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## Professionalism and the Market in 19th-Century Europe

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Professionalism and the Market in 19th-Century Europe

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## Introduction

As I was preparing my talk for this conference I happened to read an essay by a former colleague, Susan Waller, about a group of late self-portraits by the great academician Jean-Léon Gérôme.



Jean-Leon Gérôme, *The End of the Session*, 1886  
oil on canvas, 33x 27.4 cm, private collection)

In her paper, Waller attempted to account for Gérôme's significant preoccupation with self-portraiture in the late 1880s and early 1890s. She described these images as expressions of the artist's "anxiety of lateness". Waller argued that Gérôme's anxiety was provoked by the artist's old age and by "the decline of the institutional

structures and values on which [Gérôme] had built his career."

It seems to me that during this period a surprising number of artists besides Gérôme, from all over the Western world, turned to self-portraiture to reflect on artistic identity, or made portraits of their fellow artists to similar effect. Of course there are many possible reasons for the surge in such representations during the last decades of the 19th century. Nonetheless I believe this pervasive need to self-fashion identity belongs in part to a much larger crisis in what constitutes a professional artist, a crisis experienced by many artists at this time.

So today I want to speak very broadly and tentatively about what occurred in the Parisian art world during the 1880s and to contest some prevailing models of conceptualizing institutional changes during this period.

It is always worth remembering how many innovations developed during this decade. In the Eighties small, mostly artist-run exhibition societies began to proliferate. Most were medium-specific (printmakers, watercolorists and the like), lacking the ideological and visual coherency of the Impressionist shows which preceded them. Their historical importance rests in their expression of the general fragmentation of the Parisian art world during the decade. It was for example the decade of “isms” in Paris. Notably these “isms” took their point of departure from Impressionism, and not from art featured at the Salons. Similarly, the decade witnessed the symbolist challenge to the supremacy of naturalism in art and literature, a challenge that was distinctively international in character. At the same time there rose up an international preoccupation with the decorative in the visual arts and design, which flowered into Art Nouveau and similar forms of post-historicist design. Internationalism was in the air too at the Paris Salon, which admitted an unprecedented number of foreign artists to its exhibitions; this fact may have played a decisive role in the fissuring of the Salon at the end of the decade into two rival organizations.

Finally, it is worth remembering that after seven mostly successful independent exhibitions, the artists known as Impressionists almost all experienced some “crisis” of confidence during the 1880s, a loss of direction that in some cases, as with Renoir and Pissarro, led to completely new manners of working.

The full consequences of all these artistic and institutional changes took a long time to be understood by the general public for art, yet before the decade’s end, these disruptive innovations had undermined the foundations of the Salon system. In effect, a finely tuned structure of professional art practices and values celebrated annually at the Salon was replaced by a radically different model of the artist professional. This new model is what I will be calling, for convenience sake, the bohemian professional.

For my purposes, bohemia is a more useful trope than modernism because it describes an imaginary geography, situated outside the world of the publicly certified professional artist, and outside societal norms, but not inherently walled off from either. Unlike modernism, artistic bohemia is not circumscribed by style nor by nationality nor by class. And bohemia does not belong exclusively to the arts. Of course, we might find it difficult to imagine a bohemian lawyer or doctor or scientist—not just someone who dresses differently but practices law or medicine or science in a fundamentally different way from their professional contemporaries—but it is easy to imagine the youthful bohemian

developing into the lawyer, doctor or scientist. That is to say, while bohemia is not exclusively the province of the young it is dominated by them. The young often grow out of bohemia and acquire professional status. What is remarkable is that unlike the other major professions, the artist might remain bohemian and yet become a professional. I will be arguing in fact that unlike most of the other emerging professions of the 19th century, the bohemian professional came to replace established professional models for artist behavior, with significant consequences for the discipline.

Like all professional societies the Salon provided a context and a physical place for its constituents to meet, to exchange knowledge and to check out the work of one's competitors. Within the Salon and its satellite institutions, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the Academy, artists developed and confirmed a slowly evolving set of values. Because of the number of artists competing and the size of the Salon exhibitions, large sizes, sensational subjects, and eroticism were some of the means emerging professionals used to 'make it' at the Salon, and to garner public attention and to attract collectors. Once earned, Parisian art dealers converted Salon reputations into currency. By the middle of the 19th century a network of dealer relationships helped to ship Salon artists' works all over the Western world. International competition among collectors drove key Salon artists' prices to unprecedented heights for contemporary art.

In all this the Salon system gave physical reality to being a French artist; it reinforced what it meant to be an artist within a community of artists; and it demonstrated who were the important shareholders that made an artist's career possible (most importantly the patronage of the French State, but also collectors, critics, dealers, and so on). Its competitions defined for everyone within and outside the artist profession who mattered and who didn't and why.

The Salon also articulated the essential power structure of the French art world. The chief beneficiaries of the competitions then became models for other artists striving for success within the

Artist	Prix de Rome	Salon Debut	Medals at Salon	Medals at Exp. Unis.	Chevalier	Officier	Commandeur	Institut	Prof at EBA or Rome	Retrospective (posthumous)
Ingres, b. 1780	21	22		75	45	53	65	47	53	[1867]
H. Vermet, b. 1789		21	23		36	45	53	37		46
Cogniet, b. 1794	23	26	30		34	52		55	61	
Scheffer, b. 1795		17	23		33	40	53 (refused)			[1859]
Cerot, b. 1796		31	36, 52	59, 70	50	71				[1875]
Delaroche, b. 1797		25	27	36	31	37	38	35		[1857]
Robert-Fleury, b. 1797		27	27, 37, 38	58, 70	39	52	70	53	68	
Delacroix, b. 1798		24	26, 50	57	33	48	57	59		57
Decamps, b. 1803		24	28, 30	52	36	48				52
Isabey, b. 1803		21	21, 24	52	29	49				
Roqueplan, b. 1803		19	24, 31		31	49				
Roussau, T., b. 1812		19	22, 24, 37	43, 55	40	55				43
Millet, b. 1814		26	39	41, 53	54					53
Meissonier, b. 1815		19	25, 26, 28, 33, 40	52	31	41	52	46		
Daubigny, b. 1817		21	31, 36, 40, 42	50, 58	42	56				
Hébert, b. 1817	22	22	33, 50, 78, 83	38, 72	36	50	57	57	44, 65, 69	
Courbet, b. 1819		25	30		49 (refused)					
Ziem, b. 1821		28	30, 31	34	36	57	87			
Boisheur, b. 1822		19	23, 26	33, 45	43					
Gérôme, b. 1824		25	23, 31, 50	43	31	43	34	41	39	
Cabanel, b. 1824		20	21, 28	31, 43	31	39		39	39	
P. de Chavannes, b. 1824	21	31	37, 40, 58	43	43	55	65			
Boussorras, b. 1825	25	24	32, 43, 60	30, 42, 53	34	51	60	51	50	
Bretos, b. 1827		22	30, 32, 45	28, 40	34	40	62	59		
Brodry, b. 1828	22	23	29, 33, 53, 59		33	41	47	42		
Henner, b. 1829	29	34	34, 35, 36, 43	49, 71	44	49	69	60		
Villon, b. 1833		31	33, 35, 36	45, 67	37	45	55	65		
Bonnat, b. 1834		23	27, 35	33	33	40	-	47	54	
Fantin-Latour, b. 1836		25	34, 39	<i>Illegible</i>	43					
Lefebvre, b. 1836	25	19	29, 32, 34	42, 53	34	42	61	55		
Carolus-Duran, b. 1837		26	29, 32, 33, 42	41	35	41	52	67	68	
Laurens, b. 1838		27	31, 34, 39	<i>Illegible</i>	36	40	(Grand Off. 62)	54	48	
Lherminier, b. 1844		20	30, 36	45	40	50		61		
Benjamin-Constant, b. 1845		24	30, 31	33	33	39		48		
Cermon, Fernand, b. 1845		18	25, 28, 32	33, 44	35	44	67	53	52	
Roll, b. 1846		24	29, 31	<i>Illegible</i>	37					
Detaille, b. 1848		19	21, 22, 24, 40	41	25	33	49	44		
Dagnan-Bouveret, b. 1852		22	26, 28, 37	37	33	47		48		
Average age	24	24	29 (first medal) 34 (2 <sup>nd</sup> medal)	44 (first medal)	37	47	58	51	52	

profession. One of the most striking features of this table of Salon celebrities is the regularity with which most of these artists advanced

through the Salon's award system. Gérôme, Bouguereau, and Meissonier were exemplary artists within this system and not surprisingly they dominated the Salon from mid-century until the end of the 1880s.

Also note the average age of those artists awarded the Chevalier rank in the Legion of Honor (37) compared to some of those artists who came to be viewed as Salon dissidents or outsiders (Corot, age 50; Millet, age 54; and Courbet, who refused the honor at the age of 49). Given how normative artists' ages were for promotion to the Legion, it is quite understandable how an artist like Courbet could not only be dismissive of, but insulted by such belated recognition.

Professionalism is typically future-oriented in the sense that it provides its members with measurable benchmarks for the promised climb up the ranks of status and income. Professional aspirants within the Salon system rose through clearly defined steps. Professionalism is normally a form of gatekeeping and a means of authenticating and legitimizing values through the erection of self-promoted and self-sustaining standards. Professions are typically maintained and safeguarded through some kind of peer review system. Imitation was broadly regarded as the better path to advancement than invention. Yet the Salon professional, like other professionals, was able to tolerate internal critique of fits aesthetics and values, so long as an artist continued to abide by the general rules and standards of the profession.



Salon professionals can often be found to have practiced a tolerant liberalism.

Professionalism is fundamentally a market phenomenon; it stands as a surrogate for older forms of patronage, offering its members the potential for greater financial security and competitive advantages over potential rivals in a largely anonymous marketplace. To be a professional is to be regarded as someone with expert knowledge and abilities, conferred through some form of authenticating structure. Such authenticated expertise accords the professional a greater degree of authority over a given subject or practice than presumed non-professionals would have. The title or medal, the presumed expert knowledge, peer review, and so on, all work to establish trust, and with trust, to confer value on the products and behaviors of the professional.

Of course, professionalism is not without its fictions; its standards are no guarantee of competency and its expert knowledge is often self-serving. And in the world of art, its promises of advancement were no more likely to guarantee a member long-term success than what bohemia would later offer. Ernest Hébert, for example, was one of the

most highly decorated Salon artists of the 19th century, but his career has since fallen into deep obscurity.



Ernest Hébert  
*Virgin of the Deliverance*,  
stylized reduction after altarpiece  
shown at Salon of 1872  
oil on canvas, 40.3x28.3 cm,  
Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

It has been a contemporary form of art historical dogma to attribute the unravelling of the professionals' Salon system to a new system famously coined by the sociologists Cynthia and Harrison White back in the 1960s as the "dealer-critic system." The Whites placed art dealers like Paul Durand-Ruel at the center of the innovations embodied by Impressionism, an argument still being made today (as witnessed by the current show at the National Gallery in London). But I am convinced that art dealers played a much less important role in changing the Parisian art world's business model than is generally imagined. In fact in my view the famous Parisian art dealers were consistently the rear-guard rather than the avant-garde when it came to helping artists establish their reputations. It was no system at all.

The economist David Galenson and I have written elsewhere against the Whites' thesis.<sup>1</sup> We have argued, for example, that a multiple Salons system initially replaced the single Salon, rather than a dealer-critic system. As evidence, one need only attend to the proliferation of exhibition societies from the 1880s onwards, which soon became an international phenomenon characterizing the European art world from the last decade of the 19th century through the First World War. The Central European Secessions are among the most notable examples of this new business model. For the most part artists controlled these

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<sup>1</sup> David Galenson and Robert Jensen, "Careers and Canvases: The Rise of the Market for Modern Art in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century" in *Van Gogh Studies*, 1 (2007): 136-66.

societies, though, like the Secessions, they often sought the collaboration of art dealers to manage the business side of their affairs.

Our more fundamental disagreement with the Whites rests on the question whether any art dealer or any critic, separately or together, had the capacity to generate the trust necessary to elevate a heretofore unknown artist to significant national and international status. We believe they could not do this without the umbrella of artist-controlled public exhibitions. Through the ostensibly public nature of their exhibitions, such societies distanced themselves from commerce, establishing the illusion, at least, of peer review and objective evaluations, thereby generating public trust in the value of the art exhibited.

Dealers struggled to do this. An artist could be intensively patronized by the foremost dealers without success, as in the case of René Seyssaud, who received one person-shows, and often more than one, from Durand-Ruel, from Vollard, and from Bernheim-Jeune over the space of twenty years. Yet despite the best dealer support in Paris, they never managed to elevate Seyssaud from obscurity. In our view the historical evidence supports the contention that important dealer-fostered careers (with the notable exception of Picasso's) did not occur until after the First World War.

Our debate with the Whites also turns on the problem of agency. Should we ascribe to outside forces fundamental changes within the

professional practice of being an artist? The idea of attributing to external agents like art dealers the primary agency for institutional change is something we would find much harder to accept with other 19th-century professions such as medicine. The essence of professionalism in any intellectual discipline is that it is internally regulated, however much it is acted upon by external forces. During the 19th century, the membership of these disciplines set ever more stringent standards for their respective professions.

Yet art history has continually looked to explain the major art institutional changes of the 19th century via what are essentially external social forces. No doubt changes in state policies towards the arts or the activities of art dealers like Durand-Ruel did contribute to the ultimate transformation of 19th-century art institutions, but these external actors were not decisive; they were not in themselves agents for disruptive innovations.

Art dealers could not create environments that fostered innovation (indeed they generally looked for art they thought they could sell—Durand-Ruel, for one, actively discouraged his artists from innovating away from successful idioms, most notably Pissarro) and their financial support for artists at the beginning of their careers was consistently slight. The kind of dealers to support the artists of 1880s bohemian Paris were men like *père* Tanguy, who bought low and sold low, if they were able to sell at all. Instead of art dealers, we should look to the

internally-driven re-definition of the artist professional as the primary factor in transforming the market for contemporary art in late 19th-century Western culture.

We have long considered the innovations of the 1880s in terms of stylistic markers. But I would argue that at least as important were the changes in the market-related behaviors to which artists consciously or unconsciously subscribed. The Salon, of course, had possessed a virtual monopoly over how careers could be forged in France for almost three-quarters of the century. As Courbet observed after his submissions had been refused by the jury for the Salon of 1847 “to make a name for oneself one must exhibit, and, unfortunately, that is the only exhibition there is.”<sup>2</sup> Through its monopoly, the Salon vetted what kind of careers French artists could have and dictated the kind of picture with which one made one’s reputation. Frédéric Bazille complained to his parents in 1866 that “In order to be noticed at the exhibition, one has to paint rather large pictures that demand very conscientious preparatory studies and thus occasion a good deal of expense; otherwise one has to spend ten years until people notice you, which is rather discouraging.”<sup>3</sup>

In breaking the Salon’s monopoly the Impressionists introduced not only a new style of painting, they reimagined what a painting and

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<sup>2</sup>See *Letters of Gustave Courbet*, ed. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 70.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism*, (NY: Museum of Modern Art, 1961), 140.

what an exhibition could be. As the British artist, and a former friend of Degas, Walter Sickert observed in 1919 “The Impressionists have killed many things, among others the exhibition picture and the exhibition picture system. The directness of their method and the clearness of their thought enabled them to say what they had to say on a small surface... They introduced the group system into exhibition rooms, showing that one picture by an artist, though a detachable unit, also forms a link in a chain of thought and intention that runs through his whole oeuvre.”<sup>4</sup> While the full implications of these innovations were only gradually realized, beginning with the multiple Impressionist exhibitions and maturing with Monet’s thematic shows of the 1890s, it is striking how most of the innovative artists of the 1880s imitated the Impressionists’ formats and sought to show work as collections rather than singular statements.

The change from a Salon to a Salons system, therefore, was enabled by the kind of work these artists made (the experimental, small-scale painting, executed over a short period of time), work which benefited from collective display rather than in the Salon forum where the showing of one or two masterworks was the norm. The success of the Impressionist exhibitions and the collections of the artists’ work displayed within them gradually undermined the prestige and the career-building necessity of the carefully planned and executed Salon *machine*.

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Sickert, *Complete Writings on Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 254

These lessons were replicated by many subsequent exhibition societies, which structured the means by which new art was shown to the public from the 1880s to the First World War, and perhaps well beyond. The *machine* became the anomaly, not the norm, even with the most ambitious artists. This is also a demonstration of how the contributions of the Impressionists extended well beyond technique and subject matter, transforming not only the venues for art but also the very concept of having a show.

The Impressionist exhibitions offered not only a new model for the way artists could approach exhibiting, favoring the oeuvre over the individual work, they also demonstrated the potential power of independent associations of artists. Later artists learned from the Impressionists that an artist society was a valuable instrument for legitimizing as well as publicizing heretofore little known artists.

These societies also reflected the increasing importance of informal associations among artists, which operated on multiple levels. Economically, the wealthier might help to support the poorer artists, as in the case of Caillebotte's collecting of his contemporaries. They also provided mutual psychological support, a "brotherhood" of artists, which helped sustain them in the absence of wider public recognition. And they offered a means to exchange and transmit artistic ideas and techniques. It is easy to forget that judged by the subsequent fame of his pupils, the most important art educator of the 19th century was

unquestionably Pissarro. These informal opportunities for exchange allowed young artists to by-pass the long period of training and certification that a Salon career required. It is just as easy to forget that Bernard created perhaps his most innovative works and entered into the most important artistic associations of his life before the astonishing age of 20.

As the bohemians abandoned the mass marketplace of the Salon they entered an altogether different competitive arena. Pierre Bourdieu once described this distinction as two different fields of cultural production. “In contrast to the field of large-scale cultural production, which submits to the laws of competition for the conquest of the largest possible market, the field of restricted production tends to develop its own criteria for the evaluation of its products, thus achieving the truly cultural recognition accorded by the peer group whose members are both privileged clients and competitors.”<sup>5</sup> This is a complicated way of saying that there developed in Paris an alternative model of professional practice not geared toward the large audiences of the Salon, but rather to a much smaller audience of collectors and fellow artists. And within this restricted market, artists began developing their own criteria for evaluating their art. The key here is that the bohemians had begun to compete within an intellectual marketplace for ideas against the grain of publicly valued art.

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<sup>5</sup> See P. Bourdieu, “The Market for Symbolic Goods,” in *The Field of Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 115.



One consequence of this shift to a restricted field is that it was only often much later that such artists might gain significant access to commercial markets. It was not until after 1900 that a competitive market resembling those that fostered Gérôme's career developed for the artistic innovators of the 1880s. And the important difference here between Gérôme's market and that of his bohemian successors is that Gérôme's market was significantly more efficient. Gérôme was substantially rewarded for his efforts early in his career, art dealers cashiering on his reputation won at the Salon. For the later *bohemian* artists, their reputations were rewarded financially either later in their careers or in the case of a number of the innovative artists of the 1880s, even posthumously.

The rewards of the bohemian imaginary that triumphed during the 1880s were indeterminate; bohemia offered no career promises except a largely unexamined faith in the future validation of its innovators. There were no medals nor professorships; artistic aspiration was achieved through rejection, not imitation. Whereas the Salon professional subscribed to a life cycle of upward mobility, bohemianism unsettled class identities. For many, bohemianism bred distrust through its upsetting of social norms and because its internally driven aesthetic and social standards. Bohemia was also a place for the wealthy to "slum"; where the dandy lives visibly above his or her means.

Whereas professional bodies erected strong regional or national barriers along with their standards to limit competition, bohemia was presumed to be a place where cultures and classes could freely mix by virtue of a common rootlessness. Indeed, expatriation and internationalism are the most powerful manifestations of bohemia. The geography of bohemia was quintessentially urban; even the pastoral artist colonies derived the logic of their existence from urban bohemia. Throughout the 19th century, Paris possessed the largest bohemia because it was then home to cultural producers who represented the greatest variety of nationalities and ethnicities of any city in the world.

Professionalism is normally invested in the idea of protecting the status quo, as in this wonderful self-portrait by Lord Leighton, in which



Frederic Leighton (1830–1896) Self-portrait, 1880 (oil on canvas 76.5 × 64 cm) Uffizi, Florence

he self-fashions his identity as a descendent of Italian Renaissance masters while also referencing the classical tradition. Bohemia,



Christian Krogh, Bohemia, 1885 (oil on canvas), Lillehammer Art Museum

conversely, was entranced with the contemporary moment, nicely illustrated here by Christian Krogh's portrait of his young artist friends, including Edvard Munch, relaxing in the studio. Bohemia promised an unregulated life devoted to the arts and to sensual pleasures. The bohemian's self-fashioning as a social outsider discovered an easy alliance with the notion that artistic importance was to be established through innovation and the overthrow of inherited standards. Compared to the liberalism of the 19th-century artist professional, bohemians were often absolutist in insisting on the primacy of their art; they are found to be highly intolerant of other artistic positions, and especially of Salon art.

It was no doubt a self-created fiction that bohemia could exist outside of class, outside of money, and outside of social constraints, that it could be a privileged place in which to discover personal and artistic freedom. Bohemia did offer the indiscriminate mixture of social classes, but not their disintegration. While sometimes the “have-nots” became the “haves”, like Picasso, the “haves”, no matter how debauched through slumming, never fully lost their class privileges. Similarly, while bohemia claimed to offer liberation from contemporary social mores and social spaces, like the artist’s studio, in practice bohemia was just as bound by sexual politics as it was by class politics. Bohemia was and is a social construct as much as professionalism is.

The replacement of the professional Salon artist by the bohemian artist professional did not, of course, happen all at once. Its roots are early in the 19th century. But the point when it becomes the discourse through which innovative art gets institutionalized may properly belong to the 1880s. This is not a phenomenon that can be explained away by the intervention of dealers—we know that even before the Impressionist market had matured, the Salon system had already lost its hold over many emerging artists of the 1880s generation. It wells up within the artist community.

### Conclusion

The victory of the bohemians over the Salon professionals came at the personal cost to the reputations and fortunes of the Salon

membership. And the gains made for the professional status of the artist were also lost. Whereas other professions were validated and supported by a mass system of cultural production, when the bohemian artists took over they were sustained by a small coterie of collectors, fellow artists, critics and dealers serving an intimate, yet autonomous market.

One can only speculate what might have happened if the professional aspirations of 19th-century artists within the Salon system and its equivalents had been fully realized: artists might, for example, have won the legal rights to a percentage of the resale of their art; they might have created a successful, internally regulated pension system for impoverished and elderly artists; they might even have raised the minimum livelihood for the journeyman artist, as opposed to the profession's stars. Somewhat ironically, many of the social benefits to which the Salon professionals once aspired were only realized after the Second World War, when colleges and universities opened degree programs in the visual arts, thereby restoring the academy to the artist's profession.

If Salon professionalism had survived it might even have been able to sustain more well defined expectations regarding what constitutes artistic excellence. But the disruption of Salon professionalism led to the fracturing of authority—how did one now know what was valuable and what wasn't? The larger public continued for a long time to assume the professional authority of the Salon; but a handful of collectors—and

that's all it takes—began to select a variety of artists and artistic expressions to patronize explicitly on the grounds of innovation. I have often wondered how the artists, still oriented to the publicly held values of the Salon, but with the misfortune to reach maturity around 1900, must have felt about what was happening to contemporary art.

Perhaps many had the reactions expressed by the Danish artist Vilhelm Hammershøi. After having visited an exhibition in Paris in 1892 of the Society of Impressionist and Symbolist Painters, a group of young French artists whose leading luminary was the symbolist theorist and painter, Maurice Denis, Hammershøi described the show to a Danish colleague as “rubbish”, reporting that “Most of the paintings look like jokes.”

One final consequence of the triumph of the bohemian art professional was the more or less permanent establishment of the notion of art as a form of cultural alienation. Even when unintended, ideas such as artistic authenticity came to assume a corresponding lack of financial success—and therefore an essential un-relatedness to market considerations—except, of course, posthumously, when an important artist's work would then be subjected to rampant speculation. Nonetheless, “outsider”, “bohemian” artists, whether they chose to embrace the market or to reject it, no more escaped the market than did their older “professional” rivals who they deemed to be “commercial”, and were later to be called *kitsch* artists. The market affected not only the

bohemian artists' material fortunes, but also how such artists worked and how they presented their art to the public. It is difficult to find artists from bohemia who were not profoundly aware of market considerations or an important artist who failed to self-consciously position his or her work (which includes how and what the artist made), that is to behave as a professional, in relation to their market.

The bohemian's open disdain of the pursuit of money and honors was often accompanied by arguments regarding the essential spiritual values of art against the rampant materialism of fin-de-siècle Western culture. It is an example of what Bruno Latour has described as the capacity of the moderns to speak with a forked tongue, that is to say, to espouse in theory one view while in practice behaving in an entirely different manner.<sup>6</sup> This of course is what Vassily Kandinsky did during the years leading up to the First World War. He may have advocated the importance of an art that communicated through spiritual vibrations and that was effectively anti-materialist in orientation. Yet no European artist pursued exhibition opportunities more intensively than Kandinsky did nor self-promoted more inventively than he. We ought to take him as the paragon of the new bohemian professional born out of the ashes of the Salon professional.

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<sup>6</sup> See Christian S. G. Katti, "Mediating Political 'Things,' and the Forked Tongue of Modern Culture: A Conversation with Bruno Latour," *Art Journal*, vol. 65, no. 1 (Spring 2006), 95-115.