
A Framework for the Professionalization of Art Collecting: Transforming Casual Collections in Brazil

Ana Paula Moreno

Alameda Jau, 186 ap 112, 01420-000, São Paulo, SP
FGV EESP FGV INVEST, Art Economics

doi.org/10.51505/IJEBMR.2025.91016 URL: <https://doi.org/10.51505/IJEBMR.2025.91016>

Received: July 26, 2025

Accepted: July 29, 2025

Online Published: Oct 14, 2025

Abstract

The art scene has become an increasingly significant dimension of cultural globalization, marked by the complex circulation of artworks, artists, institutions, and symbolic values. Within this dynamic ecosystem shaped by curators, gallerists, museums, and art fairs, this article positions the collector as a central figure whose influence extends well beyond the private acquisition of art. Acting as cultural mediators, collectors play a pivotal role in shaping access, determining value, and facilitating the international mobility of art, thereby contributing to the formation of transnational networks. While traditionally seen as private individuals motivated by personal or aesthetic interests, collectors also operate as agents of global cultural projection, enabling the integration of artists and artworks into international circuits. Through a combination of theoretical analysis and empirical evidence from data on Brazilian collectors' behaviour, this research highlights how the collector behaviour influences the market dynamics and the international visibility of local art scenes. The findings underscore the potential of a more professional collector, an individual who builds a collection strategically and with long-term intent base to act as a catalyst for the growth and global integration of the Brazilian art market.

Keywords: Collector role, Art Legacy, Brazilian art internationalization, Art Collecting Framework; Art Market

Introduction

The art scene has become an increasingly significant phenomenon within the broader context of cultural globalization, encompassing complex processes involving the circulation of artworks, artists, collectors, institutions, curators, gallerists, art fairs, auction houses, art advisors, and other key actors in the art world.

As this global ecosystem becomes more intricate and interconnected, the challenges related to the long-term preservation and institutionalization of artistic legacies become more pronounced. There is also a noticeable lack of clear strategies for the management of these legacies, which is reflected in the absence of standardized protocols for authorizing loans, image reproduction, and access to archival materials for research and publication purposes, what reveals a critical need

for more structured approaches to ensure the sustained visibility and scholarly engagement with the work of artists (Fialho, 2025).

Among the various agents that are part of this ecosystem, this article focuses on analysing the role and influence of the collector. Traditionally perceived as a private individual driven by personal and aesthetic motivations, the collector also operates as an agent of projection, actively contributing to the integration of artists and artworks into global art circuits.

For Baekeland (1992), collectors have factual interest in the pieces they own, they read about art several hours a day, they are assiduous museum, art gallery and art fairs visitors, and most of them subscribe to domestic and foreign auction catalogues in their special fields of collecting with a deep scholarly preoccupation with many facets of art and its history, to understand the culture their objects were produced (Baekeland, 1992, p. 208).

The objective of this article is to analyse the Brazilian collector survey data and propose a framework for developing professional collectors. It investigates the balance and how collectors actively participate in the art scene and development, influencing the recognition of artists, market dynamics, how they support financially artists and gallerists and the transnational circulation of cultural goods.

This article adopts a qualitative methodological approach, grounded in both literature review and case study analysis, with the objective of understanding the role of the art collector in shaping the Brazilian and international art markets. The research focuses particularly on strategic practices of Brazilian collectors, proposing a framework for the professionalization of art collecting.

The literature review provides the theoretical and conceptual foundation of the study, drawing on scholarly works in art economics, cultural sociology, and collecting studies. Authors such as Diane Crane, Isabelle Graw, Mary Rozell, and Ethan & Thea Wagner contribute critical insights into the collector's evolving role as a cultural agent, market influencer, and institutional actor. The review also incorporates official publications, such as the *Brazilian Art Market Report 2024* and the *Art Basel & UBS Global Collecting Survey 2024*, which offer up-to-date data on collector behaviour and global trends.

Furthermore, the article proposes an original framework for the professionalization of art collectors. This framework draws from best practices in the field, such as collection conceptualization, patronage strategies, market engagement, artist research, and inventory management outlined through references to recognized sources (e.g., Rozell, Wagner & Wagner, Moureau et al., and AXA ART).

As Rozell (2021) observes, there is more to art collecting than simply discovering a work at an art fair or gallery and finding the perfect place to hang it; the practice is governed by implicit norms and entails a complex, multifaceted approach. A deeper understanding of this dynamic,

coupled with an analysis of the specific characteristics and latent potential of the Brazilian art market, reveals that the number of professional collectors remains relatively limited, despite the sector's considerable capacity for growth.

In this regard, the article draws on literature that examines the evolving role of collectors in the contemporary art world. Unlike two decades ago, when collectors often acquired works with the aspiration that they might one day hold significance in art history, today's collectors actively shape the market and influence the trajectory and market performance of artists' careers. Among them are the so-called *star collectors*, who guide the preferences of other collectors and exert considerable influence on the art market (Wagner & Wagner, p. 83–107, 2013).

At the same time, the role of the collector as an agent raises important ethical and political concerns. There is a risk of reinforcing existing asymmetries between artistic centres and peripheral regions, or of reducing art to a purely speculative commodity. Moreover, the growing influence of collectors on curatorial and institutional decisions may compromise the critical and intellectual autonomy of the arts. For Graw, “today, it would be pure illusion to characterize the modern collector as free from speculative interest, and why shouldn't he be untested in converting part of his collection back into money?” (Graw, p. 77, 2009).

In recent years there has been a surge in the number of collector-owned, quasi-institutional exhibition spaces. Many collectors chose this model as they would like to control, maintain and exhibit their collection to the public in a way that presents their curatorial approach and the pieces wouldn't be rotting at museum's storages (Wagner & Wagner, p. 22, 2013).

In light of these considerations, this article argues that collectors occupy a decisive position in the contemporary art ecosystem—one that extends beyond mere acquisition toward active participation in shaping artistic value, cultural legacy, and market structures. By focusing on Brazil, a context marked by both dynamic growth and structural challenges, this study seeks to illuminate how collectors can operate as agents of professionalization and cultural sustainability. The proposed framework for the professionalization of art collecting aims to transform casual or intuitive practices into strategic, research-based, and institutionally engaged models of collecting. Ultimately, the article contributes to the broader discourse on the governance and legacy of art in a globalized context, proposing that the evolution of the collector's role is essential for ensuring the long-term visibility, credibility, and preservation of artistic production within and beyond national borders.

1. Art Collector, a profession

In the current global market, there are 95,000 mega-collectors. They belong to a recent social class, with a fortune over 30 million dollars, are avid for luxury consumption of all kinds and represent 80% of art buyers. As a strategy, they choose artists, fund galleries to invest in the production of artists, and speculate on the values of works in the market (Crane, 2009, p. 339).

Thus, within this new context, a collector plays the role of a driving force, acting in the art market, and in addition to speculating on the values of their works, they promote them and create a curriculum for them (Cauquelin, p. 33, 2010).

Most of these collectors began with modest ambitions, not planning to become art collectors, many of them say it was by a surprise that they understood they were art collectors, especially for contemporary art as they are uncertain of their acquisitions, different from collectors of established and historical art movements (Wagner & Wagner, p. 12, 2013). But as collectors increasingly act as mediators in the global art ecosystem, their capacity to engage with context will determine not only the integrity of their collections but also their contribution to the cultural memory of future generations.

So, this article explores and proposes the transformation of a casual collector into a professional one, an individual who builds their collection strategically and purposefully, with the intent of leaving a legacy.

For Donald B. Marron, a MoMA trustee, to make a good collector, the collector must be “emotionally involved, has a good eye and knows the works in their context” (Wagner & Wagner, p. 87, 2013).

Art collecting is deeply personal, a reflection of the self, and new collectors often start by purchasing less expensive prints and multiples. Rozell classifies a collection as *vertical*, when collecting one individual artist; *horizontal*, when the acquisition comes from individual works from a broad number of individual artists; *crossover*, refers to collecting works from across periods (Rozell, p. 17-19, 2021).

For Ethan and Thea Westreich Wagner, the core activities of collecting demonstrate the collector’s knowledge, perspicacity and intellectual heft. Several interesting inputs explains art collector behaviour, beginning from what drives the art collector in choosing which artists to collect and which works to buy (Wagner & Wagner, p. 8, 2013). According to them a distinguished collection is not based on the number of artworks, nor the scale of the works, nor the popularity of the artists at that time, it is not related the collection budget, but on the collector knowledge on artists’ practices, art market correlations, gallery scene, to develop a trained eye (Wagner & Wagner, p. 64-65, 2013).

From a large variety of art works, the collector’s choices are narrowed and defined by a matrix of factors: personal motives, likes and dislikes, collecting strategy, financial wherewithal, aesthetics acumen and art historical knowledge. There are also different drives for collectors, there are the ones that likes to spot new artists before everyone else; the ones driven to buy the best artwork of the moment; the ones that are expecting in the increase in economic value; the ones that want to fill in their homes with prestigious artworks to impress their friends; to enter into social circles (Wagner & Wagner, p. 8-9, 2013).

Overall, almost the rigueur, collectors open their homes to friends, fellow collectors, museum groups, artists, dealers and curators. In doing so, they seek to affirm their self-image (Wagner & Wagner, pg.18, 2013). The collector J. Paul Getty (1892-1976) said:

I realized that my collection had grown important enough for the public to have an interest in viewing it... after acquiring many examples of fine art, one develops conscience pangs about keeping them to oneself” (Getty, p. 276, 2003).

Another interesting data to consider is the geographical influence as collectors prioritized purchasing works from their respective home countries. Economy investigators Garay, Vielma, and Villalobos explain that collectors and investors are attracted to works by artists from their own countries due to the high component of domestic prejudice in purchasing art. To those authors, it can be expected that national economic conditions will influence the local art market, thus justifying the design of price indices for local artists (Edwards, 2004).

Additionally, the contemporary art movement holds appeal for dedicated collectors, offering the opportunity to build personal relationships with artists, follow their careers and personal journeys, and, in some cases, influence their trajectories by supporting and promoting their work both locally and internationally.

Collectors who are connected to international museum boards are especially well-positioned to champion artists on a global stage. These collectors recognize that art collecting is not merely about acquiring works, but about shaping cultural heritage, selecting pieces that may enter the historical canon, endure through generations, and ultimately contribute to a legacy.

2. Focusing on Brazil

In 2024, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs commissioned the 7th edition of the *Art Market Report*¹ with the objective of assessing the current state of the Brazilian art market. The study employed a mixed-methods: research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data. Primary data were collected via a structured questionnaire distributed to a representative sample of art galleries across Brazil. Secondary data sources included official databases from the Ministry of Development, Industry, and Services (MDIC), the Ministry of Finance, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the Integrated Foreign Trade System (Siscomex), and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The qualitative component was based on in-depth interviews with 45 key stakeholders within the contemporary Brazilian art ecosystem, including collectors, curators, art consultants, representatives from art fairs and auction houses, as well as

¹ 7th edition of the Art Market Report; access on Oct 13, 2025: <https://latitudebrasil.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Act-Brazil-Art-Market-Report-2024.pdf>

opinion leaders. For the purposes of this article, the analysis will focus specifically on the role and consumer behaviour of collectors.

Findings from the report indicate galleries recorded as many as 500 unique buyers annually, 85% of participating galleries reported a client base of fewer than 150 individuals. This suggests that only a small segment of galleries engage with a broad pool of buyers, while the majority rely on a relatively concentrated group of collectors. Such data underscore the critical importance of fostering strong, long-term relationships with recurring clients, as well as offering personalized engagement strategies to maintain collector loyalty. According to the report, 77% of total sales were made to Brazilian collectors, while only 15% involved international buyers.

The report also sheds light on the economic behaviour of Brazilian collectors in 2023. On average, 42% of annual gallery turnover was generated through in-person sales, representing a decline from the 55% reported in the 2018 edition of the study. Interestingly, galleries with higher revenue tended to rely less on digital sales channels, suggesting that online transactions are more closely associated with lower-value artworks or buyers with comparatively limited purchasing power. Additionally, several galleries reported challenges in cultivating client loyalty through digital platforms, pointing to persistent difficulties in retaining online-acquired clients.

Art fairs continue to serve as vital venues for market expansion and audience engagement. In 2023, national art fairs accounted for an average of 25% of gallery revenue, while international fairs contributed approximately 9%. However, some galleries indicated that up to 55% of their total annual sales were conducted at international fairs, highlighting the considerable potential of these events for global market exposure. This data shows how collectors behave in terms of acquiring their works by presence.

Another key finding concerns the increasing influence of art advisors in shaping collector behaviour and facilitating sales. In Brazil, on average, 19% of gallery transactions involved the participation of art advisors, who typically charge commission fees ranging from 5% to 20%, with rates often decreasing as the artwork's value increases. The report emphasizes the pivotal role advisors play in the internationalization of Brazilian art by assisting foreign collectors in navigating the local market's structural and cultural complexities.

As one foreign advisor interviewed in the study remarked, "one only buys what one is familiar with," advocating for greater investment in international visibility for Brazilian artists. The advisor suggested that increasing familiarity with Brazilian art may offer a more sustainable and effective long-term strategy than focusing solely on short-term sales or direct engagement with foreign buyers.

In the context of global art collecting, Brazil's high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) present a compelling case of localized cultural investment diverging from dominant market paradigms.

According to the *Art Basel and UBS Survey of Global Collecting 2024*², Brazilian collectors exhibited the highest level of acquisition activity among all surveyed regions in the first half of the year, averaging 15 works per individual. Despite this pronounced engagement, their collections contained the lowest proportion of top-tier artworks comprising only 18% of holdings. Brazilian HNWIs demonstrated a distinct preference for emerging and early-career artists, with such works accounting for 63% of their collections, the majority were by living artists, reflecting a strong orientation toward contemporary production. This pattern suggests that Brazilian collectors prioritize engagement, aligning more closely with patronage models.

As a case study of Brazilian Concrete Art, the driving force was mainly the engagement of the Brazilian collector Adolpho Leirner in the rise of the movement internationally. Starting by rescuing Brazilian concrete art and, with his respective means, acted as a driver and facilitator of the internationalization of Brazilian concrete art by forming his collection and promoting strategies to appreciate it. This transformation in the appreciation of Brazilian concrete art happened within a relatively short period of time, of approximately one decade. In 2007, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston (MFAH) consecrated this movement with a permanent room: “*Adolpho Leirner Collection of Brazilian Constructive Art*”³. With the means of the collector, the appreciation of works and artists happened largely with the investigation of academic curators, who managed to elevate the quality of discussions and exhibitions conducted to a level of greater political and sociocultural reflection (Moreno, 2024).

It is important to highlight that Adolpho Leirner, although not the legal owner of the collection anymore, remains highly active in promoting the works and artists, as well as in shaping institutional and internationalization strategies. He serves as an Honorary Board Member of several institutions, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), where his collection is housed.

In late 2020, another important contribution of the collector was the donation of “*Adolpho and Fúlvia Leirner Art Déco, from the 1920s–1930s*” collection to Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC-USP). Leirner dedicates his life to the legacy, internationalization and respect of the Brazilian art.

In Inhotim, a remote city from Brazil, the collector Bernardo Paz opened an art complex, with almost 2,000 hectares (5,000 acres) with art pavilions, considered the most ambitious private exhibition space ever conceived for contemporary art (Wagner & Wagner, p. 25, 2013). With his own means, he invested in turning his farm into an international art hub.

² *Art Basel and UBS Survey of Global Collecting 2024*; access on Oct 13, 2025:

<https://theartmarket.artbasel.com/download/The-Art-Basel-and-UBS-Survey-of-Global-Collecting-in-2024.pdf>

³ <https://emuseum.mfah.org/collections/240410/adolpho-leirner-collection-of-brazilian-constructive-art;jsessionid=2E69A41D5832F59453B825C46BD7ED58>

Beatriz Yunes Guarita, a Brazilian art collector, plays an important role in the development and internationalization of Brazilian art through her proactive engagement in global art networks, strategic collecting practices, cultural patronage and her efforts to connect Brazilian art with international platforms. She is part of the Palais de Tokyo Committee, a Brazilian is member of the Management Board of Centre Pompidou in Paris and in Foz do Iguaçu, being the first Latin American to occupy this position. She supports institutional initiatives such as funding curatorial positions abroad, most notably at Centre Pompidou in Paris to enhance visibility for Brazilian artists in prestigious European institutions. Her advocacy for greater collector involvement in museum patronage and participation in international art groups, like the French women's collective SPOT, fosters meaningful cultural exchange and amplifies interest in Brazilian art globally.

On the other hand, Brazil is home to many collectors who, while owning significant artworks, remain largely disengaged from the broader development of the art world. These individuals tend to approach collecting from a more passive or private perspective, focusing primarily on personal enjoyment, investment potential, or social status rather than contributing to the cultural infrastructure that supports artists, institutions, and public access to art. Unlike collectors who actively participate in exhibitions, museum boards, or philanthropic initiatives, these collectors often remain outside the networks that shape artistic discourse, limit the visibility of their collections, and contribute minimally to the promotion and internationalization of Brazilian art.

3. Discussion: Becoming a professional collector, proposed framework

In 2015, the French Ministry of Culture and Communication conducted a study using a mixed-method approach that combined quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, gathering responses from 332 contemporary art collectors and conducting 66 semi-structured interviews to explore the diverse profiles and behaviours of collectors. Moureau, Sagot-Duvauroux, and Vidal categorized collectors into four groups: *semi-professional collectors*, who dedicate all their time to their collections and are not motivated by decoration; *committed collectors*, who actively support production-related activities, serve on institutional committees, and promote artists' work; *level-headed collectors*, who are less engaged in production and are often driven by decorative interests; and *independent collectors*, who do not participate in production-related activities, avoid lending their works, and purchase based on individual pieces rather than an artist's overall approach. The study emphasized that collectors are not just buyers, they shape demand and supply in the art market and often provide direct financial support to artists and galleries through gifts, loans, advances, and collaborative projects, including fundraising with friends, commissioning works, contributing to exhibition catalogues, and using institutional connections.

The research also examined the close relationships between collectors and galleries in France, finding that most collectors consistently follow just a few galleries and provide support either through regular financial contributions or, more commonly, one-off purchases.

Forms of collector support in the art scene include lending works for exhibitions, offering material or financial aid to artists, serving on the administrative or acquisition committees of contemporary art institutions, financing or publishing catalogues, donating works to museums, and providing long-term loans (Moureau, Sagot-Duvauroux, and Vidal, p. 5–17, 2015).

According to McClean, lawyer and curator, the lack of experience and knowledge to manage the legacy of an art collection by the heirs is a serious threat for the art market. The heirs' ambition to gain the greatest commercial advantage quickly, can devalue the body of work in the medium and long term (McClean, 2025).

AXA ART, an insurance company to the art business published a survey in 2014 where they classified their collectors: *art aficionados*, collecting is their passion, they are enthusiastic about art and spend a great deal of time on art related activities even if they work in a completely different field; *traditionalists*, they do not necessarily have an affluent or aristocratic family background, neither do they perceptibly differ from the other two collectors' groups with regard to their age, sex, profession or education level, their motivation for collecting is very different; *investors*, wouldn't collect art if they didn't appreciate it, like the other two types of collectors, they love to own beautiful things and give this as one of their most important motives for collecting (AXA ART, 2014).

Besides types of collectors, there are number of methodologies that can help the collector to stablish his/her own collection: *focusing on a particular art making discipline* (sculpture, paintings, photographs, etc) and from there, narrowing the selection of artistes and works; *concentrate on a specific matter or conceptual framework* (conceptual, political, etc); and *patronage*, supporting artists by having pieces on their collection, this option is the optimum, so the collector deeply understands the artworks (Wagner & Wagner, p. 178-195, 2013).

Collectors focus is to take pleasure and enjoy their artworks during their own lifetime, however, professional collector understands their obligation to take care of the artworks as a legacy, so they will take actions to preserve the works against luminosity, humidity, and others (Rozel, p. 172, 2021).

Building upon previously established methodologies in the field of art collecting, this article proposes a structured approach designed for individuals seeking to initiate collections that transcend mere accumulation and aspire toward cultural significance, institutional relevance, and the potential to contribute enduringly to art historical narratives.

3.1 Self-awareness: discover what to collect

According to Muzi, Madera and Boiardo, "the influence of other's mirroring on the self is related to the significance of the relationship between the observer and the observed". Their proposed psychological technique "mirror paradigm" was transferred from the collector to the artwork as an interesting tool to enhance individual's awareness of their feelings and consuming behaviour associated with representation. With representation, the collector reflects what he/she likes and

what doesn't like about artworks; *perception*, how they relate to the artwork; *influences in shaping the perceptions of the artwork*, what an artwork reminds them of; and *dissociative aspects*, what the artworks have that are dissociative to their relations (Muzi, Madera, Boiardo, p. 3-25, 2021).

The collector should brainstorm before deciding what kind of art they should collect, if it would be based on personal taste, knowledge, beliefs, and budget. The collection should be interrelated; with conceptual coherence, it should be curated and with a purpose. It is important to do this groundwork before to minimize the need for the collector to upgrade the collection along the way. The collector Duncan Phillips (1886-1966) said "learning from my mistakes I made – eliminating the dross – enshrining the pure gold" (Wagner & Wagner, p. 39, 2013).

3.2 The collector, the researcher

The role of an art collector, particularly at the professional level, parallels that of a researcher. A professional collector invests substantial time and resources into deepening their knowledge of the art world. This commitment involves attending exhibitions, art fairs, biennials, and auctions; reading specialized magazines, newspapers, and critical essays; engaging directly with artists; visiting galleries and dealers; and cultivating relationships with museum directors and curators. Such practices reflect a methodical and research-oriented approach, grounded in curiosity, critical engagement, and sustained inquiry.

Drawing a parallel to scholarly research, Miettinen (1997), in *The Roles of the Researcher in Developmentally-Oriented Research*, explores the theoretical underpinnings and ethical commitments that shape the researcher's role. He argues that the researcher should not merely act as an activist or facilitator, but rather as a critical inquirer, one who fosters spaces for dialogue, reflection, and collective learning. This conception resonates with the role of the professional collector, who must also go beyond passive acquisition to engage critically with the art and its contexts.

In this sense, the professional collector adopts a more rigorous and reflective stance, situating artworks within broader social, political, economic, and cultural frameworks. This approach recognizes that artworks are not isolated objects but are embedded in complex networks of meaning, shaped by the conditions of their production and reception. By approaching collecting as a form of critical inquiry, the professional collector contributes not only to the enrichment of their collection but also to the preservation and interpretation of cultural heritage.

3.3 Study the artist

In the contemporary art world, successful artists are not only creators but also professionals and entrepreneurs who actively invest in their careers to navigate and perform effectively in an increasingly competitive market. While self-taught artists continue to play a role in the art ecosystem, it has become more challenging for them to gain prominence without offering a distinctive and compelling contribution. Today, value is often placed on artists who engage in

rigorous research, continuously develop their technical skills, and articulate a unique and innovative conceptual approach.

A professional collector should pay close attention to the intellectual and critical engagement that an artist brings to their practice—how they experience, interpret, and respond to the evolving world around them. Many scholars argue that one of the most effective ways to gain insight into an artist's work is through direct interaction. Studio visits offer collectors a valuable opportunity to understand the context of an artwork more deeply, to grasp the artist's intentions, and to appreciate the nuances that may not be immediately visible in an exhibition setting.

3.4 Understand the context the artwork was created

It is part of art collecting responsibility to have a deeper engagement with the cultural, historical, and socio-political conditions that inform the production of art. The contextual knowledge of the artwork allows the collector to interpret the meaning and significance of a work as it is shaped by the artist's environment, the cultural discourses of the time, and the prevailing political or economic conditions. Without an understanding of these contextual elements, a collector risks misinterpreting or undervaluing the intellectual and cultural labour embedded in the work.

In terms of the quality of collectors, the ones engaged critically with the historical and cultural underpinnings of artworks are better positioned to build collections that contribute to the broader narrative of art history. This is particularly important for collectors who aspire to leave a legacy.

3.5. Follow and analyse the work value

Monitoring and analysing the value of an artist's work is essential for the professional collector, as it provides critical insights into market trends. This practice not only allows collectors to track an artist's evolution and positioning within the art market but also enables comparative evaluations of artworks from the same period or movement.

In the digital age, the accessibility of online art sales platforms has made it significantly easier to follow price fluctuations, observe market dynamics, and identify emerging patterns. By staying informed through these tools, collectors can make more strategic decisions, assess the long-term value of their acquisitions, and align their collections with both historical significance and market relevance.

3.6. Be informed on the art market

For a professional collector, it is essential not only to understand their own collection but also to remain actively engaged with the broader art scene. This awareness enables collectors to anticipate how their collection fits into and evolves within the global art landscape. Staying informed about current developments, emerging trends, and critical discourse is key to maintaining a relevant and impactful collection.

A limited number of media outlets provide valuable insights into the contemporary art world, including *The New York Times*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Time Out London* and *Time Out New York*, as well as digital platforms like *Contemporary Art Daily* (Wagner & Wagner, p. 165, 2013).

3.7. Commission an artwork

Commissioning an artwork is a dynamic and collaborative process that involves active engagement and dialogue between the artist and the collector. Unlike acquiring a completed work, commissioning allows an interaction to foster a deeper connection to the final piece. However, the process also carries inherent uncertainties. One of the most common concerns is the risk that the final artwork may not align with the collector's expectations or aesthetic preferences. Because the outcome is not entirely predictable, but when the process is positive, the commissioning process can result in highly meaningful and personalized works that enrich both the collection and the broader cultural narrative.

3.8. Become a patron

Choosing to support an art gallery that works with emerging artists can be a meaningful and strategic decision for collectors who wish to contribute to the development of the art ecosystem. These galleries often face financial and operational challenges.

By becoming a patron or committed collector within such a context, you are not only providing crucial financial support but also building a long-term, trust-based relationship with the gallerist. This relationship can offer valuable advantages such as early access to new works, insights into an artist's career trajectory, and the opportunity to acquire key pieces before they reach broader markets. In many cases, patrons who engage with these galleries from an early stage are rewarded with privileged access, favourable pricing, and a deeper sense of participation in the artistic and curatorial process.

3.9. Inventory management

Collectors typically begin by gathering basic documentation related to each artwork, such as invoices and certificate of authenticity. However, as their collection grows, the professional collector should adopt a more systematic approach, organizing and compiling additional materials.

The information should start with artist name, artist biography, title, year, medium, technique, edition, current location, image, provenance, exhibition and auction catalogues, catalogue raisonné, purchase value, condition, publications and exhibition history, literature with citations of the work, geographical context (Rozell, p. 69), press clippings, communication with related art agents exchanged about the collection, books, and other relevant references. The author even suggests the collector to register any special, personalized information and/or personal history that correlates the collector to that artwork.

Conclusion

As the collector and psychoanalyst Werner Muenster Berger once noted, “even a very serious and reflective collector is hard put to offer a clear, convincing explanation of his inclination or the intense emotion that occasionally occurs in the process of obtaining an object” (Muenster Berger, p. 3). This insight underscores the deeply subjective and often emotional nature of collecting. However, it is precisely this emotional impulse that this article seeks to balance by proposing a framework for professional collecting, one that is not driven by impulse or sentiment, but by strategy, knowledge, and long-term vision.

The central argument is that Brazil, with its still-nascent art market, should not only aim to increase the number of collectors but also to cultivate a new generation of well-informed, critically engaged, and professionally oriented collectors. These are individuals who act as authorities on the artists and movements they choose to support, and who approach collecting with a curatorial mindset and a commitment to building a meaningful legacy.

In this article, the author focuses primarily on collectors who adopt a deliberate and strategic approach to collecting, those who view their activities not merely as personal pursuits, but as part of a broader intention to shape cultural narratives and contribute to the preservation and promotion of artistic heritage. These collectors often envision their collections as future donations to public institutions, driven by curatorial vision, long-term planning, and a deep engagement with the artists, movements, or histories they seek to represent.

Becoming a professional collector demands more than financial capacity; it requires time, dedication, and deep intellectual engagement. It means visiting galleries, exhibitions, biennials, and museums; building relationships with artists, curators, and scholars; and developing a thorough understanding of the mechanisms that shape the contemporary art world. In essence, the professional collector assumes a role akin to that of a researcher, someone who not only acquires but also interprets, contextualizes, and contributes to the cultural and historical relevance of the works they collect.

In conclusion, the professionalization of art collectors plays a pivotal role in elevating the overall quality and integrity of the art market. When collectors approach art acquisition with greater knowledge, ethical standards, and long-term commitment, all market agents (artists, galleries, curators, and institutions) benefit from a more stable and transparent ecosystem. This dynamic is particularly relevant in smaller or developing markets such as Brazil, where a more informed and engaged base of collectors can serve as a catalyst for broader growth.

Ultimately, art collecting transcends mere acquisition to become a form of cultural development, actively shaping artistic narratives, influencing institutional discourses, and safeguarding cultural heritage for future generations. In the context of the Brazilian art market, where structural limitations and market size pose ongoing challenges, the development of a more professional and informed base of collectors is especially critical. By embracing this expanded role, Brazilian collectors not only contribute to the preservation and promotion of national artistic production

but also play a strategic part in strengthening the overall art ecosystem. Their engagement can foster greater market transparency, support emerging artists, and facilitate the integration of Brazilian art into the global cultural economy.

References

- ABACT e Latitude *Brazil Art Market Report 2024*, ISBN 978-65-981012-8-2, ACT ARTE, São Paulo, 2024.
- Art Basel & UBS. (2024). *The Art Basel and UBS Survey of Global Collecting 2024*. Arts Economics. UBS Global Wealth Reports. (2023–2024). Cerulli Associates. (2021). *U.S. High-Net-Worth and Ultra-High-Net-Worth Markets*. McKinsey & Company. (2020, 2024). *Gen Z and Millennial Consumer Behaviour Studies*.
- AXA ART Versicherung AG. *Collecting in Digital Age*. AXA ART Versicherung AG, 2014, <https://www.axa-art.com>.
- Baekeland, Francis. *Collectors and collecting: A psychological perspective*. In: ELSNER, John; CARDINAL, Roger (org.). *The cultures of collecting*. London: Reaktion Books, 1992.
- Cauquelin, Anne. *L'art contemporain: Une introduction*. Presses Universitaires de France, 2010.
- Crane, Diane. *Reflections on the Global Art Market: implications for the Sociology of Culture*. Sociedade e Estado, Brasília, v. 24, n. 2, p. 331-362, maio-ago., 2009.
- Edwards, Sebastian. *The Economics Of Latin American Art: Creativity Patterns And Rates Of Return*. Working Paper 10302. Available in: <<http://www.nber.org/papers/w10302>>. Access in: 1 Oct. 2021.
- Getty, J. Paul. *As I See It: The Autobiography of J. Paul Getty*. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003, p. 276
- Graw, Isabelle. *High Price: Art Between the Market and Celebrity Culture*. Sternberg Press (distributed by MIT Press for North America), 2009.
- McClean, Daniel. “Artistic Legacy: How to Deal with It, What to Prioritize?” *Revista seLecT*, interview by Celeste, YouTube video, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nzzLdi9eg>
- Miettinen, Reijo. *The roles of the researcher in developmentally-oriented research. Development intervention. Actor and activity perspectives*. Tiina Kontinen (ed.) University of Helsinki, Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research and Institute for Development Studies, 2004. ISBN 952-10-1939-5.
- Moureau, N., Sagot-Duvaouroux, D., & Vidal, M. (2015). *Contemporary Art Collectors: The Unsung Influences on the Art Scenes* (Study No. 2015-1). French Ministry of Culture and Communication, Department of Studies, Forecasting, and Statistics (DEPS). Retrieved from https://dlwqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/39517044/Contemporary_Art_Collectors_The_Unsung_20151029-32107-ya6w3a-libre.pdf
- Moreno, Ana Paula. *The Internationalization of Brazilian Concrete Art*. Editora Appris, Curitiba, 2024.
- Muensterberger, Werner. *Collecting: An Unruly Passion – Psychological Perspectives*. Princeton University Press, 1994.

- Muzi, S., Madera, F., Boiardo, A. *A narrative review on clinical and research applications of The Mirror Paradigm: body image, psychopathology, and attachment*. Mediterranean Journal of Clinical Psychology, 9 (2), 2021. <https://doi.org/10.13129/2282-1619/mjcp-3025>.
- Rozell, Mary. *The Art Collector's Handbook. The Definitive Guide to Acquiring and Owning Art*. Lund Humphries, London, 2021.
- Steiner, Lasse; Frey, Bruno S.; Resch, Magnus. *Home is where your art is: The home bias of art collectors*. Working Paper, No. 135, University of Zurich, Department of Economics, Zurich, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-85620>.
- Wagner, Ethan and Wagner Thea Westreich. *Collecting Art for Love, Money and More*. Phaidon Press Limited, London, 2013.