support and Australia Business Arts Foundation have been trying to connect artists and businesses for the benefit of both – artists can enhance brand, improve image and reputation as well as engage the employees of the business. They benefit from networks created, business skills learnt and funds earned to support their arts practice.¹⁴²

Some of the artists whom this subject was discussed with claimed, that as long as one has a healthy outlook on life and is working for the goal they have set for themselves, most of them do not mind working on or as something else on the side. The others admitted that they find it difficult to support themselves financially if not sacrificing the majority of their time and energy to earn (non) artistic income.

An alternative to applying for funding in Australia seems to be the scheme of crowdfunding. The Australian based platform Pozible launched in 2010 and

¹³⁹ Hollister, V., Throsby, C. D. (2003). *Don't Give Up Your Day Job*. Sydney: Australia Council Publishing.

¹⁴⁰ Throsby, C. D., Zednik, A. (2010). *Do You Really Expect To Get Paid?* Sydney: Australia Council Publishing.

¹⁴¹ Cunningham, S. D., Higgs, P., Freebody, S., Anderson, P. (2010). *What's your other job? A census analysis of arts employment in Australia*, Australia Council for the Arts, [online PDF], viewed 30th May 2013,

<http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/79074/What_is_your_other_job_the_census_study.pdf>.

¹⁴² Creative Partnerships. (2014). *Who we are*, The Creative Partnerships Australia, viewed 30th June, <<https://www.creativepartnershipsaustralia.org.au/about-us/who-we-are/>>.

raised in its first two years over \$13 million for 4000 creative projects. In addition to creating the opportunity to secure funding, Pozible also focuses on helping the creatives draft and present their projects.¹⁴³ However, to be able to create traction on the web, one must be social-media-savvy networker who can readily market themselves and their art.¹⁴⁴

4. 4. Views: Conversations with Australian emerging artists

As a part of this research, the author discussed the creative and economic viability, meaning of emerging and the need for funding with several Australian early career artists, in particular Tasmanian. The author, who has also served as a board member at Sawtooth Artist Run Initiative (ARI), investigated how ARI's (institutions mainly associated with emerging artists) are perceived and what would be their role in the market context.

These conversations also revealed that one of the key issues for artists is not spending time or money creating their artworks, but getting it out in front of (critical) audience. An alarming reality is that emerging *'artists spend as much time writing grant applications or looking for income sources as they do pursuing their artistic practice'*.¹⁴⁵

It has been pointed out in this research that a contemporary artist is also a businessperson of sort. And as a self-employed entrepreneur, an artist needs to have access to a studio space, purchase materials, rent or buy machinery needed to create works, insure, crate and organise the freight of these works. That is, in addition to the time-consuming research and administrative tasks

¹⁴³ Spring, A. (2013). 'Is Crowdfunding The Kickstart That Australian Culture Needs?', *The Guardian*, 26th September, viewed 15th April 2014, <<http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2013/sep/26/crowdfunding-giving-australian-culture-a-kickstart/>>.

¹⁴⁴ Norfor, L. (2013). *Crowdfunding: making it work*, artsHub Australia, 29th May, viewed 10th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/all-arts/crowdfunding-making-it-work-195523>>.

¹⁴⁵ Fulton, M. (2013). *Grant rejections: what are you doing wrong*, artsHub Australia, 29th May, para. 1, viewed 10th June 2013, <<http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/all-arts/grant-rejections-what-are-you-doing-wrong-195520>>.

they need to undertake. All this on top of covering the basic overhead of a person – food, clothing and shelter.¹⁴⁶

One would expect that all of these tasks and problems would be over when a commercial gallery decides to take the emerging artist under their wing. However, this is not a common occurrence anymore. The artists and art professionals spoken to agreed, that gaining commercial representation from early on seems to be a typical art school dream of what will happen after graduation show. In reality, less and less people are having a commercially sustainable practice. Most emerging artists' work is experimental and ephemeral with a potentially low or no economic value, at times losing its appeal in the eyes of commercial representatives.¹⁴⁷

The galleries have also noted the shift in how the change in arts has brought along a change in marketing it. Gallerist Karen Woodbury states that *'the gallery is no longer central; the artists are involved in a lot of self-promotion'*¹⁴⁸. One of the reasons for it could be that it is very expensive to run a commercial gallery and therefore the latter chooses carefully whom to consign.¹⁴⁹

It seems that majority of Australian commercial galleries are far from raking in the big bucks, instead they are not doing much better than hardly breaking even. Gallery expenses include wages, mortgage/rent, insurance, maintenance, the costs of running an office, as well as costs associated with exhibitions, transport of artworks, catalogues, invitations and publicity. It comes as no

¹⁴⁶ Hindmarsh, L. (2013). Conversation between Laura Hindmarsh and Merle Tonts, 6th April, Launceston.

¹⁴⁷ Team Textiles. (2013). Conversation between Team Textiles members (Abigail Tett, May Finlayson, Ashley Bird) and Merle Tonts, 9th April, Launceston.

¹⁴⁸ Meyrick, J. (2014). *The Australia Council must hold firm on 'arm's length' funding*, *The Conversation*, 18th March, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://theconversation.com/the-australia-council-must-hold-firm-on-arms-length-funding-24460>>.

¹⁴⁹ McKenzie, H. (2012). Onwards and Upwards. - *Australian Art Collector*, Issue 59, pp. 80-81.

surprise that galleries are forced to take a high percentage (up to 40%) as commission from each sale.¹⁵⁰

The aim of a contemporary gallery, especially one that focuses on supporting and exhibiting emerging artists is to promote, introduce, network and create recognition for the artist and their practice. However, commercial representation should not be entered into lightly. An artist needs to be well aware of what they are looking to gain from this partnership and be able to understand the moral and legal aspects that bind them together. As some of the artists conversed with spoke from personal experience, at times, the first choice is not always the best possible.¹⁵¹

The emerging artists spoken to in the context of this research outlined that although they would have been happy if a commercial gallery would have picked them up straight from the art school, it probably would not have been a good thing. Majority of them described the coming out of art school as a tortures process where they are not too sure which path to follow. Time spent on the natural shifting from student to a professional has in hindsight been a positive experience for most of them by allowing them to set realistic expectations and to see what they are capable of achieving.¹⁵²

There are no industry standards or consistency within the commercial art market. All that an artist can expect from the gallery is an honest effort to present their work in the most favourable way to the best possible audience.¹⁵³ If the artist receives no immediate support from the gallery that represents them, the artist is the one expected to take charge and act upon it.

¹⁵⁰ Miller, C. (2012). Staying Afloat. - *Australian Art Collector*, Issue 59, p. 86.

¹⁵¹ Foley, J. (2013). Conversation between Josh Foley and Merle Tonts, 30th March, Launceston.
¹⁵² *Opt. Cit.*

¹⁵³ Harden, M. [ed.]. (1998). Artist-gallery relationships. - *Studio Notes: The Journal for Working Artists*, Issue 22, viewed, 30th June 2013, <<http://www.studionotes.org/22/relations.html>>.

*'when it comes to the business of promoting your art, bear in mind that you are the president of your company, as well as the senior sales and marketing manager. As such, it's your job to do the research, think things through and come up with appropriate solutions'*¹⁵⁴.

4. 5. Artist Run Initiatives

One of these solutions is to turn to a non-profit organisation that specialises in experimental and emerging practices – Artist Run Initiative (ARI) or alike. Majority of Australian early career artists would agree that it is crucial for an artist to be affiliated with a few ARIs to justify their emerging status. The ARI shows are considered as the right of passage – one has to do them before they can approach curators at commercial galleries. The main aspect is that the ARIs are considered to be critical spaces where peers, teachers, critics and other artists find a common ground and keep the dialogue going.¹⁵⁵

This was also pointed out as the main reason why it could be a bad idea for an emerging artist to be drafted by a commercial gallery straight out of an art school. The artist might miss out by not having other emerging artists around them, by not being engaged and supported by them, and not be seen by curators or critical audiences.¹⁵⁶ One might speculate that another reason for Art Monthly to produce the Emerging Issue was precisely to tackle the question of institutions built around emerging artists.

A number of the articles in the magazine were focused on the ARIs and their role in the art scene. The director of the Institute of Contemporary Art Newtown

¹⁵⁴ *Opt. Cit, para. 15.*

¹⁵⁵ Team Textiles. (2013). Conversation between Team Textiles members (Abigail Tett, May Finlayson, Ashley Bird) and Merle Tonts, 9th April, Launceston.

¹⁵⁶ *Opt. Cit.*

(ICAN) Alex Gawronski wrote an article titled *Artists Run = Emerging / A Bad Equation*. He fiercely attacks the concept of an ARI that he claims is a '*training ground for future art professionals*' and functions as '*quasi-commercial enterprises*' reducing the young artists to a level of '*emerging culture industrialists*'¹⁵⁷.

Gawronski seems to differentiate young emerging artists from experimental emerging artists suggesting that young cannot be experimental and truly experimental are not young. He goes on to propose that '*when this bureaucratic concept of the 'emerging' artist aligns with the practices of ARIs, then the latter can only suffer the ignominy of being degraded to a level of culture factories for beginners*'¹⁵⁸.

Gawronski's views were presented to the emerging artists for their opinions. Majority of them found the approach offensive and ignorant. However, it is important to note that not all ARIs are equal and the connotations of an ARI depend on personal experiences.

There are a number of ARIs with different scenarios doing different work and are good at it. Most ARIs function similarly to a commercial space, vetting who they show and maintain a high standard of work, just without the commission as they do not aim to sell the artworks.

There are also a number of institutions that have similar characteristics to an ARI and might call themselves one, but have no critical element to them – just a

¹⁵⁷ Gawronski, A. (2013). Artist-Run = Emerging / A Bad Equation. - *Art Monthly Australia*, Issue 257, p. 27.

¹⁵⁸ *Opt. Cit*, p. 26.

room with wall space and a cheap bar.¹⁵⁹ These organisations are better known as vanity galleries, where an exhibition program depends on who has the money to rent the space, rather than a concept or a framework the gallery wishes to identify itself with.¹⁶⁰

The emerging artist who seeks to exhibit their works in a reputable ARI makes a serious commitment. They have to bear all the financial costs related to the exhibition – rent the space, usually install/dismantle the works, sit the gallery and cover costs of transport and accommodation, if it is not a local show. All of this in addition to the cost of producing the work in the first place. To exhibit in an alternative space, alike ARI, is not a decision most make or can afford to make light-heartedly. It is very time consuming to research the exhibition space and its background, as well as do the administrative work to secure some funding to cover at least some costs of producing an exhibition.¹⁶¹

However, not all artists agreed that they need to participate in ARI shows as they are too expensive and in most cases do not offer the artist much more than the exhibition space. Some art world members did not agree that an artist should feel like their work is not yet good enough to be shown in a commercial gallery and need to find critical audience first to be validated. To them ARI is nothing more than a detour on a road to success.¹⁶²

Alex Gawronskis views are not shared in full by the author of this research. ARIs can be used as training camps or as platforms to promote emerging,

¹⁵⁹ Team Textiles. (2013). Conversation between Team Textiles members (Abigail Tett, May Finlayson, Ashley Bird) and Merle Tonts, 9th April, Launceston.

¹⁶⁰ Campello, L. (2004). *Vanity Galleries*, Blogcritics, viewed 15th April 2014, <<http://blogcritics.org/vanity-galleries/>>.

¹⁶¹ McDonald, S. R. (2013). Conversation between Stella Rosa McDonald and Merle Tonts, 15th April, Sydney.

¹⁶² Boldkald, R. (2013). Conversation between Robert Boldkald and Merle Tonts, 1th May, Launceston.

experimental or any other kind of art. They are called artist run for a reason – the artists who run them decide what they want the framework to be.¹⁶³

A beginning practitioner will only get to be a strong artist by producing and exhibiting their works. ARIs take on these high-risk shows – sometimes they go well and the artists' work is critically and personally successful, sometimes they do not and the show is a failure. If alternative exhibition spaces, like ARIs, are not the testing grounds for those projects, where is? A commercial gallery most likely would not agree to take on a show that has no guarantee that it will even open on time. The art school exhibitions are not seen as fully professional practices as of yet.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Team Textiles. (2013). Conversation between Team Textiles members (Abigail Tett, May Finlayson, Ashley Bird) and Merle Tonts, 9th April, Launceston.

¹⁶⁴ Hindmarsh, L. (2013). Conversation between Laura Hindmarsh and Merle Tonts, 6th April, Launceston.

V ESTONIA

5. 1. Estonian art scene

The history of Estonia is rich and full of changes, some better, some worse. In the last century alone, Estonia faced several developments and predicaments, including establishing independence, losing it during two occupations, followed by the destruction of social structures through Soviet regime.¹⁶⁵ Astoundingly, the culture of the nation has survived through the turmoil and at large, the nation has managed to negotiated the past without sacrificing its deepest roots – heritage.

In late 1980s, when the regime was weakened, politicians started taking steps to distance Estonia from the Soviet Union. The revolutionary ideas of 1988 voiced the dis-contempt people had, resulting in rapid development of events that saw the country regain its independence in 1991¹⁶⁶ This called for new policies to be implemented to ensure the recovery of the culture and economy amongst other sectors. The cultural policy that was regrouped under the responsibility of Culture Committee in 1988, was renamed in 1990 as the Ministry of Culture and Education. The latter was separated into two independent entities in 1996.¹⁶⁷

'During the Soviet ancien regime, the state was both the main financier of most cultural activities, and an ideological, moral, and aesthetic censor'¹⁶⁸. The independence from structural, ideological and formal principles of the Soviet Union, called for re-evaluation of the support the government gave the cultural

¹⁶⁵ Lagerspetz, M., Tali, M. (2008). *Compendium: cultural policies and trends in Europe – Estonia, [last ed. 2013]*, The Cultural Policies, [online PDF], p. 2, viewed 30th March 2014, <http://profiles.culturalpolicies.net/down/estonia_032013.pdf>.

¹⁶⁶ *Opt. Cit.*

¹⁶⁷ *Opt. Cit.*

¹⁶⁸ *Opt. Cit.*

sphere. In 1998, the fundamentals of the Estonian Cultural Policy were approved by its highest governing power, *Riigikogu*. The new legislative policy assured that the state will provide funding for all fields of fine arts to be able to function and sustain themselves.¹⁶⁹

Nowadays, the changing economic realities and the involvement of the arts in the market place are generating heated discussions. This shift has been noted by art world elite in Estonia and Europe in general.¹⁷⁰ According to the research on cultural policies, Estonian cultural scene has taken on defensive attitude towards the contemporary markets.

*'The cultural workers themselves feel they must jointly defend themselves against the invasion of mass culture, against the insecurity created by a dependence on market mechanisms, and guard their interests vis-a-vis [against] other policy spheres competing for budget resources'*¹⁷¹.

5. 2. Cultural Endowment of Estonia

As a part of the national policy that emphasises preservation of the culture, the Ministry has made it a priority to set up a framework to support and advance the arts. The distribution of the state money for cultural purposes has been implemented by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia (CEE) since 1994.¹⁷²

The CEE relies on the fixed share of taxes imposed on gambling, alcohol and tobacco excise in conjunction with the government allocated funding to support culture in Estonia. The majority of this capital is used to maintain established

¹⁶⁹ Culture Ministry. (1998). *The fundamentals of the Estonian cultural policy*, [last ed. 2010], Estonian Ministry of Culture, viewed 1st February 2014, <<http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x294x1038x1771>>.

¹⁷⁰ Karro, K. (2012). 'Year in Art 2012', *Eesti Ekspress*, 28th December, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://ekspress.delfi.ee/news/areen/kunstiaasta-2012.d?id=65452404>>.

¹⁷¹ Lagerspetz, M., Tali, M. (2008). *Compendium: cultural policies and trends in Europe – Estonia, [last ed. 2013]*, The Cultural Policies, [online PDF], p. 4, viewed 30th March 2014, <http://profiles.culturalpolicies.net/down/estonia_032013.pdf>.

¹⁷² *Opt. Cit.*

cultural institutions (46% of the budget in 2011).¹⁷³ The support to these temples of national culture is highly important as the people of Estonia tend to define themselves through their cultural background. However, one must not forget that allocating funds to one sector of the culture simultaneously deprives it from another deserving field.

Individual artists in Estonia have some social guarantees as they are subject to the same labour laws as all residents.¹⁷⁴ Artists can choose to enlist themselves as employees, registered individual entrepreneurs or as freelancers. The two latter *'have the right to tax deductions of documented expenses related to their creative activities'*¹⁷⁵. Drawing a parallel between an entrepreneur and an artist is a step towards acknowledging that a successful (creatively, economically or otherwise) artists needs to employ business/marketing skills and knowledge to their practice in order to sustain it.

Furthermore, The Act on Creative Artists and Creative Artists' Unions (adopted in 2004) introduced a scheme of monthly allowances for creative practitioners, also applicable for freelancers lacking other sources of income.¹⁷⁶ This financial aid, that is equivalent to official minimum wage (as well as social- and healthcare), reassures the creative practitioners that their role in society is valued. The allowance can be applied for every two years for a period of six months.¹⁷⁷ Regardless of the support not being continuous through artists career, it offers a short term relief to financial tensions, most noticeable in the practice of experimental and emerging artists.

The Cultural Endowment of Estonia as well as other arm's length bodies supporting the creative practices, also allocate indirect funding to arts.

¹⁷³ *Opt. Cit.*

¹⁷⁴ *Opt. Cit, p. 28.*

¹⁷⁵ *Opt. Cit, p. 28.*

¹⁷⁶ *Opt. Cit, p. 40.*

¹⁷⁷ *Opt. Cit, p. 28.*

Legislated in 2011, the Placing Orders for Works of Art Act, or the so called 1% tax law, contribute to artists incomes.¹⁷⁸

These legislations offer support for artists in all fields and in all stages of their careers. However, in order for the arts to flourish in the socioeconomic market orientated environment, the participants need to let go of the expectations of total support (as they have let go of the total control) from the government and learn to find ways to share responsibilities in evolving the contemporary arts.¹⁷⁹

5. 3. Estonian art market

Due to its small population, some members of the art scene suggest that the art market on the local level is more or less a fictitious system. The vice-president of Estonian Artists Association, Elin Kard, partially agrees to these views noting that there is movement within the market field but these actions cannot be considered as a fully functioning art market. The buying and selling of contemporary arts happens too sporadically for it to characterise a developed market.¹⁸⁰

Kard lists as the main reasons for a hindered art scene the overall size of it (Estonian Artists Association presently has 961 member)¹⁸¹, educational shortcomings and economic influences. In addition, the relatively short and tremulous history of independent Estonia has made it harder for the market to develop and overcome the aforementioned obstacles.¹⁸²

The author has illustrated in the previous chapters of this research that the market orientated socioeconomic world of today does affect the arts, directly or

¹⁷⁸ *Opt. Cit, p. 40.*

¹⁷⁹ Naimark, M., Rich, D. (2013). *The context for cultural policy – old world and new world*, ACPCultures, [online PDF], p. 6, viewed May 2013, <http://www.acpcultures.eu/_upload/ocr_document/Naimark-Rich_ContextCulturalPolicyOldAndNewWorld.pdf>.

¹⁸⁰ Kard, E. (2009). Conversation between Elin Kard and Merle Tonts, 30th April, Tallinn.

¹⁸¹ Estonian Artists Association. (2014). *Overview*, Estonian Artists Association, viewed 1st April 2013, <<http://www.eaa.ee/167>>.

¹⁸² Kard, E. (2009). Conversation between Elin Kard and Merle Tonts, 30th April, Tallin

otherwise. One can argue that the size of the market is in correlation to the scope of its reach – smaller the market, weaker the influence. Following this line of thought, Estonia could be considered an ideal creative field as the market exists (artworks can be bought and sold) but fails to make its mark on artistic practices.¹⁸³

The benefits of this proposed creative field would first and foremost include the flourishing of more experimental and ephemeral art practices, as the artists could potentially focus exclusively on creating non-sellable art. The limitations of this proposed ideal creative field, however, are related to the restricted circulation of its product. Public funding would not be able to provide for creatives individually (as the income from private or public sales would be minimal or non-existent) as well as support the art institution (which otherwise would have low or no income). Hence, contemporary arts in an environment free from the influence of market could potentially be destined for extinction.¹⁸⁴

The artists acknowledge that not all art school graduates can use their arts practice to gain income. The artist Kaido Ole suggest that the number of these few could be around 10% of art school/university alumni.¹⁸⁵ The majority seem to take it for granted that in order to stay financially afloat, they need to subsidise their income through funding and non-arts related practices.¹⁸⁶

On one hand, this competitiveness in the arts to secure income suggests, that only very strong practices and determined professionals will survive, improving

¹⁸³ Tonts, M. (2009). Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu.

¹⁸⁴ *Opt. Cit.*

¹⁸⁵ Ole, K. (2006). 'Editorial' in ECCA [ed.] *Quest for New Cultural Nominators 2000+n: Additions to Estonian Art History*, Estonian Centre for Contemporary Arts. Tallinn: Infotrükk.

¹⁸⁶ Cunningham, S. D., Jaaniste, L. O., O'Conner, J. (2011). *Arts and creative industries: a historical overview; and an Australian conversation*, Australia Council for the Arts, [online PDF], p. 15, viewed 1st May 2014, <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/98431/Arts_and_creative_industries_FIN_AL_Feb_2011.pdf>.

the quality of the artworks within the market.¹⁸⁷ The other side of the coin indicates, that gaining entry to the saturated and small market becomes increasingly difficult. The ones to suffer in this case would be the emerging artists who, in the early stages of their career, lack the market/business/legislative know-how, are in the infancy of professional networking and therefore in an undesirable position when applying for funding (little to no validation and recognition by their peers to support applications).¹⁸⁸

5. 4. The image of an artist

The contemporary arts in Estonia are subjected to the image of an artist. Although the arts are supported on the governing level to a point where the artists are described as individual entrepreneurs, their opinion of general public does not seem to agree to it.

Artist Urmo Raus has scrutinised this view explaining that it should be only natural that a specialist with a university degree is treated accordingly. He claims that if the educational outlet is provided by a government funded institution, the same governing body should guarantee at least a number of the graduates with a job.¹⁸⁹

However, this practice does not and most likely, could not be applied to the Estonian art scene. One could suggest that the active involvement of government in creative fields hinders the creativity (a great example of the Soviet regime, where artists were used to implement policies). The short distance between a history filled with censorship makes it near impossible for government to regulate arts.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Tonts, M. (2009). Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu, p. 18.

¹⁸⁸ *Opt. Cit.*, p. 19.

¹⁸⁹ Raus, U. (2005). Art Politics in the Year of Culture. - *Sirp*, Issue 24, 1st May, viewed 12th June 2013, <http://www.sirp.ee/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5210:kunstipoliitika-st-eeesti-kunsti-aastal&catid=6:kunst&Itemid=10&issue=3071>.

¹⁹⁰ Tonts, M. (2009). Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu, p.18.

The artists in Estonia have taken it upon themselves to change their image. An increasing number of practitioners actively try to shake off an image of a starving artist.¹⁹¹ Some artists have felt the need to distance themselves from this image for different reasons. Of recent, it seems that the debate over the artist, their position in the society and their practice, rather than a job, are under scrutiny again.

The understanding that being an artist is equivalent of being unemployed was recently discussed by critic Liisa Kaljula. She claims that it will make it increasingly harder for a person to embark on an artistic career if their friends, family and society in general views arts more as a hobby than a serious, potentially income generating profession. In order for an early career artist to succeed in national and international art scene, the public's opinion of the artist has to change.¹⁹²

5. 5. A new focus in Estonian art

The newcomer in the Estonian (and New York's) art scene – Estonian Contemporary Art Development Centre (ECADC) – is preparing to close the gap between contemporary art and public opinion as well as promote the artist on the international level. Describing the mission of the organisation as:

'Fostering international exposure for Estonian artists and on developing the gallery scene in Estonia. Functioning as an umbrella organisation for Estonian partner institutions, the centre is creating strategic international partnerships in the field of contemporary art'¹⁹³.

¹⁹¹ Dagan, M. (2006). Artstudent for Sale. - *Kunst.ee*, Issue 3, pp. 18-20.

¹⁹² Kaljula, L. (2014). 'What Did You Study? - Art.', *Müürileht*, 13th March, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://www.muurileht.ee/artishoki-veerg-mida-sa-oppisid-kunsti/>>.

¹⁹³ ECADC. (2014a). *About*, Estonian Contemporary Art Development Centre, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://www.ecadc.ee/about/>>.

The new centre has established its headquarters in New York in hopes to create traction to Estonian arts. A worthwhile cause, funded by the European Regional Development Fund, is working towards the professionalisation of the contemporary arts and building networks.¹⁹⁴ Furthermore, the centre is also focusing on improving the gallery-artist relationships, communicating the needs of one another and calling non-profit spaces to start a critical dialogue with commercial spaces.¹⁹⁵

The ECADC advocates the need to export Estonian art outside as the inherently small market is unable to support all contemporary practitioners. To improve and encourage the critical discussion in the local art circles, the director also points out the necessity to bring international curators and practitioners to Estonia.¹⁹⁶

The ECADC has already held a number of seminars discussing the relationship between contemporary art and economics, educational lectures for curators and arts professionals, compiled the Legal Guide for arts and held a series of multi-gallery events to improve co-operation within the field.¹⁹⁷

5. 5. 1. The Characteristics of Estonian Art Scene

In addition to the new association, early career practitioners are also co-operating more than ever before with commercial galleries. As a characteristic to a developing market, there is a certain degree of mistrust between the galleries and the artists. The number of galleries and artists in Estonia is also

¹⁹⁴ *Opt. Cit.*

¹⁹⁵ Varblane, R. (2012). The Need to Get Talented People to Support Their Home Countries. - *Sirp*, Issue. 20, 18th May, viewed 1st April 2014, <http://www.sirp.ee/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14958:talendid-on-vaja-kodu-heaks-toeoele-panna&catid=6:kunst&Itemid=10&issue=3394>.

¹⁹⁶ Siib, L. (2014). *Liina Siib intervjuerib Eesti Kaasaegse Kunsti Arenduskeskust*, ECADC, viewed 1st May 2014, <<http://www.ecadc.ee/liina-siib-intervjuerib-eesti-kaasaegse-kunsti-arenduskeskust/>>.

¹⁹⁷ ECADC. (2014b). *Archive*, Estonian Contemporary Art Development Centre, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://www.ecadc.ee/archive/>>.

disproportional¹⁹⁸ – not enough galleries with a great track record and reputation opposed to a great number of artists, all seeking success in a market that is still in its infancy. Majority of these commercial galleries are still struggling to find a balance between selling art and representing and nurturing artists to enhance their career.¹⁹⁹

The role of commercial gallery is in a complicated position also due to the size of the market – gallerists, critics, professors, theorists as well as artists all belong to a small group of art elite. They have personal relationships which for better or for worse affect their position in the Estonian art hierarchy.²⁰⁰ The need to market oneself to others becomes unnecessary as well – once you are on the scene, you are known, and the need to attract attention to yourself in the Estonian art scene becomes obsolete.²⁰¹

Art critic Maarin Mürk highlights the obstructive side to the situation. She claims that the central figures of Estonian art are expected to stretch themselves to cover all areas and constantly fly the flag for advancing and promoting it. Their input is no longer recognised and celebrated, it is now taken for granted. The rising work load and diminishing funding for contemporary arts in a field that has a relatively low reputation pushes the professionals to exhaust their enthusiasm to lift the image of Estonian art, let alone advocate the emerging art to local, national and international art scene.²⁰²

Constantly analysing everything through a prism of personal achievements and relationships, whilst trying to prioritise activities, seems to have an overall

¹⁹⁸ Estonian Artists Association. (2014). *Overview*, Estonian Artists Association, viewed 1st April 2013, <<http://www.eaa.ee/167>>.

¹⁹⁹ Tonts, M. (2009). *Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland*: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu, p. 29.

²⁰⁰ Mürk, M. (2014). 'On Taking Things Personally', *Müürileht*, 12th February, viewed 20th Feb 2014, <<http://www.muurileht.ee/artishoki-veerg/>>.

²⁰¹ Tonts, M. (2009). *Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland*: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu, pp. 19-20.

²⁰² Mürk, M. (2013). 'The Blues of a Paid Culture Worker', *Müürileht*, 4th April, viewed 20th February 2014, <<http://www.muurileht.ee/palgalise-kunstitootaja-bluis>>.

negative effect to the art scene.²⁰³ The recent year's events in the cultural sphere of Estonia saw it divide in two poles over an appointment of new leadership to an established art museum. In the public letter declaring their support to the new director of the establishment, the signed artist stated *'poverty makes people angry and in the light of this, it could be understood why some feel the need to defend their positions against newcomers and new visions of advancing arts'*²⁰⁴.

This tension prone and polarised art scene could make it even more taunting and difficult for emerging artists to enter. The bigotry in the art scene has forced many to look for options to advance their careers outside Estonia. Potentially, this could be a great opportunity to promote the Estonian arts outside the countries borders. However, problems occur if the artists consciously distance themselves from their home country's arts.²⁰⁵

5. 5. 2. Alternative support for arts

Fortunately, there is a new generation of artists and art professionals who are taking it upon themselves to develop and promote Estonian arts. Some of them being the previously mentioned Estonian Contemporary Art Development Centre, Centre for Contemporary Arts Estonia, not to mention individuals who are flying the flag vigorously.

If one was to avoid exhibiting in commercial spaces, largely due to extremely expensive fees, there is an option of finding alternative representation, perhaps through exhibiting exclusively in non-commercial spaces. Uncommonly to other

²⁰³ Mürk, M. (2014). 'On Taking Things Personally', *Müürileht*, 12th February, viewed 20th Feb 2014, <<http://www.muurileht.ee/artishoki-veerg/>>.

²⁰⁴ 'Vaesus teeb kurjaks ja ilmselt on nendes tingimustes inimlikult moisetavam ka oma positsioonide kaitsmine uute tegijate ja uute visioonide eest'.

²⁰⁵ Karro, K. (2013). 'Outsider Kris Lemsalu Doesn't Fit with Estonian Art Scene', *Eesti Ekspress*, 15th November, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://ekspress.delfi.ee/news/areen/kunstiaasta-2012.d?id=65452404>>.

art markets the author has researched, in Estonia the artist usually covers the cost of renting the space, regardless where they exhibit their works.²⁰⁶

Because the latter can apply for funding from Cultural Endowment of Estonia, this situation is largely overlooked. One could raise this as a hindering issue to establish more of the critical non-commercial exhibition spaces. If an artist needs to pay for the rent regardless where they exhibit, most likely they are to choose a location that at least would help them sell some of the works.²⁰⁷

The new director of Centre for Contemporary Arts Estonia, Maria Arusoo, underlines the issues related to improving the infrastructure and support for artists who currently are forced to independently secure funding, source exhibition space and install/dismantle the exhibition in addition to creating the artworks in the first place.²⁰⁸

Although this concept is widely used, usually it only applies to non-commercial and alternative spaces. Commercial galleries tend to offer assistance to the artist in logistical and financial questions, as well as promote them. For better or for worse, the relationship between commercial entities and artists in Estonia, still has a lot of improving to do.

The new directions in the art scene can only be seen as positive. Advancing, advocating and validating the artists position has the potential to change the way they are regarded by the public. Only by showing respect and appreciation towards the current artists and their profession, can the art scene attract new talent to keep the cultural machine rolling.

²⁰⁶ Härm, A. (2004). Commercial galleries and the racket. - *Estonian Art*, Issue 2, viewed 30th April 2014, <<http://www.einst.ee/Ea/screw/harm.html>>.

²⁰⁷ Tonts, M. (2009). Estonian Contemporary Art Market: The Conditions of Emerging Artists Compared to Great Britain and Finland: Bachelor Thesis, University of Tartu, pp. 19-20.

²⁰⁸ Karro, K. (2012). 'Year in Art 2012', *Eesti Ekspress*, 28th December, viewed 1st April 2014, <<http://ekspress.delfi.ee/news/areen/kunstiaasta-2012.d?id=65452404>>.

CONCLUSION

The creative areas in culture are affected by the economical influences that are characteristic to the present day society. The art world does not function outside the realms of market, as proved by a number of art theorist and critics. On the contrary, a number of economists are advocating for arts influence on the market and economy.

The aspiration of the thesis *Contemporary Visual Art Scene: Conditions of the Market and its Effects on Emerging Artists in Australia and Estonia*, was to explore through research the art field of two countries – Australia and Estonia (Index 1). The study is supported by the visual practical project – The Gambit.

The arts have received a lot of support throughout the course of history. In order for the creatives to create, they need to earn some income to sustain their practice. From the days of renaissance to the birth of the modern market, the artists created mainly commissioned works for wealthy patrons. With the economic and social changes, the artists became free to create arts for the sake of creating it. This new found freedom also brought with it new challenges as the free market did not guarantee the work ever to sell.

The Enlightenment of the 18th century brought with it new ideals that also altered the way arts were regarded. The artist, who was believed to create works for market, to sustain an income, was considered to have low morals. This understanding was also reflected in the change of the artist's image to the bohemian, not seeking any fiscal benefits. Over the centuries this images was enforced and is to this day still feasible. However, in the contemporary socioeconomic society ,the 'starving artist' is facing a number of problems. With their position in flux, the artists are regarded evermore as entrepreneurs.

The two nations share some characteristics when it comes to their cultural policies. Both, for reasons specific to the countries, are regarded as relatively young markets compared to the rest of the Old World traditions. Whilst sharing a common understanding of supporting the artists practices on national level, it is implemented in different ways.

As Estonian art scene is focusing on preservation on the cultural identity and is rather reserved when it comes to change and market influence. Australia's aim is to nurture the economic and creative viability of the arts. Hence, the Australian contemporary art can be described as open to interaction with the market, Estonian contemporary art market is still finding its feet.

Focusing exclusively on the emerging contemporary visual artists and institutions specific to them, advantages as well as disadvantages of the label 'emerging' were under scrutiny.

Defining the label '*emerging*' seems to be a question from the realms of defining the length of a piece of string. The two approaches, emerging as young and emerging as experimental, both cannot offer grounds to the use of it. At large, it seems that the artist themselves are unhappy when associated with the label. Paradoxically, they agree that being seen as emerging is validating their choice of profession.

Difficulties arise with defining emerging as the early career artist tend to receive most help in forms of funding from governmental bodies – Australian Council and the Cultural Endowment of Estonia. Allocating funds to one sector or person of the arts simultaneously deprives it from another deserving field. This causes tension that can have paramount effects on the artists careers.

As the period of emerging is predetermined, some artists working with ephemeral or non-saleable experimental work cannot support their practice. The necessity of constantly relying on external assistance can come to a bitter ending when the time of emergence is up and the artist needs to find alternative ways to support their practices.

Therefore, the obstacles of becoming and being an artist extend far beyond the difficulties one experienced in the past when adhering to the profession. It takes a lot of challenges to be an artist and to be a really clever artist is not enough either.

It takes support from markets, public and private resources through grants and funds, the encouragement of society and luck to make it as a contemporary professional practitioner. There are less of these aspiring artists who have lasted the first five years of their professional practices, faced these challenges and emerged from 'the other side'.

VI THE GAMBIT – PRACTICAL CASE STUDY PROJECT

6. 1. Artistic research

Artistic research developed in the 1990s within visual arts at the universities. Geographically, the discourse originates from English-speaking countries, where it has continued via Scandinavia to Eastern Europe. However, art has always been supported by research in the sense of artists deliberately and purposefully tackling questions, engaging with them and expressing findings through artworks. It is the discipline itself that is still finding its feet.²⁰⁹

The term artistic research was created to distinguish the artists' research work both from scientific research and art in general as the artists assumed the role of researchers and began presenting their results through their works. To this day there are a number of distinct approaches trying to determine what is art and what is artistic research? According to some theorists: '*Artistic research ... must include (apart from everything else) a linguistic part*²¹⁰ to inform the viewer and set the work apart from other, non-research related artworks.

Artistic research differs from scientific research as it lacks exactitude that is quintessential to scientific research – there are no experiments or procedures to establish a controllable principle (that can be observed, calculated and measured), which is the requirement for scientific work. Art is experienced through senses:

'Sensuous comprehensibility is the precondition specific to art, the prerequisite for artistic practice and artistic experience. The rigour of

²⁰⁹ Caduff, C., Siegenthaler, F., Walchli, T. (2010). Art and Artistic Research, - *Zurich Yearbook of The Arts 2009*, vol. 6., pp. 12-17.

²¹⁰ Hannula, M., Suoranta J., Vaden, T. (2005). *Artistic Research: Theories Methods and Practices*. Helsinki: Academy of Fine Arts Publishing, pp. 45-48.

*artistic research must therefore be connected with the fulfilment of this precondition*²¹¹.

In addition, scientific research finds its place in the context of the institution it belongs to or follows. As artists work with available knowledge selectively and methodically, not systematically, their practice is based on individual positions and demonstrated through the characteristics of each work. Artistic research articulates itself through institutions. It is required to have a 'character of constant activity' – research results are constantly in use directing different and new directions of the process/procedures, they are open and could be used for public good.²¹²

6. 3. Curators and exhibitions

Art is experienced through senses; making sensuous comprehensibility the precondition specific to artistic research. As the author's specialisation during an aforementioned exchange study period was in gallery practices not in arts history, the curatorial approach to the research seemed befitting to case study. Therefore, the creative and visual outlet of the project resulted in curating and producing an exhibition (*The Gambit* – from 16th May to 28th June 2013).

Art exhibitions are considered the most important and primary vehicles for the production and dissemination of knowledge in the modern society.²¹³ However, this intelligence is '*selective and exclusive due to the biases of the organisers and the actual or perceived constraints of space, finance and availability of works*²¹⁴. Partly socio-historic events, they administer and establish the cultural meanings of art. Hence it becomes imperative for artists to exhibit their works in order for these to be perceived as art.

²¹¹ *Opt. Cit., p. 34.*

²¹² *Opt. Cit., p. 37.*

²¹³ Greenberg, R., Ferguson, B. W., Nairne, S. [eds.]. (1996). *Thinking About Exhibitions*. London: Routledge Publishing, p. 1.

²¹⁴ *Opt. Cit, p. 1.*

The context in which the artwork is presented is equally important as it creates connotations and attributes meaning to the work and its surroundings. Traditionally, the curators have been the arbiters of taste and quality – they decided which art was worthy of being exhibited to the public, and which was left out.²¹⁵

If the majority of the past century saw the curator's expertise in *'hanging the shows, eyeballing a painting with a connoisseur's gaze and sagely suggesting that it be re-hung a couple of inches to the left'*²¹⁶, the 21st is identifying them as *'unique creative thinkers'*²¹⁷. This shift, partially created by the rapid expansion of the art world and the conflict of trying to subject it to the traditional critical criteria, has left many disgruntled.²¹⁸

Nowadays, some practitioners are formulating the critical discussion frameworks to such an extent that the line between an artist and the curator seems to blur. By *'emphasizing, de-emphasizing and re-emphasizing the braided narratives'*²¹⁹, the curator can manipulate the ways art is more or less understood.

The re-invention of curatorial practices changed the job description of the curator, who is now regarded as a producer, a team leader, a search engine

²¹⁵ Ramirez, M. C., (1996). 'Brokering Identities: Art Curators and the Politics of Cultural Representation' in Greenberg, R., Ferguson, B. W., Nairne, S. [eds.] *Thinking About Exhibitions*, London: Routledge Publishing, pp. 21-38.

²¹⁶ Rugoff, R. (1999). Rules Of The Game. - *Frieze Magazine*, Issue 44, 1st January, para. 1, viewed 4th May 2014, <https://www.frieze.com/issue/article/rules_of_the_game/>.

²¹⁷ Storr, R. (2005). The Exhibitionist. - *Frieze Magazine*, Issue 94, 13th October, para. 5, viewed 14th April 2014, <http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/the_exhibitionists/>.

²¹⁸ Rugoff, R. (1999). Rules Of The Game. - *Frieze Magazine*, Issue 44, 1st January, para. 1, viewed 4th May 2014, <https://www.frieze.com/issue/article/rules_of_the_game/>.

²¹⁹ Ferguson, B. W., (1996). 'Exhibition Rhetorics: Material Speech and Utter Sense', in Greenberg, R., Ferguson, B. W., Nairne, S. [eds.] *Thinking About Exhibitions*, London: Routledge Publishing, p. 181.

and the poser of the questions.²²⁰ The gap between art management and curatorial practices is closing, especially in smaller or medium-sized institutions where the art manager's, curator's, director's and technicians roles overlap.²²¹

6. 3. Context and concept of Gambit

This case study as a result of MCA practical project at University of Tasmania could be affiliated to artistic research. Stemming from the authors previous studies on contemporary art markets and the position of emerging artists in that context, the research has the characteristics of 'constant activity'. It finds its place in institutions – University of Tartu and University of Tasmania, respectively. Artistic research also needs to demonstrate its findings in some sensuous form, which is reflected in the case study project conducted during exchange year. The case study is an exhibition, showcasing the works of emerging artists within research supported concept. The case study project aspired to create a space where the artworks are experienced and discussions sparked without trying to claim the position of an artist.

The game of chess is very noble and by many considered to be a display of great intelligence. History has seen a number of artists who are also considered excellent chess players. It is not an uncommon belief that a game could be considered an artistic expression. Marchel Duchamp, a dedicated chess aficionado, claimed '*while all artists are not chess players, all chess players are artists*²²² immortalising the connection between the two.

Following this pattern of thinking, all artists follow their own rules, preferences and instincts in taking their practice from the emerging stage to mid-career to established; same in chess, the player chooses the opening move, carries

²²⁰ Rugoff, R. (1999). Rules Of The Game. - *Frieze Magazine*, Issue 44, 1st January, viewed 4th May 2014, <https://www.frieze.com/issue/article/rules_of_the_game/>.

• ²²¹ Radbourne, J., Fraser, M. (1996). *Arts Management*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin Publishing.

• ²²² Knudsen, J. C [ed.]. (2000). *Essential Chess Quotations*. Lincoln: Writers Club Press, p. 5.

through the middle game, to the end game – checkmate – where the game has been resolved and it is time to move on to the next one, if one so pleases.

The game is determined by the initial move(s) - *gambit*. Most people are aware that the player with white pieces makes the opening move (most commonly moving a pawn). Yet, there are approximately 678 different gambit moves that are in common use, making the game difficult and intriguing at the same time.

Paul Klein suggests that artists should be like chess players, constantly looking one step ahead. He also underlines a difference between an average and a good chess player – the latter always looks at the big picture, constantly calculating each move from the first to the last in order to succeed. Klein proposes that artists should apply the way good chess players plan the game to their arts practice – pair the vision of the outcome to an equally powerful vision of how to achieve it and then find a way to implement it.²²³

There are a number of ways for an artist to approach the market and get their professional career on the way. Funding is the most popular option (consider it the white pawn of arts), alternatives would be independent sales of their works, being represented commercially, working in applied arts to support their practice, pursuing non-artistic career to support their practice, seeking support from family and friends etc. It all comes down to their decision and knowledge on how to read the map on the art world (in a game of chess, how to play different gambits to an end).

One could also draw parallels between the lives or the profession of chess players and artists. Neither is expected to make a living solely by practicing fine

²²³ Klein, P. (2013). *How To Succeed As An Artist*, Tandem Press 25th Anniversary Conference, [online lecture], viewed 5th April 2014, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcTYhaA72iY>>.

arts or playing chess. It is acceptable for both professions to supplement their incomes through other means. An amateur or a distinguished master, both have the right to play the game and they are judged on what they deliver. However, in arts, the artist is expected to classify themselves as one to be considered a professional practitioner; in chess, the player has no need to identify himself as a chess player *per se*.²²⁴

The author of this thesis is familiar with the game of chess and has played it in the past. Considering different approaches on how to resolve the physical exhibition space and desire to showcase emerging artists works in a clear connection to each other, it seemed appropriate to draw inspiration from the chess movements. Similarly to the game, the emerging artists are making their initial moves in the art scene, trying to find the best possible solutions for themselves to gain recognition in the art scene.

The emerging artists' works act as their chess pieces, the tools to play across to being established. Alike a game of chess, there is a dynamic potential concealed in each of the sixteen chessmen (their artists' practice) moving across the 64 squares of the black and white chessboard. (art scene) The key is understanding the playing field to successfully navigate through it.

Presenting the concept of the exhibition at the University of Tasmania Graduate Conference, some valued remarks were made by other chess aficionados. One of them stating that not all chess pieces making the opening move are equal. The chessman are all ranked in their value and can all move only according to their position in the chess pieces hierarchy. A key remark cementing the author's belief in the similarity of the game and arts as not all artists starting out are equal either. Their talent, skill, view of the world, education, training,

²²⁴ Groot, A. D de (2008). *Thought and Choice is Chess*. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, pp. 339-363.

financial background, social skills and luck amongst other defining characteristics and opportunities, make them all unique upon entering the emerging art scene.

The interest of this practical case study project was to showcase the works of emerging artists who do wish to enter the art scene and could be considered early-career practitioners in accordance to the meaning of the term, explained earlier in the thesis. Therefore, this research will concentrate on the artists seeking recognition within art world, including the economic art market. The question remains: what should be their first move? This decision is paramount to the career/game trajectory. *'Should you seek safety or adventure, play solidly or creatively; grasp a fleeting opportunity or remain in security?'*²²⁵.

The author of this research was able to acquire skills and attain knowledge related to common curatorial practices as well as practical experiences related to the production of an exhibition prior to undertaking the Gambit project. Previous experience of working in a museum, commercial space and a non-commercial artist run initiative setting, ensured grass-root understanding of the functioning of a gallery. In addition, the practical projects worked on during the first half of the exchange year as a curator's assistant and an assistant curator, were fundamental in deciding to go ahead with this project.

6. 4. Practical work on the project

The work on the preparations started in the previous semester by applying to secure the university gallery space – The NEW Gallery – for the proposed dates. As the context of the exhibition was already predetermined (showcasing the works of emerging Australian artists in the setting analysing their position in

²²⁵ McDonald, N. (2005). *Chess: From the First Move to the Last*. London, Chrysalis Books Group, pp. 5-6.

the local art scene), the author began contacting a number of professional practitioners.

A selection of artists was approached in person, over the phone or via email during a period of approximately two months. The selection of the practitioners was made using ARI and community galleries in Australia (see extra). Most responded positively to questions posed and were genuinely interested in participating in the group show. Due to different reasons, a number were unable to commit to the dates the gallery space was secured for.

Curatorial aim was to hold a group exhibition of minimum five to have an impact in the conceptual setting, maximum ten artist or art groups as the NEW gallery space is not fit to accommodate a large number of works. Eventually, seven artists (six individual, one group) were chosen and secured for the exhibition.

6. 4. 1. Connie Anthes

Connie Anthes was approached as she represented the segment of the emerging artists that do not fit in the age limitations set on emerging practitioners. She started pursuing her arts dream of experimental and installation art after a successful career in marketing and design. In addition, Connie was a board member of Firstdraft (one of the oldest and still running artist run initiatives in Australia).

The author sees Connie as a strong contemporary practitioner who has the skills and knowledge necessary in order to succeed in the competitive market economy. She makes no secret that a key to success is to be able to communicate with members of the art scene in a professional and calculated manner. Connie is also well aware of the implications the term emerging places on the artist. She highlighted, that ten years ago, emerging was seen as a

classification of an artist's practice, but nowadays it is nothing more than a tag line for commercial galleries.

During her time on the board of Firstdraft, Connie saw many emerging artists applying for a show in the critical space. She admitted that many of these early career artists would not have been able to create works that are experimental without financial support. However, she also noted that the young (as the majority she encountered were) seemed often disillusioned as they failed to grasp the understanding that there will be a day the funding will come to an end.

6. 4. 2. Robert Boldkald

Robert Boldkald is another artist in the show who represents the age group outside the expected when one thinks of emerging artists. Like Connie, he embarked on his career in plastic arts after a career in non-arts related field. Robert, who is also an experienced gallery technician, decided to enrol as a mature undergraduate student. His artistic practice did attract commercial representation before graduation, hence Robert is the exception to the 'art school dream'.

He does not dismiss the label emerging considering it a validation to the him by peers and arts organisations/institutions. Boldkald however does not agree that emerging simultaneously means young. For him, it indicates that a person has made a conscious decision to embark on the artistic career as a serious practitioner. The artist only emerges in the eyes of the public, the artist is no more or less of an artist in their own consciousness.

Robert notes that he has experienced being ignored by commercial galleries who are more attracted to younger artists as the latter could potentially guarantee a longterm profitable working relationship and income. He does not

see it as a healthy outlook on life or arts, if the practitioner does not believe their works are good enough to be sold in the market. The faith in their practice attracts attention of the others and he believes there is nothing wrong with making ends meet by selling artworks.

6. 4. 3. Mat Carey

Mat Carey is the youngest participant of the show, perfectly fitting for all definitions of emerging. Currently pursuing postgraduate degree, he actively participates in the local art scene (subsidises income by working as a gallery technician, is a board member of an ARI, curates and initiates exhibitions to improve his practice). Mat is a painter, continuously pushing himself to challenge the traditions of the medium.

Carey sees label 'emerging' as something necessary in the eyes of mainly funding bodies and agrees that some limitations to the term have to be employed as councils, institutions and private supporters cannot be exhausting all the funds on the same artists continuously. Therefore, defining emerging will ensure the newcomers to the scene, who will supposedly bring the most contemporary views and unaltered practices to the art scene, will receive some portion of the funding.

Mat does not expect that emerging artists should be comfortable in the early stages of their years, at least not financially. He suggests, that artists who are feeling unsafe or fearful about the economic viability of their career, should re-evaluate the reasons why they have made a choice to become an artist in the first place.

Finding alternative ways to support arts's practice could lead to the opening of doors, one never thought of knocking. A proactive and positive attitude when

tackling obstacles in the arts – and overcoming them - could, in his opinion, be a satisfaction in its own right.

6. 4. 4. Josh Foley

Josh Foley is a remarkably distinguished painter, who is in the transitioning phase from emerging to mid-career. He has secured commercial representation but still actively seeks critical dialogue outside the gallery and in the alternative spaces. Josh defines emerging as a period where the artist is still formulating ideas. When these ideas and themes have created necessary momentum and energy for the practice to support itself creatively, then the artist has moved on to the next phase in their evolution. He feels no need to define the term in age or even the direction of the practice (experimental, traditional, ephemeral, commercial etc.).

Foley emphasises the importance of the practical skills an artist can acquire during their (academic) training period, but admits that not everyone understands the importance of nurturing these survival skills while in comfortable and protected environment of an institution. Josh describes his coming out of the art school as a tortures process that forced him to re-evaluate over an extended period of time his practice and focus on improving it. The obstacles can be a force behind creativity, one just needs to harness the energy and direct it into their practice. He sees the smooth, hurdle free path to success as a potential destroyer of critical engagement and development of new ideas. An element of tension and struggle (creative, financial or both) will always be a part of artistic practice – the period of emergence is the time one needs to learn to handle it.

6. 4. 5. Laura Hindmarsh

Laura Hindmarsh is enjoying success in the early stages of her career. She works in experimental practices focusing on video and print art. Laura is an awarded practitioner who volunteers as a chair of Constance ARI, mentoring other emerging artists. She emphasises that a number of contemporary practitioners, herself included, do require support and funding in order to produce their works.

Hindmarsh offers support and guidance to other practitioners, mainly in how to secure financial support and communicate oneself to the other members of the arts. She finds it unfair and hindering, that a freshly graduated young artist could be competing against someone with a practice way out of their league, but also emerging as their artistic direction has changed and therefore is considered (re)emerging.

Laura admits she is fearful of the future as an experimental artist without commercial representation. Spending an excessive amount of time on administrative tasks (securing funding, marketing her art, organising exhibitions etc.) are already preoccupying the time potentially spent on creative work. Facing a future, where the competition for less funding is even fiercer, she questions the sustainability of practices similar to hers in the Australian art scene.

6. 4. 6. Stella Rosa McDonald

Stella Rosa McDonald was heralded as the future of Australian art after the nomination for the QANTAS SOYA prize in 2012. The award recognises the emerging artists and ensures that they are seen as vital contributors to the Australian culture and its (art) history. Stella claims that 'emerging' has been made murky by funding. She does not see the term as a negative, as it

validates the artist's position but also allows some space for errors in their practice.

McDonald suggests that markets tend to favour youth and experimental as emerging, new and *'hot'* and could potentially influence cultural organisations when it comes to the latter's choice of who to support.

She admits that constantly applying for funding to support her multimedia and print based practice, makes her at times feel like a charlatan by trying to communicate her ideas to secure funding whilst aiming to stay true to the creative vision. She points out that at times, an artist can feel pressured to create work that better fits the vision of the organisation who supports it. She encourages early career artists to stay true to their ideas as the external and internal pressures will always be an issue to tackle in arts.

6. 4. 6. Team Textiles

Team textiles was the only collaboration of artists taking part of the exhibition. The members (Abigayle Tett, Mae Finlayson and Ashley Bird) have all admitted that the reason behind forming Team Textiles was largely economic. Unable to support their experimental textile practices, working as a team gave them additional opportunities to exhibit their work as well as create a cultivate critical discussion and flow of ideas.

Team Textiles has worked on a number of commissioned projects. As active members in the art scene (all board members of an ARI, two lecturers in art), they create projects that call for public's interaction and engagement. Working as a team relieves the pressures of constantly applying for funding as well as handling all other administrative tasks. In addition, they are able to share the costs of production and studio space, making it easier to pursue artistic ideas.

Team Textile's thoughts of emerging were to see it as a buzzword, applied by institutions, organisations and marketers to create attention. They claimed that an artist would encounter difficulties if trying to deny that they at some stage of their careers, should not be referred to as emerging. The notion that there is an innovative and contemporary segment of people in the Australian art scene who are young and experimental (emerging), is crystallised in the minds of the public. Instead of trying to fight a losing battle, one should try and exploit it to the best of their abilities for as long as they can.

6. 5. A game of chess at the NEW Gallery

The context of the exhibition was to visually emphasise the findings of an ongoing investigation on primary art market and its effects on emerging artists. The visual outlet aspired to investigate discussion on the pressing topics that emerging artists face in their day-to-day practices.

As the journey of every artist is different, the curator of the exhibition hoped to convey this understanding in the physical space. The concept of the exhibition was grounded in the game of chess and how the opening move – gambit – has the potential to determine the outcome.

The sheer volume of gambits that chess aficionados play on daily bases correlates to the idea – all artists choose their own paths (gambits) and play the game according to their own rules. Similarly to the chess, knowing how to read the game plan, is advantageous.

From the notion of the game plan and how it guides the chess player, the curator chose to use this analogue in the layout of the exhibition. Each artist was assigned their very own gambit as they were all following different paths in

their artistic careers. Thin gridlines were painted on the wall to reflect the gambit, the game plan and a road map at the same time. A space was created where on each wall, black or white, the exhibits were hung according to the position of the pawn in a chess gambit. Each of them on a different journey, joined by the emerging status of their artistic career.

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Index 1. Brief comparison of Australian and Estonian art scenes

Index 2.1. The Gambit catalogue

4 Connie Anthes (NSW)

Sydney based artist whose practice interrogates everyday systems we inhabit, challenging traditional boundaries between painting/installation and sculpture/drawing. Her works act as investigations into materials, methods and modes of perception. Connie uses the idea of deliberate "errors of making" to build a structural logic where the images are teetering on the point of unfolding and collapsing; bound to crumble under their own weight.

Shadow and shape studies refer to a mathematical model that examines how symmetrical systems often spontaneously collapse.

Artworks in the show:

Untitled (shadow study #3) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 32 x 26 cm	Untitled (shape study #3) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 26 x 32 cm
Untitled (shadow study #4) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 32 x 26 cm	Untitled (shape study #4) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 26 x 32 cm
Untitled (shape study #1) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 26 x 32 cm	Untitled (shape study #5) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 26 x 32 cm
Untitled (shape study #2) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 26 x 32 cm	Untitled (shape study #6) (2012) Oil on cedar ply, 26 x 32 cm

Connie Anthes is represented by
Damien Minton Gallery, Sydney

www.connieanthes.com



6 Robert Boldkald (TAS)

Launceston based artist working mainly in sculpture using various materials to explore the shapes and forms of human body. He draws on his past experiences as a photographer working from a mental image of the "real thing". The body, and its millions of different ways of expressing emotions, is the main topic of investigation in Robert's figures.

Artworks in the show:

The Body as Subject: Series 2 (2013)
Plaster on sand, steel, acrylic, ink
48 x 170 x 60 cm

Robert Boldkald is represented by the Pejean Gallery,
Launceston

www.gallerypejean.com.au



8 Mat Carey (TAS)

Launceston based artist and a postgraduate student in Masters of Contemporary Art at UTAS. Currently undertaking a residency in Italy where he is continuing his investigations into the experiences and emotions, focusing on the creative process and conceptual drive. His practice investigates how ones past experiences alter their understanding of reality and the present.

Artwork in the show:

Image of the Two Lovers
Or
Of Serpents and Doves (2013)
(Documentation of a Wall painting at the Abbey of Thelma, Cefalu, Italy)
Digital print
84 x 59 cm

Mat Carey is a board member at Sawtooth ARI,
Launceston

www.sawtooth.org.au



Index 2.2. The Gambit catalogue

10 Josh Foley (TAS)

Launceston based artist investigating semiotic, aesthetic and philosophical concepts through paintings. Josh's works explore his various interests and investigate color theory and harmony, resulting in a variety of ways in depicting paint and playing with ideas of flatness, texture, surface and renaissance principles of space. He aims to embrace and explore the paint as a substance resonating to materials, movements, patterns and cultures in order to find ways to push his paintings in directions that would provide increasing stimulation and invigorating experiences for himself and the audience.

Artwork in the show:

Head, *Entropic Anthropogenic Landscape System (Berridale)* (2013)
Oil and Acrylic on Linen
153 x 185 cm

Josh Foley is represented by Handmark Gallery,
Hobart

www.joshfoley.com.au



12 Laura Hindmarsh (TAS)

Hobart based artist whose experimental art practice is an ongoing inquiry into the nature and means of representation. Laura focuses on the process of creating; compositional techniques, duration, repetition and layering, allowing past and present moments build into something new and eventually exceed their own representations.

Half-tone Screen Tests, (2013)
Offset lithographs
45 x 55 cm

*Artworks produced in partnership with The Big Day Press Emerging Artist Residency Program that is supported by the Australia Council for the Arts' grant for Artist Run Initiatives.

www.laurahindmarsh.com



14 Stella Rosa McDonald (NSW)

Sydney based artist whose experimental and interactive practice explores the ways of creating an image of ourselves through the prism of our surroundings. Using language as a tool to construct a narrative, it investigates the gap between the tale and its telling, displaying the different recollections of the same shared experience.

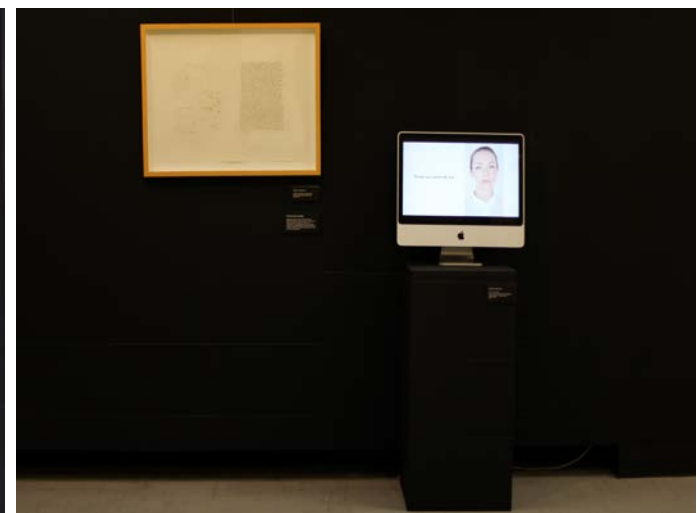
Artworks in the show:

Self, Titled (2012)
2 screen, synchronized High Definition video projection, without audio.
Edition 1/10

Self Portrait (editors marks) (2013)
Etching, artist proof, edition of ten
80 x 60 cm

Stella is a postgraduate student at COFA, University of New South Wales

www.stellarosamcdonald.com



Index 2.3. The Gambit catalogue

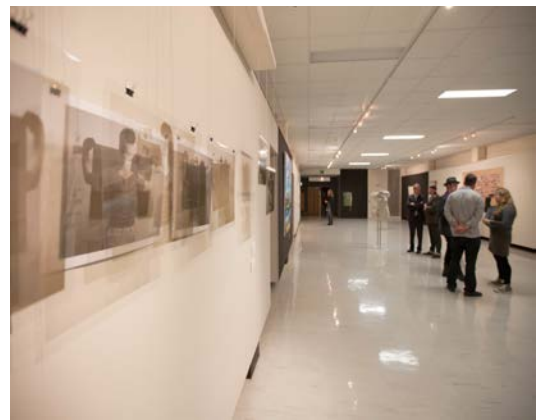
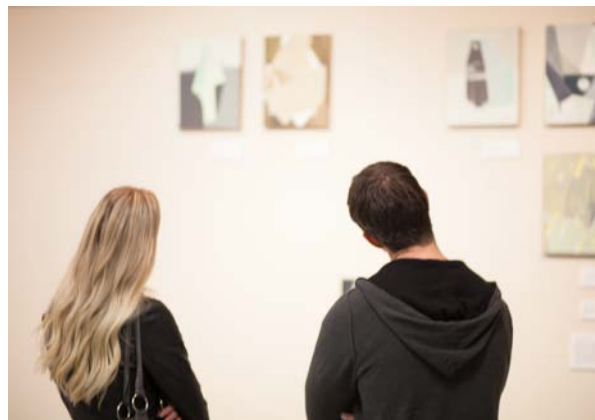
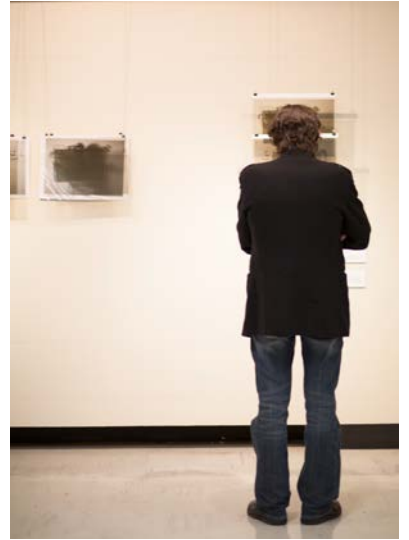
16 Team Textiles (TAS)

Launceston based artists' trio (Ashley Bird, Mae Finlayson and Abigail Tett) work mainly in various textile techniques creating audience activated artworks. Their practice *per se* is experimental and incorporates public participation and open ended objectives to explore different ways to use, combine and construct artworks from different materials.

Artwork in the show:
Masked Family Portraits (2013)
Digital print
230 x 120 cm

All Team Textiles members also continue working on their individual arts practices.

www.teamtextiles.virb.com



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KOKKUVÕTE

Kunstimaailma mõiste on laiem kui üksnes kunstnikud ja nende teosed. Kunst ei sünni vaakumis, vaid on suuresti seda ümbritsevate sotsiaalsete mõjurite, sealhulgas kunstituru mõjuväljas. Seega tuleb kunsti ja selle arengu mõistmiseks uurida kunstiturgu. Viimasest lähtub ka kunstnike positsioon ühiskonnas.

Kaunitet kunstide püsima jäämiseks on läbi aegade neid mitmeti toetatud. Renessanssi-aegsest Itaaliast kuni kaaseagse turu sünnini, lüid kunstnikud oma teosed eelõige tellimustöödena erapatroonidele. Aegade muutuste ja turuühiskonna kujunemise tagajärjel muutusid ka kunstnike praktikad. Vaba turg tõi kaasa vabaduse kunstis luua ananüümsele turule, kes ei esitanud töödele ega loomingule ettekirjutusi. Sama vabadusega kaasnesid aga ka majanduslikud raskused kuna kunstnikud ei saanud alati loota kunstitööde müügile.

Valgustusajastu tõi kaasa uuendused, suuresti seoses majanduslike muutustega. Kunstnikut, kelle loomingu müük tagas viimasele sissetuleku, ei peetut pahatihti enam kaasaegsetga võrdseks. Turule orienteeritud kunsti loomingut peeti madalaks. Sellest lähtuvat muutus ka arusaam kunstnikust, mis peegeldus tema imagos – sündis boheemlaslik kunstnik, kes ei allunud majanduslikule mõtlemisele. Sajandite jooksul kinnitstus see uus kunstniku identiteet avalikkuse silmis. Tänapäeval on see arusaam kunstnikust ning tema positsioonist ühiskonnas muutumas, kuna viimaseid peetakse üha rohkem iseseisvateks (loomingulisteks) ettevõtjateks.

Magistritöö *Kaasaegse kunsti areen: kunstituru tingimused ning mõjud noortele kunstnikele Austraalias ja Eestis* eesmärgiks oli uurida kujutava kunsti

valdkonda, kitsamalt kaasaegset kunsti ning selgitada välja turu roll kunstipärandis ning selle mõju kunstnikele, kitsamalt noorte autorite loominguks. Ülevaate saamiseks on töö autor tutvunud erialakirjandusega, uurinud riikide kultuuripoliitikat ning vestelnud kunstimaailma liikmetega.

Austraalia ja Eesti kunstimaailmade vahel leidub nii sarnasusi kui ka erinevusi. Mõlema riigi kultuuripoliitika tugineb Vana Maailma traditsioonidele, mille kohaselt riigi rahvuskultuuri säilitamiseks ja arendamiseks on tarvis seda toetustega abistada. Hoolimata ühistest vaadetest, erinevad riikide toimetehanismid poliitika rakendamisel.

Eesti kultuuripoliitika keskendub pigem kultuuri ja rahvusliku identiteedi säilitamisele, suhtudes uuendustesse ja turu mõjudesse skeptiliselt. Austraalia seevastu on avatum ning keskendub pigem kultuuri edendamisele majanduslikul tasemel ning kunstnike elu paremaks muutmisele. Riikide ajaloolist tausta võib siinkohal pidada erinevuste põhjuseks.

Käesolev uurimustöö keskendus eelkõige noortele kunstnikele, kes on oma kunstnikutee alguses. Nende olukorra paremaks mõistmiseks analüüsiti noorkunsti erinevaid tähendusi ja rakendusi kaasaegses ühiskonnas.

Mõiste 'noorkunst' defineerimine osutus üllatuslikult keeruliseks. Kahe kõige levinuma tähenduse lähemal vaatlemisel selgus, et mõlemad definitsioonid ei õigusta termini kasutust täies mahus. Ühtlasi selgus, et karjäär algusastmel asuvad kunstnikud ise on sageli need, kes ei soovi end terminiga seostada. Samas nõustusid uurimustöö raames vestelnud, et noore kunstniku tiitel annab neile kindlustunde ning kinnitab nende staatust professionaalsete kunstnikutena.

Noore kunstniku tiitel kannab endas korraga nii positiivseid kui negatiivseid tähendusi. Austraalia puhul selgus, et kõige suuremaks probleemiks oli

majanduslike toetuste määramine. Kuna riiklikul tasemel toetakse noori kunstnike märgatavalt enam kui juba kanda kinnitanud ning tuntust kogunud professionaale, on noorte kunstnike arv viimasel ajal tõusu teel olnud. Piiritletud ning kõigi osaliste poolt aktsepteeritud definitisooni puudumine on muutnud olukorra aga teravaks. Ühe valdkonna toetamine välistab sama toetuse mõnele muule, samuti olulisele valdkonnale. Eestis pole riiklikul tasandil kunstnikuameti perioodid piiritletud. Lisaks on võimalik Eestis kõigile kunstnikel perioodiliselt majanduslikku toetust saada, mistõttu toetuste poolest ei erine noore või juba tuntust kogunud kunstniku positsioon sama teravalt kui Austraalias.

Toetuste tähtsust ei tohiks alahinnata. Noorkunst on oma loomult enamasti uuenduslik ja alternatiivne ning selle turuväärtus on võrdlemis madal. Ellujäämiseks ning praktika pidevaks edasi arendamiseks, on pahatihti toetus ainsaks sissetuleku allikaks. Pidev majandusliku abi küsimine on aga kunstniku kui elukutse nime külge halva maitse jätnud. Kunstniku ametit ei peeta mõlemas riigis ametikoha võrdseks, pigem näitab tiitel, et kunstniku positsioon on samane töötuga.

Kunstnikuteega kaasnevad raskused erinevad ning kohati kattuvad ajaloost tuntuks saanud professionaalidega. Tänapäeva kunstnik oleks justkui ettevõtja, kelle ülesanded varieeruvad seinast seinast. Kaasaegse kunstnikuna ellu jäämiseks on tarvis toetust kunstiturult, riiklikul ning eratasandil, kunstniku ameti väärtustamist ühiskonna poolt ning ka hulgaliselt vedamist. Vähem on neid, kes esimesed paar rasket noore kunstniku aastat üle elavad ning elujõuliste ja tugevatena 'teisele poole' jõuavad.

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

Mina

Merle Tõnts
(sünnikuupäev: 16.11.1987)

1. annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) enda loodud teose

Contemporary Visual Art Scene: Conditions of the Market and its Effects on Emerging Artists in Australia and Estonia (Kaasaegse kunsti areen: kunstituru tingimused ning mõjud noortele kunstnikele Austraalias ja Eestis)
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