FRIEZEFICATION AND BIG CURATION

201362

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A dissertation submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Master's Degree in Art Business Sotheby's Institute of Art/University of Manchester

Sotheby's Institute of Art-London

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2023

ABSTRACT

The aim of the dissertation is to examine the curatorial framework of Frieze and its global brand identity through case studies Frieze London and Frieze Seoul 2022. The essay commences with a historical context of the development of each location's art market and Frieze's relationship to it as well as global employment of curating within economies of scale and experience. Next, the essay compares each Fair's programming, corporate partnerships, Frieze Magazine, online presentations, and testimonials. Finally, a working definition of friezefication is proposed.

Keywords: curation, curatorial, curating, global

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following research evolved under the guidance of Dr. Melanie Fasche, to whom I owe considerable gratitude for her patience, kindness, and countless offerings of wisdom over the past year (and for fielding my many emails). I would also like to extend special thanks to my interviewees Dr. Andrew Renton, Dr. Katie Hill, and Kabir Jhala, for taking the time to talk, as well as the Sotheby's Institute London Library staff, for always going above and beyond the call of duty.

Heartfelt thanks to Amanda Henriques and Jeff Ko for their allegiance and generosity.

Lastly, thank you to my family for their support and to Mike Recken for lighting up my mind.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT……2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS……3

AUTHENTICITY STATEMENT……4

COPYRIGHT DECLARATION……5

TABLE OF CONTENTS……..6

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS/TABLES……8

1. INTRODUCTION……9

2. LITERATURE REVIEW……10

3. METHODOLOGY……13
- 3.1 Research Objectives and Philosophy……13
- 3.2 Research Strategy & Data Collection……13
- 3.3 Data Analysis……14
- 3.4 Limitations of Research Approach……15

4. HISTORICAL RELEVANCE OF FRIEZEFICATION……16
- 4.1 South Korea……16
- 4.2 United Kingdom……20
- 4.3 Art fairs……23
- 4.4 Online Viewing Rooms……25

5. THE CURATED ART FAIR……27
- 5.1 Curatorial Turn……27
- 5.2 Biennalisation and Festivalisation……29
- 5.3 Frieze and Endeavor……32

6. CASE STUDIES, SEOUL AND LONDON……39
- 6.1 Programming……39
- 6.2 Magazines……45
- 6.3 Sponsors……47
- 6.4 Frieze Viewing Room……51

7. FRIEZEFICATION ……53
- 7.1 Defining Friezefication……53
- 7.2 SWOT Analysis……57
- 7.3 SWOT Interpretation……60

8. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS……..…61
8.1 Key Findings……..61
8.2 Discourse Analysis……..…62
8.3 Potential Limitations……..63
8.4 Future Research……..….63

BIBLIOGRAPHY……..…..…….64

APPENDIX 1: Dr. Andrew Renton Interview……...…76
APPENDIX 2: Dr. Katie Hill Interview…….……...….88
APPENDIX 3: Kabir Jhala Interview……..103
APPENDIX 4: Email conversation Frieze Seoul Director Pat Lee…….109
APPENDIX 5: Email conversation Exhibitor Services Depart. Head Amanda Henriques….111

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS/TABLES

1. FOI Data Frieze Funding History……..34
2. Frieze Fair 2003 – 2022…….37
3. FVR Artist Nationality Composition…….40
4. Price Averages Seoul and London……..41
5. FVR Prices……..42
6. Egon Schiele, Female Nude on Yellow Cloth, Seoul and London……...…….43
7. FVR Era Composition……44
8. FVR Medium Composition……45
9. Sponsorship Materials, Frieze London 2022 and London Olympics 2012……55
10. SWOT Seoul and London……..57
11. Kabir Jhala Instagram Stories Seoul Frieze vs. Kiaf VIP Opening…...…….58

1. INTRODUCTION

On January 18, 2022, Korean media giant CJ ENM, best known worldwide for backing the landmark Korean film *Parasite*, closed its acquisition of controlling stake of 80%, at a price tag of $775m, in an American media firm called Endeavor Content. Purchased from Endeavor Group Holdings Inc., a media conglomerate based in Hollywood, CA and the parent company of Frieze Fair, the move transformed CJ ENM from a key player in Asia to a wholly global operation. [1] Nine months later, Endeavor Inc. returned to South Korea – this time for Frieze. The inaugural fair in Seoul was cited in Endeavor's Inc.'s 2022 third quarter report as contributing to revenue of $440.6m,[2] alongside Wimbledon and the Aer Lingus Classic – just a few of the company's over 900 events of "curated experiential hospitality."[3]

The proliferation of the word "curated" and its relationship to brand identity will be explored in the research. In addition, the globalisation of the curating sector will be examined under the designation *Big Curation,* signalling its employment by big business, or economy of scale, in the cultural field and the curatorial components of transnational economic expansion.

Frieze Seoul's arrival can be seen as a symbolic cultural development and departure from Frieze's previously Euro-American circuit – a potential step towards a more pluralistic Fair model. However, it also holds enormous economic potential for American and European dealers, collectors, and artists accessing Korean and wider Asian marketplaces – and continued economic growth for South Korea. Did transplanting the event affect the curated product, who is buying it, and who is paying for it, or is a Frieze is a Frieze is a Frieze? The research aims to examine the Fair's curatorial framework for Frieze Seoul, London+Masters 2022, the newest and oldest incarnations of the Fair, and their imbrication with local, global, and international business.

[1] Frater, "Acquisition"
[2] Business Wire
[3] Endeavor, "S1 Form", F29

In this essay, *global* infers a US-American-adjacent path of expansion and stems from Americanisation, or a "one-way street from a Western direction to the East."[4] *International* is used to mean worldwide or universal. While *curating* is the curator's practice, *curatorial* endeavours to encompass knowledge exploration as an unfinished event within curating.[5] The suffix "ation" implies action or process. Curation bears insinuation of curatorial aftermath. Big Curation, or global curation, is by definition engaged with marketing a curated product, rather than a curatorial inquisition. We use curation as a departure point from which to define *friezefication*.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of pertinent literature, taking into consideration the discourse within the art market, public and private sectors, the experience economy, and the mega-event industry. Due to the limited scope of academic literature on art fairs, the breadth of research was expanded to include festivals, biennials and large-scale exhibitions, as well as curating. The literature comprises academic essays, journal articles, and books.

The most comprehensive books about art fairs are Paco Barragan's, *The Art Fair Age* and *From Roman Feria To Global Art Fair / From Olympia Festival to Neo-Liberal Biennial: On the 'Biennalization' of Art Fairs and the 'Fairization' of Biennials'*. Barragan provides a scopic historical timeline of the progression of art markets and deep imbrication with biennial culture. Barragan argues that the contemporary landscape requires a rethinking of the art fair's structure in lieu of postpandemic, postdigital conditions. Barragan does not examine links to literary infrastructure and the internal/external formation of institutional critique, nor the differentiated implementation of art fairs internationally.

[4] Hilger, "Americanisation"
[5] Martinon, "Curatorial"

The most recent book published about art fairs is Melanie Gerlis's *The Art Fair Story*, presenting a cursory overview from 1966 until present. From the point of view of an industry insider with access to the events as well as emotions of actors, Gerlis provides anecdotal insight regarding how it felt to be there: when dealers were frightened, excited, etc. The book is a testament to the proliferation of art fairs as ubiquitous enough to warrant being dubbed a hot *topic in the art world* and is recent enough to address the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic and its repercussions, as well as progressive migration into the digital realm. While synoptic, the book leaves room for more critical examinations.

Though mostly pictures, *Art Fairs* by Dolph Kessler includes insightful commentaries, namely that by Olav Velthuis, situating the art fair into a wider landscape of commerce and spectacle. Velthuis draws attention to festivalisation and the attention economy but does not address the art fair's cross-pollination with other sectors and its pervasive partnership structure. The book also includes an interview with Frieze co-founder Matthew Slottover. Another valuable interview with Slottover is found in Henrik Simonsen's dissertation, *Frieze: A Sign of the Time?* Though poignant and of its time, the dissertation invites a revisit due to it being published in 2004.

As an academic discipline, curating has yet to be art historically codified as other disciplines have. In *The Culture of Curating and Curating of Culture(s)* Paul O'Neill provides a comprehensive picture of the development of contemporary curatorial discourse and its manifestation into the exhibition space. Particularly pertinent is a chapter dedicated to biennial culture and globalisation of curatorial rhetoric from the late 1980s onwards. O'Neill does not address the appropriation of curating by the commercial sector and parallel proliferation of curation as a branding tool.

Panos Kompatsiaris's book *The Politics of Contemporary Art Biennials* and Julia Bethwaite's article, *The Scales, Politics, and Political Economies of Contemporary Art Biennials* employ a sociopolitical, ethnographic framework and address questions of relative value production. Discourse around biennials is largely concerned with the hegemony of so-called "global" large-scale exhibitions seen as primarily Western-centric tools of soft power and spaces of confinement. The prevalence of Western artists is highlighted as being problematic as is the

nationalistic format of national pavilions, such as those in Venice,[6] but not in the corporate realm.

Festivalisation of Culture, Woodward et.Al establishes an important contemporary definition of the word festival. The core argument focusses on festivals as municipal aids to enabling social inclusion. The book presents a critical engagement with festivalisation as a component of contemporary lifestyle and its correlations to globalisation and increased mobilisation, both social and geographic. The texts do not sufficiently examinee the migration of festivaliastion into the digital realm.

In *Twilight of the Enlightenment The Art Fair, The Culture Industry, and the Creative Class*, Judith Kapferer discusses art fairs (Frieze in particular) as atmospheres depleted of contemplation. She describes this as cultural consumption replacing cultural debate. She does not address the corporate role of the art fair and connections between art fair's global expansion intertwined with expansion of corporations worldwide or the implications of their partnerships on value formation.

The essay *On the Museum's Ruins* by cultural theorist Douglas Crimp is engaged with epistemological change, namely that from modernism to postmodernism. Crimp seeks to expose cracks within codified discourses, such as art history as well how said discourses are enacted spatially. Crimp draws on cultural and critical theory from the Frankfurt School and French Post Structuralism to challenge orthodoxies of modern art theory. From a postmodernist perspective, the text invites evaluation of similar issues from a contemporary perspective. While Crimp presents evidence of a postmodernist transformation, the text also requires reevaluation against the backdrop of heightened cross-sectorisation and institutional corporatisation.

What Foucault describes as discursive formations are in fact different regimes of truth. This notion is addressed by Mary Ann Glynn in *Configuring the Field of Play: How Hosting the*

[6] Literature often highlights that artwork was, until 1968, sold at Venice Biennial.

Olympic Games Impacts Civic Community. Glynn addresses relational and symbolic systems and the codification of meaning and value. Of particular pertinence is the phenomenon of institutions caught up within the contradictions of their own culture. This perspective is evaluated in art market terms and potentially opposing incentives – which in the case of this essay are curatorial critique and commercial expansion.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter examines the various research approaches used in the research.

3.1 Research Objectives and Philosophy

The goal of this research is to examine curatorial framework of Frieze Fair and its social, cultural, and economic impact on the local and global environment. Frieze has recently expanded to Seoul, South Korea, which is the most significant geographical and cultural departure since its inception and the first non-UK iteration of Frieze Masters. The art fair industry is currently experiencing a critical phase of renewal, during which structural elements are being redefined to adapt to a digital and postcovid/mid-postcovid landscape. The ways in which fairs are responding is an important prompt.

The research aims to address three main questions:

- How does Frieze Magazine affect the Frieze Fair, the brand, and its impact?
- What consistent curatorial themes can be identified in the presentation of the art, programming, expansion, and brand activation?
- What are the differences and similarities in these different locations?

3.2 Research Strategy and Data Collection

Primary data was collected from 3 September – 31 October directly from Frieze digital and physical sources, including Fair programmes, Magazines, the Frieze Viewing Room (FVR), and

social media. The FVR is screenshot before being catalogued. I undertook corresponding research to compile profiles of the artists presented to compare identifying factors with contemporary curatorial themes from the fairs and from international curatorial discourse, including underrepresented nationalities, Asian heritage, and gender equality.

Remote interviews were conducted with three art industry professionals who attended both Frieze Seoul and Frieze London, 2022. Interviewees include Dr. Andrew Renton; Professor of Curating at Goldsmiths College and former Marlborough Gallery Director, Dr. Katie Hill; Professor of Contemporary Asian Art at Sotheby's Institute, and Kabir Jhala, Acting Deputy Art Market Editor at The Art Newspaper.

Secondary research was conducted with a wide-toothed comb using digital and physical libraries as well as archived Frieze magazines. Though news outlets were an important source of information, it must be noted that *Financial Times*, *Apollo*, *Artforum*, *Artnet*, *ARTnews*, *Wallpaper**, *Art in America*, and *The Art Newspaper* are all media partners of Frieze and therefore their content may potentially be subject to be published favourably towards Frieze. These outlets were neither sanctioned nor privileged.

3.3 Data Analysis

FVR data was analysed by price, medium, and artist profile. Though price is not historically a curatorial concern, the research reveals how the Fair can potentially influence the price and the way in which price is conveyed, which entails important social and cultural factors pertinent to the event and the interactions between dealers, collectors, and the audience. Prices were reflected both as price ranges and as averages. Because every category was not always available, findings do not necessarily equal the total. Of paramount interest was comparing the presentations of exhibitors participating in both viewing rooms.

The analysis addresses artists and exhibitors of Asian descent versus the total, as well as Global West/North and Global South. I do not distinguish all minority backgrounds (the Middle East, Africa, Latin America) from one another. Such distinction is outside the scope of the research. Included in the category of Global West, or "Euro-American," are: United States, Continental Europe, Iceland, UK, and UK Commonwealth, including Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and

South Africa. Eastern European countries, such as Russia and the Ukraine, are designated Global North and therefore Europe. Asia refers to all countries on the Asian continent, including India and Pakistan. The designation ROW, or rest of world, refers to Central and South America, Africa, and The Middle East. Oceania is for the intents and purposes of this study irrelevant, as it is not represented in the data outside of Australia and New Zealand, but would have otherwise been classified as ROW.

British pound sterling and South Korean won were converted to US American dollars. Currency is reflect through the $ sign aside from tables or direct quotes taken from the source, and $ indicates USD. This way, the research does not favour UK or Korean currency. Also, this supports the underlying argument that globalisation is US American-adjacent and numerous international exhibitors priced artworks using USD. Lastly, according to the International Monetary Fund, USD is the most frequently used currency by banks and financial institutions worldwide[7] for trade, and is in line with global standards.

3.4 Limitations of Research Approach

Art Fair Studies is a form of Cultural Studies, encompassing social, cultural, and economic facets. Therefore, the research is inherently biased. The hegemonic model of Cultural Studies prevails as a Western, Anglo-American phenomenon, which points to an inherent bias in terms of my perspective as a reader and my interpretations of Cultural Theory.

The time window within which the research was conducted is not sufficient to measure true impact of the Fair, which is hugely social and felt over time. Dealers and organisers alike concur that trends would be more clearly identified if the data spanned at least two to three years. To achieve a comprehensive picture, data from all five Frieze Fairs should be collected to be able to compare with American results, especially since not only is Frieze Seoul new, but Frieze New York has a relatively new venue, and Frieze Los Angeles will also be staging a new venue in February 2023.

[7] Amadeo, "Currency"

The FVR data does not represent the fair's entire presentation. To accurately analyse the contents of the fair, one would need to physically survey every single stand on a daily basis to monitor what has potentially been sold or swapped. While this would not be impossible, it would be time-consuming and require the efforts of multiple aids. What can be gleaned from the research is the FVR participation as a data point in and of itself.

Lastly, data collected from Mutual Art is compromised in favour of London, where auction data is more readily available. Mutual Art's head office is located in London. Its Asian offices are located in Shanghai and Hong Kong. Therefore the availability of information is biased. Whereas some information was available in South Korea, there are potentially lots and corresponding data not published to Mutual Art. Once again, research is considerably skewed by a Western perspective, which must be considered throughout.

4: HISTORICAL RELEVANCE OF FRIEZEFICATION

To understand the value generated by Frieze, the local art markets in these locations respective to the global art market and the trajectory of Frieze within the art fair sector, the history of Korea, the UK, and the art fair sector will be illuminated as well as their relationships to Frieze.

4.1 South Korea

In 2020, *Parasite* made history when it became the first non-English language movie to win an Oscar for best picture.[8] The Hollywood-certified film was shot in Seongbuk-dong, an affluent, sloping district lauded as the *Beverly Hills* of Seoul, not only for its topography, but its high-priced real estate, slick new architecture, and polarised wealth. Seongbuk-dong is home to blue-chip gallery Jason Haam, presenting an ambitious programme of contemporary art since 2018 and participating in major international art fairs, including Art Basel Hong Kong and Art

[8] Yi, "Inequality"

Brussels. Haam exhibited at Frieze Seoul, telling reporters its arrival is "like the Olympics happening in Korea."[9]

Haam's comment is compelling because the Olympics already happened in South Korea — in 1988. The year leading up to the event was inflated with anticipation as the "consciousness and expectations of the people underwent a major transformation." The country had spent the better part of a decade cultivating an atmosphere of democratisation,[10] eager to renounce "scars of colonisation and pain of division"[11] after the Korean War left behind an infrastructure poor in assets and industry. Landlocked by North Korea and surrounded by "whale"[12] powers China, Russia, and Japan, South Korea's geographical disadvantage was punctuated by a minerally-poor, agriculturally unproductive landscape.

While the Olympics were in Seoul, Korean government enacted the Law of Culture and Arts Promotion, obliging new buildings over 10,000 m2 to invest 1% of construction costs on artworks. The 1980s onwards saw continued cultural development and policy encouraging economic growth, including the emergence of private art museums. The first registered private art museum, Ho-Am Art Museum, opened in 1982 — showcasing the collection of Samsung founder Lee Byung-chul. A litany of art museums and cultural foundations followed. Today South Korea has over 500 art museums, and more private art museums than any other country (45). Seoul has more private museums than any other city in the world (13).[13] Korean Cultural Minister Park has labelled South Korea "a soft-power powerhouse."[14]

Over the past six decades, South Korea has become one of the fastest growing developed countries in the world, both reflected and propelled by its cultural sector, including film, entertainment, and art.[15] Today South Korea hails the 10th largest global economy by nominal

[9] Behrens, "Hype"
[10] Sung-Joo, "Revolution", 29
[11] Chow, "Corporations"
[12] Shim, Flamm, "Rising", 5
[13] Larry's List, 11
[14] Chow, "President"
[15] Messerlin, "Success"

GDP, described by Renton as "a fantastically consumer culture"[16] with a congenital American presence that may be attributed in part to the USA – South Korea Free Trade Agreement as well as South Korea hosting the USA's third largest global military presence – some 28,500 troops.[17] U.S. Forces Korea, (USFK) have been in South Korea since the signing of a mutual defence treaty in 1953, acting as a mediating agent to protect against invasion by North Korea. Hill says that although the psychological presence of North Korea is still "enormous," the globalisation of South Korea through soft power has granted the country "a certain geopolitical pragmatism" which has been "really successful."[18]

South Korea's economic incline has run parallel to a resounding cultural wave named *Hallyu*. The arrival of Frieze in Seoul evidences the city becoming what many are calling the new Asian art hub. Cultural theorist Ben Nickl describes the stretch for global engagement as "an image Seoul curated during the Olympics."[19] Nickl's employment of 'curated' as interchangeable with 'cultivated' illustrates a symbiosis between cultural diplomacy and curating practice through conscious construction of identity and administering of cultural language, complete with its own vernacular, aesthetic, and communication channels, like communities formed around K-pop fandom — a social genre and major component of K-pop's success, whereby fans become invested not only in the cultural product, but in one another.

K-Pop emerged in the 1980s as Koreans balanced new wealth with political turmoil and was initially promoted by the government as a distraction. Lee Soo-man, founder of SM Entertainment, says "K-Pop is distinct through its emphasis on globalisation. Idols are encouraged to speak English to increase their global appeal."[20] BTS leader Kim Namjoon attributes K-pop's success to it being a "total arts package"[21] encompassing fashion, music, performance, and lifestyle.

[16] Renton, 79
[17] Shin, Lee, "Security"
[18] Hill, 105
[19] Nickl, "Appeal", 163
[20] Trazo, "Understanding" 176
[21] Raywood, "Appeal: 174

Art historian Jiyoon Lee also credits the Olympics as a catalyst for Korean globalisation; enabling Koreans to travel abroad, something that had not previously been permitted. Particularly transformative for artists and students, a notable trailblazer was Nam June Paik, nicknamed "father of video art," who instigated biennalisation in South Korea through his bringing the Whitney Biennial to Seoul, founding the Gwangju Biennale, and establishing a Korean Pavilion in Venice.[22] Paik's three-channel video installation *The More The Better* was exhibited for the Olympics, its 1,003 monitors provided by Samsung.[23]

Korean, family-controlled corporate conglomerates, or *chaebols* — like Samsung — were instrumental in bolstering Korean economy, and for decades have been offered government incentives in exchange for patronising the arts.[24] Samsung's majority owner, the Lee family, is an example of a corporation practically running a country through ownership structure. Nearly 20% of the nation's revenue is generated by Samsung, rivalled only by the government, whose spending is 25% of GDP. Put into perspective, Japan's biggest company, Toyota, comprises 5% GDP – the USA's, Walmart, just 2.5%. [25]

From 1980 to 1990, Samsung globalised itself significantly as it expanded not only its technology sector, but also diversified itself internationally, including the founding of manufacturing subsidiaries in the USA in 1984 and UK in 1987. Samsung's unique power structure relationship is a particularly Korean phenomenon, whereby a mammoth company operates out of an otherwise small country; its land mass no bigger than the US state of Pennsylvania. For this reason, South Korea demonstrates a unique capacity to "function larger than itself."[26]

Following former Samsung Chairman Lee Kun-hee's death in 2020, the Lee family donated 23,000 artworks to South Korean museums, the majority of which were traditional Korean artworks to the National Museum and 1,200 contemporary works to the National Museum of

[22] Art Newspaper podcast
[23] Chow, "Corporations"
[24] Sung-Joo, "Revolution"
[25] Chow
[26] Renton, 86

Modern and Contemporary Art. Despite attempts by lobbyists, motions were denied to use the value of the artworks against taxes on the sizable inheritance, which were projected at $10.8B on a $20B estate. However, the appraisal will be removed from the final tax assessment value.[27]

South Korea's newest president, Yoon Suk-Yeol has earmarked a $3.7bn budget for arts and culture, with incentive to continue to market a "culturally attractive country." There has also been a rise in younger collectors. When borders closed in 2020, the wealthier class commenced "revenge spending," on luxury goods and art. Art Lawyer Kathleen Kim offers a comprehensive synopsis of South Korea's financial perks that make collecting attractive, particularly to emerging millenials. Artwork sold under $46,690 is exempt from tax. Further benefits are afforded to companies purchasing art exhibited "in an office or hallway"[28] costing less than $7,802, Unlike many countries, such as the UK, Artist Resale Rights have not yet been enforced and there is no separate acquisition or possession tax on holding art. When art is taxed, only profits are taxed — and when; then as gains, or 'other income,' not standard income-tax rates. [29]

4.2 United Kingdom

In the case of London, the Olympics came after a period of financial and creative industry growth. In 2012, Frieze Magazine published an op-ed by Tom Morton addressing the impending Olympics and conflicted cultural legacies. Morton forecasted the event as "festivals within festivals within festivals," lamenting that, decorative value aside, corresponding artist-designed propagative posters were merely "promotional materials with superior graphics" and questioned whether efforts to engage with local communities were "token gestures" that preempt a mission to "pretty the place up so that it feels safe for tourists, brand franchises, and the purchasers of speculatively built luxury flats."[30]

[27] Russeth, "Samsung"
[28] Buzzi, "Kathleen"
[29] Buzzi
[30] Morton, "Marks"

Hailed as a "high point of the Cultural Olympiad" by the Financial Times,[31] Frieze Projects commissioned six high-profile public artworks for each Olympic Host Borough as a motion to bring local artistic talent to global audiences. In anticipation of the Games, then mayor Ken Livingstone boasted:

> "London's creative industries are clearly doing well and the future looks very promising, particularly in sectors like digital content, music, design, and fashion. By the time the Olympics come, we could be talking about a £30bn+ business —that's bigger than the city's financial sector."[32]

The 1990s saw the founding of Arts Council England and rise of Young British Artists (YBAs), increased national pride, and *Cool Britannia*: the massive success of Britpop artists including Oasis, Blur, and the Spice Girls – inciting fandom comparable to that of K-Pop in global scope and social engagement. The emergence of the New Labour Party in 1997 was accompanied by policy to strengthen arts and culture programmes to gain a "soft power advantage"[33] such as founding of Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). During the 2012 Olympics, DCMS used digital infrastructure for distribution, later prompting *London Tech City*, a government scheme to stimulate post-Olympic technology investment in East London as the city underwent societal shifts and increasingly adapted to the ecology of networked technology.[34]

Creative industries have increasingly been employed as an instrument to achieve social and economic goals since the UK has committed itself to fostering soft power to secure "international standing and trade." In 2017 the UK passed similar legislature as South Korea called Art in Government Construction Projects, allocating 1% of construction costs to art acquisitions.[35]

The capacity to operate in both cultural and economic relevance beyond its size is a trait shared by the UK and South Korea. Equally small yet geographically privileged, the UK hails a legacy

[31] "Projects East"
[32] Seifert, "Districts"
[33] MacDonald, "Soft"
[34] Howe, "Reliable" 56
[35] Dept Finance, "Art"

of trade as well as industry and imperialism. Rich in coal and iron deposits and just askew from the continent but surrounded by water, the UK enjoys European proximity yet retains an exclusive separateness, reflected chiefly by its currency. Its uniquely central positioning on the globe allows it to overlap with both American and Asian time zones, participating in trading hours with NYC and Tokyo. Roughly the size of the US state of Oregon, the UK has the 6th highest GDP in the world. [36]

Historically the financial capital of Europe, Brexit has imposed challenges on the UK's businesses, and art dealers, such as the 5% import tax on art from Europe. Over 100 financial services companies have relocated from London to Paris during Brexit's transition, including the European Banking Authority,[37] resulting in Paris replacing London as Europe's most valuable stock; British shares at $2.821tn in November 2022 versus French at $2.823tn.[38] The sum represents $2bn difference and has speculative implications for the art market and event industry, exemplified by Frieze competitor Art Basel launching their newest fair, Paris +, replacing FIAC, in October 2022. Additionally, the upcoming 2024 Summer Olympics are hosted in Paris. The UK continues to trade with the EU, but its biggest trade partner is the USA, with whom the UK has maintained a *special relationship,* consecrated by Winston Churchill, since 1946, entailing strong trade, bilateral transatlantic exchange, and intelligence sharing.

The UK's equivalent to the Samsung family is the Royal Family, whose spending comes from Sovereign Grant funding and profits from Crown Estate revenue, initially set at 15%.[39] Late Queen Elizabeth II had the largest private art collection in the world, comprising over one million objects, valued at over $12bn,[40] including contemporary acquisitions by Andy Warhol and Anish Kapoor. Unlike the Lee family, King Charles will not incur inheritance tax on the estate, neither on art nor assets. Elizabeth's death therefor has no comparable influence on any prominent collections. What is notable about this example is a particularly British condition of classism inherent to UK societal structure. Hill describes the UK, London in particular, as

[36] Aldrick, "Slips"
[37] Curphey, "Paris"
[38] Sheridan, "Replaces"
[39] "Royal finances"
[40] Irving, "Queen"

"absurdly exclusive, very much about the inner circle," and has been for centuries. Compared to Seoul, where the artworld is still young enough that "everybody involved in the development is still traceable," in London "you would lose track of that very quickly" and "you can remain on the edge of people's radar for years, even if they know who you are."[41]

4.3 ART FAIRS

In summer 1959, the second edition of documenta took place in Kassel, Germany. Art dealers Hein Stünke and Rudolf Zwirner reached an agreement with documenta's organisers and erected a temporary sales room in Schloss Bellevue for prints and editions. Its unprecedented success planted the seed for what became Art Cologne, the first unashamedly commercial art venue of its kind and longest running contemporary art fair to date. Art Cologne embodied the fundamental premise of an art fair — to sell art. Its tightly bundled booths, relatively short duration, and staunch neoliberal legacy targeted a collector demographic — but simply selling art was not what made it successful. The excitement of the audience and invariable success of the fair accompanied the larger cultural event, the quinquennial. Without proximity to documenta, the first little print sale would never have happened, bringing with it the advent of art fair programming and its requisite intellectual intersections.

Mega-collector Mera Rubell "never use[s] the word 'shopping'. We don't shop. We explore. You stay really engaged, reading, looking, thinking, traveling."[42] Rubell's comments are compelling because she implies that shopping is disengaging. Her reference to travel, knowledge, and critical thinking highlights the "subtle paradox, dualism, and pairing of art and market"[43] and an enduring decorum by which the art fair and its audiences seek to sever themselves from the retail landscape, transforming the practice of consumption into a commonwealth of connoisseurship.[44] The conundrum of shopping for art represents the "two

[41] Hill
[42] Altman-Yee, "Rubell", 231
[43] Garutti, "Fairland", 16
[44] Velthuis, "Prices", 25

poles of the modernist dialect, the department store and the museum," and a conception that mass culture and high art would be polar opposites.

The rise of the art fair parallels a history with Fordist ideals of mass production, mass consumption,[45] and more specifically the glamourising and event-making of evening auctions in the 1960s.[46] In this way, art fairs have been instrumental to establishing art as commodity in its own rite by contributing to secularlisation of art events,[47] when markets of the past originated from religious festivals. However, when self-identifying collectors reject terminology, art fair rhetoric becomes caught in a conflict of interest between cultural and economic motivations. At the peak of its popularity, Art Cologne was credited with "generating the most public and open discussion about the contemporary art market,"[48] though also criticised as enabling "tournaments of value,"[49] via the non-profit programming conspicuously contributing to brand construction.[50] Meanwhile *tournaments of value* echoes a cliché that equates shopping to sport. According to visual artist Cornelia Parker, "art fairs are like going to Ascot. It's a global market now."[51]

The 1980s and 1990s were ripe with consumer-friendly environments and cross-fertilised, all-in-one type experiences. Consumption became a social activity, associated with cultural uniqueness,[52] endorsed by events and transnational dialogues[53] built through social networks. The 2000s onward saw an unyielding proliferation of art fairs worldwide. David Harvey identifies the hyper-consolidated art fair environment as "time and space compression,"[54] whereby human interrelations are sped up exponentially because of the time it takes to travel between various disparate locations, ie the booths, decreasing dramatically — from miles to meters. The consensus among dealers is that the payoff for doing a fair is not always readily quantifiable by

[45] Beech, "Art"
[46] Barragán, "Age"
[47] Barragan, "Roman"
[48] Thompson, "Fairs", 328
[49] Thompson, 71
[50] Zagrebelnaia, "Audience", 36
[51] Financial, "Fairs"
[52] Woodward, "Festivalisation"
[53] Jefferies, Weinberg, "Considering", 21
[54] O'Neill, "Curating" 62

sales alone, and may take months or even years to be reflected by the strategically cultivated networks.

4.4 ONLINE VIEWING ROOMS (OVRs)

The history of online viewing rooms is short. Though a handful existed before 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was a fundamental catalyst for art dealers pivoting to, and creating their own, e-commerce platforms.[55] Because art fairs entail physical congregation and international travel, social distancing regulations and a global shipping crisis were especially crippling to the sector.[56] For consumers accustomed to online shopping, the relocation was familiar territory. While 2020 saw a global downturn in art sales, online activity surged, with digital transactions comprising a quarter of sales.[57]

In South Korea, a reported 90% of the population uses e-commerce platforms, projected to rise to 94.4% by 2023,[58] compared UK's 82% in 2021.[59] Former Gagosian director Sam Orlofsky, says "at least 75% of the conversations we are having right now are brainstorms about how best to present art online."[60] Political commentator Thomas Friedman argues technology is one of the major forces propelling globalisation,[61] whereby technology becomes a cultural mediator, and a platform for creative strategy. Douglas Crimp argues that an advanced stage of capitalism is characterised by material becoming dematerialised in order to be readily consumed, and "disembodied images and pure information is disconnected from histories, social contexts, and modes of production,"[62] leading to alienation of experience.

[55] UBS, "Report", 89
[56] Feinstein, "Virtual"
[57] UBS, 100
[58] Santander "Consumer"
[59] EcommerceDB
[60] Zagrebelnaia, 39
[61] Rectanus, "Incorporated", 18
[62] Crimp, "Getting"

This alienation is not only material but also social —whereby critical and even superficial conversations become distanced if not eliminated. In other words, OVRs offer anti-social dimension to a heavily socialised model. Professor Isabelle Graw argues that the OVR is not an environment that facilitates critique, or in the vain of this essay, curatorial inquisitions. Graw explains that "online showrooms's so-called editorial formats tend to function like press releases and serve publicity purposes,"[63] separating the conditions of the artist's work from real-world parameters of value formation and attribution, thereby removing these platforms from critical reception. In fact, in the case of Frieze, the viewing room is arguably the least curated section at the Fair. Despite Frieze's otherwise rigorous curation, each FVR is altogether identical. However, this is debatable.

OVRs provide images of artworks as well as practical information; artist's name, title, medium, year, size, and provenance. Templates also elicit (solicite?) prices or price ranges from the dealer. Because prices are rarely disclosed at exhibitions, the normalisation of price disclosure is an eminent revelation. For consumers, the impression of price transparency and price itself may impact the artwork's perceived intrinsic value. Price becomes a defining aspect of the work — and for better or worse, a curatorial consideration. To that end, insofar as the curatorial can be differentiated from curating, so is pricing from prices, that is, "the decision-making processes that prices are the outcomes of."[64] Therefor, even stripped of its conventionally curatorial conditions, the viewing room becomes a kind of curated space.

The quantification of art or "transmutation of art into a measurable quantity"[65] is, according to Graw, something we are familiar with only from auctions. Furthermore, by eliminating social barriers, OVRs may be a critical way to expand audiences to those not previously inscribed into the art community.[66] For example, of the bidder composition from the record-breaking 2021 online Beeple auction at Christie's, 91% were new buyers.[67] Renton explains that technology has "removed the austerity. We used to buy art through connoisseurship. We used to learn about art

[63] Graw, "Resort", Thesis 1
[64] Velthuis, "Prices", 117
[65] Graw, "Resort"
[66] Graw
[67] Kinsella, "NFT"

over we used to rely on someone who taught us about art, to buy something. That's not the primary driver anymore. That's the climate."[68]

From this chapter we can observe progressive migration into the digital landscape. Expansion follows a trend in the post-Fordist era of global entrepreneuralism and recurring involvement of the United States. Also evident is an element of sportification as well as socialisation/antisocialisation of culture, which leaves lingering parallels with betting, conspicuous consumption, and the "emotional resonance of brand names in our lives, and our quasi-religious relationship to consumerism"[69] and its pageantry.

CHAPTER 5: THE CURATED ART FAIR

This chapter situates the art fair within the discipline of curating and tracks their steady and equidistant development and evolution out of postmodernism and into the increasingly consumer-centric contemporary/postcontemporary landscape.

5.1 THE CURATORIAL TURN

There is a restaurant in Heathrow Airport called *The Curator*. The message it sends to globetrotting consumers is one not only of artisanal selection, but comestible authority. In an age where everything is curated and the curator is anyone, its meaning has evolved well past expert, caretaker, or even author. Mainstream appropriation of the term 'curated' caters to conscious consumers's aversion to the conglomerate nature of mass production, whereby curation is synonymous with discern, responsibility, and in the case of the restaurant, "small batch" product that will "expand your knowledge." This overlap of the commercial and knowledge markets[70] instigates a timely dilemma between global occupation and provincial authenticity — or as one

[68] Andrew Renton interview
[69] Jefferies, Weinberg, "Contemplating", 22
[70] Graw, "High"

Sotheby's slogan puts it: "Global Connections, Local Expertise"[71] — resulting in a postindustrial boutiquefication of franchise. Globalisation and hyper-accessibility have resulted in an over-availability of culture and its products: so much so that it needs to be selected, editorialised; curatorialised. This harbours tensions between the promotion of cultural production versus consumption[72] against an emerging model of curatorial practice of cultural diversification and ambitions to decentralise historically established Western formations of value and legitimacy.

The past 70 years have seen a curatorial turn across industry sectors, deeming curating not only a critical component of artistic direction, but a chief tenet of effective branding. Contemporary curators have become mediators of validation and brand identity —no longer purveyors of quality, but cultural analysts.[73] The art market's propulsion of the curator began in the 1960s and through to the 1990s, when curators began to assume a more "proactive, creative, and political part to play in the production, mediation, and dissemination"[74] of art and subsequent "rapid proliferation of large-scale, curator-led exhibitions worldwide." As the curator increasingly steered the evolution of large-scale exhibitions, curators's capacity to impart value took a critical and educational turn reflected by a reinstatement of the curator as expert or educating actor, described as the curatorialisation of education, "whereby the educative process often becomes the object of curatorial production."[75]

Cue the emergence of a curatoritate, or elite minority of celebrity curators, whose authorship shapes the framework of critical discourse to such an extent that it also transforms symbolic value into market value. By influencing the modes of production, developing the audience, and determining value, the curator is more powerful than ever before. Paul Kaiser attributes the success of curators as influential figures as derivative of the dilemma of "art to assert its supposed autonomy in a market heavily regulated by economic factors,[76] where previously

[71] Art Basel Miami, 118-122
[72] Ward, "Sea", 122
[73] O'Neil, "Culture", 54
[74] O'Neil, 9
[75] O'Neil
[76] Von Bismarck,"Curatorial"

critical or validating authorities, such as academic institutions or publications, are, unlike the curator, inadequate in terms of creative production.

The notion of an art fair being curated presents another inherent conflict of interest, wherein "aesthetic interests, the power of money, and the value of art"[77] coalesce, invariably becoming embedded in the curatorial strategy. The critical turn, during which curation transformed from a custodial practice into a critical one, transformed the role of the curator; no longer just to maintain, conserve, or endorse value, but to generate it. Hence, the intrinsic connection between criticality and commerce; the critical supports the commercial, or "artistic sophistication for the sake of social legitimisation"[78] whereby curating participates "in the process of constituting meaning."[79] Today curators are both creative producers and value producers, resulting in a "new mode of value production".[80] The curated art fair has not only to deliver a comprehensive presentation, but also function as a successful commercial enterprise. While arguably one exhibition, in actuality it comprises hundreds of little exhibitions, and thus a plurality of curated productions and incentives.

5.2 FESTIVALISATION AND BIENNALISATION

Festivalisation is rooted in Foucault's concept of 'eventalisation,' whereby events become disassociated from historical context and lose their original meaning. Biennalisation, on the contrary, alludes to the creation of meaning through large-scale art exhibitions. While the two words function in apparent opposition, they are neither mutually exclusive nor contrary, but rather they function in tandem. A key difference between *eventalisation* and *eventification* is the manner in which events transpire, the former referring to naturally occurring or spontaneous events and the latter describing a top-down structure in which events are planned, happening

[77] Rectanus, "Incorporated", 15
[78] Foster, "Recodings", 40
[79] Von Bismarck, "Curatorial"
[80] Graw, "Resort"

serially.[81] Eventalisation of art spawns numerous supplemental social opportunities to utilise or even monetise the suspension of "overlapping subcultures,"[82] convening in what becomes a "carnival atmosphere of a grandiose gathering of global art world observers."[83]

Velthuis describes art dealers tapping into the "fetishist desires of collectors by offering them a lifestyle for sale rather than just an artwork, including access to [exclusive] art parties, dinners, and studio visits."[84] Art critic Jerry Saltz anecdotally collates contemporary art events as "fun fairs," comparing them to Fyre Festival[85] describing "a crowd that's not normally in the art world; a very self-selecting, self-filtering system that is looking for something. For an experience, for an event, for I think, frankly, each other."[86] Saltz's observation suggests that festivals's intrinsic value comes not from art, but from a curated selection of people.

With the rise of the creative class and the augmentation of Millenials and Gen Z filling the labour pool as Boomers near retirement, the global workforce has forged a shift in the event industry towards more festivals worldwide.[87] Festivalisation of culture serves numerous objectives, including leisure and lifestyle consummation, social enterprise, and identity construction, allowing "diverse cultural identities to become visible, the interests of various groups become presented, and cultural identities to be asserted".[88] Furthermore, festivals are an economically attractive way of marketing culture as a product for economic stimulation,[89] from tickets sales to engagement with periphery markets such hospitality, travel, and partnerships in satellite sectors.

Mark Shapiro, sports executive and President of Endeavor Inc., says that a way the company amplifies volume of the Fair[90] is through incorporating more events as "a way of festivalising the

[81] Richards, "Emerging"
[82] Zagrebelnaia, "Audience", 35
[83] O'Neil, "Culture", 61
[84] Velthuis, "Prices", 26
[85] 2017 fraudulent luxury music festival on the Bahamian island of Great Exuma
[86] Saltz "Instagram"
[87] *festival* functions as a loose term implying a multidisciplinary social event
[88] Woodward, et al "Festivalisation"
[89] Woodward, et al
[90] Van Straaten, "Endeavor"

event."[91] Events within events is precisely the aim of festivalisation — reflected by supplemental cultural activities being centred around an already existing cultural activity. The consumer is able to curate an experience within a wider line-up of experiences. The consumer-product relationship, or bond, is enhanced through increased diversity or range, and therein an increased potential for rewarding sensory stimulus. Festivalisation is intent on engagement of its audience — locally but with global immersion. This is especially valuable to the cultural branding of place, or place making, in what Shapiro describes as a "year-round activation in the cities" the Fair inhabits.

Paco Barragán uses biennalisation to illuminate the convergence of biennials and commercial art fairs. The surge of curated art fairs has led to multiple critics and curators alike confirming formal similarities,[92] reinforced by Paul O'Neil, who argues that *biennial* can be used to describe any "genre of large-scale exhibition, typified by a propensity for a large number of works, an ample budget, and am ambition to be part of an international world nexus."[93] The biennale and transnational art fair share an institutional framework that drives the overarching curatorial influence, and "privileges the curator's position as the leading authority."[94]

Therefore, *biennale* may ostensibly function interchangeably with *art fair*, assuming the event abides by certain protocol, namely creating temporary, mediated spaces where contemporary curatorship "transcends geographical boundaries and looks to global networks of cultural production for its source material."[95] Emmanuel Négrier goes one step further, drawing parallels between festivalisation of culture and the evolution of democratic regimes,[96] which may be observed through the nationalism of biennials staged in the 19th century as a means of mass-education which harboured imperialistic or nationally curated agendas[97] like the art competitions accompanying the Olympic Games from 1912 to 1948[98] or national pavilions in Venice. Writer

[91] Van Straaten
[92] Barragan, "Age"
[93] O'Neil, "Culture, 52.
[94] O'Neil, 61
[95] O'Neil, 52
[96] Négrier, "Festivalisation"
[97] Altshuler, "Avant-Garde"
[98] Stromberg, "Medals"

and curator Dr. Simon Sheik describes contemporary biennials as the "Olympic Games of the Art World,"[99] with notions of a cultural arena creating cultural hierarchies. As "one of the most globalised urban spectacles,"[100] the Olympic format insinuates not only internal competition but heightened festivalisation.

5.3 FRIEZE

Frieze Magazine was founded in London in 1991 by Amanda Sharp, Matthew Slotover, and Tom Gidley. In 2003 the Fair was founded by Sharp and Slotover after nearly eight years of planning,[101] aiming "to be in the top league,"[102] according to Slotover, who cited London as a good city because of of its proximity to Europe but "strong connections to America".[103] The UK's rise of creative industries and redrawing of the boundaries of arts and commerce presented Frieze a ripe landscape for expansion, however Frieze attributed its success to looking both locally and beyond itself,[104] with global aspirations of "expanding its horizon beyond the UK."[105] The magazine chartered a presence in the USA early on, employing a US magazine editor in 1993.[106]

As an emerging Fair, what Frieze lacked in commercial competitive advantage it made up for with cultural merit — residual intellectual credence from the 90's as a prestigious, sophisticated brand.[107] Unlike other fairs, Frieze had a literary voice and already captive audience — the readership — who associated the name with a level of institutional critique achievable only through writing and publishing. In total, Frieze publishes four magazines: Frieze Magazine, frieze, Frieze Week, and Frieze Masters. Frieze Magazine is printed eight times a year and

[99] Sheikh, "Marks"
[100] Surborg, "Mapping"
[101] Simonsen, "Frieze," 69
[102] Simonsen
[103] Simonsen, 74
[104] Simonsen, 20
[105] Griffin, "Taking"
[106] Griffin
[107] Hill, 104

distributed internationally, and Frieze Week is printed unique to each physical Fair and distributed onsite and at partnering hotels and restaurants, highlighting the surge of cultural events that occur simultaneously across the city.

Andrew Renton recalls the first Frieze;

> "You can't disassociate Frieze Fair from the Magazine. There was a kind of naïveté that allowed them to be ambitious. The galleries that I talked to said 'oh, we really love those guys so we're going to [participate] to support them.' It's hard to imagine that the galleries at the time were doing it almost as a favour to the Frieze people because the Frieze people were seen to be the kind of credible end of the art world; that they were on the side of the artists, they were kind of cool, and so on. It is corporate, but it doesn't feel so corporate — and that's the paradox."[108]

Also in 2003, Frieze founded Frieze Foundation, a non-profit organisation spin-off. The foundation was regularly awarded bursaries of up to $48,000 from Arts Council England for curated programming,[109] also under the name Frieze Projects and Frieze Events, Ltd. According to the Arts Council grant application, funding contributed to a roughly $425,000[110] annual budget for curated programming targeted at "multidisciplinary audiences with less knowledge of contemporary art but strong interest in theatre, scenography, architecture, music, design, and art history."[111]

[108] Renton
[109] The first decade of Frieze Foundation grants are not published
[110] Annual budget ranged from £344,000 to £360,000
[111] Holmes, "Arts Council", 11

Project Title	Applicant Name	Main Discipline	Amount	Decision Date	Year	Funding Programme	Strand
To cover the overheads of a pilot, Frieze Talk Series, aimed at encouraging new collectors of contemporary art	Frieze Events Ltd	Visual arts	£14,425.00	30/03/2004	2003/04	Managed Funds	Managed funds
Trade Association Feasibility Study	Frieze Events Ltd	Visual arts	£5,000.00	10/03/2010	2009/10	Managed Funds	Managed funds
Frieze Foundation Organisational Development	Frieze Events Ltd	Visual arts	£10,000.00	24/05/2010	2010/11	Managed Funds	Managed Funds
Frieze Projects 2011-2012	Frieze Foundation	Visual arts	£125,000.00	04/08/2011	2011/12	National Activities	National Activity Above £100k
Frieze Projects 2013	Frieze Foundation	Combined arts	£40,000.00	20/08/2013	2013/14	GFTA-PG	Over £10,000
frieze video - Art writing for the screen	Frieze Foundation	Visual arts	£11,946.00	28/01/2015	2014/15	GFTA-PG	£15,000 and below
Frieze Projects 2014	Frieze Events Ltd	Combined arts	£40,000.00	25/06/2014	2014/15	GFTA-PG	Over £15,000
Frieze Projects 2015	Frieze Public Programmes Ltd.	Visual arts	£40,000.00	07/07/2015	2015/16	GFTA-PG	Over £15,000
Frieze Projects 2016	Frieze Public Programmes Ltd.	Combined arts	£40,000.00	04/07/2016	2016/17	GFTA-PG	Over £15,000
Frieze Projects 2017	Frieze Public Programmes Ltd.	Visual arts	£40,000.00	17/07/2017	2017/18	GFTA-PG	Over £15,000

FOI data Frieze Funding History Courtesy of Arts Council England

This diversified target audience exemplifies Frieze's "principle of intersection between different disciplines with the desire to bring together visitors from different spheres" as a way of finding crossover between various fields and therefor an "ideal place for communication between different realms of knowledge."[112] Grant applications cite Frieze facilitating "an experience of contemporary art that is different from any museum or gallery environment, created for the event" and "not designed with commercial ambitions."[113] It also highlights the "immense amount of activity" during Frieze that is a "unique opportunity to experiment with temporality and encourage a different type of work to be produced."[114] By making a virtue of the metropolitan city and focussing on extracurriculars, Frieze "changed the way that art fairs worked," developing a model that capitalised on the "synergy between art, non-art, between party culture, museums, etc." Nowadays, "people want to go to an art fair to have an experience."[115]

[112] Garutti, "Fair", 8
[113] Holmes, "Applications"
[114] Holmes, "Council" 2013 Application
[115] Renton, 79

In 2005, Frieze Sculpture Park opened, an open-air sculpture installation garnering public approval from then-mayor Boris Johnson, who attested to Frieze "cementing London's reputation as a global centre for culture and the art market" and well as "contributing significantly to London's economy," adding Frieze Sculpture Park fostered inclusion of both tourists and Londoners alike as a "free attraction."[116] In 2012, Frieze launched Frieze Masters, a separate Fair exhibiting Old Masters that has maintained a strict vetting policy and taps into the secondary market. Over the years, the Fair continued to add more curated sections, often enlisting star curators to oversee them. In 2016, Frieze Academy was launched, offering talks series, masterclasses, and other educational programming that progressed to include Frieze New Writers Programme, Art Fund Curator's Programme, Frieze x Deutsche Bank Emerging Curators Fellowship, and numerous accolades for artists and exhibitors.

Frieze Foundation's website has remained inactive since 2015, suggesting it has been dismantled. Frieze continues to collaborate with non-profits, namely London-based contemporary arts organisation Forma, a registered charity that develops interdisciplinary artistic projects. Since 2018, Forma has partnered with Frieze London to administer the Frieze Artist Award with the support of Arts Council England.[117] Though bursary value is not publicised, previous iterations have awarded up to $30,000.[118] Frieze London's carbon footprint was audited by Hope Solutions in 2018 and 2019, after which Frieze reduced its C02 consumption from 207 to 88.1 tonnes, with the most consumption reported as fuelling generators to power the tent.[119] Excluded from the audit was the footprint of exhibitors, travel, or shipping. In 2021, Frieze joined Gallery Climate Coalition, an international community of organisations committed to reducing the art sector's environmental impact.

In 2016, the majority of Frieze shares were sold to Endeavor Holdings, Inc. Headquarters remain in the UK while half its fair seasons occur stateside, the most recent American addition being

[116] Frieze, "Sculpture"
[117] Forma, "Sonic"
[118] Contemporary, "Kapwani"
[119] GCC, "Audit"

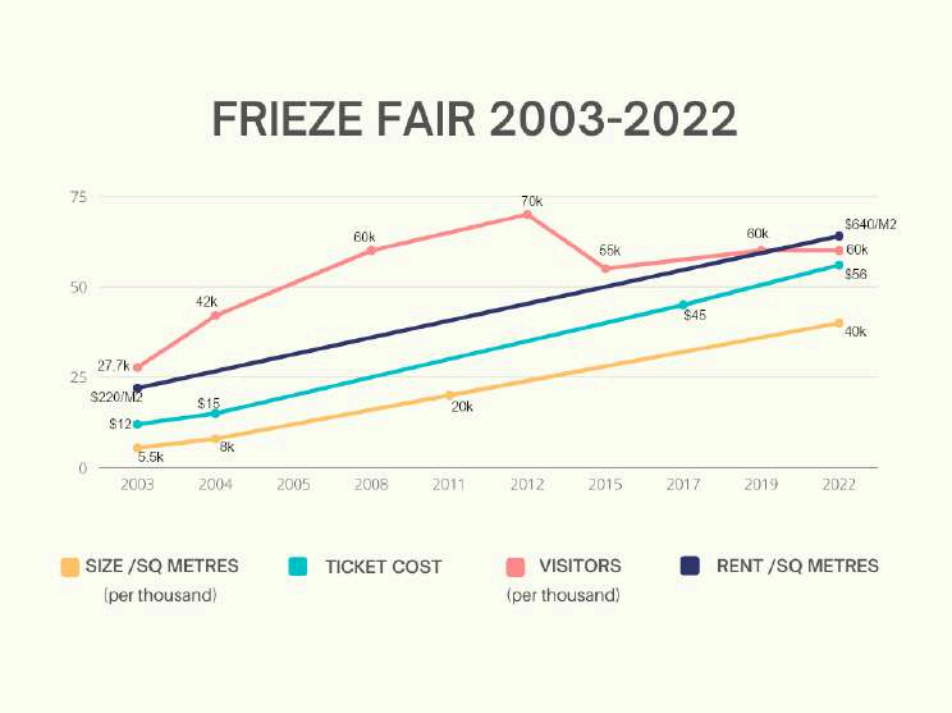
Los Angeles in 2019.[120] Endeavor's president Mark Shapiro says that, "Frieze LA would never have happened without Endeavor. The concept was started by us…and we had an unbelievable attendance from people in Hollywood." Emmanuel "pushed to open an art fair on his home turf" despite reluctance that LA was not a suitable venue. Emmanuel's mission echoes the narrative of Korean cultural diplomacy, saying he "wanted Endeavor to be a cultural ambassador – the centre of that is art."[121] He says, "buzz leads to more exposure and to more extensions [of the brand]. Sales brings buzz and buzz brings sales. They feed off each other,"[122] adding that the aim is to "do it for the galleries and the artists," as opposed to generating revenue.[123]

In a 2019 IPO Filing under a section labeled "Growth Strategies," Endeavor states that it "will continue to grow in markets around the world and aims to improve and increase access and activation opportunities, particularly in certain large media markets such as China and Russia" as well as other methods to geographically expand its assets through distribution infrastructure.[124] Endeavor's pursuit of the Asian market mirrors "geostrategic shifts in power reflected by major art centres," wherein the combined mainland market for China and Hong Kong surpassed the UK for second place globally in 2021, according to the UBS Art Market Report.[125] Endeavor's aspirations for the Chinese market demonstrate further incentive to initiate projects in Asia.

Now operating five fairs on three continents, Frieze's square footage, booth, and ticket prices have grown substantially, making it the world's most expensive art fair for both exhibitors and audience.[126] Frieze has seen a number of structural changes; the most recent development saw Global Fair Director Victoria Siddall step down in 2022, the third high-ranking director to step down from the company in the past 18 months following New York artistic director Loring

[120] Frieze New York opened in 2012
[121] Freeman, "Honcho"
[122] Freeman
[123] Freeman
[124] Schneider, "Majority"
[125] Hurley, "Market"
[126] Cascone, "Expensive"

Randall and Americas Director Rebecca Ann Siegel.[127] While each continent has its own director, Siddall's departure means there is no longer a sole creative command over all Fairs. This is more similar to franchise business structure, with operations regulated by the brand and creative management assigned regionally. Furthermore, Shapiro says that although all Endeavor's businesses invariably report to him, Sharp and Slotover "are the curators of the brand," and attributes curatorial components of branding as "marketing, content, partnerships, sponsorships, and really the whole communications approach."[128]



Frieze Fair 2003—2022 Statistics from Financial Times, ArtNet News, The Arts Development Company, and Neptunes Structures

In 2021 Frieze launched 91, a multi-tiered private members club offering exclusive access and supplemental private programming. Members receive private visits to studios, artist residences, tours, and networking events. Global Head of VIP Relations Kaitlin Lechlich has pledged an

[127] Dafoe, "Departure"
[128] Van Straaten, "President"

estimated "24 events planned each year in each [Frieze] city."[129] Membership fees run from $1,260 to $1,890 compared to annual magazine subscription costs of $50. The Fairs have also started selling tickets granting early VIP entry, previously accessible by invitation only, starting at $200/ticket and breaking previously established rules of "people say[ing] the VIP tickets are the one thing money can't buy."[130]

Frieze's membership model extends beyond 91, bridging the Magazine to the Fair. By employing the online platform Pelcro, Frieze online Magazine shifted from being entirely ad-funded to a combination ad-funding and subscription funding by implementing online paywalls to access digital content. As a result, Frieze has recently experienced an unexpected upswing in print revenue, which had declined 12% in 2021 but is now increasing. Chief Digital Officer Tom Laidlaw says:

> "It has transformed the way that we think about our relationship with [the audience.] Rather than trying to get as many people to come to the fair as possible, each fair as a new event, we now have a sort of growing membership base which we garden and manage, think about engagement for, have an app for, a membership programme for, etc. Their accounts are permanent and they are coming back."[131]

Also in 2021, Frieze opened No. 9 Cork Street. The venue hosts visiting galleries that exhibit in one of three spaces of a renovated Mayfair townhouse for short stints, and was described by Financial Times columnist Melanie Gerlis as an art market "game changer".[132] Like the Fair, exhibitors pay a flat fee relative to the size of the space, with prices starting at $26,500 for three weeks.[133] The space sits just metres away from where Rudolph Zwirner, the father of Art Cologne, rented a gallery in 1962, which failed due to a lack of collectors.[134] The gallery adds yet another cultural product to the Frieze Franchise, and the first bricks and mortar establishment open to the public.

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[129] Stevens, "Members"
[130] Hayes, "Loathing"
[131] Pelcro, "Revenue"
[132] Gerlis, "Cork"
[133] Gerlis,
[134] Mehring, "Emerging"

CHAPTER 6
CASE STUDIES: SEOUL AND LONDON

In September 2022, Frieze held its inaugural edition in Seoul, drawing crowds of over 70,000. One month later, Frieze opened in London, which reports annual crowds of 60,000 to London and Masters combined. Through the FVR analysis, Magazine, partnerships, and testimonial data, the research seeks to reveal how the various editions of Frieze correspond in their curated frameworks.

6.1 Frieze Viewing Room (FVR)

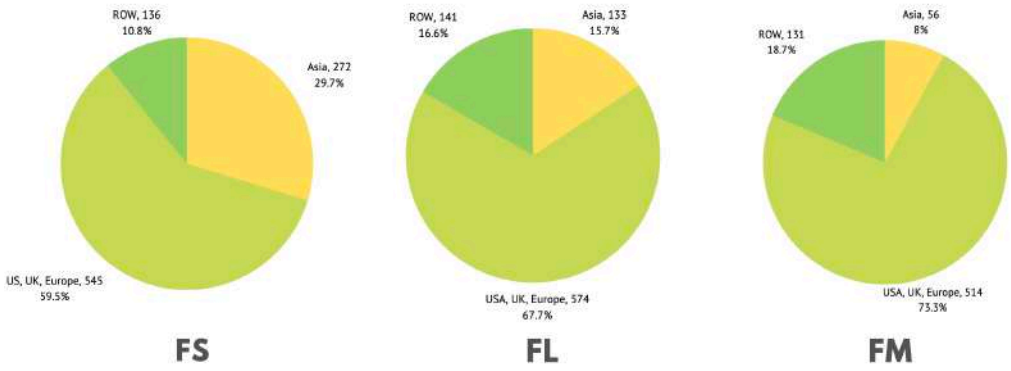
Frieze is the only art fair that has branded their online viewing room. By naming it, Frieze has differentiated their product as well as personalised it. A valuable resource for analysis, the FVR represents the behaviours of the exhibitors through the artworks they present, how they present/curate them, and how this differs between the three fairs – offering insight into speculations of the dealers otherwise kept notoriously private. Unlike Fair programming, FVR presentations are managed directly by the exhibitors. Though previously included in the exhibition costs, since 2022, FVR hosting has become optional, incurring an added fee of roughly $1,000.[135] Seoul was the only Fair whose majority of exhibitors, or 53.8%, paid the extra FVR fee, compared to 32.4% at London's Fairs. This may be attributed to Korea's higher propensity to shop online, but also an extra precaution taken by exhibitors unfamiliar with the local market. Hill notes that, unlike London, where the terrain is familiar, FVR fees would be "a small price to pay if you are deciding to put out in Seoul and make the enormous effort. You might as well maximise everything that you're doing around the decision to go."[136]

The FVR festivalises itself by following a similarly tiered model to the Fair, its first two days online restricted to VIP audiences. Unlike the Fair, anyone with a Magazine subscription is

[135] Henriques
[136] Hill

granted early access. The FVR maintains a quality of scarcity and eventification by remaining live for just under two weeks. FVR Seoul and London partnered with Vortic to generate a virtual reality platform comprising VR spaces. Viewable only on Oculus VR headsets, FVR Seoul comprised 15 participating galleries, "including a strong contingent of Korean spaces."[137] With twice the amount of physical galleries in total, Frieze London/Masters comprised only 11 Vortic spaces.[138] The platform also engages with a heightened experiential factor.

The FVR Seoul contained a total 959 artworks and was 68% male and 32% female. From 954 identified artists, the FVR comprised 272, or 28.5% Asian artists, 545, or 57% Euro-American artists, and 136 or 14% from ROW. Price average in Seoul was $145,000 from 737 priced artworks. The price average for Asian artists was $68,184 from 196 priced artworks. Comparatively, Seoul's auction lot average was $26,869 from 479 lots and comprised 430, or 89.5% Asian artists and 49, or 11.5% Euro-American artists, and no artists from ROW.



FVR ARTIST NATIONALITY COMPOSITION

Data gathered from FVR Seoul, London, and Masters

FVR London contained 849 artworks and was 58% male and 42% female. FVR Masters contained 718 artworks and was 56% male and 44% female. Price average for Frieze London was $64,338 from 662 priced artworks and $34,634 for Asian artists. The price average for

[137] Frieze, "3D"
[138] Frieze, "London Edition"

Frieze Masters was $230,373 from 518 priced artworks and $190,302 for Asian Masters. The average price from both London Fairs was $147,355 from 1180 artworks. The London auction lot average was $33,300 from 2,164 lots and comprised 6% Asian artists

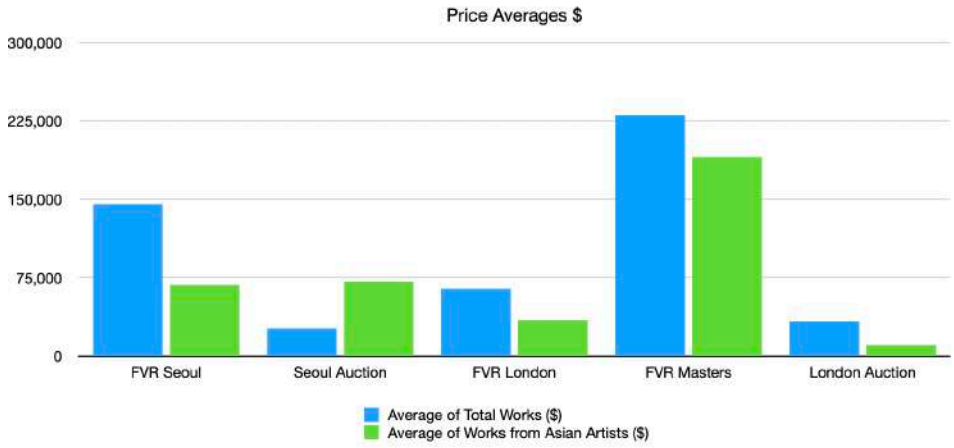
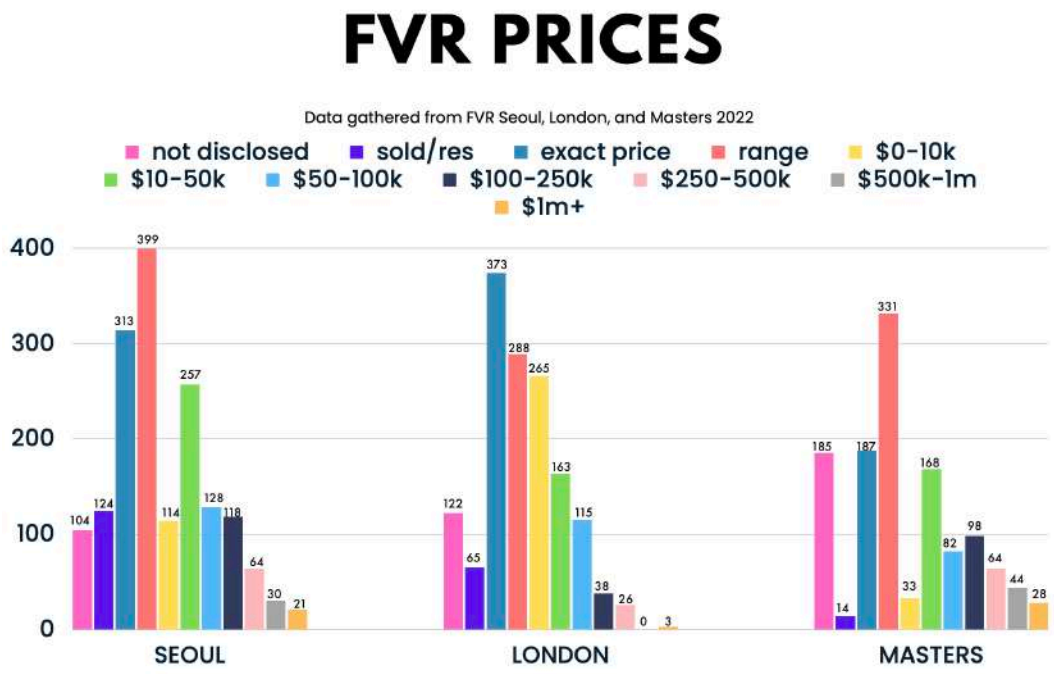


Table 1

	Average of Total Works ($)	Average of Works from Asian Artists ($)		
FVR Seoul	145,548	68,184		
Seoul Auction	26,869	71,437		
FVR London	64,338	34,634		
FVR Masters	230,373	190,302		
London Auction	33,300	10,653		

Data gathered from FVR Seoul, London, and Masters, and Mutual Art United Kingdom and South Korea sold lots at auction

Data suggests that Frieze follows a price mechanism independent of local art markets. FVRs more closely resembled one another than they reflected local auctions. Although FVR encourages price transparency, prices are often conveyed through price ranges instead of exact sums. Dealers do not always disclose even a range, opting instead for Price on Application (POA), Not for Sale, or Private Collection. Additionally, works may be marked as either Reserved or Sold.



In the case of repellent pricing, codified language may be interpreted in what Velthuis refers to as quality signalling.[139] Dealers use ambiguous designations as a tacit device to initiate dialogue. Renton comments:

> "That's how they seem to be talking about most of the works, that they are not for sale. But you know, everything's for sale. *Everything's for sale*. At a price. You've got these British guys being cagey and you've got these Korean people being discreet and kind of just delicate about things – it's a non-assertive and very respectful culture…I don't think it's just about language, I think this is about a cultural difference."[140]

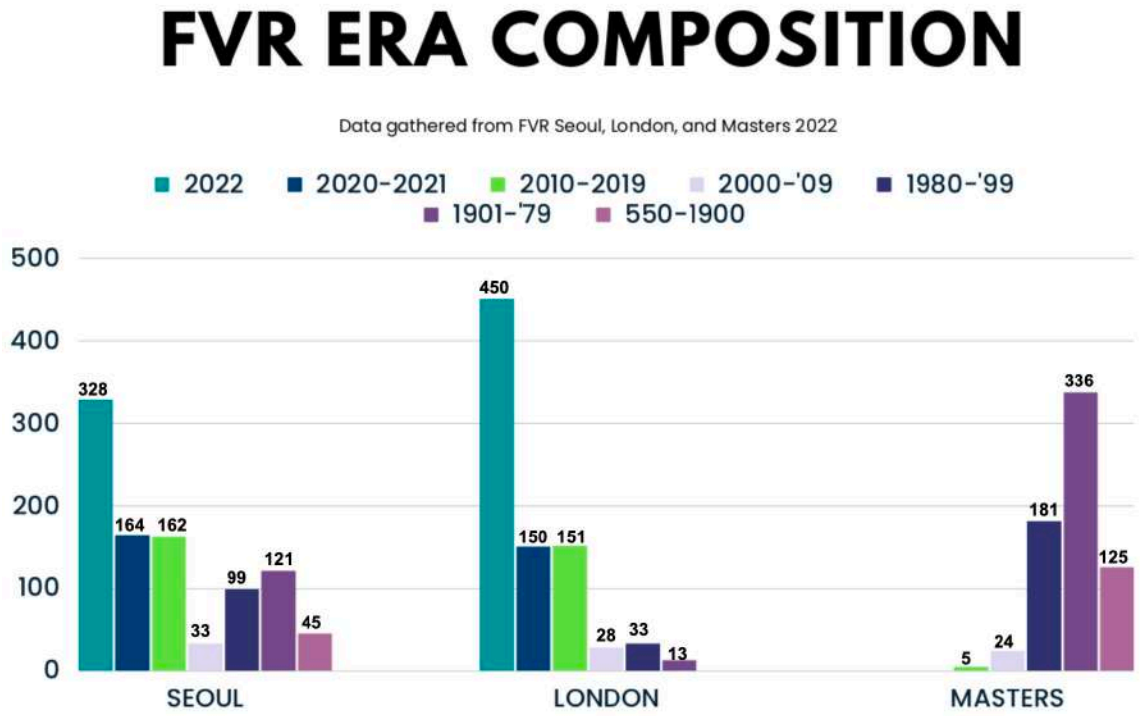
The codification of price in London, or lack there of in Seoul, can be observed in Egon Schiele's *Female Nude on Yellow Cloth*, exhibited by Richard Nagy in Seoul and London.

[139] Velthuis, "Prices"
[140] Renton



Data gathered from FVR Seoul and Masters

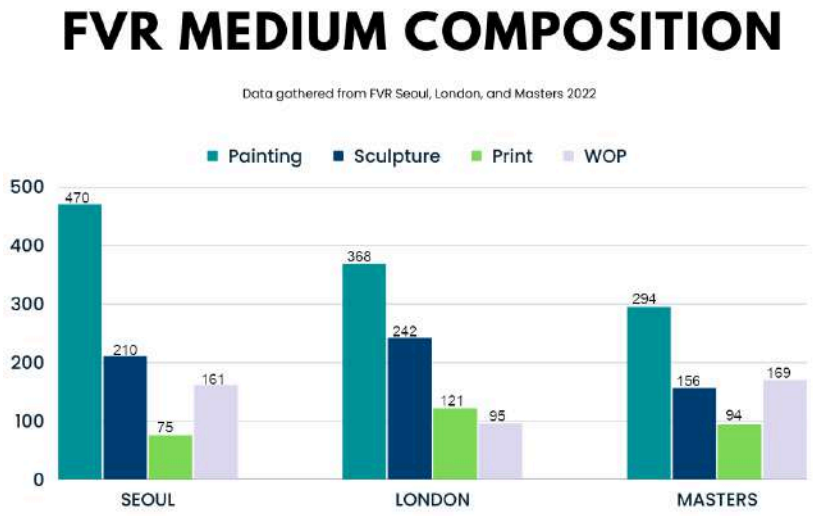
Frieze features FVR in its newsletter, employing its literary influence to add criticality to the FVR that otherwise may be lost for reasons mentioned by Graw. Frieze online Magazine also publishes articles about the FVR, highlighting works curated for publication by price. Headlines include *10 Works Under $5,000*,[141] *Ten Works Under $25,000 on Frieze Viewing Room*,[142] and *Works Under 10k on Frieze Seoul Viewing Room*,[143] catering to both readers and collectors.



The high quantity of artworks created in 2022, higher still from 2020 onwards, points to what O'Neil refers to as a "hyperbolic culture" of contemporary art and calls into question the phenomenon of *art fair art* as a mode of production, wherein artists create highly sellable artworks *for* the fair. If so, the curatorial functions as a predetermining factor. Regarding medium, each fair was primarily dominated by painting, which was also the "largest area of

[141] Frieze, "10 Works"
[142] Frieze, "Ten"
[143] Frieze, "Works"

collecting in every individual market and across all generations, wealth levels, and lengths of experience collecting" according to the 2022 UBS Art Market Report.[144]



6.2 Magazines

Distributed internationally and online, Frieze print Magazine purportedly reach a readership of 200,000, the majority of whom are from the USA and Canada at 36%, followed by the UK at 27%, Europe at 26% and ROW at 11%. The Magazine promotes a multidisciplinary agenda, stating that it targets a "broad art-interested audience."[145] Seoul Director Pat Lee credits the Magazine for generating "critical discourse around how the fair has developed and grown into an organic relationship with the host city."[146]

As the composition of artworks reveals insight into exhibitor strategy, so does advertising and editorial space in Frieze Magazine. In September's issue, six Korean-based galleries took out print advertisements of current exhibitions; six Fair exhibitors took out booth advertisements, one local (Korean) museum, and one local Biennial. There were two Korean exhibition reviews.

[144] McAndrew, "UBS", 73
[145] Frieze, "Publishing"
[146] Lee, "Top"

Frieze advertised four in-house products, including Frieze Seoul, Frieze London, Frieze Masters, and Frieze Sculpture. There were three Korean-based editorial features, including an interview with MireLee, a feature on Do Ho Suh, and an essay by Liz Kim about Minjung art movement. Translated as the People's Art Movement, the essay stresses the emergence of feminist art representations in South Korea during the 1980s and the promotion of gender equality through structural diversity as well as the "rejection of Western modernism and elitism".[147]

October's issue featured 28 UK-based print advertisements of current exhibitions; five Fair exhibitors took out booth advertisements, five local museums, and one auction house. There were five UK-based exhibition reviews. Frieze advertised five in-house products, including Frieze London, Frieze Masters, Frieze Sculpture, Cork Street, and 91. There were three UK-based editorial features, including a profile on artist Garrett Bradley, a feature on emerging London galleries, and an interview with Barbara Chase Riboud.

The resounding quantitative difference between the two issues is the amount of local advertising. Without knowing the price to run a full-page ad, it is impossible to speculate the monetary difference, but what can be inferred is there were nearly five times as many local advertisements for London. This may correlate directly to readership demographics, wherein the UK readership is potentially twice that of Asia.[148] Other advertisements include exhibitions in New York, Berlin, Paris, Bern, Reykjavik, San Francisco, and Lisbon – all Euro-American locations. While the difference is rationalised by readership composition, it also suggests that the literary, institutional critique generated by Frieze Magazine remains Western-centric. Despite Frieze Fair being embraced by South Korean audiences, primarily Western audiences consume these Korea-based articles and reviews. The intellectual and cultural value generated by the Magazine is created independent of Fair performance.

Art Basel is Frieze's biggest competitor, but Frieze Magazine retains its role as a critical agent. During the most recent Basel edition, Frieze Magazine published a "critic's guide"[149] to Basel,

[147] Kim, "People's"
[148] Because the remaining readership is ROW, Asia has no specified readership statistic.
[149] Kościuczuk, "Guide"

asserting their role, first and foremost, as an administrator of institutional critique.[150] Art Basel also publishes a magazine accompanying each fair, its content starkly more sales-oriented. From the most recent Art Basel Magazine, six of its editorial articles highlighted a private collection or a collector. The magazine featured a staggering seventy-four pages of advertisements before the table of contents, none of them art-themed, most of them luxury real estate. The magazine features one exhibition ad from a local museum and one from a local gallery.[151]

6.3 Sponsorships and Partnerships

This chapter identifies three key dimensions of partnerships: globalised sponsorship by transnational corporations, sponsorship of cultural programmes, and social/media partnerships[152] and theier employment at Frieze. Many corporations with legacies as producers of mass consumer culture also seek partnerships associated with so-called high culture, allowing them to "operate on both sides of the cultural boundary, which has been increasingly blurred" by the proliferation and accessibility of everyday cultural products.[153] By sharing audiences, sponsorship relationships present advantages to both parties to "mobilise their own global communication channels."[154] Global sponsors provide art fairs with fiscal reinforcement and circulation opportunities. Art fairs offer valuable audiences to corporations who seek to institutionalise their own cultural policies as a way of establishing themselves as cultural producers.[155]

Since 2004, Frieze Fair's leading global partner is Deutsche Bank. Headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany, and New York City, USA, Deutsche Bank exhibits over 10,000 artworks in collections based in London and New York City.[156] The Bank was founded to connect Germany to the rest

[150] Kościuczuk, Krzysztof, "Critic"
[151] Art Basel, "Miami"
[152] Rectanus, "Incorporated"
[153] Rectanus, 6
[154] Rectanus, 10
[155] Rectanus, "Incorporated"
[156] DB Collection

of the world, saying "the Americas was central to this strategy from the start."[157] Claudio de Sanctis, Global Head of Deutsche Bank International, says collaborating with Frieze enables connections with clients as well as a shared "mission to make the global Fairs more inclusive and sustainable."[158] The partnership has developed Art:LIVE, an online video platform. Streamed live, Art:LIVE both festivalises and globalises itself by occurring in real-time on YouTube. Seoul explored the city of Seoul with emphasis on emerging Asian galleries and Seoul-based curators. London highlighted the Frieze Masters Spotlight section curated by Camille Morineau as well as Frieze Sculpture – each season's episode curated to reflect the themes of the fairs: *Explorations of Heritage and Identity* in Seoul and *The Natural World* in London.

Frieze's other longtime Global Partner is BMW, a German company whose website states that the USA is its "second home with a growing footprint" and second largest market after Germany.[159] In Seoul, the company presented one special edition of 99 BMW 8 Series Gran Coupes designed by Jeff Koons. First shown in February at Frieze LA, its initial unveiling was accompanied by an interview with Koons published in Frieze online Magazine.[160] A signed edition of the car was later auctioned by Christie's New York for $475,000, the proceeds of which went to a charity for Missing and Exploited Children[161] in a highly publicised demonstration of corporate philanthropy. London was more conservative and presented immersive experience programming *Open Work,* curated by Attilia Fattori Franchini featuring artist Nikita Gale.

Frieze champagne sponsor Ruinart is owned by French conglomerate LVMH, whose largest revenue by region comes from Asia with 35%, followed by USA with 26%.[162] International Communications Director Fabien Vallerian says partnering with arts organisations is a natural

[157] Deutsche Bank, "America"
[158] Deutsche Bank, "Frieze"
[159] BMWUSA "News"
[160] Mclean, "Glovebox"
[161] Bell, "Koons"
[162] LVMH, "Financial"

brand extension, and "provides familiarity"[163] to fairgoers, as champagne becomes synonymous with art and luxury experiences. Like DB and BMW, partnership goes beyond promotion and into the realm of programming. Frieze Seoul's Ruinart space exhibited Korean artist Kim Chong Hak's fifteen hand-painted second-skin champagne bottle cases, the proceeds from sales going to benefit Korean biodiversity through a Seoul-based ecological charity. Though prices were not publicised, skins alone retail for $160 and are made of paper.[164] London's Ruinart lounge featured a participatory installation by Danish artist Jeppe Hein. Audience members were invited to engage in an interactive, educational activity involving chalk, essential oil, and the champagne-making process, after which they were prompted to use the chalk to draw an interpretation of the experience.

Extending beyond Frieze, the Jeppe Hein x Ruinart partnership is part of Ruinart's "carte blanche" project, commissioning artists to create installations for a variety of industry events. Hein's installation at Frieze demonstrates corporate impact on audiences through programming and its capacity to impart cultural influence. Whereas sponsors have not historically been empowered to influence the artistic content of art fairs, because Hein's installation was created within the parameters of champagne, Ruinart's influence on the artist's body of work and subsequent career trajectory is clear, also authorising Ruinart as a cultural tastemaker,[165] and in this instance a curator – imparting the curatorial cues mentioned in the FVR section.

Frieze Seoul partnered with Korean international art fair Kiaf. Organised by an association of Korean galleries, Kiaf launched in 2002 and prides itself in exhibiting "globalised contemporary art."[166] The Kiaf partnership can be interpreted as a strategic decision; a kind of practical adaptation to Korea Art Week, but also a brand extension. By teaming with a locally established fair, Frieze was again able to connect with an already cultivated audience as well as potentially

[163] Cain, "Champagne"
[164] Vinatis, "Ruinart"
[165] Martorella, "Sponsorship", 138.
[166] Kiaf, "Overview"

eradicate perceptions of the fairs as competitors, though Hill says "Kiaf was slightly overlooked, dominated by the presence of Frieze."[167]

A shared priority in globalism is a recurring theme in all partnership relationships examined. Frieze Seoul director Pat Lee asserts that "the sponsorships are controlled globally and the focus is on global sponsors."[168] Encountering corporations as 'partners' demonstrates what Sociology Professor Andrew Wernick calls 'promotional culture'; "a predominant, legitimised mode of communication within most aspects of society and our produced symbolic world"[169] that delivers messages through cultural products, influencing various communities's formation of meaning and value beyond the product's practical interpretation.

Each Fair featured a collection of artist-designed espresso cups by coffee partner Illy. Seoul's collection included designs by Marina Abranavić, Yoko Ono, and William Kentridge, among others. London's collection was designed by Pascale Marthine Tayou. Illy's Chief Executive Officer Cristina Scocchia says "when sipping an Illy espresso from an Illy Art Collection cup, lovers of coffee and art will associate the aroma and flavour of the Illy blend with the aesthetic, visual, and tactile experience of a cup designed by an artist, establishing a relationship with contemporary art."[170] Scocchia's commentary clearly demonstrates Wernick's theory of cultural products delivering messages that formulate non-practical, symbolic value to various communities, – in this case, 'art lovers'.

[167] Hill, 10
[168] Lee
[169] Rectanus, "Incorporated," 7
[170] Illy, "Frieze"

6.4 Programming

Frieze Seoul "felt very Frieze-like," according to Hill. "Frieze is quite distinct, it's got a strong brand identity."[171] Meanwhile, with one extra VIP day, Frieze London was "so crowded," according to Renton. Belgian Collector Alain Servais complained of an "insane crowd of socialites," curator Carrie Scott adding that "nothing about the experience fostered meaningful discussion."[172] Renton explains "too many people is bad for business. That's why those tickets are so obscenely expensive. They're meant to be prohibitive."[173] While each Fair's tickets were roughly $55, partnership with Kiaf meant Seoul tickets granted access to two fairs, whereas London and Masters tickets were sold separately at double the cost.

Frieze Seoul featured 120 exhibitors total, including sections Main, Masters, and Focus Asia. Of the exhibiting galleries, 39 originated in Asia, 79 in Euro-America, and 1 ROW. Frieze London featured 166 exhibitors, and included sections Main, Focus, Editions, Idra's Net, and Non-Profit. From exhibiting galleries, 18 originated in Asia, 133 in Euro-America, and 15 ROW. Frieze Masters had 128 exhibitors, including sections Main, Focus, Spotlight, and Standout. From exhibiting galleries, 4 originated in Asia, 119 in Euro-America, and 5 ROW.

Seoul expressed a "strong contingent of Asian galleries"[174] represented at the fair, which is reflected in the higher composition of Asian exhibitors, 10 of which were in the fair's curated *Focus Asia* section. A further 12 Seoul exhibitors with roots origins in the USA or Europe have opened secondary or tertiary locations in Asia. In total, 50 galleries, or 42%, have an active presence in Asia. From these exhibitors, 16 are based in South Korea. Of the Frieze Masters section of Frieze Seoul, 4 exhibitors had roots in Asia, or 3%. One additional exhibitor had a secondary gallery in Asia, totalling 5 exhibitors, or 4%, with an active presence in Asia.[175] One

[171] Hill, 10
[172] Shaw, "VIPeeved"
[173] Renton
[174] Westall, "Galleries"
[175] Frieze, "Seoul"

exhibitor commented that "art fairs are rarely known for their strongly curated special showcases, but the inaugural Focus Asia section at Frieze Seoul stands out with galleries."[176]

Frieze London's curated section titled *Idra's Net* presented 18 artists international artists, addressing ethics of globalism and postcolonial legacies. From 166 exhibitors, 15 had roots in Asia, or 9%, with an additional 9 maintaining secondary or tertiary galleries in Asia. In total, 24 galleries, or 14%, have an active presence in Asia.[177] Lastly, from Frieze Masters London's 128 exhibitors, 4 had roots in Asia, or 2%. An additional five exhibitors had secondary or tertiary galleries in Asia, totalling 8 exhibitors, or 6% with an active presence in Asia.[178] Frieze Masters London shows a noticeable dip in the amount of exhibitors either from or active in Asia, but also demonstrates the significance of Frieze's decision to take Frieze Masters abroad and the potential transformation of Masters over the forthcoming decade.

Abbas Zahedi won London's Frieze Artist Award for work that "builds upon Zahedi's long-standing interest in borders, thresholds and how things can move within systems or networks." Applicants were prompted consider environmental sustainability as a departure point for their submission[179] to correspond to London 2022's themes of evolution of landscape, environmentalism, and "the effects of capitalism on nature."[180] Similar sentiments are reflected at the conclusion of the 2021 UBS Art Basel Report, reporting the strong trend amongst HNW individuals to the betterment of life on the planet and environmental sustainability.

A number of satellite events accompany each fair. Hill says "everything was thrown at it: endless parties, dinners, events."[181] Jahla recalls being invited by Seoul's mayor "to a large dinner at some stadium. He's basically the second most important person in the country after the president. He made this whole speech about how Frieze Seoul is going to be the lynch pin for Koreans's new culture and the new K-art wave. I thought it was so interesting and strange – could you

[176] Devi, "Collectors"
[177] Frieze, "London"
[178] Frieze, "Masters"
[179] Art Forum, "Abbas"
[180] Frieze, "Natural"
[181] Hill, 10

imagine Sydey Kahn or any other London mayor inviting press in for Frieze London? It felt very much like an Olympic bid in some sense."[182]

Jhala's observation echoes Haam's Olympic sentiments, illuminating the magnitude of Frieze's arrival and the imbrication of cultural and political sectors, demonstrating how a mega-event has repercussions on the entire community, creating a "growth machine diaspora."[183] Likewise, all four components in the case studies present situations of broadened sectorisation and subsumption of proximate worlds. Hill confirms these sentiments, saying Frieze Seoul "slightly shifted the dynamics of the east Asian art market. It shifts the weight into South Korea as an important, established and kind of validated hub."[184]

Chapter 7: FRIEZEFICATION

This chapter presents a preliminary definition of Friezefication, its purpose, and uses the definition as a departure point from which to examine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from Frieze Seoul and London+Masters.

7.1 Defining Friezefication

A recurring trend observed both in and outside Frieze is prevailing social evasion of the financial, expressed through love of art and philanthropic engagement. Art for art's sake, coined by French philosopher Victor Cousin, is iterated by Emanuel, Rubell, and observed through non-lucrative enterprises like Frieze Sculpture, charitable projects, and administering of numerous prizes and extracurricular activities. Behind this phenomenon lies the festival, whose paramount incentive is social. Outwardly monetising its value would be self-defeating. Profitability, though necessary, is not cited by Frieze as a goal. Director Lee says that he would "judge the success of

[182] Jhala
[183] Surborg et al, "Mapping", 342
[184] Hill

the fair by the networks connected," and qualifies the fair's value as "the network built up over the years,"[185] going on to say that "curating programming," not sales, was the biggest challenge.

Here again, curating surfaces as a developmental instrument to constitute the purpose of the Fair and its role within the ecology of the cultural landscape. Programming provides infrastructure for network building, supporting notions of social capital, and reinforces that "in order to be institutionally legitimised, [art] must be reduced to its social instrumentality."[186] Jahla recalls one conversation from Seoul with an exhibitor of rare books who "didn't sell a single book the entire three or four days, but was really keen to come back a second and third year because, for this sort of genre, it really does take a couple years of continued conversations."[187]

What distinguishes Frieze is that it performs dual functions as both generator of autogenous institutional critique and producer of entertainment; publication *and* festival. Curatorial engagement is sown by the Magazine, the Academy, and its critical branches, and propagated at the Fair, the Gallery, or events, through a system of self-pollination. As such, themes discussed in the Magazine are employed at the Fair, reinforcing their cultural value, such as September Magazine's article about Minjung art discussing "better representation of women in the male-dominated art world,"[188] mirrored by Frieze Masters programming *Women Artists of the 20th Century,* which in turn resulted in the Masters FVR containing a noticeably higher proportion of female artists. Friezefication can be understood as the establishment's own institutional critique traveling back and forth between its products. This critique serves to augment the commercial occupation produced by the Fair or the corporation, and may explain why, as Renton says, it is corporate without feeling corporate.

[185] Lee, "Top"
[186] Rectanus, "Incorporated", 11
[187] Jhala
[188] Kim, "People's", 90

Friezefication may also present systemic conflicts of interest, first and foremost when critical positions presented by the Magazine do not align with the Corporation's. For example, Morton's article criticised the Olympics for facilitating invasion of brand franchises in London, yet in 2021 Endeavor acquired the 2024 Paris Olympic Games as a client for a variety of concierge and distribution services.[189] Furthermore, Morton's characterisation of Olympic artist-designed banners as "promotional posters with superior graphics"[190] could likewise describe Illy's artist-designed mugs. Such conflicting postures are conceivably endemic to the notion of corporate expansion and do not invariably reflect directly on the brand's identity due to the degree of separation. Therefore, Friezefication may be limited in its scope to the confines of Frieze products, which facilitates a level of corporate disassociation, and as Emanuel says, allows Sharp and Slotover to be ultimate curators of the brand.



Sponsorship Promotional Materials from Illy, Frieze London and Rachel Whiteread Poster for 2012 London Olympics. Data from illy.com and Counter Editions

Morever, the Magazine promotes Fair programming as well as Frieze's other cultural products, like Cork Street and 91, either through editorial content or advertising. This creates a cyclical pattern of institutional support and infrastructure whereby the curation, the publication, and the corporation, propel one another. Frieze's mission statement is to "serve as a definitive platform

[189] Shaw, "Snags"
[190] Morton, "Marks"

for the discovery, inspiration, and discourse of contemporary art and culture,"[191] the operative word being *discourse* – spearheaded by its literary voice, the Magazine, which not only provides intellectual infrastructure, but, unlike events, is omnipresent; recurring monthly.

The new membership-structured model described by Laidlaw presents another aspect of Friezefication: a Frieze community. Community building falls in line with community outreach and Frieze's legacy of public sector engagement. Through Frieze Sculpture, partnerships with non-profit organisations, and the Endeavor-sponsored Tate Acquisition Fund of $184,000,[192] which finances artworks from the Fair being added to Tate's collection, Frieze behaves philanthropically. Renton says, Frieze "absolutely feels it has a community duty to the artworld beyond being a commercial thing. It believes it has a role and that's part of its remit, whether it's the sculpture park or what have you. It wants to be seen to be providing a public service."[193] He adds:

> "You could almost argue they feel guilty about what they do – almost like, we feel a bit guilty that we run an art fair because actually we really believe in art and the artists etc., so what we're going to do it make our fair really curatorial because that's what the art world really wants, to have something that's not just a commercial exercise."[194]

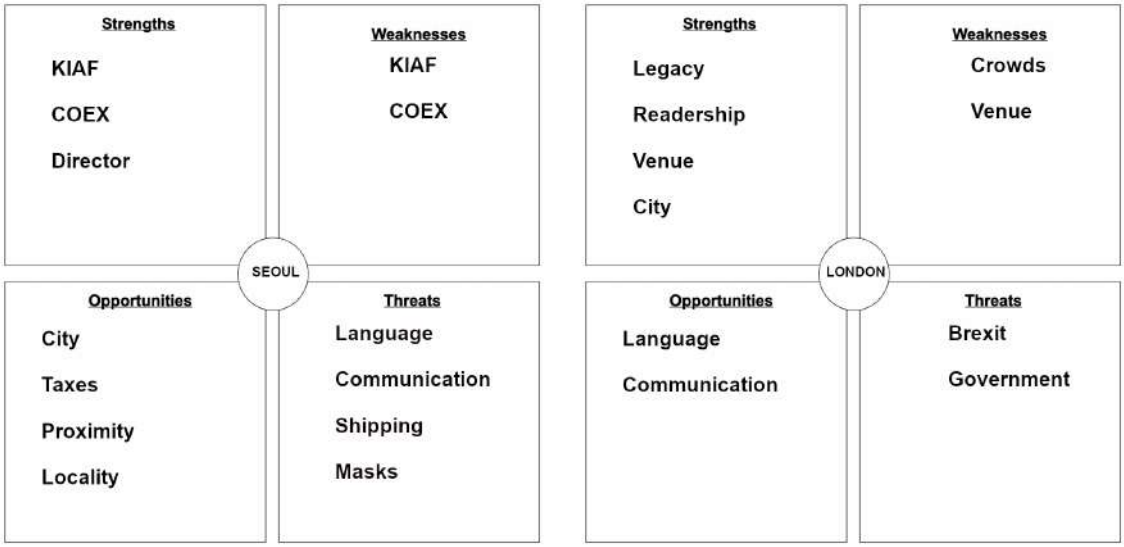
Jahla says, "I think [Frieze] still want to be seen as a punky, sort of art start fair [whose] works are edgier than Art Basel while having a really good reputation."[195] Seoul Director Lee affirms this sentiment, saying "Frieze remains a steady centre. The curated section, talks, and performances add an additional edge of cool. It's a leader, not a follower."[196] According to Jhala, Endeavor are also "trying to turn it into a hospitality and entertainment offering…everyone,

[191] "Power Players"
[192] Tate, "Acquires"
[193] Renton
[194] Renton, 4
[195] Jhala
[196] Hayes, "Loathing"

especially through the pandemic, has realised that trade fairs aren't the most profitable models. You can make something more profitable if you offer an array of other things alongside it."[197]

Finally, Friezefication becomes a valuable tool for development and place-making. Somin Jeon of Various Small Fires said, "in comparison to Kiaf last year, which we participated in, the crowd, the booths, the galleries, the quality and the curation of the booths is very different. I think [Frieze Seoul] will help Koreans understand what a better art fair would be."[198] Historically, events between different cities "allowed them to learn from each other."[199] Hill describes similar demonstrative practice by Korean art galleries, who were influential in China in the early 2000s. "The Korean galleries were setting the standards. Chinese artworld learned from Korea how to operate."[200]

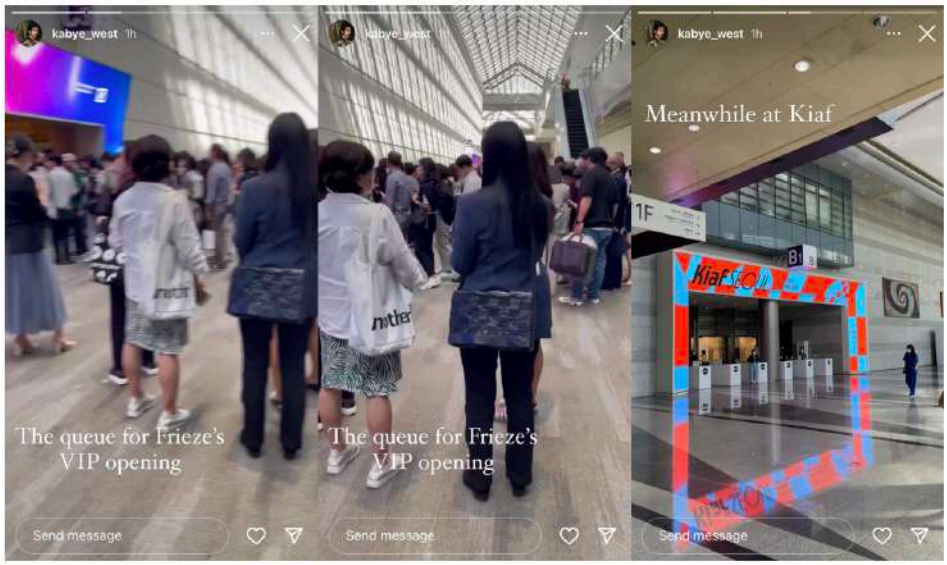
7.2 SWOT Analysis



SWOT Frieze Seoul and Frieze London

[197] Jallah
[198] Devi, "Collectors"
[199] Richards, "Models", 6
[200] Hill

Seoul: Partnering with Kiaf is both a strength and a weakness due to benefits and drawbacks discussed earlier. Though socially beneficial for Frieze, it may have detracted attention from Kiaf. Kabir Jallah claims that, while the Frieze Seoul opening was well-attended, "no one really attended the KIAF opening."[201] A local attendee posted to social media, that, although they regularly attend Kiaf, Frieze was "more meaningful in many ways. I visited twice at 10 o'clock. It's like a Louvre that you can't see all the places you go."[202]



Kabir Jhala Instagram Stories of VIP Opening at Frieze Seoul and Kiaf. From Instagram

When asked whether Frieze posed a threat, Jiyoon Lee admitted that "some local Korean galleries were showing their concerns [that] international galleries's arrival maybe kill the Korean market and collectors [would] buy only international artists...they will not buy Korean art because it's not going to have investment value and so on." [203] She adds that she considers it to be a "very positive challenge," citing similar competitive tensions in the film sector decades earlier proved to be a "great opportunity in the long term."[204]

[201] Jhala
[202] Sabrina B. "Instagram"
[203] Art Newspaper, "Summer"
[204] Art Newspaper

Venue is both a strength and a weakness. Though COEX is central, convenient, and stable, Director Lee says "part of me wishes the fair was in a creative venue, but there are limitations to viable venues to host an event this size."[205] Opportunities include the city of Seoul due to its rich cultural ecology and economic strength. Taxes are favourable for buying and selling art. Proximity to the rest of Asia, primarily China, Hong Kong, and Japan, present opportunities to access the greater Asian market. Locality of Gangnam District fosters numerous art and retail collaborations.

Threats include both language and communicative barriers. Signage was bilingual, to help with communication. Furthermore, Korean mask regulations made communicating all the more difficult. Lastly, the prevailing war in Ukraine and sanctioned Russian airspace,[206] a critical flight path connecting Europe to South Korea, threatens shipping capacity, making it more timely and expensive, potentially limiting what artworks can be presented, bought, and sold.

London: The twenty-year legacy and thirty-year readership is a strength. Director Lee gushed about being inspired by "how smooth the London fairs are"[207] since they have established a rhythm. The venue is both a strength and a weakness. While the tent is iconic and has character and legacy, it is also more work, expensive, and was cited as the Fair's most energy exhaustive component in its carbon footprint audit. Opportunities include language and communication, since all exhibitors speak English and are familiar with the Anglo-European cultural assimilations, and therefor encounter few communicative barriers. Brexit and UK political instability is the biggest threat due to taxes, import, and visa requirements of visiting dealers.

The week before Frieze London+Masters, former UK Prime Minister Liz Truss discharged her finance minister, sending the pound and euro into record-breaking parity with the dollar during the Fair, in turn stimulating an already robust presence of American buyers.[208] However, testimony of London describes the opening as teaming with non-art crowd populace reminiscent

[205] Lee "Email"
[206] Lee, "Korean"
[207] Lee, "Email"
[208] Reyburn, "Busy"

of Saltz's description of Fyre. Servais called London "a mess," describing it as "an event, not a fair."[209] Renton agrees that Seoul's opening was busy, but not like London, describing London as "insane", elaborating that "London becomes a kind of spectacle and a scene and there's people in silly hats and there's a different vibe, with Seoul you feel like everyone there was trying to do some business." Despite the more conservative atmosphere, "trying is the operative word" due to a sense that "galleries did have some issues communicating."[210]

7.3 SWOT Interpretation:

Regarding cultural migration, feedback suggests that Frieze maintains a culture of its own, supported by the strong western infrastructure already present in South Korea. Hill says Frieze Seoul still "felt very Frieze-like," Jallah agreeing Seoul "felt like a very Western fair," describing the art presentation as safer and "skewed more towards the 20th century and more commercially driven —even more painting than Frieze London. Dealers didn't want to take a risk coming in cold into a market."[211] His testimony is corroborated by FVR data showing a higher proportion of painting in Seoul. While this may be interpreted as a lack of curation, it is in fact a different mode of curation and sensitivity to the local aesthetic and social desires.

However, the culture of the Fair did change somewhat with the advent of price transparency and cultural differences regarding communication. Offline, Hill notes that price transparency at Frieze Seoul was very noticeable, and that "the London mask came off," adding that "it showed that those kinds of ideas of social context of art and the artworld shift in different contexts," such as place and space, as well as the "codes needed to operate in that environment."[212]

[209] Reyburn
[210] Renton
[211] Jhala
[212] Hill

8. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Key Findings

The South Korean art market is in a comparable state to that of London at the time Frieze Fair was founded. Simonsen points out London's emergence from "YBA obsession"[213] in the early 2000s, after which art from the UK became more nuanced in the eyes of global consumers. This may indicate the future trajectory of South Korea and the dynamic indicated by Hill by which weight is shifted and allows it to also become more complex than just a product of Hallyu.

Frieze Seoul was both more and less diverse than Frieze London+Masters. While the composition of Asian artists was higher in Seoul, artist representation from ROW decreased. Seoul focussed on luxury, both in sponsorship, prices, and overall presentations, trying to demonstrate high quality. Seoul's prices were higher than London but lower than Masters, which aligns with a curated focus on luxury, both in corporate partnerships and otherwise. However, artworks by European and American artists were priced higher than artworks from Asian artists. Korean taxes had no visible impact on price categories.

The multidisciplinary nature of audience cultivation employed by Frieze from its earliest grant applications mirrors 'all in one' qualities of K-pop and Korean soft power, resulting in both diversification of, as well as retention of audiences, following general movement towards art being not "just about art anymore, [but] about everything else."[214] The membership model employed by Frieze framework functions similar to communications channels and fosters identity and lifestyle construction referenced by Velthuis. Hype surrounding these products supports brand identity as much as membership or monetary profits. However, focus on hype

[213] Simonsen, "Frieze"
[214] Renton

threatens art being reduced to statistical information about target audiences and prioritisation of social effect over artistic quality.[215]

Engagement with non-profit programming and the public sector is consistent from Frieze's initial founding. Incidentally, pecuniary disengagement proves remunerative in other ways, namely formation of intellectual prestige, brand identity, and camaraderie with the artistic community, making for a "really amazing brand across the board" that has "diversified, expanded, yet still feels attractive"[216] to artists and galleries. Renton's theory of guilt can also be expressed as a way of profiting from not profiting, or profiting in ways that cannot be quantified.

8.2 Discourse Analysis

The assumption that a programme can be understood and enjoyed across the globe or conversely that a 'global' offering can be brought to a local audience implicitly draws on an idea that there is a global taste or "omnivorous desire for being exposed to certain experiences."[217] Friedman's theory of globalisation proposes a homogenised consumer landscape[218] – that McDonald's hamburgers taste the same[219] the world over. However, Friedman does not account for subjectivity, or that hamburgers just "taste the same to him." [220] In actuality, the experience is subjective, especially for whom it may represent "discovering what modernity tastes like,"[221] according to Professor Jeffrey Wasserman.

Frieze assumes different value in different places, even if the product does not change, or as Hill says, continues to feel Frieze-like. In London, Frieze is legacy and spectacle. In Seoul, Frieze is validation and well-mannered. To the dealer it's the Olympics, to the visitor it's the Louvre. In

[215] Bishop, "Social"
[216] Renton
[217] Chalcraft, 115
[218] Friedman, "Lexus"
[219] Wasserman, "Mickey"
[220] Wasserman
[221] Wasserman

fact, it is both. Frieze Seoul made its product recognisable, yet adapted it enough to remain authentic. Renton says, "if you are a consumer going to McDonalds all over the world, there's something reassuring about the [hamburger,] but equally reassuring about getting kimchi dipping sauce in Korea," essentially something that is regional, "that means you're not just in your American bubble, you are venturing out and having a slightly different experience."[222] In this way it navigates the curatorial dichotomy between local and global.

8.3 POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS

The greatest limitation comes from quantifiable data being hugely restricted. Data that is available is subject to gaps and conclusions are dependent on strategic speculation. However, testimonials are a valuable way to compensate for lack of data and provide a valuable replacement.

8.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

Along with continued analysis of viewing room data, Fair developments, and Endeavor quarterly statements, future research should monitor Magazine readership statistics published by Frieze. The most recent report accessible was from 2017, and liable to have changed over the past five years and continue to evolve with Frieze Seoul.

Wordcount: 14,997

[222] Renton

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Appendix 1
Interview with Dr. Andrew Renton

10.11.22

Professor of Curating

Frieze and Basel want fewer people, too many people is bad for business. That's why those tickets are so incredibly, obscenely expensive. They're meant to be prohibitive.

Do you think that's like a gatekeeping thing?

It is, but it's almost incredibly pragmatic, about Frieze this year I felt it was just too crowded. They've let too many people in, cause you could buy a first day ticket. Normally that has to be kind of earned. You could buy one for £200 or something and what it meant was it was just insane.

Did you feel that way at both Friezes?

I didn't feel that way about Frieze Masters but then again having said that…

Did you feel that at Seoul as well?

Much, much worse in London. Seoul, it's a different culture. Seoul was interesting because they got into bed with the art fair that already existed. Which is a bit of a - it's very local and not really cool and whatever, it's almost like a kind of association of galleries rather than a kind of selective art fair and I think they felt that they should do that because that was the way that they could get into a new culture as it were. When you went to the exhibition hall you had one on one floor and one on the other.

Cologne did it …

… it meant that it was the local scene in one and the international in the other, but of course the cool, local ones wanted to be in Frieze. We went on the opening day and yeah it was crazy, but it was not like London. That may be because - also because London becomes a kind of spectacle and a scene and there's people in silly hats and there's a different vibe, with Seoul you feel like everyone was there trying to do something, trying to do some business. Trying is the operative term. You did get the sense that international galleries did have some issues with communicating. If someone comes onto your stand and they don't speak English, unless you've got a local on your stand it's going to be really hard.

In terms of signage and everything, how bilingual was the production of the fair?

Yeah, it was bilingual. It's an interesting point because Korea, like certain places in Asia, is not bilingual in the street signs. The other thing that I discovered, I've been to Seoul twice - the first time I went, I was given a driver who just took me everywhere. This time I had to navigate. I thought okay, 2022 you've got Google maps, no problem, Google maps doesn't work. And like suddenly - and it doesn't work in a really disconcerting way, it's not that it just goes blank, it looks like it's working but it's not. And so you need to get yourself equipped with local software and local equipment kind of thing, otherwise it's going to be not straight-forward.

Seoul is one of those places - it's a big city and there's a lot of schlepping backwards and forwards. Navigation was a challenge - which is one of the reasons why historically art fairs were not in the big cities and they were not in the cities that had distractions. Like Cologne, like Basel. The theory was that you came to Basel to go shopping, you did not come to Basel for other things. So when Frieze broke the mould and set up Frieze London, a lot of people were saying, ah but London's a hard place to do an art fair because there's so many other things going on. And they made a virtue of that and then that changed the way that art fairs worked in the world. Now you find Miami, Paris, a lot of places now like the synergy between art, non-art, between party culture, museums and the art fair simultaneously, etc. So Korea is the sort of next logical step in that direction, and that a lot of people who were not Korean really wanted to have an experience. I think that that's the thing, you can't undo that now. People want to go to an art fair to have an experience.

You have to give them extra things, either access to museums shows or private collections….or something.. and I think that's what everybody expects and that's what everybody got when they went to Frieze. I don't think there was a huge amount of business by comparison to let's say Basel, but I think it's sort of planting a seed and it grows from there. There were some really great collectors in Seoul- so I think they were very excited and very grateful that it was there. It's almost as if you're putting on this whole rigmarole - for 20 people.

"Korean-ness"

How Korean did the fair feel?

It felt like a fair but then the minute you step outside, it's something else. I think the extra stuff that they laid on played up to that Korean-ness so you really did feel that, because it would be really weird to go from Europe or the United States to Korea and not get a sense of what it was. Just lock yourself in an air-conditioned building, no one could be expected to do that. And most

people feel like they get a sense of a place if they get access to museums or if they get access to collections or just go somewhere exotic, like a kind of a restaurant or whatever it is. I think that was laid on and there were programmes that were laid on

There's the question about for whom is that fair, because these things are very international. I think with a fair like this one it's looking both locally and beyond itself.

You've got to ask that question about why Seoul now? And it's to do with lots of factors but everyone's wrestling to figure out where the main Asia art fair is going to be. There's maybe room for lots of them, but no one wants to go to Hong Kong at the moment.

It's a very American tendency, with the chains, but you do find yourself re-assured. You are on your own when you get there, even things like going to the supermarket you think ok I'll get some snacks. That's how those brands work across.

The reality is on the ground it's a fantastically consumer culture. You go to the fancy equivalent of Mayfair and there's a Louis Vuitton and they're probably doing more business than London. Korea's got this other complexity that you've not North Korea there as a kind of psyche, but it's not evident. It's in the back of your mind but you're literally like in the future as you're walking down the street…in danger…(16:04) Then there's the kind of American presence there, which is a way of kind of mediating that and so on.

I feel it's much less complex, much less repressive, much more open, than let's say the new Hong Kong is, which feels really kind of compromised. It's a very respectful culture. I'll give you an example: the fair was in September. By September pretty much everyone all over the world has given up on wearing masks and all of that. First of all the testing is really hardcore, you test before you leave and you test when you land. Then you're in a culture where …wear a mask all day all night 'til you get back to your hotel room, which to us now seems so incredibly strange, but there you literally didn't see any exceptions to that. It tells you a lot about the culture. It's a very progressive culture on the one hand, but there's deep sort of respect for the order of things.

And that is also one of the challenges of the art world, how do you enter into this very sophisticated art world in Seoul. Lots of western galleries starting to open up there and use that as their stepping stone throughout Asia. The question is, and I don't have the answer, are all of those Western galleries just a culture in themselves or are they fully embedded within the Korean art scene? I think it's probably more the former than the latter. I think they're probably doing just enough business to pay their rent and to be there.

The masters element though

If you asked anybody, they'll say they preferred Frieze Masters, because in a way there's just a kind of pleasure to see amazing things you wouldn't otherwise see. I was amazed at how ambitious some people were to put stuff up.

The presentation was probably more ambitious in Seoul, but they probably wanted to just do something - knock out.

…that's how they seem to be talking about most of those works, that they are not for sale. But you know, everything's for sale. Everything's for sale. At a price. I think it tells you a lot about what they think might communicate over there and I think it means really good recognisable bits of art history or contemporary practice that are really kind of recognisable brands, and that seems to work. I wonder how they got on in Seoul because you've got these British guys being cagey and you've got these Korean people being discreet and kind of just delicate about things - it's non assertive and very respectful- you tell me what you tell me. If someone played hard to get with me in a gallery I'd say "yeah right, but c'mon," but you can't imagine anyone in Seoul being in a position to do that with those galleries. You can't imagine that conversation going on with a local.

There's a big discrepancy between what I think I'm communicating and what's being received and it makes it kind of hard. That kind of default international expectation that English is that lingua franca - most places in the world that's straight forward. I don't think it's just about language. I think it's about cultural difference. I think a lot of galleries take on a local in places like that because it's just so much easier.

Its' an American fair. How has it changed since being purchased by Endeavor?

You can't disassociate Frieze fair from the magazine. I was in the first issue of Frieze Magazine, not even issue one, it was issue zero, and when it started its as a couple of guys who were kind of really - they weren't in the art world and there was a kind of naïveté that allowed them to be ambitious. If they stopped and thought about this, to set up a magazine in the art world when the magazines that existed were art forum and flash art that had been in place for 40 years lets say and survived by the fact that everyone had a subscription and the subscription renewed and what it meant was they knew they could pay their bills. There was no reason and no incentive for anyone to have a new model.

Their new was model was they juxtaposed artists who literally just got out of art school, with grand old men like Gerhard Richter or whatever it was, and it was the juxtaposition of completely tried and tested and completely unknown that made it exciting at the time - that and at the time in the first issue the put Damien Hirst on the front cover - it was the juxtaposition of tried and tested and completely unknown that made it exciting at the time. That's what I called naiveté its like a really refreshing naivete. There's a lot of love that carried forward and I remember at the time that they annoyed the fair it was so left field…nobody could have imagined it. And the galleries that I talked to said oh, it's so weird but we really love those guys that we're going to do it to support them. So it's hard to imagine that the galleries at the time were doing it almost as a favour to the Frieze people because the Frieze people were seen to be the kind of credible end of the art world, that they were on the side of the artists, that they were kind of cool and so on.

I don't think the Frieze Fairs are the most profitable fairs, reading between the lines. I think if you were a gallery your priority would be to be in Basel - where you probably make the most money. And then I don't know, but obviously they would be very high up there.

It is more commanding as an entity than let's say Cologne, but maybe the Basel entities might be more successful for you because American collectors seem to favour that. So nevertheless, the - Frieze has retained a fantastic brand. It's a really amazing brand across the board. They do things right, artists seems to like them, galleries seem to like them, and so on. That brand has diversified, has expanded, and yet feels still attractive.

It is corporate, but it doesn't feel so corporate, because - and that's the paradox - the interesting thing about art fairs, I've been on these selection committees for a few in the past - the obsession on selection committees is that the organisation does not just want you to do a booth with your gallery artists, they want something curated so Frieze probably were the most proactive in that and then all the other followed. They will tell you - and very often when you don't get in they will tell you, " well, you know, we were hoping for a more curated, thought-through stand. We wanted a show and not just a bunch of painting on the wall." And Basel has gone that way, but actually historically it wasn't like that. It was just about people putting good stuff on the wall. I think if we were to really think about that, I wonder if that's something to do with a kind of - maybe in Frieze's case and I'm overthinking this, or I'm completely projecting, but hear me out-

It's almost like, we feel a bit guilty that we run an art fair, because actually we really believe in art and we really believe in artists, etc, so what we're going to do is we're going to make our art fair really curatorial because that' really what the art world wants . You could almost argue that they feel guilty about what they do - I think - I really don't think that's the right way of saying it, but the idea of putting the curatorial into it is something to do with umm, trying to not have something that's JUST a commercial exercise

I call it "profiting from not profiting"

AR: that's a good phrase. Something like that - and umm, you know, of course it's a double bind - you know, we're all - having been on both sides of it, it's really interesting to see how galleries bend over backwards to try and do something to answer that for the organizers and how interested the organizers are. But at the same time, there's another sub text going on because the organisers are walking around your stand and really looking to see just how valuable the stuff you've got it, because teeter was always a truism that you took your most expensive work to Basel. You could sell a $50m painting in Basel. Question is, could you sell a $50m painting in Frieze Masters? It's a real question.

I did an analysis of all three viewing rooms and at the end of the day the average price was about $125k in Seoul and …it was actually pretty similar, I expected Seoul to be much, much lower, I expected the difference to be bigger

The other thing that we haven't talked about is I think there's a massive shift to that viewing room.

You know they started charging for the viewing room

I think that that space is going to be more and more important. First of all, because the technologically is going to get better and better. It's already pretty good. What was very interesting for me and one of the reasons I went to Seoul - is I've been - I spent the whole summer in Australia and we flew back via Seoul - I have this theory that Seoul could be a really interesting hub that links Australia with America and Europe in the way that Singapore and Hong Kong have been. Singapore is still in the running, but Hong Kong is out of the running. What was really interesting talking to

None of the Australian galleries went to Frieze, partly because they had their own fair the following week in Sydney, so the timing was not right, but I think you'll find more and more Australian galleries going next time

One thing that was really revolutionary for the galleries in Australia was - we visited them and said, well how's it been during Covid? Without exception, every single gallery said, "we've had the best year we've ever had"

Wow

And I said, well how is that possible? And they said people don't feel guilty about buying online anymore.

And it makes a platform for price transparency

It's transparency, you can think about it and take your own time, you can learn on the job, and it was really shocking to me because my wife and I were kind of going to these sympathetic - and they say they've had the best two years they've ever had and are opening up a new gallery because they've got so much business - and the Australian art scene, like many art scenes in the world, is a microclimate. Most stuff is relatively reasonably priced, it's communicating to its own people, it's not going very much further than Australia - why I'm telling you this is that I think that during Covid those viewing rooms became a legitimate space.

It's interesting what you said about branding, because Frieze is the only fair who actually named their viewing room after themselves

You know, during Covid a lot of things happened that no one ever thought was possible, one of the things that was really interesting was not just that things got sold online, it wasn't just a record for things that were bought online, or by absent parties. The really interesting statistic that came up was at one of the auctions, the under bidder was online using the software where you just press on a button. What was really interesting was that that was only for a certain level of stuff but that if you were getting into the millions what you needed was maybe someone on the phone for you that would do your bidding on the room, that you would need to have a relationship. What was really clear is because the art world sets itself up for being exclusive or whatever is that there were new collectors who didn't know their way in, who didn't want to know their way in and there was one guy who was the under bidder for a painting that sold for $85 million or something, but he was pressing with his finger up to 80 something million dollars, but he was prepared to spend $80m without calling Christies to say, here I am, I'm a crypto billionaire, he just was registered and he was pressing with his finger on his keypad. Do you want another bid, yes. That world has opened up - not because of the technology but it has kind of removed the austerity and approachability, connoisseurship. We used to buy art through connoiseurship. We used to learn about art or we used to rely on someone who taught as about art, to buy something. That is not the case anymore. That's not the primary driver anymore.

So that guy with his finger, he didn't want to be in a conversation with the expert - that's the climate.

Also the viewing room has almost nothing curatorial about it. Everyone's viewing room is identical - you can either have a wall-mounted toggle or not but even if you do, it's always the

same room with the same chair for scale. There's nothing about the viewing room like the booth (41:26) It's like the opposite of all that curatorial stuff that's happening at the fair

If you went down my kind of guilty conscience kind of route, this is the bit where you can just be guilt-free.

It's a guilt-free space.

Guilt-free consumerism. What you see is what you get, what you think you see is what you get - and so on.

There's an argument for this. If you walked into Frieze on the first day, I just wonder what you can see. Can you see the wood through the trees? Can you really get to grips with the painting that's in front of you? There is a very strong sense that that viewing room is going to be - it is a legitimate space and I think it's going to be a very useful space for a variety of reasons.

It's also up for twice as long as the actual fair.

Of course - and it can be replenished -there's a lot of churn that can go through those spaces. You can sell. That's the other thing is, if you've worked in the gallery in one of the great illusions that the gallery has, and the fair is a good manifestation of that, galleries are pretty predictable in the way that they set up a fair. Very often you'll find that you go to a gallery and they have the same artist always on the same wall. You walk into the booth and it's pretty similar in composition to the one from the year before. That enables you to navigate instantly, but something else is at work there, which is there's that one painting that's available, but you and I know that there are far more paintings available but they are not made available. So they're drip-fed into the market one at a time, unless there's an exhibition. One at a time process.

If you're in the viewing room, you have one John Curran, or whatever, and if the painting is sold, then that one slips out and a new one comes in rather seamlessly. At least in a certain type of art it can happen really, really seamlessly and you retain that aura that it's the only one, but actually there's a lot of rotation.

The market is controlled, and I think galleries are realising the viewing room is a very good way of controlling that because actually you can limit what you show but you can refresh, because if something sells, it sells. And again it's that thing, that people will buy from that without even talking to you. Imagine spending a million bucks without having a conversation with somebody.

That may be quite normal now - with this whole thing, one of the interesting things that the auction houses have said recently is that with the -

They got - when that terrible work of art that sold for $60m that NFT - the majority, I think like 60% or something like that, the majority of bidders were new to them. Not the old school collectors. They've got the best databases in the world. They know every single sector, they know where every single work is and one is to reach those collectors but also to reach those collectors who own the work to get the work back to sell it again. Every painting has a piece of string on it that they can reel in - to re sell it, but when it came to that NFT thing, these were brand new people that they'd never ever come across before. There is evidence that some of them were buying NFTs and Giacometti's, but this is new money. Stupendous money. They want to conduct their art business the way they conduct their own business, which is to do digital transactions as much as anything else. At the end of the day they've made their gazillions out of being nerdy and they're being nerdy in the way that they're buying their art too.

Did it feel like the audience at frieze Seoul was mostly millennial? I know that the majority of collectors in Seoul are millennials or younger.

Not really. It felt very prosperous and it felt quite sophisticated, but there are - there have been some superb collectors in Seoul, a lot of the people from those being Korean industries. Every single major Korean company has a collection and organisations like Samsung -Samsung has the best museum in the country- they have the best collection in the country. Just masterpieces and so on.

It felt pretty millennial but there was more than that.

I think Seoul has the most private art museums in the world.

Yeah - that's also maybe a function - that sometimes happens when the state does not do that job. And they fill in a gap - but Korea has always had that - so you get this weird kind of blurring between big industry and the museums. The museums are extraordinary

You're saying there's great museums because there's no Arts Council England over there

That's the sort of logic that happens in a lot of places internationally and then certain museums take the role of that national type of museum - it's not necessarily just an Asian thing - just of the top of my head I'm thinking about the Korbenthium Foundation in Lisbon, which sort of

functioned for quite a long time as a sort of quasi collection just because there was regular buying and because there's a museum there. I mean there are other museums there that might have more state ownership and so no, but in the absence of those museums, private will step in. It gets more complicated in America of course where it's sort of mainly at the end of the day, it is still privately funded, pretty much everything. So, uh, but no, Korea is interesting in that regard because it just - where there's a kind of pursuit of excellence - extraordinary collections. Very often not necessarily contemporary or modern, just historical stuff that you just can't imagine all being gathered together. Museums work at a different pace than private collections: much more slow, much more measured, but a private collection is able to pay

Do you feel like it would be fair to say that art fairs, or Frieze is kind of straddling the private and the public sector?

That's what it wants to do - that's what it wants to be seen to be doing. It wants to be seen to be providing a public service. There is this thing - I'd be the first one to say it - Fairs provide a public service. They give you access to stuff that's incredible. The problem you have is that if they are too much public service, then it's a problem for business. Too many people. The art fair that always had this problem, because it was absolutely like really kind of embedded in the life of the city - was Arco in Madrid. Historically, whilst it wasn't the most high profile fair in the world, might have been the mot highly attended fair in the world because every student, every kid, everyone went to go and see the fair. But what galleries used to say, and I haven't kept up with it recently, but what galleries used to say is that they complained because it was impossible to do any business.

You'd be sitting in your booth, and suddenly there would be thirty school kids standing in your booth and you wouldn't begin to be able to reach a collector. So there would be a lot of that.

I think Frieze absolutely feels it has a community duty to the art world beyond being a commercial thing. It believes it has a role and it does lots of really interesting things on the side, whether it's the sculpture park or what have you, but it absolutely believes that that's part of its remit.

It's really interesting.

How are you going to make sense of all of this?

I've been trying to, if I'm going to use this word friezefication, just to define what that is and I think it's kind of - I'm interested in this word biennalisation - so it's some of that but it's also

globalisation and also combining the primary and secondary markets in one place, which is what galleries cannot do and auction house cannot do, but it does both of those things and then there's this like spectacle.

Like 60% of artworks from Frieze Seoul were from 2022, so many artworks were freshly made

I find that the most terrifying thing of all - because I just, the thing that I found the most terrifying thing about Frieze was that booth, Gagosian's booth - zombie abstract stuff, all the same size, all different colours, super abstract, and super expensive. Those paintings had been like $50,000 the year before, taken over by Gagosian and were now $500,000. Like what?! That terrifies me because I think that there is no guarantee that if you buy something from Gagosian that that will retain any of its value. It could, but it feels brutally market-driven. Everything was sold.

You are scraping data from whatever you can access. You and I know that that's the tip of the iceberg, it's one of the reasons why when something appears to be transparent it's very satisfying for people who are new to the game. Even if you overpay, at least you know what you're doing. That's why people quite like auctions even though that's not a straight-forward thing either. Any kind of research into art market is always skewed by the lack of available information. You're trying to piece it together from your perspective and it's always worth articulating that. saying, I'm strategically, deliberately going on the available information. But I recognize that under the surface there's all sorts of things that are not available.

It speaks to how Frieze situates itself within London. So it kind of looks around for corporate sponsors - who will we pull in? The corporate sponsors reflect that thing that I was talking about at the beginning, which is that art fairs aren't just about art anymore, they're about everything else.

It changes everywhere it goes, if it's smart it changes everywhere it goes.

Which is kind of interesting if you're a consumer because if you are a consumer going all over the world, there's something A reassuring about the chicken nuggets but also B equally reassuring do discover that you're getting kimchi dipping sauce in Korea. It means that you're not just in your American bubble that you are actually venturing out and having a slightly different experience.

Leon has Korean mayo, because we're obsessed with Korean food and fashion and everything at the moment

Korean culture is kind of amazing, K-Pop - K Pop , the scale of K P-pop is mind boggling. Forget everything you think you know about pop music. K Pop - if one of those - a few of the K-pop singers came to frieze, if they come to Frieze, that's like a billion dollar gain. It's huge the impact that those things have. And we don't necessarily understand it. If you're cool you might know a few of those bands, but those bands - the numbers that are at work - and the trickle down affect culturally.

I was exploring the cuteness thing in Korea for my daughter so we went to some of those super cute Korean creatures shops - again they have their origins in K Pop. They kind of originated by some of those figures. There's a whole cultural layering - and the scale of it, because they're selling into China or places - so the numbers can be huge. I don't get it all, but it's amazing. It's really extraordinary. It hasn't really kind of cracked here in the same way.

The scale of it - Korea can sort of operate bigger than its size - the number of viewings of Gangnam style - 4.5 billion views.

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix 2

Interview with Dr. Katie Hill

18.11.22

Professor of Contemporary Asian Art

When you went to Frieze Seoul, was that the first time that you have been to South Korea?

Yeah it is

Did you have any kind of expectation about how Seoul would be, or how Frieze Seoul would be?

I didn't have that much expectation for Frieze - for Seoul itself I have quite a lot of expectations. Actually it was much more interesting and diverse thanI had imagined it would be, in that I'd imagined it much more of a sort of huge great kind of super modern city in Asia and it was less homogenous than that - much more incorporating old architecture, some of the gallery district are quite pretty, nice little areas where you could wander in and out with cafes and shops, less sort of that idea of an asian city which some of china has become. It's quite interesting to seeing it amongst that. Frieze itself was very sort of, it was very Frieze-like. Frieze has got a very strong identity and what interested me was, it retained that feeling of this is frieze and we are now in Seoul.

I did get the sense from behind the scenes a bit of this feeling of - I mean it was quite a tough call I think for frieze to have its launch in Seoul because it's a huge amount of work seeing up in a completely new city, even though that had been planned over eight years. We actually, I went to dinner with Victoria Siddall so that was really interesting asking her about why they chose Seoul and she was sort of talking about it. They had looked at other cities like Tokyo and Beijing and definitely felt Seoul was the best city.

Was that more of a logistical decision, did she say, or for other reasons?

It was about the maturity of the art market, the readiness, the feeling of cultural readiness and the deep institutional embedded-ness of the art world in Korea, which is quite impressive. It's very high quality institutions, and it's backed up now by very strong government support. I think all those conditions including the stability of it politically and economically, so obviously Beijing could have been an absolute disaster, let's face it, and Hong Kong it's been proven in the last two years that Hong Kong is - you know, it was never considered a risky space but actually it was pretty astute of her

Would you agree that it's sort of out of the running in being like the Asian art fair go-to capital?

No, I wouldn't. Interestingly I think that Hong Kong is a space to look at still, very strongly, because given what's going on in the Chinese art world there's a lot of worry about Taiwan and Taiwan's also got quite a mature art field. I think Hong Kong has been growing its infrastructure really quite considerably and the west Calhoun district with **M+** is really significant. And the palace museum, the entry of these big institutions, so it's definitely not going to go away, Hong Kong. I think it's just that obviously the geopolitical situation is much less favourable to foreigners and whether that will change or not is another question. The situation inching is extremely thriving but we're so cut off from it that we don't even perceive it barely, which is crazy its a sort of weird barrier that has gone up.

Frieze Seoul, what was really interesting was one that the feeling of the energy around it was incredible - really amazing

Are you saying that you felt a stronger energy at frieze Seoul than at Frieze London?

It felt like it was a very exciting event in Seoul, really wow factor - everything was thrown at **it.** We were just asked to endless parties, dinners, events, there were huge range of high quality exhibitions in other spaces around Seoul during that time.

And you didn't feel that way in London, at least not more than usual

I thought London was great, but you know that feeling where you have to go about three times, I always find it exhausting. I thought frieze masters was very impressive.

Everybody has said that this year about Masters versus Contemporary

Yeah, I mean I did feel that before but I think I took less time to absorb the Main fair. Masters I feel like I took more time and kind of absorbed it a bit more.

How about the Frieze Masters at Frieze Seoul, did it feel like Frieze Masters or did it feel like another section?

That's a really good question actually. I think it felt a bit more as though it was within the fair rather than a separate fair, but it was very, very high quality, I mean it was incredible the quality of it. And I'm trying to think of examples bit I remember there being some extremely high-end word in that section. What was interesting was that because it was held on one floor, a floor of

this massive building that we were in, also held KIAF - it sort of meant that you had this kind of massive amount to try and take in, you'd have to go in and out about five times over the course of several days. Because KIAF is really established and huge - large numbers of Korean galleries from all over Korea, which was really interesting because you don't really perceive how much is going on outside Seoul of course- so I think that momentum was really impressive with Frieze but I think there was also a tension there because obviously it put pressure on KIAF. It meant that KIAF was slightly sort of over-looked. It was kind of dominated by the presence of Frieze, and that was interesting in itself because I think that will be - it will be both kind of beneficial in that it creates and enormous momentum for visitors and collectors but it's also slightly irritating if you've been developing something for many years and then suddenly Frieze arrives [steals your thunder] but having said that, I think in the longer term it's a very beneficial for Korea and the region to have it there.

The partnership?

Yeah

I saw all the tickets allowed you into both fairs, it was kind of like one came with the other.

That's right yes - an our alumni kind of kicked in and we had special access to the VIP etc etc, so we were treated really, really well, our group, we were sort of particularly given very good treatment and I thought they put such a lot of work into it. I could see they looked absolutely exhausted. You could see it on their faces the amount that had gone into that fair, getting it established, getting it - and presumably it will get easier for them but you could sort of feel the heaviness of the work of the amount they put into getting this off the ground and trying to sort of give top treatment to everybody, all their clients all their collectors, etc etc and the city of Seoul and how much it meant to it, having it there. It was an enormous event actually.

I was very impressed with that because even though there had been a lead up to that when we went and it had been talked about for months on end, it was very interesting witnessing it as a launch and as an event that slightly shifted the dynamics of the east asian art market and the perception of status you know amongst the countries in East Asia.

So how would you say that it shifted from Frieze?

17:45

I think it shifts the sort of weight into South Korea as an important, established **a**nd kind of validated hub that was clearly displacing Hong Kong - and I'm saying that for the time being because I'm not sure how much that is going to displace Hong Kong. The difference is that Hong Kong is Chinese and the fact is the Chinese art market is enormously powerful and you've got this massive country, you know, which has taken over Hong Kong, and you can't underestimate the power of that, the impact of that market. Because Korea is Korea, it's a much smaller country - you know, how many people speak Korean compared to Chinese in the world? It's a much more niche kind of culture, but having said that I think Korea has been really successful at promoting its soft power and the whole thing of K-Pop phenomenon has been really really important. Interesting I think that has happened due to a certain geopolitical pragmatism, without this problem of China as a kind of massive authoritarian state which is basically kind of blocking its ability to engage in the world, so I think those things are interesting to observe.

Would it be fair to compare, in terms of negotiating neighbors, geographical neighbors, North Korea aside, having to negotiate first China and then Japan the way maybe the UK has to now with Europe post Brexit?

I think there are some much heavier and more extreme politics around that

I mean, to different degrees

Oh my god, it's on a completely different level. I mean the interesting thing is it's precisely that presence of North Korea is enormous, you can't under estimate its - the fact that it is such an extreme state and the fact that this is a constant daily situation for Korea, and then the question of China and its dynamic, of course Japan is problematic as well, because Korea was colonised by Japan for 40 years or something, so it's incredibly complex, that region. And therefor it's done really well and in someways the comparison of Britain with North Korea is not a bad one.

I think the UK would not admit that they were being held back by Europe, they would just like to say that they don't need anybody, but so I wonder, who is holding them back if anybody, the way that those neighbours might be holding back South Korea, or making South Korea be dependent slash not entirely independent to make their own decisions.

Yeah, I mean I definitely think there's a strong set of conditions that it has to work within and it will be absolutely conscious of those boundaries that you're describing but of course the competing for status of Korea versus Japan for example is less - it's much more open than Japan, although Japan is due to shift by all accounts shortly into a more expanding kind of growing art market. That's something I've heard but I'm not sure how it's going to happen with the art the Tokyo Contemporary and is it Magnus who set up the art fair in Tokyo - umm so interestingly

you know, the politics of Korea has become more globalised I think in a way, more open to the outside world and obviously China has got much more insular. I think in Britain it's interesting you say that - are you thinking of the art market?

I think I'm thinking of just the market in general

There's not question about that, absolutely it's sort of - it's a question of ridiculous sort of national suicide really.

I thought maybe there could be an American angle as well, because not only the UK and the USA being together, but just Frieze being purchased by a corporation in the USA and now also having an American presence in Seoul already, so there's something going on here with the USA

That's absolutely correct and that was my impression when I was in Korea, that that was the dynamic that you're talking about, that culturally it is definitely American backing, but obviously has existed in the post war period and onwards. And the dynamics in the Korean art scene are very much about that but interestingly there's lots of Korean artists in London for example, so London always maintains its position for art education, for practice-based education in art and that's something that always is very interesting when you go to East Asia because it's unbelievable the number of artists who pass through London, who have had that contact. Of course in Korea there's lots of artists who have also studied in America, so I think you're right, I think the geopolitics of that is sort of America with Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, very clearly aligned to the United States in the post-war period, no question about that. But they're tied in quite a dependent way as you say, and militarily there are conditions placed on those countries which are essentially being propped up by the American regime through particular kinds of conditions that were imposed on them. So I think that's worth kind if linking to the current regime, especially in that area of Asia because of course there's massive tensions around China's expansion into South East Asia and things like the Philippines.

Again that's an American propped-up — the geopoliticals always go back to the States as you say. With Britain it's interesting you mentioned Brexit because - I'm not sure how much that will affect the art world. It has massively affected the market, the broader market as you say, and the whole culture, very very negatively, but it's interesting isn't because they've just mentioned that Paris is taking over as financial centre for the stock market, which is quite shocking actually.

I don't know how much Paris has gained in the art world, I think it has gained, definitely, in the Brexit situation, for galleries who sort go decided to withdraw from London and that kind of thing.

Endeavor who bought frieze, sold another media company that they owned in Seoul at the beginning of 2022

Wow

You don't hear about this stuff

No, definitely

Another weird connection I made is that it seems like Frieze is now a franchise. The first franchise, it started in the UK but then it kind of became and American thing, so it's kind of the same trajectory as frieze itself, like, started in the UK, but it's essentially an American fair now because of what it is and how it functions.

How do you think it sort of compares to Art Basel? Because that model is one of those fairs that rapidly expanded, and went international.

I think that it's more rigorously curatorial and what I don't quite know yet is why, but it always has been. I like to call it profiting from not profiting, another person I spoke to said they think it comes from a kind of guilt. They feel guilty about being this art fair so their way of compensating for that is them saying like oh we're going to curate it really well because we know that that's what the art world wants and we have got this magazine

That's what I was going to mention, because originally that's the thing that it was pinned on, it was about the writing and it was about the credibility from a curatorial perspective and a critical perspective. For me that definitely evolved into something completely different beyond the early stages of Frieze, because it was always Frieze magazine you know, because that was thing thing. I don't know how much that has changed because I haven't been reading that magazine. I felt like in the early days it was quite an intellectual undertaking, and I have a feeling it might be slightly less so, although I know there are elements that are there, although of course that's also the trajectory of the art world in general. It's shrinking that intellectual space in favour of the commercial art world, the expansion and the kind of intelligent galleries who are doing those things quite cleverly.

That leads me to a question I had about whether you felt a palpable difference between the sponsors. I know you were at frieze masters in London where you don't really see the sponsors

as much, but at frieze London you do, so in terms of like the booths, the installations that the sponsors had in Seoul, like Ruinart, like Illy, like that diamond thing

Is Deutche Bank the…

Deutche Bank is like the big sponsor, right

I wasn't observing it on that level so much at the time. I had a friend who I hadn't met for years and years, she was working at the VIP section lounge and then there was a whole huge bit at the back and there was some technology thing, the LG booth who had paired up with a gallery for this kind of high tech iteration, there was. Fair amount of technology because obviously Korea is so sort of technical. Dominated by things like the corporations of Samsung, there's a huge presence there. I think that was visible to a certain extent. I'm trying to remember whether that stuff out much or not in the case of Seoul. I would have to look at it more coldly.

I wasn't at Frieze Seoul, but I did see at Frieze London the Ruinart booth had an interactive installation. You stick your hand inside of this like, glory hole thing and they hand you a piece of chalk, raw chalk, and they explain to you that they use the chalk to make the champagne and they put this orange oil on your wrist and then you're supposed to draw with the chalk how it makes you feel - and it seemed like in Seoul that the ruiner booth was giving away or selling these second skins that you put on a magnum bottle of champagne. So it was more consumer-luxury product oriented, whereas in London it was more experience economy oriented.

Yeah that's really interesting yeah, absolutely, I mean it doesn't surprise me that the luxury was kind of foreground if you like, I mean we went to some very sort of high-end presentations which very much merged luxury brands with contemporary art in Seoul, so it very much echoes the culture, which is high-end sort of luxury. There was a design company that we went to that had an amazingly super slick presentation and then there was a - in the ground floor a contemporary artists who's quite well known was doing something with NFTs but also actually physically present with all these kind of adoring fans that kind of thing - so that was very much merged with this brand of sort things like, handbags and designer goods really - and we saw quite a lot of that in Seoul in general. The culture is very much along those lines. The Hyundai department store was absolutely extraordinary. Super beautifully presented - almost to the point where you didn't dare feel like you were in a shop, just unbelievably sort of slick but also forbidding actually, just so perfect.

There's a lot of things like cosmetic surgery in Seoul, I mean it's a big, big industry, so that to us is a little bit alien. I think it points to an interesting challenge for contemporary art where the culture is still emergent for a kind of broader interaction with it by the public, let's say. It's still

kind of quite evolving but there's some very good quality galleries but also really amazing museums, so it's sort of under the surface of that I think it's not nearly as embedded as somewhere like London in kind of everyday life, you know - the culture. And it's much more based on a very superficial kind of external image of something like luxury and status and perfection and those kind of values. Which is I think less - it's also the case in China of course it's a much larger world in China, it's just huge - it crosses so many different areas so I think it's interesting in Seoul it's the arrival of Frieze is very interesting because it's a funny mixture of feeling that that is an arrival, like "we have arrived" also the fact that they have kind of pulled it off almost against the odds, like "wow we have actually been validated by the West fully"

Yeah it's a validation absolutely

It's a validation but in Hong Kong that's kind of already quite familiar in a way because they've had Art Basel, Hong Kong, they've had big art fairs, the auction houses have been there for many years. Like 30, 40 years you know.

There's a lot of auction houses, I mean there are some in Korea, but not even - it's a small fraction of the sales of what's going on in London. September and October in Seoul the total was like maybe 500 lots that I could get prices for, and I have already 800 for I think maybe two weeks in London.

It's funny because we did meet someone who had founded one of the Seoul auction houses which was really interesting, but what's interesting about all that is again that you - in Seoul the art world can be - to can pinpoint all these things about it because it's relatively young everybody involved in that development is traceable. It's small enough that, we met him at a dinner because the person I was there with knows him quite well. He had actually been kind of a pioneer in the auction market in Seoul, and we were with someone who's a collector who's very, very wealthy guy who had been involved in collecting for quite a long time, and it feels as though everybody involved in that art world would have been there, but you would know exactly who did what when over two decades or that kind of period. I think in London you would lose track of that probably quite quickly.

It reminds me of Berlin.

I mentioned that very high-end design store. On one floor of it at the top they have the gallery.

Oh yes, this is MCM Haus and they have Koenig gallery on the top.

Yes, they showed us around so my friend who took us she just knows everybody and she knows the guy who owns that store, who runs it. They took us up to the gallery and the mother was there, his mother was there as well. That was really interesting because I said, oh wow - I remember them having a gallery in Beijing and I never liked his taste. They deal with younger painters quite a lot. He does a lot of painting. It was in this rather beautiful building and it was right at the top it was this bit.

They have a roof top.

Exactly, we went onto the rooftop - it was really interesting. It just reminded me because of the German connection.

… London's absurdly exclusive, I mean it's very snobby it's very much about the inner circle which has been a constant source of paint an irritation and that's echoed in different circles of people but I think it's interesting that you can remain on the edge of people's radar for years in London even though they know who you are.

I also noticed them codifying the prices in UK but not Korea

Now that is something we really, really noticed. We really noticed that - especially because in Frieze Masters it was like, what? You know, you could see prices, and you could ask prices and some of our group were asking for prices, they had to do a project and you know, they were supposed to be scouting for works, looking for prices, thinking about the various prices, so interestingly that completely fell down. That you say, the mask came off if you like, the usual London mask. Which is interesting because the sales side - I felt that the dealers were doing very well in Seoul and the feedback was quite strong from some of the dealers. I talked to some people who are normally in London and it just felt like there was a huge amount of interest in everything and the sales were pretty strong I think.

I think that most of the sales that get published are only the biggest ones

Right, absolutely. And then the old masters side of it of course was of great interest and western modernism. That was really interesting and I think the were really after clientele they were just wanting to get - its very different from saying, if you're Victoria Miro you are trying too place works into a certain kind of level of institution or this or this - they're incredibly careful who they sell to, where the placement is. You are literally forbidden from selling. It's really carefully guarded and it's very territorial, even within the gallery about who sells what to who. So that's very interesting and I think because they were in a new space and because they wanted to get it

out there - and they only had that one week - they were just like, right we're going to put out the prices and that's it and everyone can come. And you're right it showed that those kind of ideas of a social context of art and the art world shifts in different contexts related to who you belong to and what you perceive to be the codes needed to operate in that environment.

But you're also saying that it wasn't just a cultural thing or a language barrier, that's it's also kind of a time pressure - you take them out of their natural habitat, put them in Seoul and then they're like, oh what happens in Seoul stays in Seoul, let's just sell this art before we go home to where we come from.

It would be interesting to ask the galleries what their cultural perspective is in the sense of when were those decisions made, what you're going to take with you, what you expect the collectors to want, who those collectors might be, and then sort of where do you go after that and how do you retain that clientele internationally. Interesting culturally the idea that you sort of set a standard. This is something that is actually quite sensitive because in Korea they were so influential in China in about the early 2000s. The Korean galleries were the ones setting the standards in China, like this is how you do it - Arario, PKM, and they were putting themselves in Beijing because it was a big market, so interestingly a lot of the Chinese art world learned from Korea how to operate.

Now twenty years on, you've got this situation where the Western art world is still pulling its weight in Asia and still used as a validating system in a way, and yet they probably would't know the nuances of that region as you said, the regional dynamics within it. But it is important for somewhere like Pace for example, because they pulled out of Beijing, to be in Seoul.

Some of the other galleries are going in as usual kind of in a wave of this new excitement of Seoul becoming a big art centre so it's this endless trend-driven reaction which the art world I really prone to, what I call "sheep". The art world is so prone to trends, but of course is what happens is there's a big wave of activity where they all do one thing, it's very deeply conformist. I always find that interestingly that's where Berlin is interesting because it sort of refuses to do that.

It's more subversive, yeah

It's slightly more kind of, no I'm not going to do that

It's also very anti…like, technology.

Yeah, exactly - the thing with Britain is it became so endeared to the American model of capitalism that it's basically got into bed. It was basically 9/11 that pushed it into this new alliance, which is absurdly buying into the ideology, which it doesn't need. I mean it's a small country it's not America.

These huge art fairs have become really sort of like huge sort of event kind of spectacles.

Like a Biennale

I always find the curatorial side of art fairs a bit absurd because, I like going to the smaller galleries in those art fairs, the emerging galleries at Seoul who had a tiny booth but just seeing it in that context.

I can say I think that the impact of Frieze - sort of the momentum around it and probably even within a year because it's such a short time, between now and the next one, that will sustain a lot of cultural activity in Seoul. So in some ways it's kind of about - on the one hand that activity was gaining momentum and sort of increasing and a huge amount of work was going on in all these different spaces, both across public sector and kind of commercial sector galleries let's say - in the lead up to Seoul for a year, and then of course Seoul Frieze arrives, and then it's going to continue.

In some ways it's really interesting how generative it is. In a way Shanghai had that effect - the Shanghai Biennale had a strong effect on Shanghai and then it had Shanghai Contemporary which was a bit of a disaster because it sort of folded after two years, but then - now they've got 021 and other fairs which have continually increased the activity.

And you said that they had been planning this for 8 years?

That was when they first decided on Seoul. I think of course the pandemic set it back by about three years, and I think because she stepped down now. Your point about logistics is absolutely correct because, you have to have the venue, you have to understand how it's going to happen, so of course that probably takes quite a while to sort of get it into place in a different city across the world, etc etc. and because it's in this massive enormous purpose-built building, it's just perfect for it, it just holds the whole thing, you've got KIAF on another floor, you can literally go up the escalator and down to the basement. It's really really kind of convenient on every level. It all comes together and it's easy and that's the same with Basel Hong Kong, it's in the convention centre.

That's again super easy to access and they have all the big auctions there. So that was interesting.

I have one last question and that was you mentioned earlier about this tech strength of Seoul - I noticed that more than half the Seoul galleries had it, but less than half in London had it. I wonder if there's a connection between that tech culture and opting for that extra viewing room that comes at a cost?

I mean, I wouldn't be able to say but it think that if you're not so familiar with the kind of clientele that you might be able to draw in, who are they, are they in the region or in the broader region, ie East Asia kind of thing, but the point is, it would be a small price to pay if you are deciding to put that out in Seoul and make that enormous effort.

It's like an extra insurance and a drop in the bucket compared to the cost of the decision of doing it

You might as well sort of maximise everything that you're doing around the decision to go.

Whereas in London, you're like, well they're all going to come here, so…

Maybe it's more complacent and maybe they're much more familiar with their audience.

We all know why 91 is there, to make money. It's an expansion - it's another product and another way of expanding the market for Frieze. You can easily sort of see all this stuff as complete farce, how predictable it is.

It's interesting thinking about Frieze because it has become something that I don't recognise I suppose is the point. In the 90s it was very much a prestigious kind of critical, intelligent thing that we were all kind of like, oh that's exciting and sophisticated, and it has just become something entirely different, so we're almost living in a parallel universe now. It's like, oh, is it? It's almost indistinguishable from the commercial art world product that is Art Basel, are you - which one are you in when you're standing in it?

I know Frieze is quite distinct, it's got a strong brand identity - but I feel that it's - disingenuous is - not pseudo intellectualism, but the kind of well, the art world plays at that very cleverly, doesn't it? So the element of intellectual depth has always been almost like a performative, or

more recently become a performative aspect of the art world in which the real kind of stuff that was going on, the bulk of the intellectual discourse was played out in the 90s. We've kind of moved beyond it into an expanded commercial model, which is slick and in a way you can see through it very quickly. I mean the Joe Malone candles just say it all.

The artists themselves have also bought into, which diminishes their brand, if you like, they're kind of constantly compromised by this issue as well.

I think exhibiting at Frieze helps the provenance of any artist or gallery it's just part of what they can say they've done, it's like, we were at frieze or my work was at frieze, I think it probably started when Endeavor purchased them and they became corporate.

Yes, exactly, so you can trace it and I think the one - I've seen some very weak projects by artists at frieze as well and it's embarrassing. It's embarrassing - an artist I know who lives in Britain, Taiwanese, he's actually pretty interesting but the thing he did at Frieze was just excruciatingly awful and then - it's a few years back now, and it was embarrassing because it was so obvious that he just wanted to be there for any reason but he couldn't really come up with a decent project

It's also possible that they wouldn't allow him to do entirely what he wanted to do, because they kind of have a hand in the curation of the booths so I'm sure that they have a hand in the curation of the projects. So it could be that he wanted to do something and they were like, no we want you to dial it back or we want you to do something more like this.

I think he also was conscious that he didn't really care what he did. Inside that commercial space, you are really a product yourself and you are a commodity yourself.

Well it's like that Jeppe Hein thing with the Ruinart and the hunk of chalk

It's very gimmicky. It loves gimmick but it loves playing on a sort of pastiche of what is conceptual art, or - it's a kind of fake, it's taking it into another dimension in which - it's like an advert. It's like you're [thieving, leaving] it as someone who will sort of accept that as contemporary art. Which is really interesting because it shows you the dimension where we cannot exact that kind of constant being incorporated by the whole thing. It's also very difficult to resist it, so your resistance to the subscription model is a good one, and you could articulate that in an article on your own terms to place that critical positioning, but it's interesting what you said about the takeover really makes sense to me now, it allows me to see why I see it as heavily shifted towards a different model. And also the demising of its intellectual credibility.

But they would never get rid of the magazine because that's what is grounding them in the art world, in the critical world.

They wouldn't but has it been coopted by a sort of less in-depth critique kind of?

There's thing magazine that Frieze publishes in German and in English and it's frieze with a lower case, and they only distribute it in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria even though it's bilingual so they could distribute it worldwide but they don't, and they have an office in Berlin - I think the reason they have the magazine is to like, have this relevance in the cool capital, and be more critical, but you can see this magazine isn't making any money, because it's only distributed in three countries, and like, little ones. But they're not going to get rid of it because it's important for them to have this little niche magazine that nobody knows about.

You mean the Frieze brand?

The magazine, the German one.

As you say, that's very Berlin it's like, why bother? It feels like Germany has a very distinctly different approach, even in Europe, which is interesting to me. It feels more culturally different than one might expect. It's a very regional place and it still is. Because it has had such a legacy and reunification, it still is a fragmented place in a way

Also the unification was really more of an absorption, it was not a unification - I think this is why North Korea does not want to have a unification

I know what you mean, I think it's difficult to say but it think it has to be seen as a unification because of the barrier that existed which was both kind of economic and ideological if you like, even if you take that down the space doesn't drastically change perhaps or there is still a legacy that would take a long long time to even out.

Do you see a unification in the future?

In Korea?

Yeah

Umm, I mean we went to the north Korean border which was actually incredible - we had a day there which was absolutely incredible, and there is this huge square called Peace Square I think

it's called, an enormous vast space which is completely empty with some artworks that I think have been commissioned - and the idea of that square is that when the border comes down everyone is going to pour into the square, which is in the centre of Korea, like the geographical centre - so what was interesting about that is for me it was this moment of realisation that it's both dystopian and utopian because in a way you can't get out of either of those positions so that you're on this border which I precisely that position of nobody quite knows what's going to happen but the hope is always there that that border will come down. Bu t the recent history of that war is so potent that you're given a guide about this bombed out building, supposedly the headquarters set up by the north Korean side, a bit like Hitler's project of - this is going to be my headquarters sort of thing, so a sort of headquarters building, and it's still standing.

Then you've got these stories of how battles took place, really violent stuff and you've got a clapped out train that was bombed during the Korean war, these relics of the war are there - tanks, and I suppose what's strange is that that history, like the person I was with, she didn't tell me about this until afterwards but she said well actually my grandfather was kidnapped to the north because his student was involved in the resistance or something, and then he disappeared. The family doesn't know what happened exactly, so the point I'm trying to make is that a bit like Germany the history is still alive in the sense that it, even her own grandfather and the stories of that crossing are horrendously gruelling, you know really really horrible situations - you can't just pull down the border and everything's okay. The legacies of these histories are never - we can see these histories echoed in the current state of china and north Korea, so actually east Berlin is imbricated. That communist history is very much alive because it's what is dividing Korea and what is containing China's paranoia about the west, etc etc. because it doesn't go away it just continues in different forms.

We're so embedded in that idea that you're supposed to sell something. And that's how you value things in terms of a commodity exchange, but of course the reality is that's a construction as well.

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix 3

Interview with Kabir Jhala

2.12.22

Acting Deputy Art Market Editor for The Art Newspaper

I know you were very well prepared for it because you had been there already and wasn't your first time, you've been to Frieze before, I was wondering if anything surprised you about Frieze Seoul even though you kind of knew what to be in store for?

I guess to an extent how packed, it was very very popular so umm on the VIP opening day the queue sort like snaked around the Coex centre the entrance of it, I think that was a little bit surprising, it was incredibly well-attended and I think also another thing that was surprising is no one really attended KIAF on the opening - as you know they were sort of held in tandem. KIAF on the bottom floor and Seoul was on the top. I think that was my one takeaway. I didn't really come with any expectations because obviously it was an inaugural fair and also because with the frieze brand fairs you do sort of expect a certain level of quality, a certain sort of slickness, a Ruinart stand and certain restaurants, etc.

Kind of on the other side, was there anything that didn't surprise you but was reassuringly familiar or very frieze-like?

In terms of Frieze-like, I think the general quality of the works and the price points were off (?) Frieze London, a lot of dealers told me that they brought very similar quality work to both fairs. Frieze Seoul was inevitably safer art, so by that I mean skewed more towards the 20th century and maybe it was more commercially driven so even more painting than Frieze London but I think that is just because dealers didn't want to take a risk especially if they're coming in cold into a market where they don't have any contacts.

Did you feel like there was more price transparency at one fair versus the other?

I think that's difficult to say qualitatively, just because obviously it's not like I'm even doing a survey of all of it. I think that Korean collectors ask prices, that's not necessarily that's unique to their culture. I don't think I can say, sorry.

Did you get a sense of Koean-ness - did you feel like you were in Korea or did you just feel like you were at Frieze?

No, very much the latter. It was very un-Korean in that sense. There was probably about 10%, if that, of galleries were from Korea and they were mainly focussed in the Focus Asia section. If they were. I can't really give you a comparison of what east Asia's other premier art fair looks like in terms of Asian-ness but no, it was a very Western fair. But also that goes for the - the thing that's most been driving the art market boom has been the appetite for western works, because they are great buyers domestically if anything they buy domestically, like Korean ceramics is impressive field in that sense.

And you mentioned the Ruinart booth - did you feel a different presence of the sponsors

There was nothing interactive or anything, I think where there were partnerships, even more so than Frieze London, was with fashion brands. There was a lot of fashion crossover there. So, Pat Lee told me, I believe on record, he basically said that that's one of the things that Frieze Seoul is going to try and do - Koreans are so mad about fashion and the luxury fashion industry there is so dominant. And so there were a lot of parties held by like, brand like Prada, and Gucci and all these sort of events, in a way that London doesn't even really do that much.

In terms of the events, like did the extra curricular events differ that you attended or that you were invited to?

So one thing I will say that - obviously there are always going to be tons of parties and stuff, and because it's the inaugural year the parties were quite large scale and of like, there was a lot of them but one thing I thought was interesting was that the mayor basically invited all the press and VIPs to this very large dinner at some sort of stadium in Seoul and basically - the mayor of Korea, obviously Seoul is such an important part of South Korea, holds like half the population in its metro area, he's basically the second most important person in the country after the president, and very much touted to be the next president as well, it's very much a stepping stone to the presidency, and he basically made this whole speech about how Frieze Seoul is going to be the lynch pin for Koreans new culture and the new K-art wave and I thought it was so interesting and strange that - could you imagine Sydney Kahn or any other London mayor inviting press in for Frieze London? It was very much like, it felt very much like an olympic bid in some sense.

People keep bringing this up about the olympics, it's really interesting.

Jason Hamm I don't know if you've actually got it on record, but he's a Korean art dealer based in Seoul, his programme is mainly international - he described Frieze Seoul as "our olympics" basically.

It's also interesting because of the post-Olympic environment in Korea - there's a lot of connections there to tease out

Also I think, you know - even though it's so Westernised it's still more of a collector's culture and I think there was a sense of like, we must really impress everyone and we're all in it together we're on the stage and we should make sure that everyone has a great time and thinks that our art scene is amazing.

Did you also feel a presence of like, K-pop starts?

Yes, a lot of K-pop stars attended and also the fair itself, you had like RM and Jude Dragon, two members of Black Pink, I'm not super well-versed in K-pop so I'm sure that there were other ones who also attended, but all the big hitters that even the non-specialists could identify were there.

And you went on the opening day. Is that the only day that you went?

I went on the second and third day as well it think, but for more brief periods of time. Iw as researching for an article about sales, because obviously fairs like Art Basel for example and to a large extent Frieze London, a large extent of the sales happen on VIP day and it's sort of like presumptuous to even be at your stand by day three and day four and I was wondering whether Korean buyers sort of allow it to narrow the same way? To an extent I found that most people sold their booths on day one if they were going to sell and it was more like just interested talks on days two and three.

I noticed that frieze London was a day longer because they basically had two VIP days and it seems like Seoul just had one - is that right?

Yes, but I think on the second day I feel like VIPs could get in like an hour or two earlier on the second day, but I will have to confirm that for you.

Did you feel like - I heard a lot of people complaining about frieze London that a lot of the VIPs were not really collectors - did you feel like that a Frieze Seoul or was it more like an actual art crowd?

I think it's a little bit difficult for me to say because I'm not ingrained in that scene. I don't know necessarily whether that is the case, whereas for example anecdotally in London, when during those crucial VIP hours, some of my friends had gotten in some of my artists friends, people I know socially were wandering around at a time when it's meant to be like, the primo-collectors, so that's how I know that there were maybe not serious people. Whether that was the case in Frieze Seoul, I personally couldn't say. I don't necessarily know that many people in the scene to say - umm but I mean, people were selling really well, also I would say, the works under $50,000 which is the sort of tax break price mark that you have, they were literally flying off the walls in the first couple of hours. So there was a lotto deals being made, so I don't think that people were like, annoyed who were there.

Frieze Masters is usually quite different from Frieze London - it's got its own kind of design concept and all its different rules - did it feel like frieze masters or did it feel more just like another section?

No it very much felt like Frieze Masters, even like during the crazy hours and stuff.

It felt slightly different, within the exact same fair you could literally wander from one booth and just end up in frieze masters, so it wasn't like totally physically separate. The booth design was a bit more wooden and dark colours, so you felt like it was more stately in that sense - it had a big mix. It had like some rare books, it had some ancient art, some antiquities, I will say in terms of sales I spoke to one rare book dealer and she basically didn't sell a single book the entire three or four days but she was really keen to come back a second and third year just because for this sort of genre it really does take a couple of years of continued conversations before we start making these sales so I wasn't really put off by that.

What was the biggest different for you between the two fairs?

Seoul was masked, for a start. That tends to still be a big barrier for people who want to make deals and make connections. The art world is such a hyper-social industry in which it relies so much on those relationships - I think establishing that is quite different with a mask on and I think that dealers found that in Seoul as well. Don't forget, most of them are foreigners who would have come from countries where at that point mask bans would have been cited for a similar event, so I feel like there was a little bit of annoyance of having to go back into the pandemic if that makes sense.

Did one of the fairs maybe feel more curated than the other?

Frieze London felt more curated definitely - I feel like with Frieze Seoul, people kind of brought a bunch of everything - there were maybe about a quarter of the galleries there, either because of sustained business in China, including Hong Kong or say another Asian hub, they had some connection to Seoul and they kind of knew what to bring- those galleries include Thaddaeus Ropac and Perrotin which has Seoul spaces. Those guys already have one existing roster of clients they kind of know what chimes well with their clients. I would say the majority of galleries kind of didn't know what to bring and this was a test year for them and as a result you sort of saw something that was a less curated approach to the booth because they just wanted to tick all the boxes, see what sells, and then next year they can come back with a more refined approach.

It seemed like they really wanted to bring a high quality presentation to Seoul as well

People always say this as well, like Korean buyers tend to be the same the thing with most east asian, they do a lot of research, like they're not just going to wander into the booth and just buy anything. They're going to do their homework beforehand which means that you need to be very prepared with what you're going to save also, like you just can't bring your off- your second rate stuff and hope that it's going to sell.

I thought it was really interesting in the interview that your podcast from the summer when you talked about the logistics of not being able to get things to Seoul necessarily because of the Russian airspace - I hadn't thought about that

Well, I did wonder - the thing is like it's difficult to obviously have a gallery tell you and be honest whether the reason that they brought so many small paintings, for example, is because you know, they wanted to bring stuff within a certain price bracket and paintings sell well. Or whether also, those shipping issues they therefor make bringing build sculptures a lot more difficult. And there were also - I wasn't able to say, there were a lot of very niche sort of tax issues in Korea which I wrote an article about - that pertains to things like photography, doesn't count on the tax-free art. So you saw a lot less photography, and umm or otherwise it was the dealers maybe hadn't even done their homework and realised there was another thing - basically you have to have an import tax license number to bring in artwork and sell it without being taxed which basically means if you do sell it in Korea, you kind of back out to a Korean collector - I can write that down for you in a more simple way because it has been a couple of months - but I do think that there are also a bunch of tax things that if people didn't do their homework and they haven't had a good understanding of Korea, they kind of got stuck with. Obviously frieze Seoul was very happy to advertise Seoul as an art tax haven, which isn't 100% untrue, but just that there are finer points to that.

I think that they haven't fully - I mean they've started to incorporate artist resale rights, but not really actually implemented them yet.

Interesting, I actually wasn't aware of that - I guess I was to an extent aware that they have artist resell rights a bit like the UK and not like the US but I wasn't aware that it wasn't being implemented. Maybe you could send me your sources - I've actually found, I've taken my foot off the Korean market pedal as of a month or two ago.

Well, thank you for revisiting it for me.

No no, of course - it's nice to be plunged back into it. I don't mean that permanently, just because I was so - it was so all-consuming for so many months and it's less so now.

I'm interested in Frieze because it's a British fair and it's kind of perceived as a British air because it's from London, but I think it's actually operating - I mean it's an American fair actually.

I mean of course, it's Los Angeles-owned.

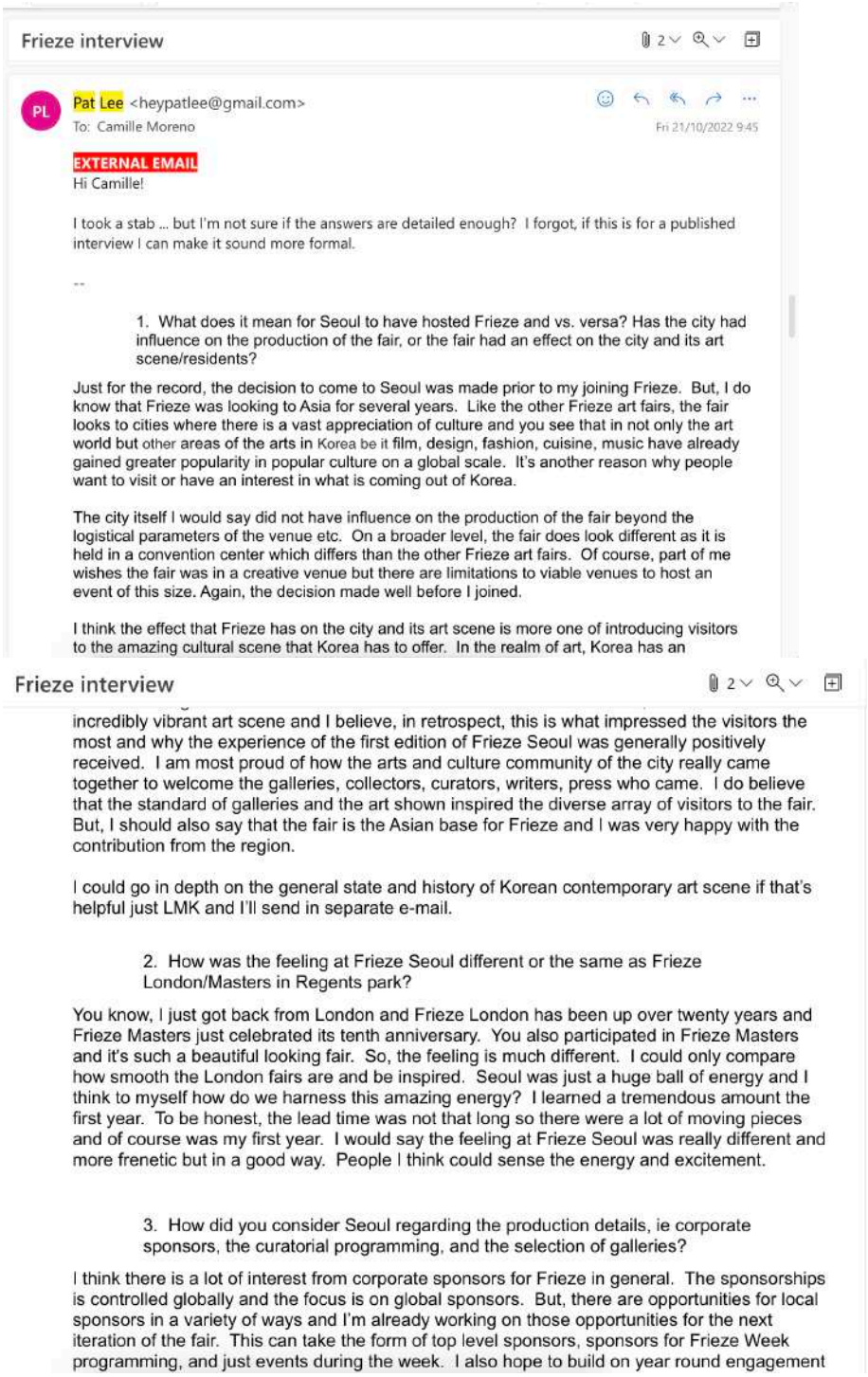
And it seems to be becoming more and more American, but not in its face…

Yes, I would definitely agree with that. I think they still want to be seen as a a punky, sort of art start fair that has works that are edgier than art Basel while having a really good reputation, but I think that Ari and the Endeavor team they're trying to turn it more into a hospitality and entertainment sort of offering, much in the same way that MCH has done with Art Basel. Everyone, even before the pandemic and especially through the pandemic, has realized that trade fairs aren't the most profitable models and you can make something more profitable if you offer an array of other things alongside it.

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix 4

Email conversation with Frieze Seoul Director Pat Lee



Frieze interview

PL Pat Lee <heypatlee@gmail.com>
To: Camille Moreno
Fri 21/10/2022 9:45

EXTERNAL EMAIL
Hi Camille!

I took a stab ... but I'm not sure if the answers are detailed enough? I forgot, if this is for a published interview I can make it sound more formal.

--

1. What does it mean for Seoul to have hosted Frieze and vs. versa? Has the city had influence on the production of the fair, or the fair had an effect on the city and its art scene/residents?

Just for the record, the decision to come to Seoul was made prior to my joining Frieze. But, I do know that Frieze was looking to Asia for several years. Like the other Frieze art fairs, the fair looks to cities where there is a vast appreciation of culture and you see that in not only the art world but other areas of the arts in Korea be it film, design, fashion, cuisine, music have already gained greater popularity in popular culture on a global scale. It's another reason why people want to visit or have an interest in what is coming out of Korea.

The city itself I would say did not have influence on the production of the fair beyond the logistical parameters of the venue etc. On a broader level, the fair does look different as it is held in a convention center which differs than the other Frieze art fairs. Of course, part of me wishes the fair was in a creative venue but there are limitations to viable venues to host an event of this size. Again, the decision made well before I joined.

I think the effect that Frieze has on the city and its art scene is more one of introducing visitors to the amazing cultural scene that Korea has to offer. In the realm of art, Korea has an

Frieze interview

incredibly vibrant art scene and I believe, in retrospect, this is what impressed the visitors the most and why the experience of the first edition of Frieze Seoul was generally positively received. I am most proud of how the arts and culture community of the city really came together to welcome the galleries, collectors, curators, writers, press who came. I do believe that the standard of galleries and the art shown inspired the diverse array of visitors to the fair. But, I should also say that the fair is the Asian base for Frieze and I was very happy with the contribution from the region.

I could go in depth on the general state and history of Korean contemporary art scene if that's helpful just LMK and I'll send in separate e-mail.

2. How was the feeling at Frieze Seoul different or the same as Frieze London/Masters in Regents park?

You know, I just got back from London and Frieze London has been up over twenty years and Frieze Masters just celebrated its tenth anniversary. You also participated in Frieze Masters and it's such a beautiful looking fair. So, the feeling is much different. I could only compare how smooth the London fairs are and be inspired. Seoul was just a huge ball of energy and I think to myself how do we harness this amazing energy? I learned a tremendous amount the first year. To be honest, the lead time was not that long so there were a lot of moving pieces and of course was my first year. I would say the feeling at Frieze Seoul was really different and more frenetic but in a good way. People I think could sense the energy and excitement.

3. How did you consider Seoul regarding the production details, ie corporate sponsors, the curatorial programming, and the selection of galleries?

I think there is a lot of interest from corporate sponsors for Frieze in general. The sponsorships is controlled globally and the focus is on global sponsors. But, there are opportunities for local sponsors in a variety of ways and I'm already working on those opportunities for the next iteration of the fair. This can take the form of top level sponsors, sponsors for Frieze Week programming, and just events during the week. I also hope to build on year round engagement

via Frieze membership programs (which is a global initiative not yet launched). There are opportunities for sponsorship here as well I would presume.

Curatorial programming is also something I wish to go deeper on. This year we worked on Frieze Film with GYOPO and WESS (both non-profit curatorial / artistic collectives). But, I am working on exposing more of the dynamic artist run and non-profit spaces in Seoul. We did do a talks program with Kiaf though I came a bit late to the table on that one so I expect to build on this for the next iteration.

The selection of galleries I was very happy with. The quality of the art was outstanding. I was happy with the fact that we have just over thirty percent representation of Asian galleries. The fair is not a huge fair so I expect it be a challenge given the strength of the programs that have applied.

4. What is the significance of Frieze Seoul being the first ever edition of Frieze Masters outside of London? Do you expect the Masters section at Seoul to continue to grow?

For this question, I would revert to my colleague Nathan Clements-Gillespie who is the director of Frieze Masters and really took the reins on that one. The response to the Frieze Masters presentation was amazing. The audience here in Seoul has not really had the opportunity to see the types of works presented and I am so thankful to the galleries that brought such amazing things. I am relieved that the response from the Frieze Masters galleries was so positive since it's just the start and will take time. From the start, I wanted to have a Frieze Masters component because I believe there is tremendous potential and appetite for the types of works and the quality of the works here in Asia. I do expect the section to continue to grow.

5. How important is the diversity of home countries of exhibitors and artists at Frieze Seoul as well as where they are based? Do you think having artworks from a globally diverse collection of artists is important to collectors, and does this differ at all in Seoul and London?

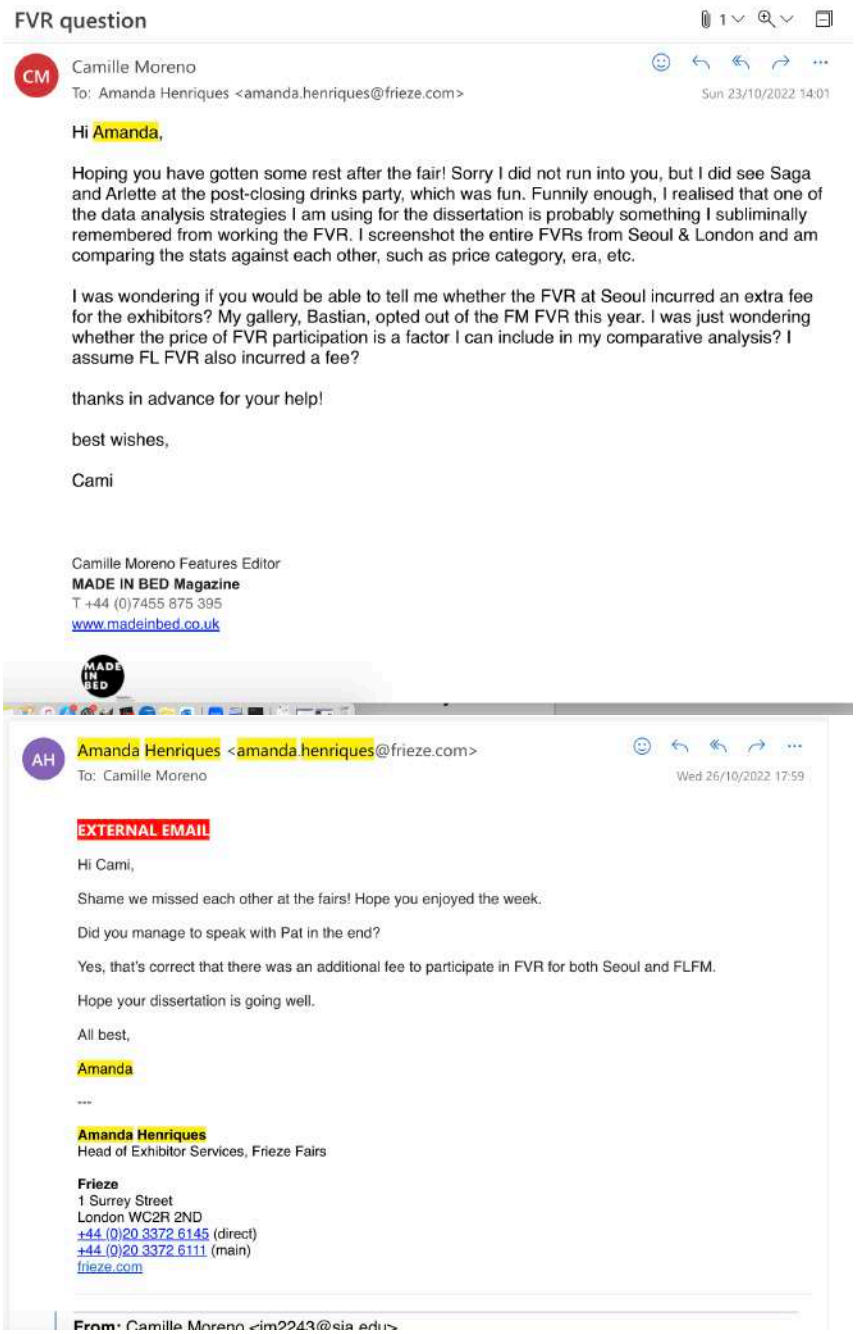
To me this is incredibly important. Frieze Seoul is the Asia base for the Frieze art fair. I am happy with the geographical diversity and I think this will only strengthen once China's COVID policy changes to allow for full re-engagement. All the Frieze art fairs feed off the locality in terms of the programming, gallery list, engagement with local art and culture institutions. Of course, the base is the quality and expertise of the Frieze team so that know how can be leveraged but the fairs should have their unique aura.

From the collector point of view, I do believe those that would make the trip to Seoul want to be inspired and to learn about art from a different region. They are also looking for inspiration and an experience that is memorable. As people who are already open to culture and to appreciate the importance of culture this is definitely a mandate. If these major fairs just show the same things all over the world it would be a bit dull. That being said, Frieze Seoul in Asia is the bridge. So, while the Asian audience appreciates the opportunities to see an amazingly diverse array of art work from the US, Europe, South America etc. and to engage and meet galleries and professionals from different places, I think the non-Asian audience also wants to learn more about the compelling art from a different part of the world.

...

Appendix 5

Email conversation with Head of Frieze Exhibitor Services Amanda Henriques



FVR question

CM

Camille Moreno

To: Amanda Henriques <amanda.henriques@frieze.com>

Sun 23/10/2022 14:01

Hi Amanda,

Hoping you have gotten some rest after the fair! Sorry I did not run into you, but I did see Saga and Arlette at the post-closing drinks party, which was fun. Funnily enough, I realised that one of the data analysis strategies I am using for the dissertation is probably something I subliminally remembered from working the FVR. I screenshot the entire FVRs from Seoul & London and am comparing the stats against each other, such as price category, era, etc.

I was wondering if you would be able to tell me whether the FVR at Seoul incurred an extra fee for the exhibitors? My gallery, Bastian, opted out of the FM FVR this year. I was just wondering whether the price of FVR participation is a factor I can include in my comparative analysis? I assume FL FVR also incurred a fee?

thanks in advance for your help!

best wishes,

Cami

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AH

Amanda Henriques <amanda.henriques@frieze.com>

To: Camille Moreno

Wed 26/10/2022 17:59

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Hi Cami,

Shame we missed each other at the fairs! Hope you enjoyed the week.

Did you manage to speak with Pat in the end?

Yes, that's correct that there was an additional fee to participate in FVR for both Seoul and FLFM.

Hope your dissertation is going well.

All best,

Amanda

Amanda Henriques
Head of Exhibitor Services, Frieze Fairs

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From: Camille Moreno <im2243@sia.edu>