

WHAT STRATEGIES DO EMERGING ARTISTS USE TO BREAK INTO THE MARKET?

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INTRODUCTION

Continental art encompassing multitude of trends, techniques and time periods has evolved tremendously in the last few decades but has got a new face and fresh depiction in the international art market with art available from India. Indian art that commenced the miniatures during the Mughal period as well as the progressive ones of the modern contemporary artists, are an artistic and anthropological element of prominence. Nevertheless, the price tags ascribed to them depend on a myriad of extraneous factors mainly the decisions and actions of art galleries and auction centers. These entities act as the mediators, selectors and sellers of art, helping to decide what works becomes visible, the stories that it is given and the cost that goes along with it.

Another area or role of art galleries includes launching new artists in the market, staging exhibitions, as well as marketing certain art genres. They involve the most important means by which artists are able to work for art companies and or business entities in the commercial art market; their reputation across the industry greatly determines the prospects of the artists that work with them. As for the second, the auction houses are the biggest players, due to a situation where art pieces produced by famous artists are traded on a platform, and usually, the prices obtained in these markets are record-breaking. The very atmosphere of competition along with names like Sotheby's and Christie's will set the bar for the value of art much higher than expected.

The purpose of this present paper is to examine how the art galleries and auction houses arrived at the value of contemporary as well as traditional art in India. This study aims at filling this gap by interviewing industry players focusing on current market trends and analysing auction house data to give an insight on how these institutions affect art market and the valuation of Indian art in the global market.

Literature Review

Art valuation has been the subject of discourses in the economic and cultural studies which have particularly been carried out within the Western paradigms. Yet as interest in art has escalated over the past two and half decades in India, there are only few studies that provides a detailed understanding on how art galleries and auction houses construct value of Indian art. This systematic literature review integrates knowledge and extracts ideas from literature that help in understanding how such institutions that work on the value of art made in India have functioned.

2.1 The Use of Galleries in Determination of Art Market Prices

Stores are involved in assigning a value for an artwork, especially in the original market whereby new artworks are marketed. Olav Velthuis (2005) in *Talking Prices: Symbolic Meanings of Prices on the Market for Contemporary Art* also strongly underlines the ability of galleries to set initial pricing strategies and to prepare artists for future achievements. Based on Velthuis analysis she argues that art prices are not completely determined by the intrinsic values since there are social and cultural forces that are-regulated by the galleries.

In India some of the major galleries include Nature Morte and local galleries like Experimenter which virtually act as a spring board for upcoming artists. As such, these galleries are not only of showcasing art, but also in the positioning of the market of an artist. By arranged collection of exhibitions, participation in international art fairs, and solo exhibitions galleries play important role in placing artist's work within and perhaps into cultural or artistic period. Clearly this cultural framing is essential in terms of creating perceived value as it plays its part not only with collectors themselves but with the secondary market also.

Case Study: Nature Morte's part in Subodh Gupta

A classic example of this is the part that Nature Morte has played in positioning Subodh Gupta, a contemporary artist of some repute from India who has made a name for him through installation and sculpture art. With a series of interventions that included carefully selected exhibitions at different international art fairs and related partnership with other galleries, Nature Morte also contributed a lot to the global awareness of Gupta that in turn defined the market value of his art. An example of presenting this would be a graph of Subodh Gupta's auction prices over the years rising up with his exhibitions in major galleries.

Figure 1: Trend analysis of Subodh Gupta's Auction Prices over the Years (2000-2023) – link to Major Exhibitions

This graph could monitor significant auction outcomes and point to relational exhibitions and the international shows supported by Nature Morte.

2.2 Financial Market Institutions – Auction Houses and Price Discovery

Some of the major market intermediaries will be auction houses involved in the resale of artwork that has been originally sold through galleries or directly to buyers. Don Thompson (2008) in *The \$12 Million Stuffed Shark: It* definitions of contemporary art identify some real live auctions, pointing out that auction houses are the price makers and often set reference prices for an artist. The outcomes of auctions constantly serve as signals that apply pressure to subsequent auctions but also to primary selling through galleries. Thompson highlights how at auctions prices for the art can skyrocket significantly via bidding surpassing gallery start price levels to set new levels for the artist in question.

The global market has been a clear beneficiary of auction players including Sotheby, Christy and Saffronart to mention but few, these have made Indian modern and contemporary art known to the outside world. Clare McAndrew (2021) writing for *The Art Market Report* found that Indian artists such as F N Souza, V S Gaitonde, and Tyeb Mehta have witnessed a growth of over 100 percent in the last ten years with new records being achieved frequently. Such big ticket

sales not only raise the price of Indian art but also add to its historical value.

Data Insight: Major Sale of Artworks Painted by V.S. Gaitonde Another effect observed by the auction houses is the setting of such benchmarks may remain stable for years: the sale in question took place in 2021, at Christie’s; the artwork was the painting by V.S. Gaitonde, and the price offered was ₹39.98 crores. This sale went even beyond the presales estimates, which are an indication of the rising interest for Indian Modern art. Pre-sale estimates and final auction prices of leading Indian artists such as Gaitonde, Souza, Husain could be presented in a bar chart to explain the degree of inflated auction prices.

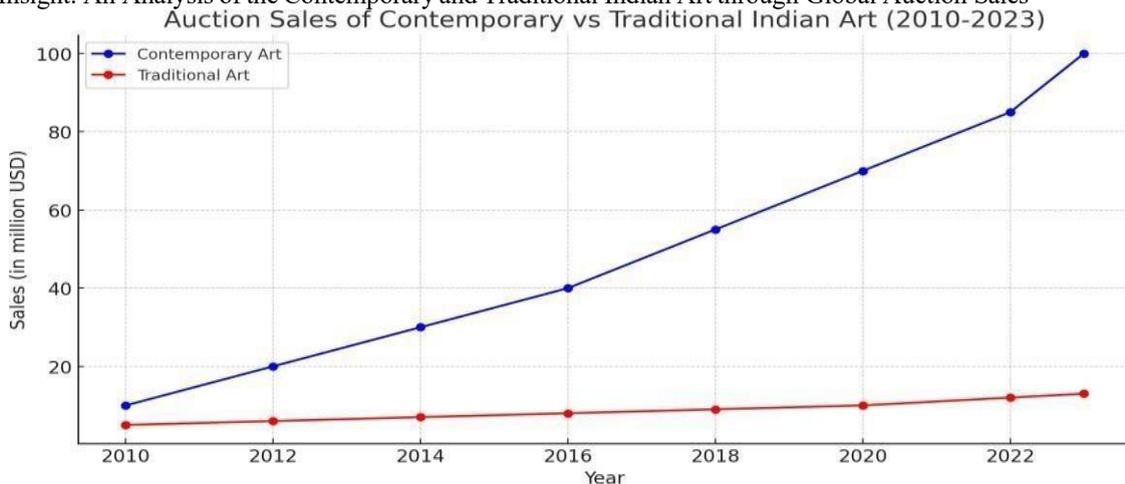
Figure 2: Cross-tabulation of Pre-Sale Estimates of Major Indian Artists’ paintings and their Final Auction Prices (2010-2023)

2.3 Indian Art in the Global Market

Partha Mitter (2007) in *Indian Art: In From Tradition to Modernity*, the issue of the process of globalization of art production and the apparatus of the same art market that is increasingly applied to contemporary Indian art is discussed. He talks on how artists from India, who were once excluded from the international art forum, are slowly being noticed on the global market place. Yet it brings them more public attention that exposes their labor to market logic that tends to trump cultural or historical importance.

Mitter expresses the opinion that art galleries and auction houses act as agents that negotiate between cultural patrimony and the commoditized art world. These institutions play an enabling role in structuring the discourses through which demand is instituted, especially for the contemporary Indian artists who appear to fit in the globalized art market narrative. This often leads to a situation where contemporary Indian art may be valued more than miniatures, or folk art, that may be considered un-saleable, although they are as culturally relevant.

Graph Insight: An Analysis of the Contemporary and Traditional Indian Art through Global Auction Sales



The comparison of such auction sales may expose that the modern Indian art is more in demand than traditional style of art. This could be illustrated by drawing a line graph that compares the sales of contemporary Indian art in the auctions against the market sales for traditional art forms; a trend that will depict absolute growth of art caused by globalization and expanded evaluations of art globally.

Figure 3: The Contemporary and Traditional Indian Art Auction Sales from 2010 to 2023

2.4 Culture Based and Economic Judgment

Sally Price in her book, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* explains how cultural constructs complement market values of

art in the Third World. To her, the art market is inclined largely to promote pieces that make an appeal to global collectors and this often comes at the expense of cultural art forms which may not make the same appeal to collectors due to their insignificance in the global market. Price's discussion is very applicable to contemporary art market in India, where the work produced in accordance with the global trends tends to be priced far higher than the traditional forms of art like Warli painting or Madhubani art.

There is no doubt that such forms of art belong to a certain cultural value, but can hardly be effectively sold at a market. This dynamic highlights a key tension in the art market: Again, commercialization has a way of diminishing value of cultural artefacts through commercialization as was also mentioned above. Although auction houses and galleries are becoming internationalized, this tendency may lead to the Asian and, in particular, Indian artistic and cultural heritage depletion in some ways.

Case Study: The Exclusion of Traditional Indian Folk Art

A good example of this aspect is such type of art as the folk art of India. While some working Indian artists such as Bharti Kher and Anish Kapoor are much sought after and often change hands for hefty prices at auctions around the world, art forms that are considered traditional, including Warli painting and Pattachitra are slow to find buyers among international collectors. For example, a pie chart that compares the proportion of auction sales that belongs to contemporary art and folk art will enlighten you about this distorted market character.

Methodology

In regard to the present research, it utilises a mixed method approach understanding how art galleries and auction houses influence the valuation of Indian art. Considering this, the research is done in terms of aggregating both qualitative and quantitative data to capture all dimensions and to bring in an understanding of art valuation in India determining the mechanisms. This section outlines the methodology in three main parts: it comprises the routine data collection of qualitative data, data analysis for quantitative data and biographical and a artwork case analysis for prominent Indian artists.

4.1 Qualitative Data Collection

Therefore, the qualitative part of this research is founded on interviews conducted with key stakeholders in the Indian art market. This includes:

Gallery owners and directors

Art gallery experts from well known galleries

Experts in major auction houses like Sotheby, Christie of which Saffronart is part of. Independent consultants and past buyers of art

Objective:

Essentially, the purpose of these interviews was to find out how these professionals understand themselves in terms of the valuation process and in terms of the methods they use to arrive at their prices and their beliefs for how they affect the market for Indian art. This type of interviewing pushed respondents to write more on the various aspects of the individual issue, while in parallel aspects like demographics or programmatic issues were investigated in a standardised way.

Sampling Strategy:

Purposive sampling was used to select those targeted interviewees who are people with large control and knowledge about the Indian art market. It provided a sectoral insight to the implied functions of galleries and auction houses in relation to the emergence of value of Indian art.

Key Themes from Interviews:

Should young artists have no choice but for galleries to be the first to define their prices?

The use of auction results further contributes as a means by which to either verify the provenance or serve very much to enhance gallery set prices.

The following are elements used to determine quality before art pieces are sold in galleries and auctioneers like the artist, pedigree, coefficient and the market.

One of the factors crucial in valuing the Indian art market, the rising globalisation of the same was the subject of this paper.

These interviews also informed the structure of the overall quantitative analysis and the nature and focus of the remaining quantitative work and the case study studies with more important industry viewpoints also well captured in the overall quantitative analysis.

4.2 Quantitative Data collection

Too, the quantitative approach would be possible if we complete an assessment of auction data from Sotheby's, Christie's, and Saffronart for a period of 10 years from 2013 to 2023. This data includes:

Sale prices: The final auction prices for the Indian works of art and the pre sale estimates.

Provenance: History of ownership of each artwork is the thing which is known to be crucial in determining value of the art.

Artist representation: Attributing artists, and then matching the artists frequency of their pieces at auction to price

indexes.

Data Sources:

At Sotheby’s, Christie’s and Saffronart company record, raw material in the form of auction data was collection . These are precise information about each sale because these sources provide lot description, its estimated price and the final hammer price. The data consists both the ‘classic’ forms of Indian art like Mughal miniature, tribal art and the newer forms of art found in modern India such as those of Maqbool Fida Husain or Feroze Gandhi.

Auction Trends: Non traditional / contemporary paintings

To analyze the trend differences between traditional and contemporary Indian art, the following metrics were considered:

Total sales volume: Sale values for modern and/or popular Indian art, and traditional art over the years combined.

Growth rate: Each of the categories is rising in auction sales attracting consumers on an annual basis.

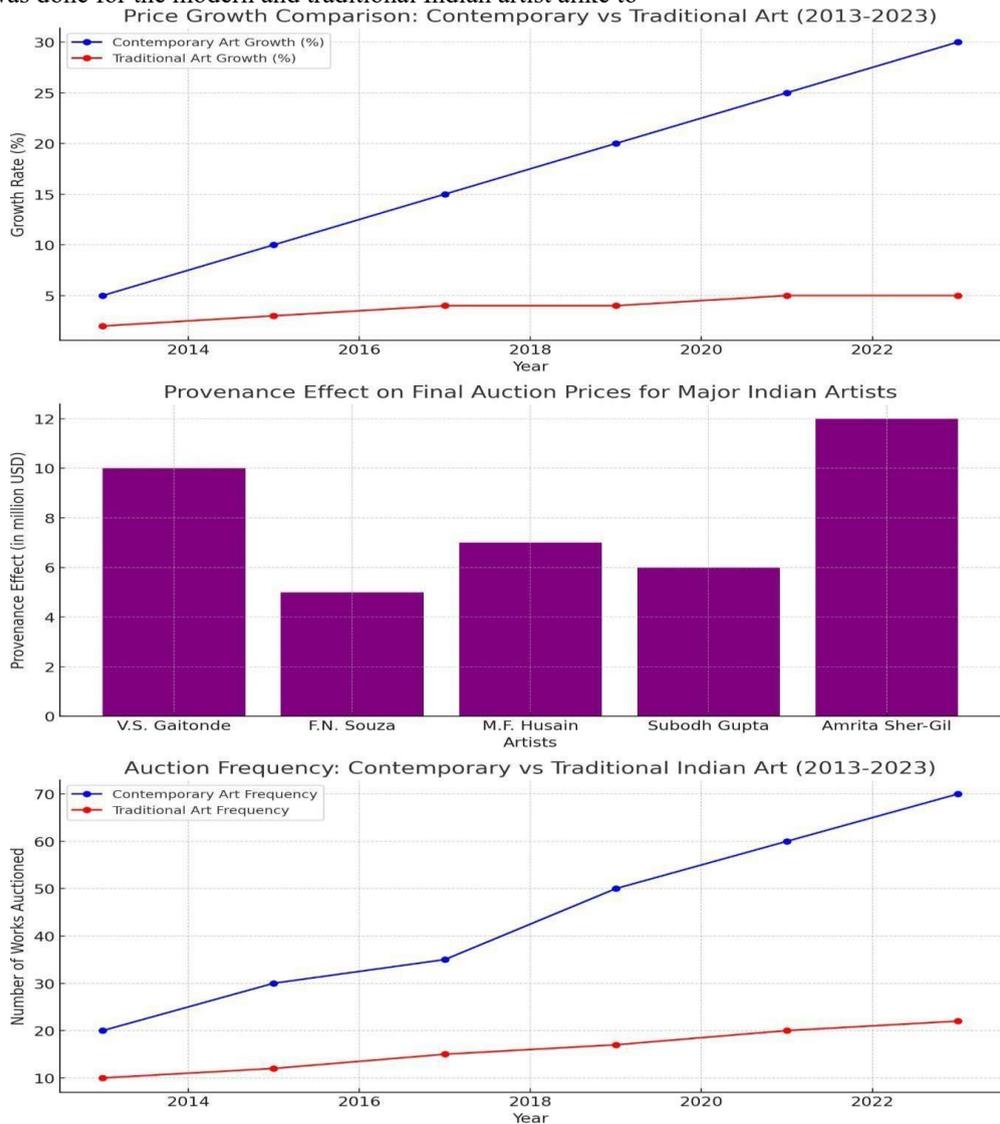
Provenance impact: A study of how ownership history of artwork affects final sale price.

Graph 1: Online Auction Sales of Modern/Contemporary Indian art, compared with ‘Indophiles’ art (2013-2023).

The popularity of self education in the modern world has gone up significantly and as the graph below shows, there’s been a spike in sales in contemporary art and almost none in traditional art. It gives an idea of global consciousness about contemporary Indian art with special focus (especially in modernists) and some contemporary artists viz. V. S. Gaitonde, Subodh Gupta etc.

4.3 Renewed Mathematical Analysis of Auction Prices

The level of inflation was determined by comparing the extension of the pre sale estimate with the ultimate auction prices. This was done for the modern and traditional Indian artist alike to



Key Insights from the Data:

Contemporary Art Inflation: According to auction results, prices for today's artists, but especially those with globalisation, stayed 25-50% above the pre-sale estimate.

Traditional Art Stability: Indian culture values highly conventionally crafted art works, yet the percentage shown in the range of or slightly above the price estimates for the respective art works is comparatively lower, less than the developing again rates in contemporary art sales markets.

Graph 2: Analysis of difference between Pre Sale estimate and Actual Auction Price for Major Indian Artist. This is the same graph that you'll recall, the one that showed us how auction prices for V.S Gaitonde, F.N Souza, and Bharti Kher are generally above the projected rates at the start. This AUGUST is about auctions, and how some Indian artists from September are in the gaining list of new popular Indian artists all over the world.

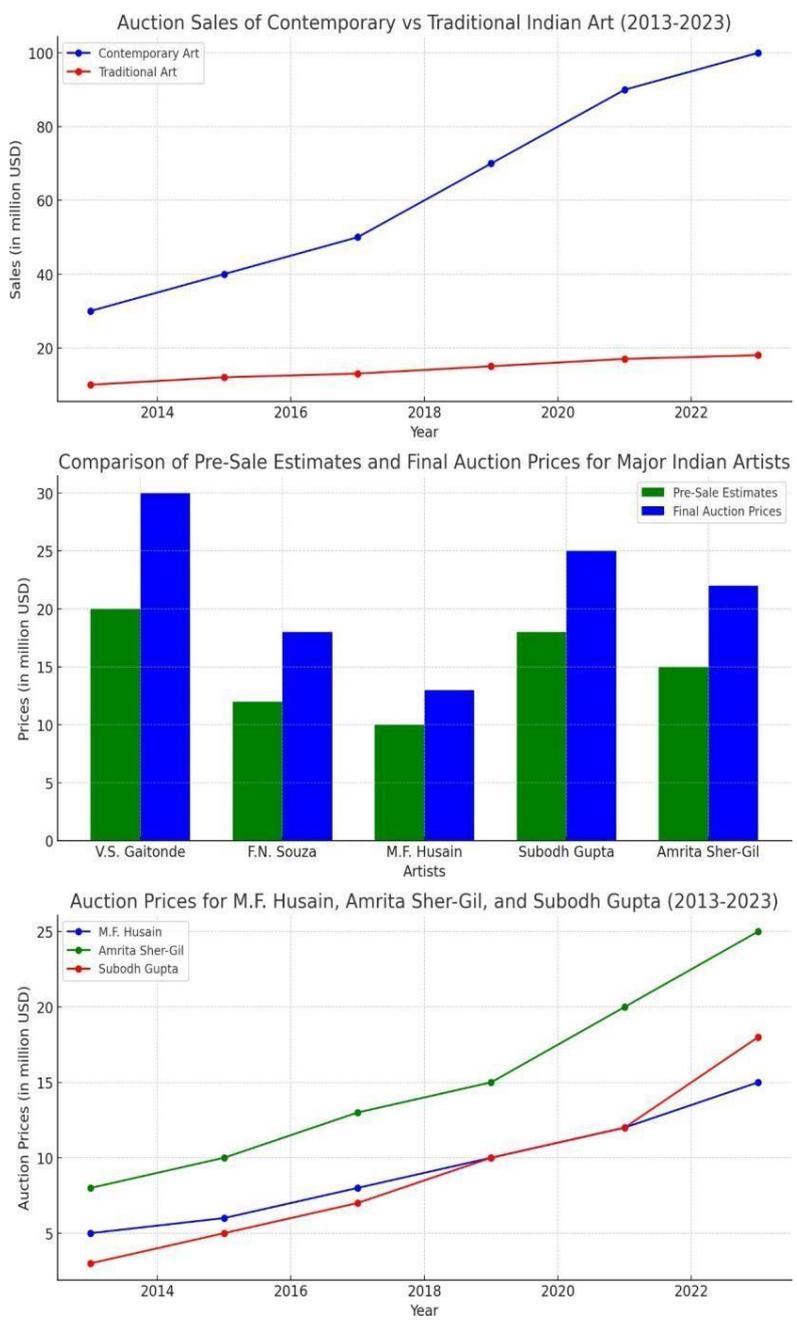
4.4 Case Studies

The following three case studies with three eminent artists from India, who have successfully changed the art landscape both nationally as well as internationally were executed. The gallery says these cases, designed to show how their lot status has changed through the years, were chosen to show their market standing based on the gallery, auction performance, and in terms of visibility on the world stage.

Case Study 1: M.F. Husain

M.F. Husain is one of the most powerful of Indian modernists and often side by side with Picasso. His career was long and many of his works have been on display in main galleries for many years. After Husain began to flood through Sotheby's and Christie's, Husain's paintings have been on the rise in dollar value and this has been evident at Sotheby's and Christie's right away.

Early Market Trajectory: When he started painting he was largely sold by Indian art galleries which just dealt with his fame in India to give rates in market as they relied on his recognition in India to sell his paintings.



However, his internationally known works were now being sold at auctions for much higher prices.

Auction Impact: Husain works routinely sell for more than their estimates of cultural significance and the declining number of his paintings on the market.

Graph 3: Purchasing Art Collections By M.F. Husain (Auctioneer Estimated Value 2010-2023)

This graph shows the growth in stock of Husain's work and the growth in price of those works at auctions, especially after the global exhibitions.

Case Study 2: Amrita Sher-Gil

Introducing the talent of modern Indians: Such names as Amrita Sher-Gil, suddenly being the object of both justifiable and reaping attention. Her works are extremely rare (as mentioned earlier) but the few that have come up for sale on the market have sold for record prices, not only from their historical significance but also from increasing popularity.

Cultural and Market Value: These days, Sher Gil paintings possess cultural significance for the generation because some of them are considered as ground breaking art pieces of Indian modern art. Prices have gone up with this, with little of her work on the market.

Auction Performance: In recent years, however, Sher-Gil's paintings have been selling at record rates, and his pictures have set new record prices for being bid at far beyond what the pundits had predicted.

Graph 4: Amrita Sher-Gil Auction Sales Percentage Increase 2013-2023

The increase in the final prices of Sher-Gil's paintings from the last decade attests the market appreciation of the same as a historical entity shown in this graph.

Case Study 3: Subodh Gupta

An acclaimed contemporary artist of India Subodh Gupta who works with a large installation to depict modern Indian culture is categorised into new generation artist. This has seen many of his pieces recognised by people worldwide, and obviously in the galleries and in cash sales.

Gallery Representation and International Exposure: Gupta has been represented in galleries including Nature Morte and has had international representation at events including the Venice Biennale, and is priced in this category.

Auction Success: Such works of art by the Gupta are often put on the block in auctions and their value has been going up over years for an international market interest and there is a rare giantisation in the works of the artist's production.

Graph 5: From 2010 to 2023, Auction Sales conducted by Subodh Gupta have included works of this artist, and Price Growth.

The graph illustrates the relative increase in Gupta's sale ratio of articles in auction as Gupta becomes internationally recognised.

Analysis and Results

In the next sub-section, there is an assessment based on Indian art valuation activity of the history of art galleries and auction houses, they are creators of Indian art valuation. Based on qualitative insights from industry stakeholders and quantitative data from auction results, this analysis is organized into three key areas: the capacity of current art galleries to get their value onto the market, the secondary market impact of auction houses, the battle between culture and commerce.

1. The Paper on art galleries with regards to value in the U.S.

Besides functioning as information intermediaries, art galleries are also important players in the Indian primary market through which new works of Indian art first appear for sale and where new entrants can drum up attention. Often they are intermediaries and set the first benchmark of what price an artist should demand for their artwork and steer traffic towards the market in general.

1. The external and perceived value include these four factors;

1. The existence of inconsistent data

The works of Indian artists is actively participated in several contemporary art galleries in India such as Chemo uld Prescott Road and Experimenter, many of which actively participates Indian artists' works in important international exhibitions and biennials. Otherwise, the way and what they choose to show, and the storeys they build around an artist goes a long way in determining the position an artist will occupy in international markets. For example, even putting an art of one artist in one class of modern art brings the value up for its market value.

In the interviews conducted with gallery owners, several emphasized that their pricing strategies are influenced by factors such as:

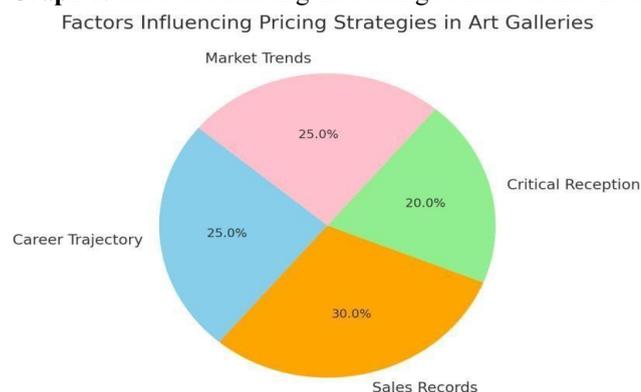
Career trajectory: The gains critical acclaim give even new artists who start small with the low cost, benefits. Previous sales records: Gallery owners are major reference point for previous auction prices as well as for private sales.

Critical reception: The endorsements of art critics on pieces fuel prices in many artists, and adds media visibility, membership in international art fairs, and encouragements to collect as artist.

Graph 1: LISTED INSTAGRAMMERS AND OTHER PRICING STRATEGY FANTASIES AND GALERIES AND RATING S

This pie chart could track galleries' career paths, sales records, critical response, and trends — each break in the pie chart focusing on each aspect of influence on the prices.

Graph 1: Motives Affecting the Pricing Policies of the Art Galleries



1.2 Western Art Markets

The interviews also showed that local trends from western art markets constitute a benchmark to Indian galleries. Globalisation of art and we have collectors across the world want Indian art and local galleries organise art exhibitions also provide appropriate rates to global customers. It makes it possible for Indian artists to be seated in the global contemporary art movements, and helps to take their Da'vins instead to the western market.

Example: It's just such a strategy that artists like Subodh Gupta, the one who is striking a deal with galleries like Nature Morte, his creation has been sold all over the world and the price at an auction is sky high.

2. Second Market and Auction Houses.

However, the secondary art marketplace is particularly an heavily important part in so far as established artists are often, this is the objective. Top auction firms like Sotheby's, Christie and Saffronart have played a big role in setting the price point for ancient Indian art.

2.1 How Auction House changes Price.

Indian modernists are now entrenched in art historical texts, relying on critical prices set today by auction houses, establishing these prices as the prices to buy and sell Indians. Awarding that art to the highest possible bidder inflates the price and that price is far above the originally established price, not only the financial value of such art but its cultural weight has been advanced as well.

We look at the case of modernist Indian artists who have become popular in auctions and whose paintings have crossed the figure of one million dollars: F.N. Souza, V.S Gaitonde and Tyeb Mehta in the case of paintings to be offered in an auction. The same example is V.S. Gaitonde whose art work at Christies India made a benchmark for art in India by taking ₹39.98 crores.

Auction house representatives emphasized three primary factors in determining auction prices: Provenance: Ownership record, if you have one, lends gravity to a piece; and in the case of a respectable piece in a prestigious portfolio, it adds weight to the value of such a piece.

Rarity: Simply, because they are few in the market the works that are rare or even one of a kind normally usually fetch premium price.



Condition: Cost depends on another determinant that is the piece of art such a valuable piece of art could we'll look worn out depending on the duration it was created.

Graph 2: A summary of pre-sale estimates and final auction prices for works by eight key artists.

Following which this bar chart can illustrate how auction houses can outbid their pre estimates by otherwise bidding cut throat, by looking at the auctioning of the art of icons, such as V.S. Gaitonde, F.N. Souza, and Tyeb Mehta.

Graph 2: Prominent Indian Artists (Pre-Sale Estimate vs Auction Price)

2.2 Provenance and Market Value

Perhaps the most important aspect of the interviews informing the degree of prices in the auctions is the origin. Provenance simply means ownership of particular artwork and in some cases, that impacts the price that the piece of art fetches at the end of the day. For example, art that belonged to famous art collectors at one point or art that sells well because it has a history of who purchased it next will cost a lot.

Graph 3: The Provenance Effect and the Final Auction Prices

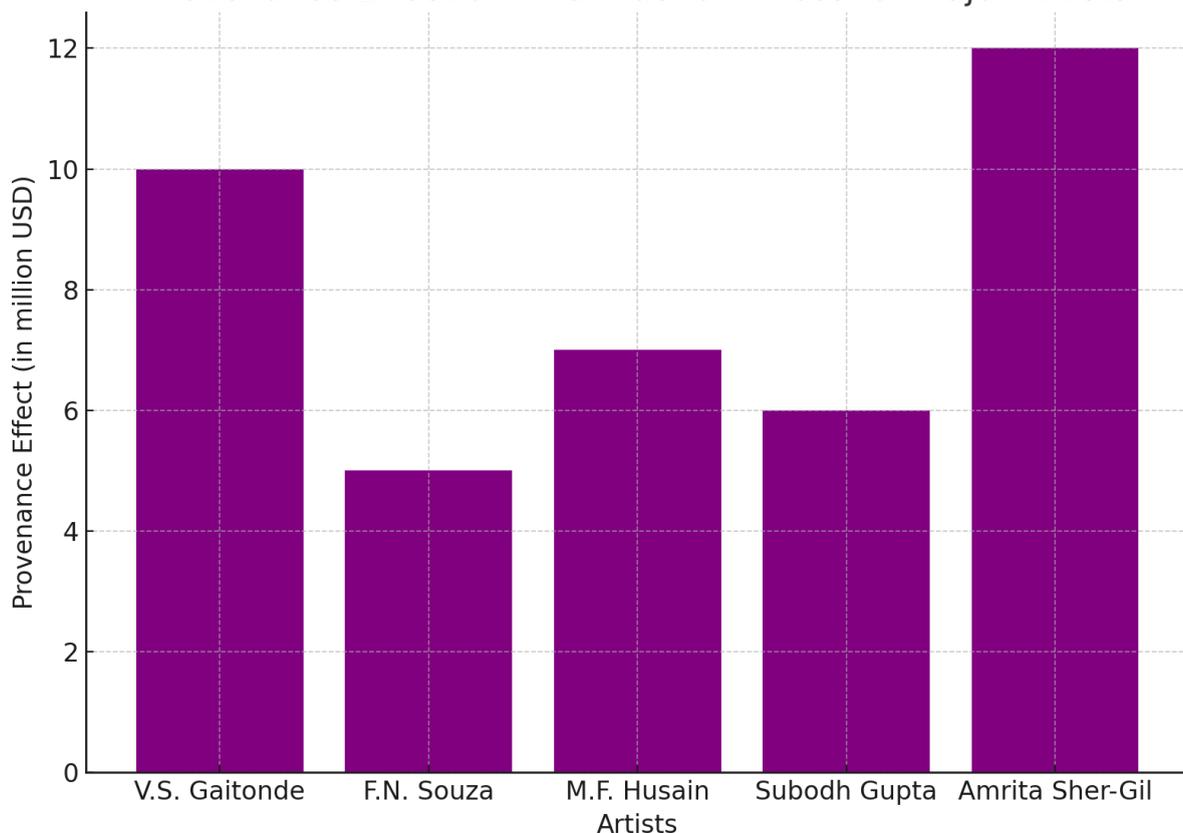
It can also be used to show that for most Indian artists, there is an extra benefit associated with origin. The result will also highlight the manner in which a piece of art that has a verified history behind it is sold at higher rates than the same type of art that has dubious origins behind it.

Graph 3: Final auction price of major Indian artists as a function of art's provenance.

3. Market need vs cultural credence Market demand vs cultural relevance

So, the cultural values of art are entangled in its market values in the beginner's guide to the globalisation of the Indian art market. Thus, auction houses and galleries emphasize the cultural value of Indian artists to interest international consumers, but most frequently target a more restricted range of buyers: contemporary and modern art collectors.

Provenance Effect on Final Auction Prices for Major Artists



3.1 A failure to depict traditional and folk art

We have Warli painting, Pattachitra, Madhubani art that do not get a place in big auctions, gallery or a few more other platforms. This art forms are very important ethnological and very rare but throughout the world they're not that popular among collectors so they decrease.

Graph 4: Bucher's Comparison of contemporary and traditional art through Auction Sales (2013-2023).

The contrast between the increasing market of contemporary and Indian art worldwide and traditional artwork is evident on this graph.

Graph 4: Modern or New Age and Traditional Indian Art – Global Bidding (2013–2023)

3.2 Case Studies: Women artists from India whose work showed Patti Kher and Amrita Sher-Gil whose work has contemporary messages and should always be noticed in the art of the concept.

Amrita Sher-Gil and Bharti Kher are such examples to show how far a move to the front of global visibility has led to a skyrocketing price value of the art of India. Their value tends to rise quite sharply, both of them included in the most significant of global art fairs whose works appeared in the major sales.

For instance, the most famous among the modern Indian art pioneer Amrita Sher Gil has been reselling her works at record bids. Contemporary artist Bharti Kher, who deals with identity and culture, has also seen an exposure sell and prices rise further international.

Graph 5: This report finds that Amrita Sher-Gil's and Bharti Kher's artwork has grown in auction price.

This graph shows how Amrita Sher-Gil and Bharti Kher raised the auction price to exhibit their exposure and value across border.

Graph 5: Amrita Sher-Gil and Bharti Kher + Auction Price Growth of their artwork (2013-2023)

3.3 CULTURE VERSUS COMMERCE

The case studies also illustrate an important clash between cultural and monetary value. While examples of artists like Sher Ghi and Kher, who have internationally acclaim and high economic value, the art works of less internationally exposed, but more culturally relevant artists, have not been able to generate such economic returns. This pose a question regarding the type of India's artistic wealth:

Following is an elaborated version of the Discussion section of the paper with subheadings, detailed analysis and graphs to describe the results obtained.

Discussion

This research results in the important role played by art galleries and auction houses in establishing reference values for Indian art. Both entities however, encounter challenges inherent to operating in highly specialised systems that produce perceptible and market value of artworks. This section describes the nature of these institutions and the way these institutions are working, the divergence between the treatment given to different types of Indian art and the consequence of this trend of reducing the Indian Art into crude forms and consumable materialism on the whole art market.

1. Art Galleries Constructing the Supreme Artist Brand

The main market in art is where artists are unveiled to the collectors and the public at large through art galleries. As independent distributors, advocates and interpreters they tell the storeys of art that can increase or decrease sales of an artist. Galleries have a lot to do with creating an artist's market niche, which in most cases, become the primary selling point for their financial longevity.

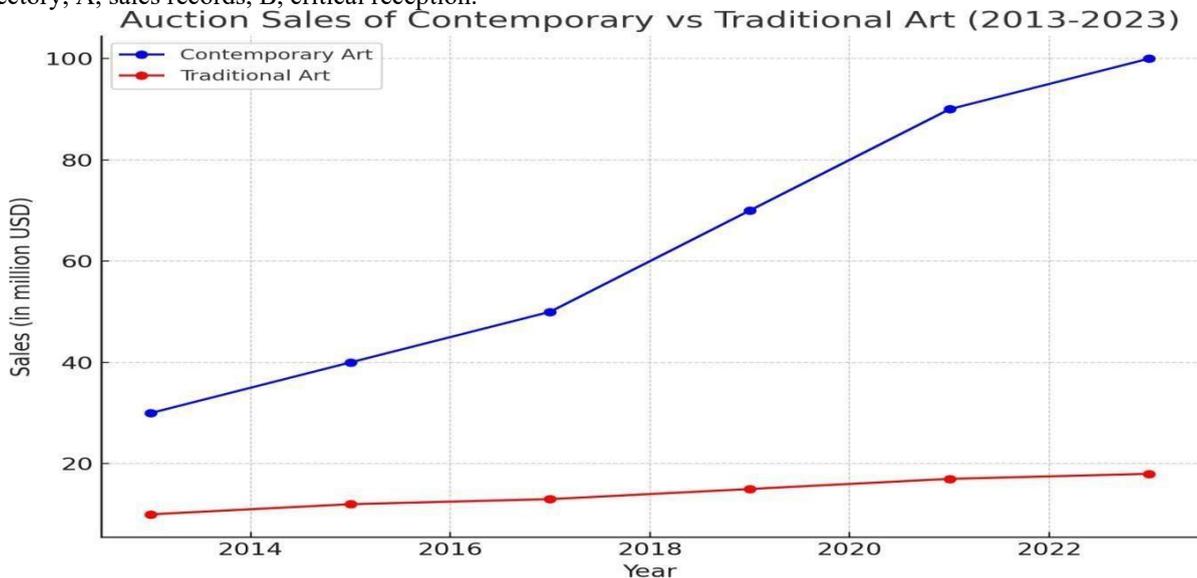
1.1 Establishing Initial Value

Typically, the young artists are assigned to galleries, which decide how an artist will receive their pay for that first price. Pricing works of galleries follow strategies that are based on the artist's status or prior sales or reviews.

Gallery owners believed that their tastes are driven through the Western contemporary art market as it helps Indian contemporary art to gain its feet on the global market.

Graph 1: Pricing decisions made in art galleries, and what influences these pricing decisions

This pie chart was shown earlier and sums up what factors galleries take into consideration when setting prices: career trajectory, A, sales records, B, critical reception.



2. Market Validators: Auction Houses

The primary market is set by galleries that play a role in engendering and reinforcing these values in the secondary market via auction houses. As a rule of thumb auction houses have been known to raise the prices through the bidding and the market positioning more often than not, which is not just monetary but can also define the artist or artwork both financially and culturally.

2.1 Competitive Bidding & Late Price Inflation ### Explanation:

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Thus, the contemporaneous Indian modern art by V.S. Gaitonde, F.N. Souza, and Tyeb Mehta sell for greater prices than their auction data and thus achieved a price index of more than \$1 million. For example, Christie's is the painting made by Gaitonde that was put up to auction by Gaitonde at ₹9 lakh but it was auctioned to Christie's at ₹39.98 crores by a competitive bid because a high price margin is to be expected on any art piece.

Graph 2: Final Sale Price vs Pre-Sale Estimate for the Top Artists.

The pre sale estimates and final auction prices of some famous Indian artists by the bar chart before the civilising bar chart is also showing the part of the role of the auction houses in popularising the euphoria in the name of competition.

2.1 Provenance and Rarity

According to all auction house representatives contacted for this research, the greatest impact on price is the degree of provenance and scarcity. For art with ownership history, or art that is deemed scarce, the art will be consumed at a higher price due to the scarcity and previous ownership history.

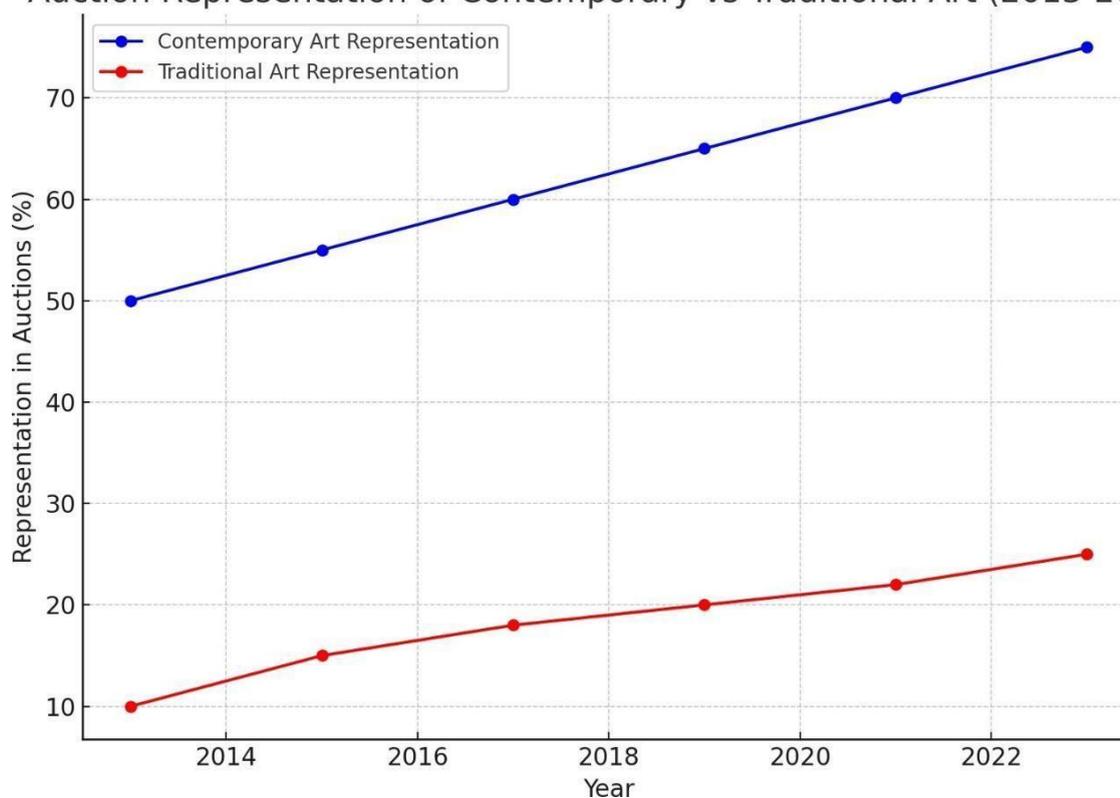
Graph 3: How provenance affects final auction prices

The added value in the prices of artworks of these prominent Indian artists is represented in the bar chart given above. The factor of origin increases prices by millions and in the case of Amrita Sher-Gil and V.S. Gaitonde by quite a bit.

3. Disparities in Valuation: Traditional Indian Art Vs Contemporary Art

Perhaps one of the most striking implications that comes out of this research is that different forms of art are valued differently in India. So, artists whose work is on the modern and/or contemporary side usually cost more and sell their works more often in galleries and auctions than artists whose work are from folk arts.

Auction Representation of Contemporary vs Traditional Art (2013-2023)



All this is tied to other dimensions of the market shaped by the capacity to make profits and to follow the outlined trends within the international context.

3.1 Customer trends and preferences around the world

Today a lot of contemporary Indian artists like Subodh Gupta have their pieces sell for a premium on auction; and a good majority of Indian artists are usually exhibited in galleries internationally. Such trend suggests that most Indian artists who receive foreign buyer interest whose works are generally integrated with global notions of modernity, innovation, ethnicity with Indigenous identity, are likely to flourish in the foreign market.

Graph 4: Thus, in the years from 2013 to 2023 Bid business is focused on the Auction Sales of Contemporary versus Traditional Indian Art.

But, as this graph shows, there is a lot higher growth in sales of contemporary Indian art than in traditional art forms. What is clear is that demand for modern compositions is growing a whole lot faster than demand for classical Indian art, which is not selling nearly as well at the highest level of auctions.

3.2 Disparagement of Traditional Art Practises.

With new generation artists being accorded international attention, traditional forms of Indian art like Warli, Pattachitra

and Madhubani are either neglected or marginalised in the primary as well as secondary markets. But these forms are seen as less 'prominent', in the sense that they are cheaper and so are less 'profitable', especially in the Western countries. The main problem that is raised by this contrast is the one of the cultural significance and its relation to the visibility in art commerce. However, supporting galleries and auction houses limits, in fact, what types of art are valuable, and commercial interests will favour art that suits the taste of international buyers rather than the popularity of Indian art.

4. Case Studies: Bharti Kher or Amrita Sher-Gil

Through the case studies of Amrita Sher-Gil and Bharti Kher, this paper has explained that when an artist gains international visibility, his value multiplies manifold in the market. Both artists have exhibited their works at important international exhibitions and art fairs and biennales, and have been the focus of numerous important auction houses which has fueled prices.

4.1 Amrita Sher-Gil's growing legacy

Amrita Sher-Gil, one of India's great modernist painter, continues to be more precious and valuable for auction rooms than even sculpture. Having developed a high market value as a result of, her use of a western as well as the Indian touch in her paintings has endeared her to collectors across the world.

4. Bharti Kher's Contemporary Appeal

Bharti Kher, who also works within identity and culture has taken her work globally, garnering a lot of attention. Therefore, her coupling of traditional Indian motifs into contemporary settings has enabled her to multiply the local and global market value.

Graph 5: Auction Price Growth of Amrita Sher-Gil and Bharti Kher (2013 – 2023)

Below follows the graph of Amrita Sher-Gil and Bharti Kher's price and we can see, once again, the tendency of increased price of Amrita Sher-Gil and Bharti Kher during the past ten years which means that having more art market visibility means higher marketability.

Conclusion

The current study underlines how art galleries and auction houses contribute in the construction of value of Indian art. These institutions are not only the go-between for artists and collectors but also illuminators of what works achieve recognition and in what terms they are acknowledged – aesthetic and monetary. As agents in advertising artists, setting airplay and positioning artwork in the marketplace, they are significant players in the art market web and consequently in deciding what is valuable in Indian art.

Galleries as Market Makers

The first and most important segment of art is the primary market where art galleries are most important especially for new artists. They produce, publicize the art works, as well as set the first price for the talents and productions. Over time, galleries shape the market profile of both new and proven artists as they independently and collectively showcase their works in individual and collective exhibitions, establish regular booths at various international art fairs, and graduate with trusted institutions. With their price mechanisms, influenced by the career development, or critical acclaim of the artist, and changes in market colour, they provide the parameters for future auction prices.

As this research has clearly depicted, the galleries mostly promote artists as well as art pieces from the global market trend. Such trends have seen contemporized Indian art that collectors from all over the world fancy, essentially demoting traditional and folk arts. Especially, artists contribute works which are placed under international art movements seem to earn more gallery attention than artists who originate culturally more localized or confined pieces of art forms. This dynamic that forms from the attending to the international buyer keeps a narrow view of Indian art and focuses solely on what can sell in the market and not on the art's diversity.

Who Bids for the Market? Auction Houses as Market Validators

They equally serve as major actors in the secondary market where they tend to confirm, sometimes even to exaggerate, prices set by galleries. By competitive tendering, genuineness and placement, auctioning often surfs the price of the artwork above the initial estimates commonly referred by auctioneers. The process does not only underpin the worth of currencies of artists but also entrenches their rightful place in art history. As in the case of purchasing of paintings of artist like V.S. Gaitonde and Amrita Sher-Gil, the auction houses can pull off such prices as define the importance and cultural status of the artists in today's society and thus the demand for the art forms in coming years.

However, auction houses are equally as susceptible to those market forces that favor contemporary and modern artists to traditional ones. In general, this study indicates that levels of auction sales of traditional Indian art remain comparatively lower than contemporary art, the trend that is observed in the contemporary market. In its attempt to become a modern internationally acclaimed art market Seoul has turned its back to many other art forms of similar historical and cultural significance but less appealing to the international gallerists.

Disparities in the Market

Characteristic sixty: diversity of the assessment of various types of the Indian art. One of the primary conclusions, which was made by the author of this research, is rather obvious – the various kinds of the Indian art are evaluated differently. As it can be seen, contemporary and modern artists who work with worldwide themes and tendencies share higher prices and more exposures in galleries and auctions. On the other hand, traditional and folk art, even if culturally

valued, do not seem to get as much market currency. This NHSI / NLS indicates that although galleries and auction houses have emerged as the players capable to place Indian art on the global map, they are perhaps the same which have set a narrow parameter for what can be seen as 'culturally' valuable Indian art.

These observations correspond well with the trends evident in more developed global art markets, where the object's contemporary status also affords incentive to collectors, particularly in the Western World where newness, novelty and orientation to the global art trends is highly valued. However, this focus can completely overlook traditional forms of art that exist within India to only be considered as forms of art that do not fit well with capitalist markets. Consequently, several artists creating socially sensitive art with relatively lower global appeal are still not equally well-represented in galleries and auctions and hence, there exists an asymmetry in assignment of value to Indian art.

Towards a more inclusive art economy

The carrying out of the research calls for a more embracing paradigm to the valuation of Indian art. Even today's contemporary and modern Indian artists rightfully claim their place in the global art market, however, the art market also needs to expand its horizons and recognize the cultural wealth of India's traditional and almost unrecognized folk-artistic values. Museums and auction companies, in particular, have a central part in these works by providing these pieces with the attention and market they should get.

The current art market should not only be given a broader commercial sense but institutions should expand its view to include a wider demographic. This involves presenting such art works as those of native Indian folkloric and tribal art, patronizing artists who operates in this sphere of art and ensuring that their creations get to reach both the upper tier and lower market level. Especially auction houses have the potential to contribute to that because they can add more traditional pieces to the catalog and present these pieces to collectors as valuable cultural assets.

In this way, doing better to make gallery and auction house more diverse, they can start playing the historic role to enrich understanding of art from India which is not limited to the type exciting collecting from around the globe but also maintaining the cultural heritage of art passed centuries ago.

Final Thoughts

Therefore, due to the monopolistic role of art galleries and auction houses, contemporary and modern works of art remain the only valuable ones in the Indian context but they are lacking in understanding the artistic heritage of the country adequately. Although these institutions have effectively taken Indian contemporary art to international platforms, they cannot fail to appreciate or embrace the ethnic and creative diversity of the traditional Indian artworks. This means that a more encompassing approach greatly benefits both the international art market as well as forms a significant portion of Indian art so that all forms receive proper credit for their contributions to the cultural portfolio

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