

Marketing Mix Elements Used by Visual Artists from Renaissance to Present

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Abstract:

In order to be successful, visual artists must utilize a marketing strategy and marketing mix. In this paper, we will analyze key advancements in marketing that changed the way artists achieved financial and critical success since the Renaissance. Through the lens of marketing mix methods and tools such as product, price, promotion, place, segmentation, targeting, differentiation, and positioning, we examine how artists initiated shifts in marketing strategy. How did changing cultural conditions instigate new marketing techniques? What is the combination of specific artistic and marketing skills for an artist to be successful? Are some of these marketing skills universal over time? Is the traditional marketing mix a useful framework for visual artists to create effective marketing strategy?

Keywords:

Artist marketing, arts marketing, artist entrepreneurship, marketing history

Introduction

Artists vacillate between embracing and rejecting the management requirements of their profession depending on economic, political, social, and cultural context. Despite the well-worn stereotype of the artist as elusive recluse who shuns engagement with consumer society, there are numerous examples throughout history in which artists take an active role in the marketing and sale of their works (Meyer & Even, 1998). Some artists do not shy away from consumer desires and actually seek to serve them, achieving notable financial success in those efforts (Hirschman, 1983). There is also a long tradition of artists crossing over from fine art to commercial work. In fact, the stigma of this interaction has sometimes led to new developments in marketing (Gould, 2012). At the same time, artists in different eras have shied away from marketing because it implies pandering to the consumers' desires (Meyer & Even, 1998). In order to be successful in the marketplace, visual artists must utilize or benefit from some sort of marketing strategy. In this paper, we will analyze key advancements in marketing that changed the way visual artists achieved financial and critical success since the Renaissance. Through the lens of the marketing mix that includes product, price, promotion, place, and strategies of segmentation, targeting, differentiation, positioning, and branding, we examine how artists in the visual arts used marketing strategy tools. Is the traditional marketing mix a useful framework for visual artists to create effective marketing strategy?

In the context of these marketing methodologies, visual artists we examine in depth are Rembrandt, Hogarth, Raphael, Mucha, Warhol, and Murakami. We also include examples of other artists who were particularly strong in one or more areas of the marketing mix, including Gentileschi, Bearden, Girodet, Cassatt, and Dalí. All artists in this paper were selected because of their unique, strategic balance of understanding and incorporating audience desires, cultivation of critical acclaim, proficiency of technique, and development of innovative marketing technique or approach. From a marketing perspective, these artists considered the desires of their customers balanced with their own desire to advance an artistic medium. While there are many artists throughout history that have utilized the marketing strategies discussed in this paper, we are highlighting artists who implemented and advanced these strategies with particular success. There are numerous volumes written about the individual artists in this paper, including biographies that focus on their work and lives as well as their achievement (or lack thereof) of financial success. However, there is a paucity of research connecting the specific marketing strategies of multiple artists throughout history. Rather than relegating marketing to an ancillary discussion in a bibliography or an analytical interpretation of artistic work, what are the marketing strategies utilized over time that can still have value today?

This paper examines the strategies of visual artists who directed their own marketing and sales process rather than relying solely on intermediary agents (such as gallerists, auction houses, critics and patrons) to sell their work. In some cases, the marketing efforts were targeted towards such intermediaries or champions, but the marketing remained artist-directed. To build these connections, we synthesized research based in art history, marketing theory, and arts entrepreneurship theory.

Literature Review: Marketing by Artists

Several scholars have completed a thorough review of the arts marketing literature to date, including Fillis (2007, 2011), Bradshaw (2010), Rentschler & Kirchner (2010) and O'Reilly (2011). In all of these reviews, the authors note a lack of arts marketing research and call for more directed research in specific areas. Briefly addressing the analyses that do exist, we can begin with Hirschman's (1983) influential article, "Aesthetics, Ideologies and the Limits of the Marketing Concept", in which she argues that while some artists do successfully employ marketing, the motivation to market is internally, not externally, driven. She criticizes the idea of traditional marketing and the fine arts, saying it is not possible because the customer's need is not a priority and therefore not a true marketing focus (Meyer & Even, 1998). "The term 'audience' or 'consumer' is extended beyond the public at large and even beyond the notion of external parties (e.g. peers, critics) to the realization that some marketing exchanges are initiated within one's self. In self-oriented marketing, the creator may serve as the initial consumer of that which he/she creates" (Hirschman, 1983). In contrast to Hirschman, our paper concurs with Meyer & Even (1998) in the stance that successful artists do indeed actively market themselves and function more like entrepreneurs. In order to sell art, the artist or artwork needs the "endorsement" of museums, galleries, auction houses, and so on. Therefore, in order to cultivate and promote these relationships, as well as sell directly to buyers, artists must have a fully realized marketing strategy, whether it be targeted to the buyers or to intermediaries.

As Fillis (2004) points out, critical research on effective arts marketing has been minimal, but with strong recent contributions from several scholars, including himself. He specifically calls on arts marketers and researchers to leverage their expertise as an advantage in developing creative business strategies (2007). We are answering his call

to make the artist and his or her creativity the core function of our arts marketing research, and we seek to achieve that through an examination of the artist's biography through the lens of the marketing mix framework.

Marketing Mix Framework

In the modern era, we have a set of methodologies and tools a modern marketer uses to promote a product in a marketplace. In this paper, we will use one of these methodologies to understand the marketing strategies that visual artists used to promote themselves and their works. If we compare these artists to the current marketing model for small firms, they share the similar characteristics such as the inherent ability to adapt quickly to changing cultural and economic conditions and to have solid, more personal relationships with their customers (Fillis, 2004). "To achieve exceptional results, companies must develop creative ideas which, in the realm of products, advertising, merchandising and sales presentation, distinguish their offerings from those of competitors" (Kotler, 1967, p. 246). All of our selected artists followed this process and achieved noteworthy success and fame.

The discourse (or lack thereof) around artists marketing themselves and their works has led to repression of a discussion of those strategies and an unwillingness to teach them. However, in the past, artists were doing these things naturally without the now unwanted label of "marketing" on them. Instead, we might consider that we have drawn the line of where marketing "begins" as occurring much later in the artistic process than when it actually takes place. As Butler states:

....artists feel they must shun the notion of following.... Artists are the ultimate manifestation of that absolute insult in the marketing schoolyard, namely the 'product orientation'. But their internal focus... is what makes them artists... This may not be anti-marketing though (2000, p. 355, 359).

To explore the marketing mix for artists, we must first establish the framework we will use to examine these marketing elements. Recently, some scholars have used the Product Life Cycle framework to track artist career trajectories (Lehman & Wickham, 2014). We chose the marketing mix framework that was initially developed as the 4 P's by Jerome McCarthy in the late 1950s and then expanded upon by Philip Kotler in the ensuing decades (Schultz & Dev, 2012).

While Fillis (2007) believes that the conventional marketing mix approach is of limited value to the arts marketing practitioner, we propose that because there is such limited application of the traditional marketing mix in visual arts marketing, we should apply it to artists' marketing efforts to assess its utility before discarding it. There are two main reasons for choosing the traditional marketing mix concept as our marketing framework. We appreciate its simplicity and agree with Borden's (1984) interpretation of the marketing mix as a simple and practical concept. "In short, the mix chart provides an ever ready checklist as to areas into which to guide thinking when considering marketing questions or dealing with marketing problems" (Borden, 1984, p.12). Additionally, the marketing mix has had a profound influence on development of the marketing theory and practice (Constantinides, 2006). Can we take the traditional marketing mix framework and use it for artists to employ successful marketing strategies? In our overview of other marketing concepts and in our analysis of artists' biographies, we argue that the answer is "yes". Our premise is the "4 Ps" applicability as a framework for self-initiated visual arts marketing. In the arts marketing literature that does exist, the focus is usually on contemporary artists, while we are using an art historical perspective. Rather, the marketing mix can be utilized to make connections across eras. Situating those artists within this framework will allow us to better understand visual arts marketing practices and modes in the past and going forward.

Using the model suggested by Kotler & Keller (2011), we begin with customer value and relationships at the center. The visual artists in this paper employ elements of marketing strategy and a marketing mix in order to sell their art in the marketplace conditions of their time. The development of marketing strategy requires the artist as business to ask: Which customers will we serve through segmentation and targeting)? How will we create value for them through differentiation and positioning? Then, the marketing mix becomes the business' (or artist's) marketing program to execute that strategy. The names and terminology of this marketing mix, such as the 4 Ps, 7 Ps, 3 Cs, Anson matrix, etc., are the subject of many marketing articles and textbooks. For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on how artists segmented and positioned themselves to their target markets and then employed Kotler's (1967) traditional marketing mix of product, price, place, and promotion to deliver the intended value to customers.

Entrepreneurial Motivations of Visual Artists

During their formative years, each successful artist's mind is open to stimuli that later shape his/her professional career. All of the artists discussed in this paper possessed an entrepreneurial spirit that would drive them to devise innovative techniques in their artistic style and medium that would later become the foundation of their marketing efforts. By Drucker's (1985) definition, the entrepreneur "always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity" (p. 33). The visual artists in this paper adeptly respond to cultural and economic changes both through their subject matter and business strategy. Thus, professional artists who seek to sell their work and who develop new and innovative art concepts can be considered entrepreneurs (Thom, 2016). Others have sought to define this further, calling on researchers to focus on arts entrepreneurs' "innovative combinations of strategy, individual skills, and mindset operating in each case" (Chang & Wyszomirski, 2015, p. 11). Fillis and Rentschler (2010) reinforce the fact that creativity as an input is directly correlated with entrepreneurial activity as an output. Thus, when artists use their creativity for art production, they can equally benefit from its use as a resource for their business endeavors.

So, how did each artist achieve success in the marketplace? Codified marketing theory did not exist while some of our chosen artists were alive, and most of them did not think about marketing as something separate from the overall creative process. Yet they understood that techniques we refer to as marketing were simply effective methods to showcase and sell their art. Fillis claims:

Entrepreneurial marketers have been adopting concepts, theories and practices to suit their business needs for centuries. They sometimes reject everything they have been taught and instead develop their own system (2004, p. 15).

Within any study of entrepreneurs, cultural context is critical. Culture gives rise to new creative and business opportunities (Munoz-Seca & Reverola, 2010). Cultural developments, both major and minor, dictated how artists created and promoted their art. These responses, combined with an entrepreneurial spirit, drove innovations in style, medium, and marketing and selling art. As Fillis states, "art history is full of examples of one-time avant garde artists who, through their creative entrepreneurial activities, attract a following and create success and market demand in the longer term" (2007, p. 7). All of the artists discussed in this paper used creativity strategically and demonstrated strong entrepreneurial motivations to adapt to cultural and economic conditions of their time. The marketing of art was an inherent entrepreneurial activity in each artist's creative process.

Marketing Mix: SEGMENTATION & TARGETING

Rembrandt

Dutch painter and etcher Rembrandt van Rijn's (1606-1669) artworks are notable for their obvious, evocative brushstrokes and use of dramatic chiaroscuro lighting. Rembrandt was a highly skilled artist as well as businessman, finely attuned to changing market forces in the Netherlands. "Rembrandt loved only three things: his freedom, art, and money" (as cited in Alpers, 1995, p. 88). Rembrandt was a forerunner of several business strategies that artists now use to manage their careers. Like Rubens and other contemporaries, Rembrandt developed a workshop approach, employing several assistants to complete his paintings under his direction (Alpers, 1995). This has led to questions of authorship and how many works attributed to him were actually made by him (Wheelock, n.d.). We continue to see this division of labor utilized by contemporary artists from Warhol to Koons to Murakami.

The seventeenth century was a period of remarkable economic growth and societal change in the Netherlands. Following several wars and subsequent migrations of peoples from both inside and outside the country, Amsterdam grew and became one of the most prosperous cities in the world. Trade expanded within Europe and across the world. With a weakened clergy and little land ownership options, an affluent middle class developed with clergy, lawyers, merchants, doctors, industrialists, and other small businessmen. In this cultural context, the visual arts flourished. Across Europe, Dutch artists led the way in new developments in still life painting and printmaking. During Rembrandt's era, the demand, production, and marketing of paintings was widespread (Alpers, 1995). While European artists of the era tended to rely on patrons and clerical commissions, Rembrandt took advantage of the new merchant class in the Netherlands to segment and target a new audience for his art.

Market Identification: Segmentation & Targeting

Rembrandt was a forerunner of several business strategies that artists now use to manage their careers. For this paper, we focused on his strategies to segment his audience and focus on target markets. In Kotler & Keller's (2011) terms, segmentation refers to the varying customer types and needs. A segment will respond to a product or service in a homogenous way. After the segment has been identified, the business or artist will choose to focus on one or

more of the segments, creating their target market. Rembrandt developed a strategy that segmented his audience and identified key target markets within that audience to whom he would actively work to promote and sell to. Because he was so good at marketing himself, others copied him, leading to even more emphasis on his individual achievement (Alpers, 1995).

First, Rembrandt was forced to develop new markets because of his dislike of the patronage system. While the professionalization of artists led to more freedom in some ways, it did not lead to more freedom from the patronage system or demands of clients, except in Rembrandt's case (Alpers, 1995). Due to his dislike of patrons and often antagonistic relationships with them, he rejected the patronage system. In some cases, he was taken to court for undelivered paintings or for openly mocking his patrons within the paintings (Alpers, 1995). To develop new audiences for his work, he devised his own sales strategies within the developing marketplace (Alpers, 1995). The new affluent middle class sought status in commodities, and pictures were a relatively inexpensive way to achieve it. Many artworks were marketed at fairs accessible to the average working class (Alpers, 1995). Rembrandt's clients included a range of small businessmen as well as scholars, preachers, and craftsmen (Crenshaw, 2006).

Capitalizing on the developing market economy in the Netherlands, Rembrandt sought to connect to art connoisseurs on a broader scale. He used a range of segmentation methods to bring his work to market, including direct sales, agents, and auction sales (Crenshaw, 2006). By diversifying his sales outlets through varied revenue streams, Rembrandt created autonomy and freedom for himself. His detailed, elaborate paintings were at the apex of his product line, followed by prints and lesser, sketchier paintings. He also made money by charging tuition for workshops and selling products through those workshops. Finally, he appears to have profited from the sale of other artists' work that he purchased and resold, though it is unclear how often he did this (Crenshaw, 2006).

Further Targeting: New Markets for Prints

Rembrandt created value through the burgeoning print market in seventeenth century Netherlands. "Throughout the sixteenth century, the printing business spread rapidly... Towards the end of the century, when the counter-reformation movement gained force, the skills acquired by a generation of engravers were in high demand" (Hutter, 2015, p. 52). Furthering his skills in market segmentation, Rembrandt created new target markets by seizing upon the possibilities of the nascent print medium. The production of lower cost prints allowed him to create more work and target new buyers of art who may not have previously been able to afford his work. Rembrandt leveraged the value of the multiple during an era when the printing business spread rapidly.

Rather than simply capitalizing on the ability to make identical multiples from the same plate, his process of continually reworking the plate (much in the same way he reworked paintings, never declaring them finished), he created a demand for collectors to own multiple, yet slightly different, versions of the same image. Through his use of multiple variations of the same print, the medium also allowed him to solidify his status as an artist to be collected. His printmaking technique worked to stimulate demand from collectors for the varied editions of his prints (Crenshaw, 2006). In these ways, Rembrandt leveraged the value of the multiple as a marketing strategy.

Gentileschi

Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1656), was also highly skilled in marketing, specifically in creative targeting and promotional strategies. She was an Italian Baroque painter who reached considerable fame and success during her lifetime, quite unusual for a female painter living in seventeenth century Italy (York, 2001). As a young woman, she was raped by her teacher in her father's studio, and a highly publicized trial ensued. Some scholars state that this negative incident eventually influenced her artistic career positively by solidifying her determination to succeed as a female painter. In fact, she may be considered to have leveraged the negative experience and publicity into something positive (Locker, 2015). It may have also influenced her to choose a subject matter of strong and suffering women.

Networking as a Targeting Strategy

While much of the research on Gentileschi focuses on the salacious details of her biography, she was a skilled businessperson and a creative marketer. In her era, there was a taboo against overt marketing of one's work, so artists achieved success through a "soft sell". In Gentileschi's case, she positioned and promoted herself within elite intellectual circles in seventeenth century Italy. In order to stay connected to her target audience, she traveled frequently and became an ardent networker in the important artistic circles associating herself with academies of painters, poets, and other important cultural institutions. Her network created a word-of-mouth promotion that utilized the power of endorsement (Locker, 2015).

Creative Targeting Tactics

To have her work instantly recognized by her target audience, Gentileschi created a distinct trademark for her work using her signature. Through a study of Gentileschi's signatures, Mann (2009) confirmed her to be "exceptionally creative in presenting her paintings to her public" (p. 72). She suggests that Gentileschi modified her signature to appeal to different segments in different cities in Italy. In order to present herself to the most significant patron in Florence (Michelangelo's nephew) as a skilled painter as well as as an artist who knew the city's artistic past and present, Gentileschi strategically designed her signature to appeal to a specific Florentine target segment (Mann, 2009). York (2001) postulates that Gentileschi's letters stand as evidence of her talents to communicate with her target segments based on their status, location, and art interest. Everything she did to advance her career as a painter stemmed from her continuous study and deep understanding of her target audience and segments, including a new tactic in self-portraiture in which Gentileschi represents herself as the classical allegory of painting (Garrard, 1980). She wisely managed her own image to constantly serve the needs and desires of her customers.

Marketing Mix: DIFFERENTIATION & POSITIONING

Hogarth

William Hogarth (1647-1764) was an English painter and printmaker considered to be the most inventive English artist of the eighteenth century (Hutter, 2015). Known for depicting scenes of modern moral subjects, Hogarth intentionally turned away from traditions of European painting and sought to create a unique, nationalistic English idiom. Similar to developments in the Netherlands, in eighteenth century England, there was an increase in consumer culture as greater distribution of wealth gave people from different economic and social backgrounds the ability to purchase goods, notably luxury goods. Disposable income led people to seek status goods to distinguish themselves and indicate intelligence and stature. Small tradesmen were a growing class during the period. There was a move towards status hierarchy instead of strictly class.

Changing society in early Georgian London created new markets for art. Increased urbanization and wealth led families to seek to signify their status and reputation by purchasing artworks that communicated a certain level of education and politeness/decorum (Hutter, 2015). There was a turn away from European Renaissance painters to a turn inward to British artists. In addition, buyers wanted to purchase signed paintings from living artists (avoiding the problem of fakes at the time) (Gould & Mesplède, 2012). Through his skillful use of differentiation and positioning, Hogarth capitalized on these trends and became one of the most successful English artists of the eighteenth century.

Market Identification: Differentiation & Positioning

Like Rembrandt, Hogarth excelled at segmenting and identifying his target market, then differentiating and positioning himself and his artwork in order to connect and sell to those audiences. Differentiation is what the marketer seeks to achieve in order to distinguish his/her offering in the mind of the customer and provide value. Positioning is the actions the marketer takes in order to clearly communicate this difference, giving them an advantage over the competition, and convincing the customer to purchase. "The company's entire marketing program should support the chosen positioning strategy" (Kotler & Keller, 2011, p. 51).

Differentiation through Subject Matter

Renaissance painting, especially by Italian painters, strongly featured religious themes. Hogarth reacted against this and was not interested in mythological or biblical painting because he felt these genres did not help to elevate British artists (Gould & Mesplède, 2012). Instead, he sought to communicate via the "conversation scene" or moral tableaux that communicated one's values and social graces. His feelings about subject matter were perfectly aligned with new, patriotic British audiences (Bermingham & Brewer, 2013). Hogarth's *The Wollaston Family* is often cited as a prototypical example of the conversation painting and how it illustrates mores of social interaction in eighteenth century England (Hutter, 2015). By differentiating himself through subject matter selection, Hogarth marketed his works successfully. Via subject matter, and specifically the conversation scene, Hogarth's fame and commissions grew, leading to a very successful, long career.

Positioning an Affordable Signifier

In addition to differentiation, Hogarth positioned himself within the marketplace as an artist who offered customers the ability to demonstrate social graces through affordable prints. As social status became the primary signifier of one's place in British society, citizens sought to display their moral values and rid themselves of a boorish, uneducated image (Gould & Mesplède, 2012). Hogarth capitalized on the development of the printing industry to open up new markets, positioning himself to new audiences eager for art to signify status and reputation in their communities (Hutter, 2015). Like Rembrandt, Hogarth seized the potential financial opportunity of the print medium

to sell to a growing middle class that could be potential buyers of his work. His subject matter and business acumen in capitalizing on the development of the print medium created a momentum for success (Gould & Mesplède, 2012). Similar to the conversation piece paintings, Hogarth also created prints that illustrated the opposite of polite behavior for which he also became very well known.

Bearden

Romare Bearden (1911-1988) produced prolifically and was an active networker in arts and community organizations. Bearden was a rarity amongst African-American artists of his era, achieving financial success and making a living from his art (Powell, 1992). His work capitalized on a resurgence of interest in black history, art and culture during the 1970s and 1980s. “The result was mainstream acceptance and marketplace demand for original works, high-quality reproductions, limited editions, book illustrations, and even theater and film work. Romare Bearden, perhaps more than any other African-American artist before him, had succeeded in making ‘Black art’ (a term he detested in relation to his own work) and ‘the Black experience’ a hot commodity” (Powell, 1992, p. 65). Bearden’s success can clearly be attributed to differentiation and positioning through his range of artistic styles, including richly textured collages as well as his subject matter detailing the African-American experience in the United States.

In addition to differentiation and positioning, Bearden also utilized the marketing mix element of place via his presence in diverse channels of distribution. He was the first art director of the Harlem Cultural Council, a prominent African-American advocacy group. He was a founding member of the Black Academy of Arts and Letters and was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters. In addition, he founded several art venues including The Studio Museum in Harlem and the Cinque Gallery.

Girodet

Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy-Trioson (1767-1824), known as Girodet was nurtured by the artistic genius and fame of his master Jacques-Louis David. Driven by the ambition to break through the current Neoclassical style and fascinated by the political environment of seventeenth century France, he adopted an attitude of rebellion in all aspects of his life that led to fame and success. He serves as an example of an artist who used rebellion as a differentiator in his marketing strategy.

In his effort to innovate and provoke, Girodet decided to focus on topics that can produce passionate reactions from his audience. Thus, he intentionally chose sexuality and politics as subject matters in some of his most important paintings. Smalls (1996) claims that “Girodet’s originality and modernity lie in his process of recasting or reinventing the terms of sexuality...” (p. 23). At the same time, Girodet was conscious of current political events and maintained an active interest in politics for use in communication of personal messages (Taws, 2008). His painting *Revolt at Cairo* (1810) is an excellent example of an art piece that delivers a political statement on sexuality (Smalls, 1996). His differentiation tactics and political awareness made him successful enough to befriend and work on commissions for Napoleon. Girodet positioned himself as an artist, the rebel, in his style, subject matter and in his approach to life. He understood that in order to achieve a celebrity status and considerable fame, his “rebellion” strategy had to be present and consistent in all aspects of his life as an artist. Kuspit (2006) states that in his paintings *The Sleep of Endymion* (1791) and *Ossian Receiving the Ghosts of the French Heroes* (1801), Girodet created the “Hollywood glamour using spot-lighting and erotic elements. He was a predecessor of what Erich Fromm calls ‘the marketing personality’ and of show business” (Kuspit, 2006).

Marketing Mix: PRODUCT

Raphael

Raphael (Raffaello Santi, 1483-1520), master painter and architect of the Italian High Renaissance, is known for his Madonnas and large compositions. Raphael understood that in order to become a successful artist amidst the more mature competitors of his time, Da Vinci and Michelangelo, he needed to achieve near perfection in his art “product” which became defined by refined technical skills, relevant subject matter and signature classical style. Michelangelo once said of Raphael, “He had his art not by nature but by long study” (Bosch, 2010). Eventually, Raphael became a man so successful, who “lived not as a painter, but as a prince” (Reiss, 2008, p. 36).

During the High Renaissance, Italian culture exhibited high appreciation for arts and artists. It was marked by the growth of art products in the marketplace that created demand for artwork in public and private spaces. Consequently, the growth of art patronage resulted in a significant economic development (Goldthwaite, 2010). Patrons were religious and secular and both male and female (Locker, 2015). There was strong demand for art

products within religious spaces that featured religious subject matter. The majority of artists strived to receive the patronage of Pope or at least of high church officials. The High Renaissance also celebrated the return to Greek ideals of beauty, courage, and mythology. Many artists, including Raphael, found inspiration in the myths.

Sales Strategy through Patronage

As a son of Urbino's court painter Giovanni Santi, Raphael was exposed to the profession since childhood (Reiss, 2008). He was a young, smart artist who understood the economic importance of the stakeholders involved in his professional and personal life. He mastered the networking skills that were necessary to advance him as an artist, first under patronage of many important male and female patrons, and later in his life under the patronage of the most influential figures of his time, Popes Julius II (r. 1503-13) and Leo X (1513-21). Once Pope Julius II asked him to decorate rooms in the Vatican palace, Raphael knew how to be diplomatic to gain Pope's affinity and respect. When asked by the Pope to destroy all former frescoes and paint new ones, Raphael refused in order to demonstrate honor for masters of older generation (Brauner, 1916). Instead, he strategically focused on producing the best possible work that would create organic word-of-mouth for his art. Raphael's marketing savvy is evident in the fresco *The School of Athens* where he strategically places faces of contemporary and important figures such as Michelangelo and Da Vinci as faces of Plato and Aristotle. There are several other well-known faces, including one of Raphael's in the lower right corner of the painting.

Subject Matter as Product

Raphael chose his subject matter strategically. As a devout person, he also found satisfaction and joy in painting a subject matter in high demand at that time, the Virgin and Jesus as a child. As a marketer, he focused on development of mastery of this subject matter as he constantly worked on improvement of his technique while learning from the master artists in Rome. There are over 30 paintings of Virgin and Child produced by Raphael. Some of the most well-known are *Madonna of the Meadow* (1506) and *Madonna and Child with Saint John the Baptist* (1507). In all of his artistic activities, Raphael sought to improve his product to suit his target market. To do this, he had to achieve both technical and artistic perfection to measure up with competition while incorporating popular and self-referential religious subject matter.

Cassatt

Mary Cassatt (1844-1926) was an American artist who moved to Paris to pursue painting. Cassatt found herself in a socially and artistically fluctuating environment marked with high art production and high competition. Female professional artists were quite unusual for the late nineteenth century. Cassatt is an example of a female artist who skillfully navigated through the challenging artistic and business scene, and as a true business woman, she took advantage of its changeability to find an influential voice of her own. As an entrepreneurial artist, she understood that her acclaim must come from refining her art product to suit her audience's tastes (Pollock, 1998).

While working alongside Degas in Paris, she developed her own style and, most importantly, found a unique subject matter for her product focusing on women as mothers, usually depicted with their children. This revealed her position as a female artist and communicated her views on the role of women in the society. Although her focus on women as mothers might seem somewhat traditional, her professional ambitions and activities demonstrated a much more progressive stance towards women. Some scholars claim that this juxtaposition of Cassatt's beliefs was the foundation of her marketing strategy as an artist. Her product was a strategic blend of female images that gave rise to a new definition of a modern woman (Broude, 2000).

Marketing Mix: PROMOTION & BRAND

Mucha

Alphonse Mucha (1860-1939), was a renowned painter and decorative artist. Born in the Czech Republic, his style was nurtured by many art-related professions, including work as a decorative house painter. After he moved to Paris, the center of the art world at the time, he eventually established his signature style which was classified as Art Nouveau. The breakthrough in Mucha's career came in 1894 when he was commissioned for a poster of Gismonde for Sarah Bernhardt, perhaps the most famous woman in France at that time (Kadlečková & Kusak, 2000). She was an actress in the Theatre de la Renaissance and offered Mucha a six-year contract after the first poster design that was original in terms of artistic style and significant in terms of publicity value.

For the People: Is Utility Function of Art?

Nineteenth century French culture exhibited elements of rebirth, freedom, collaboration, and experimentation with ideas within the growing art community. At the heart of the avant-garde, Art Nouveau, and other artistic movements,

Paris was an essential part of the life of an artist who sought to create something new and modern (Ormiston, 2007). Although Mucha never sought to associate himself with Art Nouveau, he took advantage of some of its practices and theories. The most important element of Art Nouveau was establishing a certain unity among people through art objects and giving art a utility function. This principle gave Mucha an impulse to promote his art via multiple channels and forms.

Transmedia & Cross-Promotion

Promotion refers to the various methods of promoting the product, brand or company. Mucha is an excellent example of an artist who leveraged promotion, specifically cross-promotion through other commercial ventures, to further his career. What is unique about his technique and style is their transferability into different media – an idea we consider to have been a marketing innovation of its time. Mucha's multi-channel promotional activity included posters, stamps, postcards, banknotes, sculptures, printed publications, murals, interior decorations, jewelry, book illustrations, stained glass windows, menus, lithographic calendars, and theater set designs. Both locally and globally, he became known as an illustrator and decorative/graphic designer. This popularity brought him continuous commissions for commercial and artistic projects (Ormiston, 2007). Indeed, Mucha's ability to promote his art brought him long-term fame as a commercial artist.

Warhol

Andy Warhol (1928-1987) is the leading figure in the twentieth century Pop Art movement that was inspired by consumerism, mass production, and the booming world of advertising. Similar to Mucha, he produced his art in a multimedia fashion. His artistic activities surpassed the narrower range of traditional artists into highly public and ever-accessible domains. "Warhol's prominent reputation derived both from his prolific output and his omnipresence as a famous figure and celebrity endorser" (Schroeder, 2005, p. 1297).

Branding the Brands Strategy

If used strategically, branding can have a huge impact on the artist's public image and sales. It centers on the creation of a consistent image that customers and other stakeholders can recall and recognize with or without visual stimulation. Visual elements in branding are perfect for its use as an artist's tool. A well-established brand can leave a strong mark on any culture, transcend its time, and influence generations to come. When Schroeder (2005) argued that "successful artists can be thought of as brand managers, actively engaged in developing, nurturing and promoting themselves as recognizable 'products' in the competitive cultural sphere", he used Andy Warhol as one of the best examples of an artist who managed his brand with a great success (p. 1294).

Moreover, the culture in which Warhol matured became the ideal setting for his art and his marketing genius to flourish. The post-war boom in the American economy led to an explosion in consumer culture and advertising. It was the era of powerful brands like Coca-Cola, Campbell's, and Disney, and public obsessions with celebrities like Marilyn Monroe, John Lennon, and Elvis Presley (Warhol & Hackett, 1980). Advertising as a discipline and field was at its heights during the 1960s, so to affiliate himself and his work with its ascent was just a natural progression for a smart, conscious artist. Just as advertisers created recognizable brands for Coke and Campbell's, Warhol created a brand of his artwork and in turn, himself.

As a brand manager, Warhol elevated branding by carefully studying cultural traits and realigning his artistic ambitions with artistic and social needs of his audience. As an artist, Warhol developed a unique style that could only be attributed to him, and he chose subject matter that had the highest potential to be attractive to his audience – celebrities, famous figures, famous brands and the general public. He made sure to be visible at the most relevant events. To create a profound cultural impact, he established an art production center called The Factory, and started mass producing his art (Warhol & Hackett, 1980). Warhol attempted to create an art brand that had artistic, economic, and cultural value. Warhol's art and books for children are other examples of the breadth of his branding activities. Warhol himself said it best:

Business art is the step that comes after art. I started as a commercial artist, and I want to finish as a business artist... 'Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art'... making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art (1975, p. 92).

Dali

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) has been called one of the "greatest self-publicizing marketers of all time" (Fillis, 2007). As some would say, he was a shameless self-promoter, creating his own brand of provocateur. First, he had an ability to "identify and exploit new opportunities" (Fillis, 2007). He seized upon new technologies such as film and

television, and also explored photography, sculpting, jewelry, fashion, and theater. Other promotional tactics to build his brand included: setting up his own museum (the Dalí Museum in Figueres) and foundation (the Dalí Foundation) to manage it; staying in the press with stories and striking photographs; bringing an anteater on the Dick Cavett show; posing for photos while walking an alligator like you would walk a dog; and joining the Surrealist group and then publicly leaving (Fillis, 2007).

Dalí created controversy with his switch between styles and controversial political manifestos. He realized that this controversy was good for his career and the sale of his art. He appeared to be purposely controversial, taking strong stances, and flirting with philosophies of fascism and nihilism.

Dalí, perhaps in resentment against the flood of comment that his radical artistic development had unleashed, or, more likely, realizing that he was regarded as scandalous by almost everyone and wanting to see how much he could shock people if he really tried, decided to widen the gap that separated him from the Catalan artistic community with a series of premeditated acts. First, he published the Yellow Manifesto, to which Lluís Montanyà and Sebastià Gasch were co-signatories, with two main premises: one a critique of Catalan culture, the other a defence of what he, rather ambiguously, called anti-art (Gibson, Torroella, Fanés, Ades, & Vidal, 1994, p. 93).

Through his continual ability to shock and provoke, Dalí and the easily identifiable Dalí brand lingered in the minds of the art world, his critics, and his audiences.

Marketing Mix: PRICE

Murakami

Takashi Murakami (1962-) is a highly successful Japanese contemporary artist. His artwork and business practices simultaneously reflect and practice the consumer culture of the early twentieth-first century. Owning three studios as well as an animation studio, Murakami has expanded upon Warhol's Factory approach and built his own multi-national corporation. He has made the blurring of art and commerce the subject of his artwork as well as the philosophy behind his business and marketing strategy.

After a period of economic growth in the 1980s, Japanese culture saw an explosion of consumerism and elite luxury goods. At the same time, manga, anime, and character goods, became popular and were exported to other countries. After an economic downturn in the 1990s (that somewhat continues to this day), Japanese artists like Murakami turned inward. Murakami assessed the Japanese art market when he was starting his career and found it unreliable. He began to market himself overseas and developed new marketing techniques, founding the Hiropon Factory in 1996. By 2001, he had a solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, and the Factory had grown into "a professional art production and management organization", at which point Murakami renamed it Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. It now employs over 100 people in three offices in Hiroo, Tokyo, Long Island City, New York, as well as a new animation studio in Daikanyama, Tokyo ("What is Kaikai Kiki?", n.d.).

When faced with the dichotomy of what is considered to be art, Murakami thought, "Why not just revolutionize the concept of art itself?" ("What is Kaikai Kiki?", n.d.). To address this question, he created his Superflat, Coloriage, and Little Boy series which blended Japanese pop culture with high Western art. As Murakami is perhaps the purest expression of the artist who markets himself/herself successfully, he has been analyzed for a full range of marketing strategies. For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on his innovations in using price as a marketing strategy and then using his brand to support the overall strategy.

Marketing Without Shame

First, it should be noted that Murakami's business strategy is transparent and unabashed. Having moved well past the idea of the reclusive Modernist artist who can't be bothered with marketing (or for whom it is distasteful), Murakami is not ashamed of marketing himself or extending his brand. Murakami believes artists should be aware of and engaged with the art market, and he appropriates and operates within those worlds (Matsui, 2007). He makes a clear connection between artists and entrepreneurs, setting an example for artists to take charge of how their work gets turned into a product and monetized (Matsui, 2007). In his world, Warhol set the stage, and he is expanding it. "If Andy Warhol provided the model, Murakami has broken the mold" (Matsui, 2007, p. 132). Warhol is someone to be emulated and built upon.

Murakami's range of commercial and sales activities is formidable, including producing merchandise, operating an art fair, managing careers of other artists, planning exhibitions, hosting radio shows, writing newspaper columns, operating an animation studio, and pursuing commercial collaborations (Matsui, 2007). In terms of the marketing

mix, price strategies may include list price, discounts, allowances, payment period, and credit terms (Kotler & Keller, 2011). With Murakami, it's his strategy, both from a conceptual and marketing perspective, to offer a range of price points that all serve to sell product, connect to his conceptual framework, and build his brand. While his high art (gallery, museum) pricing is consistent with artists of his stature, it is his forays into mass-produced items that are noteworthy. Part of Murakami's conceptual art practice is employing subject matter outside the tradition of high art, connecting to new and more general audiences (Matsui, 2007).

In a seminal exhibition in Los Angeles, Murakami collaborated with Louis Vuitton to develop a pop-up market with co-branded items. Through this collaboration, he was able to reach a new market (Schimmel, 2007). Until this point, artists and museums rarely chose to publicize any alliances with industry or consumer culture as it was considered distasteful (Stallabrass, 2004). "With its accounts and copyright and merchandising specialists--it became clear that Murakami's LV collaboration was only the most conspicuous (and, no doubt, lucrative) point in a constellation of activities that dwarfs his gallery-bound paintings and sculpture in administrative scope and market reach" (Matsui, 2007, p. 131-132). Aligning himself with Vuitton, Murakami created a hybrid work that embodied his artistic sensibilities while questioning consumerism yet selling more handbags (Stallabrass, 2004). Rather than create work that would be subsumed by the Louis Vuitton brand, Murakami maintained his own strong brand; in fact, he exerted dominance over the Louis Vuitton brand, asserting his own brand (Schimmel, 2007) "And here Murakami has turned the tables--if not the knife--by co-opting their structures as seamlessly as they have been accused of co-opting art's" (Matsui, 2007, p. 132).

At a lower price tier down, Kaikai Kiki also sells keychains, stickers, pillows, bags, towels, and other assorted tchotchkes. Murakami imbues mass-produced trinkets with the aura of fine art status and hand of the artist. Murakami also advertises that he closely supervises the design and production of these products as well, adding value through the artist's involvement (What is Kaikai Kiki?, n.d.). Murakami states that "art should be present in everyday life" and Kaikai's merchandise "can be enjoyed by anyone, anywhere." He believes that we should rethink art and its relationship to commerce, becoming more accepting and transparent in a consumerist society (What is Kaikai Kiki?, n.d.). Murakami believes that art should be democratic, reaching a wide audience. It should enter in the open market for many to approve of or purchase (Matsui, 2007). Products are available for sale in Japan as well as through distributors, ending up at galleries and museum shops. Remarkably, he has taken ownership of the licensing revenue that has normally been the domain of museum shops and foundations (Matsui, 2007).

Marketing Mix: PLACE

The other key element in the marketing mix is place. All of the artists mentioned here skillfully utilized place as part of their entrepreneurial endeavors. We have emphasized how the culture (or place) of each artist was critical in informing their response to marketing conditions and strategies to take advantage of those conditions. Place in the marketing strategy is an essential domain for delivery of the product to the target audience. For the purpose of our research, we (re)defined place as the platform that enables artists to connect with their customers. Fillis points out the interdependence of elements that exist in a culture (or a place) in which the art, social, and economic worlds are connected (Fillis, 2009).

Rembrandt eschewed the traditional mode of distribution through patrons and instead sought to sell directly to his buyers. Gentileschi and Raphael leveraged their networks, connecting to prominent figures in their cultures who would then also promote them and their work. Hogarth capitalized on a growing middle class to create new sales channels through the production and marketing of multiple editions of prints. Bearden was a key member in various organizations and intellectual circles in the African-American community, connecting his work to audiences that would be most interested in it. Girodet worked through traditional channels but utilized a rebellious stance to differentiate himself within those channels. Cassatt allied herself with the Impressionists, a key strategy that connected her work to prominent male painters of her era. In a similar vein, Dalí allied himself with Surrealists, but then created more notoriety for himself by famously breaking away from them. Mucha used commercial crossover to create new channels for his work to be seen. Warhol created his own place in the Factory, but then also worked through traditional gallery models of distribution. Finally, through his innovative use of price strategy, Murakami created entirely new distribution outlets for an artist of his stature, including museum and gift shops. All of these artists were highly aware of the cultural and economic conditions. They carefully researched and evaluated the environment (or place) into which they were going to produce their art.

Summary & Further Research

This paper only begins to make the connections between artists and their entrepreneurial marketing strategies, and there are numerous future research paths. Rather than continuing to stereotype artists as recluses who shun business and money, we seek to give artists more agency over their careers by highlighting how they have successfully done so for centuries. Given the ever-changing market conditions of today, it is increasingly difficult to hold onto an ideology of art's exceptionalism as transcendently outside the market. There is a need for more in-depth research on the connections between artists and their entrepreneurial marketing strategies, which will build a deeper understanding of the business acumen of visual artists.

Can we take the traditional marketing mix framework and use it for artists to employ successful marketing strategies? We have argued that artists can achieve this. In terms of targeting and segmentation, the artist must have a clear understanding of who his/her target market is and how to reach them. For differentiation and positioning, the artist must understand how to distinguish his/her work and communicate that difference to the target market. For product, the artist should think about what the audience seeks and for what motivations. For promotion and brand, the artist must use innovative tools and techniques to promote both himself/herself and his or her art. For price, the artist must understand how his/her work fits into the current art marketplace, and if it doesn't, must explore new options for price in order to sell work. For place, the artist must fully utilize channels of distribution available in his/her culture, and if that is not possible, he/she must create new channels.

Beyond this, are there other marketing frameworks that should be combined into the traditional mix? Future research could examine how other frameworks can apply to the successful marketing of art. For example, in services marketing, we can look at the additional 3 P's of People, Process, and Physical Evidence. If the marketing and sale of art is a hybrid of product and service marketing, how do these elements connect? The sale of art is often a curious blend of product and service. There are numerous examples of buyers committing to a purchase after developing a relationship with or connection to the biography of the artist. Why do people buy art? In looking at this, we should look to contemporary art markets.

We plan to build on this knowledge through research and bring it back to our classrooms, building lessons for emerging artists. By continuing to ask if there are universal marketing traits of successful artists, our goal is to empower generations of future artists to think entrepreneurially by understanding their marketing mix and take control of their financial futures.

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