

12-1995

## An internship with Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. of New Orleans, Louisiana

Elissa Ann Gydish  
*University of New Orleans*

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AN INTERNSHIP WITH  
KURT E. SCHON, LTD.  
OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

A Report

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

in

Arts Administration

by  
Elissa Ann Gydish  
B.A., Agnes Scott College, May, 1992  
December 1995



LA. COL.  
MASTER'S REPORT  
1995  
'986

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## ABSTRACT

The following thesis is a report on an Internship with Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., a fine arts gallery dealing in nineteenth century European paintings. The organization is housed in two galleries in the French Quarter in New Orleans, Louisiana, although its clientele is international, including museums, foundations and private collectors.

The Intern acted in the role of researcher, responsible for the researching and documentation of the existing and newly arriving inventory at the Gallery. This report examines the methods by which the Intern approached her duties in regards to issues discussed within the Arts Administration curriculum. The writer will make parallels between the issues faced by the non-profit and for-profit arts sectors, as well as between contemporary and fine arts organizations.

## INTRODUCTION

Upon my application to the Arts Administration graduate program at the University of New Orleans, I harbored some rather grandiose images regarding my impact upon the art world. Having designed an art history major with a business economics minor in a small, southern all-women's college, I encountered endless inquiries as to my intentions for the degree. Indeed, I admittedly was unsure as to the outlet I would find for my education and training, yet the words "Arts Administration" provided a link between my interests in business and the arts. Thus, I settled in New Orleans in 1993 to begin my studies of Arts Administration.

It is interesting to reflect upon my rather naïve notion of the art profession before delving into the significance which the Arts Administration degree has actually provided. From my application essay, I cited the role of the Arts Administrator in providing historical information to further community understanding of the arts. I felt that, in addition to novel marketing strategies, the Arts Administrator could somehow provide the community an understanding of the relevance of art to the community.

A brief experience as an undergraduate within a research position at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta had awakened my interest in the academic foundations of an arts profession. The static and archival quality of the environment, however, curbed my pursuit of a museum career. An internship with a

modern art gallery in the same city had alerted me to the managerial aspects of the field, yet my art historical background seemed of less use in the capacity of contemporary work. Therefore, I can not emphasize enough the excitement of culminating my graduate studies within an organization like Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. The Internship position of researcher not only suits my passion, but also provides a means in which I may accomplish those grand plans I had made for myself as a senior in undergraduate school.

One might sense that this student was wholly unprepared for the heavy weight granted to the study of the nonprofit sector of the arts within the Graduate program at UNO. However, by the completion of the Internship, I realized that the balance of Arts and Administration that had attracted me to the program in the first place had, in fact, prepared me for my entrance into the business of the arts.

The for-profit nature of this internship and its completion within a small-scale organization presented me with several not-so-clearly delineated tasks. In order to properly introduce the topics associated with the responsibilities of the assignment at Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., the reader must first become familiarized with the nature of the work and of the business.

Thus, it is essential to begin by discussing the management structure of the Kurt E. Schon Gallery, as it relates to the curriculum of the Arts Administration degree.

One will find that, although much of the curriculum focused upon the creative marketing and development skills necessary to overcome the financial constraints faced by the nonprofit organization, the for-profit world of the arts is just as vague in terms of its relation to the traditional business structure. Primarily, the successful art gallery is guided not by profit alone, but by a sincere appreciation for the collection and the concern for its proper placement. Section I will cover such issues as discussed primarily in the graduate courses involving the establishment and management of a business endeavor.

Chapter 2 considers the role of marketing and maintaining the image of the fine arts gallery. Publicity efforts in terms of the common utilization of media do present parallels with subjects discussed in the preliminary Drama and Communications class, as well as the Arts Administration courses' foci upon Marketing and Development. Once again, however, the for-profit nature of the internship provided several distinguishing factors from the tactics employed by nonprofit arts organizations.

For example, as a business, the fine arts gallery need not solicit support of a public nature. Rather, the concern lies in the development of an international clientele through typical media, and by solid reputation. Nor do the methods of marketing undertaken by the gallery necessarily follow the model of the traditional capitalist venture. Discretion is of

prime importance, as the clientele does not normally consist of the common public.

Indeed, the prestige granted to the gallery by its long-standing commitment to an exemplary collection is the most decisive explanation for the success of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. Patrons are drawn to the Gallery in desire of forming a collection or acquiring a single piece of work which captures their soul. Through a joint effort of the sales and research departments, the gallery can acquire an understanding of the client's needs, and establish an appropriate selection of works. The methods and issues surrounding the formation of the collection and consignments will be discussed in Chapter 3, along with parallel issues such as deaccessioning, as used by the nonprofit sector.

Section II outlines the tasks of the research department, in terms of acquisition and research procedures. As this particular component of the thesis deals with the practicalities of the Internship, it would be appropriate to pause for a moment here to outline the various responsibilities of the internship itself:

1. To compile an inventory list of incoming paintings
2. To conduct research which will lead to the verification of the Gallery inventory
3. To continuously seek new information on represented artists, so that the Gallery may be alerted to financial trends which will affect the purchase of new acquisitions for the Collection
4. Visual inspection of the Collection for

authentication

5. Completion of a document to be given to prospective buyers, outlining the artist's background as well as a visual and technical description of the painting

6. To assist the sales staff

The section will also bring to light the importance of accurate research, and will eventually lead to a more theoretical discussion of the tasks at hand within the subsequent Chapter. Chapter 5, therefore, will highlight the approach to the outlined tasks, in terms of categorization, criticism and scholastic comprehension of the artistic style and medium.

Chapter 5 will also introduce elements addressed in the Visual Arts 6010 class, which I found to be the most useful preparation for the Internship. The powers of presentation which the Gallery holds, for example, is one topic to be examined. In this discussion, I will make parallels to the issues encountered by the museum, as a framework for the display of objets d'art.

The previous chapters will reveal that the proper historical information will not only verify the value of the work, but will satisfy the artistic concern with cultural continuity, and the preservation of heritage.

The final section of the thesis will involve several parallels between the nineteenth century European art venue and the Contemporary art market. Chapter 7 will examine research as a crucial element in insuring against forgery,



which has posed a problem for artists and the art market as early as the sixteenth century.

Upon reflection of the Arts Administration curriculum, I discovered that the nineteenth century artist encountered similar issues as the artist of our era, in terms of seeking a place in the arts world which would most fully foster artistic expression and development. Thus, this Chapter 8 will examine the development of alternatives to the museum and commercial gallery in the 1970s, as paralleled to the offshoots of the Paris Salon and Royal Academy as options for the nineteenth century artist.

The development of the American arts policy from the European model will also be discussed in the succeeding chapter, and the I will provide suggestions which I believe to be more appropriate in terms of public art and patronage. Upon recalling the issue of public art as it affected Victorian society, one may find that the question of public patronage is not a new problem, but that it does require new solutions.

Chapter 10 is a reflection of my experience within the Arts Administration program and the Internship. I will consider the issue of public taste, and attempt to distinguish the "fine arts" market from the labels of "high" and "low" arts. The discussion will focus upon the elitist status of the product, in terms of the economic and cultural factors which drive the New Orleans art market. The topic will

include my personal ponderings on the future of the arts organization.

Upon the completion of these final pages, I hope to have provided justification for the honor of the Masters of Arts in Arts Administration from the University of New Orleans. One might find that the issues which fall within the scope of this internship at Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. tend to reach theoretical, rather than managerially-defined proportions. However, the benefit of case studies in management classes, hands-on experience in marketing and development, and the lengthy debates of seminar classes certainly apply to my present work. I humbly hope that, in some way, I might share my experiences with the department, thus becoming a reputable figure within the New Orleans art community within and without the arena of the University of New Orleans.

**SECTION I****THE ORGANIZATION**

Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., is a privately owned and operated fine arts gallery which deals primarily in nineteenth century European art, although some American work as well as contemporary work is less extensively represented. The Collection embraces all of the major European schools, and subject matter includes paintings from the Romantics, historical and genre works, marine paintings, equestrian art, floral and still-Life works, and paintings by the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists.

The organization is fairly small-scaled in relation to its international market, and a horizontal structure insures the most efficient and effective operations. Thus, tasks can be distinguished by administrative, maintenance, sales, and research roles, although many employee responsibilities overlap departmental restrictions. This interconnection of roles, as the following paragraphs will reveal, can contribute to the communication process which is essential to the operation of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. The limited staff and difficulties in defining staff roles, however, can also lead to conflict within such a small organization.

## CHAPTER 1: MANAGEMENT

### The Formation of the Business

The intimate scale on which Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. operates can be partly attributed to the nature of the art business. The Collection itself began with the vision of one Austrian art collector, born of a distinguished family of impassioned art lovers. Although Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. has developed a dealer/agent relationship with several contemporary artists, the basis of the Collection is in the work of artists who have already earned a place in history. Thus, the development of the Kurt E. Schon Collection grew out of personal taste and a financial understanding of the art market, rather than the nurturing of contemporary trends.

Having extensively discussed the role of the art dealer in Fine Arts 6010 class, the Intern was familiarized with the great names of the business. Each dealer as interviewed in Coppet and Jones' The Art Dealer<sup>1</sup> cites the importance of contacts and professionalism for a successful art business venture. Most difficult to define, however, is that elusive "eye for art" to which a collector refers for a successful art collection.

Many dealers will select works based upon the "big name", without an appreciation for the integrity and quality displayed by a particular work by the artist. For example, a

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<sup>1</sup>de Coppet, Laura and Alan Jones, The Art Dealers (New York: Crown Publishers, 1984)

collector might be attracted to the sellability of a work by Bougereau, which could be sold for a remarkably high price based simply upon the name of the artist. The unseasoned art collector who subsequently purchases this particular work from the gallery may not be aware that the painting is not the best example of Bougereau's talent. The client relies upon the expertise of the gallery.

I must express a true admiration for the ability of the Schons to overlook "big name" sellability in search of quality. This assurance that each work is of an exceptional nature stems from the private nature of the Collection; quite frankly, the owners are not so concerned with "selling", as they are concerned with enjoying the Collection.

As Christopher Wood asserts, the collection "is the result of an ideal collaboration between collector and dealer, the collector providing the means and the enthusiasm - the dealer providing the expertise and the knowledge"<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the Schons have become a critical force in the market, due to the thriving reputation of the mainstay of their business: the Collection.

Of course, the collection as "product" requires a "place" of purchase. As the Schon Collection expanded, it was relocated to a large gallery space at 510 Saint Louis Street in New Orleans in 1971. Like the museum which aims to provide

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<sup>2</sup>Britt, Julie, The Poole Collection (New Orleans: Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., 1980), p. 7

the proper curatorship for its pieces, the Schons desired to obtain a building which would most efficiently and effectively suit their purposes of conservation and display. Thus, they moved in to the Saint Louis space, after extensive renovations on the site, which had once served as a rice warehouse.

As the Arts Administration student has studied during the lectures of the Fine Arts 6010 class, the space which houses the collection is a prominent issue. The display of the collection is an axiom for the museum as well as for the fine arts gallery, as these institutions are "formed as repositories for artifacts of material culture, charged first and foremost with the responsibility for the care and safekeeping of collections".<sup>3</sup>

Upon the transferring of their Collection to this new space, the Schons focused upon the adaptive reuse of an existing structure, while keeping in mind the different programs and services for which the space would be utilized. Thus, the Saint Louis Gallery boasts of four floors of exhibition space, as well as an adjoining building (512 Saint Louis) which houses several consigned collections, the research department, as well as a grand ballroom which has been the site of many receptions throughout the years.

As the Collection and clientele expanded even further, the Schons found it necessary to offer an alternative space

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<sup>3</sup>Darragh, Joan and James S. Snyder, Museum Design: Planning and Building for Art (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 38

for viewing. In 1983, the Kurt E. Schon Gallery at Royal Street was opened as a "walking gallery", where an appointment is not necessary for a viewing of this portion of the Collection. In making the Royal Street Gallery more accessible than the Saint Louis space, the Schons have not only expanded their venue but have offered the general public a place to view some of the finest pieces of nineteenth century art collected in the States, free of charge.

Of course, the overwhelming atmosphere of both Galleries may be a hindrance to the interested art lover, who might be intimidated by the ostentation and pomp of the spaces. Indeed, potential audiences might be turned away by the "by appointment only" sign. The Gallery, however, is primarily a place of business.

#### Employment

Although Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. maintains an international clientele, the business is a relatively small-scaled organization, housed in two galleries whose employees are directly supervised by the owners, Kurt and Anita Schon. The roles and responsibilities of the employees of the organization quite often overlap, and no employee is confined to one particular gallery. Thus, management takes on a horizontal structure, by which tasks and responsibilities are distributed in a less hierarchial standard than the large for-profit.

The organization maintains several employment components,

which can be aligned with the typical staff organization of the museum, in its roles as curator, conservateur, educational curator, registrar, and director. Additionally, one must include the elements of the sales staff. No departmental delineations exist, however, and the proper functioning of the organization depends upon consistent communication amongst employees and the owners.

One may, however, grasp a sense of the management operations of the Gallery through a "tour" of the work force at Kurt E. Schon. When a client enters the main Gallery at 510 Saint Louis, he or she is greeted by an attractive woman, whose job responsibilities encompass a host of tasks. Gwyn Borel does not merely answer the phones and greet clients, nor does she act in the sole role of secretary. Having been in the employ of the Gallery for five years, she has acquired a natural ability to keep the operations of the business running smoothly. In addition to the obvious tasks of letter writing, mailings, and setting appointments for the sales staff, Ms. Borel must be fully knowledgeable in regards to the inventory of the Gallery. As in any well-structured organization, while tasks may not be so clearly delineated, the mission of the organization must be shared and respected by all employees. Thus, the success of the Gallery depends upon a shared vision.

Should one be interested in a tour of the Gallery space, Ms. Borel will introduce the client to an available salesperson. Andrews Wilkinson is a member of the crucial



sales staff; having been with the organization for almost ten years, he also has a vested interest in the success and history of the organization. Accompanied by the learned Mr. Wilkinson, one may tour the six floors of the Gallery whether with the goal of finding a specific painting, or simply to peruse the Collection. At the end of the survey, the client may request additional information on a particular artist or work, and will be given a synopsis of biographical information as well as a photograph of the piece to take home for consideration.

Although walk-in patrons do constitute a portion of the business, particularly in a time of heavy tourism or during the convention season, the crux of clientele exists within established contacts who sometimes conduct business over the phone. Thus, the salesperson must maintain association with patrons on a continuous basis, remaining alert to the acquisition of a painting which might interest said patron.

Additionally, the salesperson has an unspoken duty to update the client with any new information which reaches the Gallery. This professional, yet friendly rapport ensures a solid relationship between salesperson and client, and a commission-based pay system provides additional incentive to maintain these standards of conduct.

Should Mr. Wilkinson be unavailable, one may be lucky enough to be guided through the Collection by Mr. Schon himself. An exceptionally dedicated man, Mr. Schon delights

in sharing the history of the Collection with prospective patrons, as well with to the casual browser.

The sales staff also includes Stephen Callan, who oversees the activities of the Royal Street Gallery as its Director. As a "walking gallery", the Royal Street Gallery normally realizes a greater influx of curious passers-by. One need only view the bustling activity of Royal Street on any given day of the week to understand the need for additional sales staff at this location.

The Royal Street Gallery is hosted by a receptionist, a "greeter" who handles the overflow of customers and also acts as a salesperson, as well as an additional full-time salesperson, Mr. John Hiers. The Galleries are open from six to seven days of the week, depending upon the promise of activity; thus, a rotating schedule of several salespeople is necessary to proper Human Resource Management.

Contact between the two galleries is consistent throughout the day, as salespersons accompany their clients through both locations. "Check-in" calls are quite frequent, and the entire staff remains in communication in regards to the needs of the client. Most importantly, Mr. Schon remains visible and available to his employees.

Of equal importance to the success of the organization is the employment of two men, Eugene Sheridan and Gary Curtis, whose responsibilities cover a gamut of tasks, from fulfilling the role of registrar in the maintenance of the

work, to keeping shipment records. From installing a new painting to crating a work for shipment, the men must always be available. Just as all employees, they must be familiar with the Collection. Indeed, one will find that most every employee speaks of a "favorite painting"; such is the devotion and personal interest taken in Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

Of course, regardless of the shared activities and horizontal structure, proper management is utmost. Ms. Carol Dupplexis fills this capacity, as well as several of the roles reserved for the registrar, such as record keeping. One will find her office on the second floor of the main Gallery, in close proximity to the office of Mrs. Schon. Her concerns, as cited in managerial courses, include planning, organizing, leading and controlling the work and performance of subordinates.

For example, when Mr. or Mrs. Schon choose to purchase a new painting, the manager prepares the necessary invoice sheets, and then directs the research department on the history of the piece. The researcher (hereafter, I will refer to this internship in third person, as "the intern" or "researcher") will then begin to trace the background of the artist and the work. Quite often, much time will elapse between the purchase and the actual receipt of the painting.

However, once the work has been received by the Gallery and necessary restoration or cleaning has been completed (roles staffed by outside contractors, to be discussed in

succeeding paragraphs), the researcher must then provide the necessary information to the secretary, who will create a file for the work, and thus, cross-check the inventory list maintained by the manager. The research Intern may be paralleled to the position of educational curator within a museum.

Now a "home" must be found for the painting, a decision normally determined by Mr. or Mrs. Schon, who for all purposes would be considered the curators of the Collection. Eugene and Gary are called, and the work is appropriately placed for display.

Thus, coordination is an organization-wide effort, which is well-suited to the operation of a small-scale organization operating on an international level. Mr. Schon has been successful in maintaining the loyalty of his employees thorough an intimate association with the staff, which develops a devotion and sincere interest in the success of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

#### Relationships with External Organizations

One may now turn to the topic of the relationships which Kurt E. Schon maintains with outside organizations. As aforementioned, in addition to the staff under the direct employ of Kurt E. Schon, the organization requires the expertise of several outside contracts.

When a painting requires restoration or cleaning, the Gallery remits the work to a local restorer, who acts in the

role of conservateur. A professional photographer also contributes to the success of the company, in producing photographs of the Collection to be used in marketing efforts, as well as for the use of the client.

Of course, the Schons maintain a close affiliation with various auction houses, art buyers and private collectors, in order to enhance the Collection. Museums also comprise an important outside element; for example, an equestrian museum in Kentucky recently expressed interest in a Royal Academy painting in the possession of the Schons.

The Schons have also supported the arts community in New Orleans, through associations with various charities, including New Orleans Artists Against Hunger and Homelessness. One might be familiar with the recently aired WDSU spot, in which Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. expresses its support for the auction season in New Orleans.

Other philanthropic affiliations are not in public knowledge; one would hope that many more organizations would follow the lead of the Schons and engage in charitable activities without the expectation of business returns. However, as Arts Administrators are wellaware, the for-profit organization can benefit greatly from an association with the nonprofit enterprise. This enhancement of public image within the community will be further discussed within the following chapter on the role of Marketing and Advertising as conducted by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

**CHAPTER 2:        MARKETING**

Before embarking upon any serious study of the advertising media utilized by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., it would be useful to first review the principles of advertising and types of media available. These points may be extracted from both the for-profit sector, as well as from the special interest of the nonprofit organization's marketing campaigns. Although the for-profit organization maintains different goals for its strategies, not to mention a greater level of resources, parallels can indeed be made with issues discussed in Arts Administration courses.

Having entered the organization at a point forty years into its inception, the Intern realizes that the goals which faced Kurt E. Schon upon its opening are not the same ones which it encounters today. Thus, the steps required for the initial marketing plan have been met to the satisfaction of the Schons.

One will assume that the Schons primarily set marketing goals, and positioned the organization to cater to a clientele of financially strong persons, thus directing their advertising plan accordingly. To establish the business within the venue of New Orleans would be a natural choice in consideration of the historic nature of the market and the availability of antiques, according to an initial marketing audit.

In the early days of the organization, the Schons did

utilize the services of out-of-house agencies, in the development of the organization's marketing strategy, promotion campaigns, and actual advertising. However, as one will find, the clientele has now been firmly installed, and the aim is one of maintenance rather than of broadening the market base. Thus, promotion now takes place under the direction of Mrs. Schon, and is restricted to the print media of the magazine and periodical. Mrs. Schon will attest that the mass media of television and radio are simply not "appropriate" for Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

Primarily, one must consider the all important "Five P's" as they relate to the operation of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.:

1. The Product: a timeless painting with verified credentials.
2. The Publics: an established clientele of private collectors, museums and foundations, as well as the interested art admirer.
3. The Price: determined by the initial purchase price, in addition to costs of restoration, framing...etc.
4. The Places: two centrally located galleries, which enhance the work and provide an appropriately elegant setting for the collection.

Finally, the fifth component of Promotion calls to the forefront the means by which the Schons advertise the Place, justify the Price, maintain an image with the Public and, thus, supply the Product.

Inherent in the discussion of this marketing process is the setting of marketing goals. An organization, whether of nonprofit status or profit-driven, will primarily specify both

action goals and image goals.<sup>4</sup> As mentioned, the action goal undertaken by the Schons at the present time is the retention of established clientele, and to a lesser extent, the expansion of its reputation. Thus, most crucial to the attainment of the goals of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. is the maintenance of image.

The organization utilizes marketing in order to cater to, rather than persuade a prospective buyer. Thus, the marketing mix which has established the prestige of the Gallery within the international art market includes advertising, publicity, and publications. In providing a consistent reputation with the arts community, Kurt E. Schon Ltd. may attract an "audience", the culmination of a sale will take place under the influence of factors not within the power of advertising.

#### Advertising in Print and Direct Mail

The advertising campaign, thus, maintains an educational and informational focus. Advertising in relevant publications such as Architectural Digest, Arts and Antiques, Southern Accents, Southern Living, and Art and Auction allows the organization to reach a clientele of art aficionados, decorators and art patrons.

A color illustration of a particular painting is depicted in the aforementioned publications several times a year,

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<sup>4</sup>Stern, Gary J., Marketing Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations (Minnesota: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1992)



most often upon the acquisition of new paintings. At the same time, a brochure is produced under the direction of Mrs. Schon, who has developed a keen sense of lay-out and printing. Upon the publication of an advertisement, the Gallery receives a great number of inquiries from the public, who will be sent a brochure upon request. In combination with the advertising campaign, the brochure serves to establish a correct level of publicity for the Gallery.

Thus, the Schons employ the method of direct mailing to target specific individuals, and the salesperson who has made contact with the prospective buyer will often include a personalized message within the brochure.

Information is also disseminated according to a mailing list maintained by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. The mailing list is obtained from a guest register which patrons are requested to sign upon their departure from the gallery. In doing so, their name will be kept on a computer file for two years, and they will be sent brochures and information throughout this period. Brochures are also distributed to local hotels and convention centers. In this particular environment, there is no need for supporter lists from related organizations, subscription lists, public files, newspapers or commercial list brokers. Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. conserves a highly-targeted audience.

#### Visibility within the Community

In consideration of the inherent financial stability of

this particular for-profit arts agency, one will also understand the exclusion of topics such as fundraising and special events within the discussion on marketing. One may, however, consider the many receptions and artists openings which the Schons have hosted as a parallel to the "Special Event". One will find the evidence of such festive events on the walls of the back offices of the Gallery, which are lined with pictures and posters from throughout the years.

Theme parties abound, and the social pages of the New Orleans Times-Picayune have served to publicize the events. For example, an opening held for a series on "Sin" created by the Surrealist painter Jean-Pierre Serrier invited party-goers to don a costume in the guise of their "favorite sin". While neither confined by nor driven by fundraising motives, these galas serve the same purpose as those undertaken within the nonprofit arts organization: to invite the public into the gallery.

#### Catalogues and Publications

Quite often, the reception of a particular artist or collection is paralleled by a catalogue. Although proper research and documentation do offer insight into the intentions of the artist, the benefit of the artist's own words are irreplaceable to the understanding of the work. In this vein, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. has collaborated with writer and artist to facilitate the publication of books on several represented artists and collections.

There exists within the library of Kurt E. Schon, publications on the aforementioned Jean-Pierre Serrier, the English Impressionist John Strevens, the equestrian Poole Collection, as well as a book displaying the marvelous components of the Shakespeare Collection.

In addition to providing a showcase for the works and artists represented by the Gallery, the periodical or scholarly publication can serve to enhance the credibility of the Collection. Thus, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. has been involved in many ventures within the realm of scholarly research.

Indeed, the position of this writer has been a springboard for various scholars to enter the world of art historical literature. Christopher Wood, a specialist in the field of Victorian painters and sociological history, and in the former employ and consultation of this gallery, has graced the art world with several in-depth studies on the field of Victorian culture.

Such an academic enterprise likens the role of the gallery to the museum, in its aim to educate. Additionally, in so much as the museum is concerned, the marketing of such books can serve as supplemental income. For the for-profit gallery, however, the technique serves more of a straightforward role, in upholding the artist or collection as a prime example of the fine art represented by the gallery. Upon purchase or consideration of an investment in a painting, the client may use the documentation as assurance to the

quality of the work, or merely to enhance his understanding and enjoyment of his investment.

For example, as aforementioned, Kurt E. Schon took on the role of editor for a book which featured the work of John Strevens<sup>5</sup>, a contemporary English Impressionist with whom the gallery had developed a relationship at an early point in the career of the artist. The author, also a former Director of Art Research for the gallery, produced a 50-page book which follows the career of the artist. Such an in-depth study provides useful information to the understanding of the artist's development and style, as well as offers the pictorial outlet for illustrating the artist's works and inciting interest in the market. With beautiful, high-quality illustrations, the publication is an excellent marketing tool.

As John Strevens practices the much known technique of Impressionism, personal anecdotes and history play a more prominent role in the book than the investigation of artistic intent. However, an enigmatic and contemporary style such as Surrealism often requires a more analytical approach in research publications. For example, a beloved artist of the gallery is Harold Hitchcock, a contemporary English landscape artist who can be categorized within the realm of Surrealist style, with a penchant for the Romantic interpretation of symbols and subject matter. Kurt E. Schon also makes this

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<sup>5</sup>Zamparelli, Thomas L., John Strevens: The Man and His Works (New Orleans: Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., 1982)

publication<sup>6</sup> available to its clientele, in order to clarify the symbolism which defines Hitchcock's work.

Such high-quality publications, combined with the international reputation of the Schon family as well as their residence within the community, serve the marketing purposes of the organization. Therefore, the responsibility of marketing is an organization-wide effort, influenced particularly by the pride taken in employment with Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

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<sup>6</sup>Williamson, Ian, Harold Hitchcock: A Romantic Symbol in Surrealism (New York: Walker and Company, 1982)

### CHAPTER 3: THE PRIVATE COLLECTION

Central to the discussion of any business organization is its product, in this case, the product will be considered the Private Collection amassed by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. The discussion will include not only the motivations behind securing a particular piece for the inventory of the Gallery, but the topic of matching the painting, or product, with the patron, or consumer.

A discourse on the formation of a Collection will naturally lead to the topic of breaking up the Collection, as related to the much-debated tactic of deaccessioning. The writer will follow the link between patron, museum and the private fine arts gallery, and examine the role of each in the decision to sell a particular work in the Collection. Inclusive within this discussion is the alternative of the consignment which Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. offers to its clients.

#### Forming a Collection

In 1909 the Paine-Aldridge Tariff Act established that a work of twenty years or older can enter the United States tariff-free. In 1913, the Act was amended to eliminate the age requirement in time for the contemporary Armory Show in New York. Thus, one will understand the rise in private collecting which took place in the United States in the early twentieth century as a result of government incentives.

Obviously, when one decides to collect fine art, personal taste plays a central role in the choice of paintings for a

private collection. Additionally, the financial value and future promise of a particular work or artist constitute decisive factors.

When a patron contacts the Gallery, most often he or she does so with a specific work in mind. Considering the role of an established contact list and the targeted marketing in which Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. engages, one may comprehend that the prospective buyer requires little convincing. Thus, the sales staff need not employ "hard-sell" tactics; rather, the primary goal is to determine the needs of the client and direct him or her accordingly.

A first-time buyer will, understandably, need a greater level of assistance from the sales staff. The salesperson must first determine the patron's motivations for securing an art work, whether financially based or driven purely by aesthetics. The status of the buyer is one indicator of motivation. For example, a museum representative would likely be interested in the works which maintain the most impressive pedigree, while a private collector would probably consider personal aesthetics and financial potential as guiding factors for their interest in a work. Thus, as the salesperson ushers the patron through the Collection, he must be receptive to the client's reactions. While the salesperson must perceive the client's tastes and preferences, the research department is responsible for providing the proper information and documentation. Quite often, sales and research will

collaborate on determining and catering to a client's needs. For example, the researcher will sometimes uncover a master/apprentice relationship between several artists represented within the Collection. Should a client display an interest in one of these painters, the salesperson should be aware of any similarity in style or genre in order to provide the client with a wide range of choices. Therefore, contact must be maintained between research and sales, a relationship to be further examined in Chapter 6.

As in any properly-run business, the staff should also be familiar with the financial trends which affect the art market. Just as the employee of the nonprofit organization should peruse The Chronicles of Philanthropy in order to determine probable sources of grants and funding, so should the fine arts gallery be updated from periodicals such as Arts and Antiques and Art in America.

Therefore, in order to fully satisfy the interests of the public, any arts organization should secure a network of like-minded organizations and information resources. The entire staff should be involved in the acquisition and dissemination of pertinent data, as issues which concern the good of the organization are not entirely useful if restricted to the upper management.

In conclusion, forming a collection is an effort which is guided primarily by personal aesthetics and/or financial motives. Christopher Wood offers excellent advice on



collecting which illustrates the goals of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. to meet the needs of the client:

"Firstly, it is obviously important to get expert advice, and the dealer selected must be well-established and of proven reputation. Secondly, it is important to choose an area of specialization.....Thirdly, the personal response is important. Never collect art for investment alone. The greatest reward to be gained from collecting is to buy things that give one real pleasure to own and enjoy. In other words, collecting should be fun".<sup>7</sup>

### Consignments

Let us now turn to the issues involved in the dispersion of the Kurt E. Schon Collection, as well as options which exist for the clients, both private persons and museums.

One may define "consignment" as a fiduciary relationship, wherein the owner of a painting or paintings delivers said work(s) into the custody of the Kurt E. Schon Gallery. The Gallery, thus, provides a space for display, and charges the consignor a fee of 25% of the selling price when the work(s) are sold, in addition to an initial fee. Most often, the works which the Gallery holds in consignment were originally purchased through the Gallery, thus insuring the art buyer that his investment has been protected. Normally, a one year period must elapse between the point of purchase of a work and its acceptance for consignment.

In order to fully understand the issues associated with the consigned collection, the writer will refer to the

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<sup>7</sup>Britt, Julie, p. 5

Shakespeare Collection<sup>8</sup>, which is currently on consignment with Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. from a private collector. The Collection consists of a number of Royal Academy paintings, portraying scenes from Shakespearean literature. The owner of the collection maintained the desire to keep it intact, a wish one may easily understand in consideration of the great effort required to assemble such a collection.

The inability to sell an individual piece from the Shakespeare Collection does initiate a dilemma for the Gallery, as well as for the prospective art buyer. The proper placement of the entire Collection is a great feat due to the high price. However, the consignment system guarantees that the Collection will remain in the guardianship of a capable curator during this interim to the procurement by another collector.

The Shakespeare Collection has travelled extensively to be showcased in museum exhibits throughout the country. The comprehensive subject matter of the works promises a successful broad audience of admirers of the English playwright, and for patrons attracted to the Academic style of genre and literary painting.

This practice of the travelling loan exhibition is an effective way for the museum to furnish notable exhibits without the high costs necessitated by the permanent

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<sup>8</sup>Bagneris, Althea, The Art of Shakespeare (New Orleans: Corkey, Inc., 1989)

collection. Quite often, however, a museum may find that some pieces in the collection may not be of equal quality to the others, or at least not of museum standards. Thus, the museum will choose several works, and the remainder of the patron's collection will be stored or refused for display. Such a situation has the potential for poor rapport, as well as storage problems for the collector who is interested in offering his collection on loan.

Therefore, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. serves as an alternative conservation and presentation space to the museum. In accepting the Shakespeare Collection en masse, the Gallery has assured the owner of its safekeeping, and of its availability on the art market. The Collection, however, will also remain available for touring exhibitions at museums and such, whether in its entirety or as a selection of works.

More often Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. accepts singular works on consignment, or collections which are not of such a grand scale. The consignment method promotes an ongoing relationship with the clientele and preserves the integrity of the art work. The work will always have a curator with the ability and equipment necessary to maintain the works, an element necessary in any museum or gallery.

#### Deaccessioning

Like the private collector who wishes to sell a painting, one will find that a museum may not always be willing or able to utilize its conservation resources for the care of a work

which is not detrimental to its collection. The solution often resides in deaccessioning, or selling off a piece or portion of the museum collection to either the auction house, fine arts gallery, or private or public bid.

The issue of deaccessioning, while a controversial one in regards to the museum, can oft be of benefit to the fine arts gallery. For example, a grand scale Belle Epoque portrait of Isabelle McCreery, rendered by the Spanish artist Raimundo Madrazo y Garetta, was recently acquired by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. In attempting to establish the identity of the sitter as well as procure additional information on the artist, the researcher looked to the previous provenance of the work.

According to the data received with the painting, the work had been submitted to auction by the San Francisco Museum of Art. The writer, thus, contacted the Director of the Museum to inquire about the background of the piece, and the conditions leading to its present provenance. The account is an archetype for the role and justification for deaccessioning, contingent upon certain circumstances.

Apparently, the Museum had received this majestic work in 1950 from the McCreery Estate, a prominent family of Irish lineage who had settled in San Francisco in the late nineteenth century. The painting was commissioned to Garetta, who had established an international reputation for his society portraits. Unique to the history of the work was the fact that a Spanish-borne and Parisian-trained artist had

voyaged to the United States. In addition to soliciting this helpful information, the writer then inquired as to the reasons and legal limitations on the deaccessioning of the piece.

One may recall the polemical nature of the process of deaccessioning. The debates in Fine Arts 6010 classes reviewed the collections management policy, and a reflection upon these topics will serve to elucidate the model of the San Francisco Museum's deaccessioning.

The museum acquisition is central to the educational and conservational goals of the institution, while the continued development of the collection is crucial to the dynamic nature of art studies. The museum has a responsibility to cater to the changing concerns of its patron, and to respond to new information which might alter the historical context and status of a piece currently on display. In essence, the museum Collection belongs to the public, and any question regarding deaccessioning carries implications of public policy.

Deaccessioning is oft of benefit to the museum which wishes to satisfy the above noted public responsibilities. Thus, the San Francisco Museum chose to sell off this particular piece in order to secure acquisition funds for works which it deemed more crucial to the mission of the organization. The issue of space was of prime importance in the decision. The Director explained to this writer the

vastness of reserves which the Museum holds in storage, of works which have been donated but may never be displayed. This particular portrait, although of a prominent person and of historical value, simply was of too grande of proportions (124 1/4 x 85 inches, framed) to justify its installation.

The question, however, involves whether or not the museum has the legal and/or ethical right to disperse a collection which the patron has generously donated. The public museum is accountable to public patrimony, thus necessitating the consultation with the public whenever such a resolution is contemplated. This practice does not necessarily involve polling the public as to its wishes, but to, at the very least, public notification of the intention to deaccession.

In maintaining a communicative relationship with the civic community, the museum may avoid controversy and possibly serve its own needs. For instance, when the museum alerts the public of the option of deaccessioning to relieve financial struggles, the public may resist the sale and come to patronize the museum more often. Or, should the museum justify the deaccessioning in a publicly-spoken strategy to expand its collection, the public would sympathize with the museum's desire to serve its public with new acquisitions. Deaccessioning should not be a secretive, or survival measure.

The goals to be facilitated by deaccessioning, therefore, will determine whether use of the method is justified. Weil admits that the retention of objects which are not central to

the museum can be a draining expense, and accepts deaccessioning as financial leverage in conditional circumstances.<sup>9</sup> For example, if the aim is generation of funds for further acquisitions, or the transference of the piece to another museum, Weil would support deaccessioning. The destination of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. for the Garetta piece might not be rationalized according to Weil's concepts, as the piece will most likely end up in another private collection. Nonetheless, the Gallery acts as a clearing house for the work.

Before choosing to deaccession, the museum must consider several points. Primarily, precatory restrictions may exist which would bar the option of deaccessioning. In our example, the McCreery collection had been donated during a period when museums were not facing the same financial crises as today; thus, the question of rights to deaccession never emerged upon the receipt of the donation. Although the San Francisco Museum retained the right to dispense of the McCreery Collection while not being legally bound by contract to the donor, a consultation with the McCreery heirs was not only ethical but good public relations.

In this case study, the McCreery family acquiesced to the sale. A much different situation, however, can be related by the woes encountered by the Barnes Foundation. Readings and

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<sup>9</sup>Weil, S.E., Rethinking the Museum and Other Meditations (New York: 1992)

discussions in the Fine Arts 6010 class alerted Arts Administrators to the ethical and legal issues of deaccessioning, particularly when the donor/founder explicitly stated a desire to keep the collection intact.

Upon the formation of this mainly Impressionist and Post-Impressionist bequest, "Dr. Barnes insisted not only that no works could be sold but also that none could be moved from their places on the wall."<sup>10</sup> Barnes also described limitations which strictly excluded reproducing the works, thus negating several marketing/exhibition tactics which the Foundation could have otherwise taken to meet its financial needs.

When the Barnes Foundation found itself in financial distress, the Trustees petitioned the court to allow them to defy the wishes of the founder. In this case, deaccessioning entails public accountability dangers as well as legal issues. Should a nonprofit foundation financially depend upon the very collection for which it has earned nonprofit status? This student maintains the argument against deaccessioning in these cases, and agrees that the method should be used only in cases where all other solutions have been attempted. Thus, I concurred with the decision of the Pennsylvania courts in allowing a travelling exhibition of some of the Barnes works, but remaining negative on the prospect of "selling off" works.

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<sup>10</sup>Kimmelman, Michael, "Balancing Art and Budgets at the Barnes", New York Times, 7 February 1991, p. B4



Had the Barnes Foundation been as publicly accountable as, perhaps, a museum, the repercussions of deaccessioning would be even more complicated. A museum, as mentioned earlier, may justify deaccessioning in terms of the relevance of a particular piece to the entire collection. For example, one might accept the deaccessioning of a Cubist painting which does not meet museum quality standards. However, the Barnes Foundation, although a nonprofit formation, was formed and donated under the direction of a private collector. Thus, the Barnes Foundation "is the custodian of a great private collector's peculiar vision of art,"<sup>11</sup> a vision which must be respected, if not by ethics, then by law.

In addition to legal restrictions exerted from forces outside the public arts institution, the museum should also consider whether or not deaccessioning is of utmost benefit. Primarily, one must consider if the object in question is relevant to the stated mission of the museum. In our study, the activity of deaccessioning undertaken by the San Francisco Museum was tolerable, as the Museum does not cater specifically to portraiture, to the Belle Epoque, nor to works by Spanish borne artists.

Secondly, the museum must appraise its own ability to conserve and preserve the piece, including the availability of

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<sup>11</sup>Kimmelman, Michael, "The Barnes Explores Other Byways", New York Times, 21 April 1991, p. 38

proper display space. Again, the San Francisco Museum attested that the vast dimensions of the work made it a burden to organizational resources.

Finally, the museum must judge the condition of the work, and whether the costs of restoration would outweigh the benefits of its display. The Garetta portrait arrived at the Kurt E. Schon Gallery in relatively good condition, with the exception of multiple layers of varnish that had been applied to the canvas over the years. While the San Francisco Museum had not the motivation nor funding necessary to restore the piece, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. does. Thus, this situation was clearly permissible according, at least, to Weil's standards.

As good public and management policies, therefore, the museum should form guidelines for deaccessioning, by maintaining an ongoing list of works which might be sold. The approval of trustees and the curatorial staff must be obtained, while permission from the heir is important, if not necessary. The proceeds gained from the sale should be used for the growth of the collection, rather than for the paying of bills. Such standards would discourage the problems associated with a scandal such as that of the Barnes Foundation.

As a fine arts gallery engaged in the business of buying and selling art, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. does not confront the impediments encountered by the Barnes Foundation in its decision to sell. The most obvious dissimilarity descends

from the nonprofit and for-profit status. The foundation or museum thrives upon public support, and is more strictly bound to the demands of the public. The gallery, however, endures and adjusts to the whims of the open market, and maintains more freedom in the handling of its collection. Both types of arts organizations, however, hold great powers and responsibilities as preservers of a culture.

The integrity of the collection is a significant issue in both sectors. As discussed in the section on forming a collection, the private patron of the arts may organize a selection of paintings to suit his/her taste. The museum, in contrast, must satisfy a community-minded set of standards, thus highlighting issues such as the deaccessioning trend.

In consideration of public patrimony, dispelling a collection as a means of financial survival seems ludicrous. If an institution cannot sustain itself through its patronage, whether through community support or grants, one must question whether the institution is of significance to the community. While one can argue that the preservation of a culture is always of relevance to any community, one must realistically make the admission that "culture" cannot be force fed.

However, a thriving museum might follow its mission statement in using the process of deaccessioning in order to enhance its relevance to the community. For example, in May of 1990, the Guggenheim of New York sold three important works in order to acquire the Panza Collection of American

Minimalists.<sup>12</sup> In this case, the Museum found that the process served the interest of keeping the collection updated. Selling works by Kandinsky, Modigliani and Chagall allowed the organization to introduce new and equally significant elements of contemporary work into the public arena.

Perhaps the more historicized works, like the Belle Epoque portraitists or Old Master drawings, do belong on the auction block, on private walls, or in the well-orchestrated and business-minded setting of a for-profit gallery. The collection, thus, is made more accessible to the general public than by the museum, in that no admission fee is charged, and no membership is required.

Although the high price tags attached to such works incorporate an elitist element into the art market which offends many purists, one can assert that the average museum-goer has no intention of purchasing a work on display at the local museum. One enters the nonprofit art institution for enjoyment and for education, rather than for financial aims.

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<sup>12</sup>Rosenbaum, Lee, "How Permanent is the Permanent Collection?", Art News, May 1990, pp. 191-197

## SECTION 2      RESEARCH AND THE ROLE OF THE INTERN

Having covered the topics central to the formation and operation of the organization which served as host to this Internship, one may now describe the role which the Candidate for the Masters degree in Arts Administration performed in the functioning of the Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. One must first outline the specific tasks assigned to the Intern, hereafter referred to as the "researcher".

A step-by-step description of each responsibility and its connection to the overall operation of the Gallery will reveal that the verification of artistic provenance and pedigree is the principal objective of the research department. Thus, Chapter 4 will confirm the importance of documentation to the success of the for-profit art gallery, particularly in the information lent to the client.

The significance of documentation will induce a discussion on issues of art criticism and analysis, as pertaining to the responsibility of the arts institution to display works pertinent to its mission. Most often, both the for-profit and the nonprofit arts organizations intend to provide and conserve the primary examples of a particular style or genre, for public display.

Although Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. is not legally accountable to the public taste, one will find that conserving the "primary examples" of paintings serves the best interests of

the art dealer. Thus, a discussion of the visual verification of the quality of works in the inventory will ensue. The section will also cover the power which Kurt E. Schon possesses in terms of presentation.

Finally, this section will cover the pertinence of the research department to another critical component of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd: the department of sales. The chapter will discuss the proper approach to presenting the documentation of a painting, in order to insure the most appropriate information will be distributed to the prospective buyer. The chapter will also cover the assistance which the research department may grant the sales staff, particularly in historical background.

#### CHAPTER 4: THE INTERNSHIP

One may first turn to the defined goals of the Intern as "researcher", and study each task individually. As listed in the Introduction of this Thesis, the responsibilities of the researcher include:

1. To compile an inventory list of incoming paintings
2. To conduct research which will lead to the verification of the Gallery inventory
3. To continuously seek new information on represented artists, so that the Gallery may be alerted to financial trends which will affect the purchase of new acquisitions for the collection
4. Visual inspection of the collection for authentication
5. Completion of a document to be given to prospective buyers, outlining the artist's background as well as a visual and technical description of the painting
6. To assist the sales staff

Listed as a primary goal of the researcher is to compile an inventory list of the paintings which have recently come into the possession of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. The Management department, as notified by Mr. or Mrs. Schon, will provide the researcher with any available information. Normally, preliminary information is extracted from the records of the previous owner. Basic data will include the name of the artist and his/her school of artistic study, the title and size of the painting, and any other material which might assist the research department.

Thus, upon creating a dossier for the artist and

painting, or upon adding to a previously existing file of the artist, the researcher takes on the responsibility suggested by the title of the Intern: to research the particular work and artist for any information pertinent to its historical and financial credentials.

In addressing the task of research, the writer utilizes the resources of the Tulane University Library, as well as a private art library assembled by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. For the purposes of locating the most accurate information, the Gallery depends upon many art dictionaries and art market publications.

Due to the private nature of the Gallery, one may understand the necessity of maintaining the confidentiality of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. reference sources. However, one may confirm that the most valuable foundation for the study of nineteenth century artists are those resources which had been written during times contemporary to the particular artist. Such data would be unmarred by the objectivity created by the passing of time, and untainted by retrospective analyses. Of course, recent publications do serve as a source of financially-oriented data, such as price indices and auction reports.

The conducting of research is also of value to the third assignment of the Intern: the upkeep of the Collection files. The existing inventory must be continuously audited and updated with any new information. The researcher is



additionally responsible for the maintenance of artists' files, which is accomplished by reading periodicals pertinent to the field. For example, the researcher recently discovered through an arts magazine that a Catalogue Raisonee is soon to be published on Pierre Mignard, an Old Master artist represented by a painting at Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. The Catalogue will include the intensive research conducted by a specialist on Mignard's work, and will be a helpful reference for the Gallery.

As discussed in the section on Employment at Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., material relevant to the success of the Gallery should be distributed to all staff members. The nature of the research position magnifies the importance of the awareness of current market trends. Thus, in addition to perusing arts-oriented magazines, the researcher receives numerous book catalogues on current publications germane to the field of nineteenth century art.

One may now examine the tools which the research Intern has employed in the proper completion of the above described duties. As discussed in core Management courses, organizational skills are necessary for the proper completion of any task. Thus, when the research department receives notification from management on the acquisition of a new piece, research will cross-support the management files with a list of "incoming paintings", which records pertinent information as listed in Appendix A.

The period between the purchase and actual arrival of the work can span from a week to a month, depending upon the source of the seller, and any necessary repairs which must be made to the canvas or to the frame. In order to guarantee the timely completion of her duties, the researcher maintains an updated ledger on the status of each incoming painting.

The inventory sheet will list the name of the artist, the birth and dates of the artist and/or the dates in which the artist flourished, the title of the painting, and the School of the artist. Often, management provides the Intern with a transparency or photocopy of the painting, as visual inspection is a pivotal component of authentication and completion of the document.

The researcher then performs preliminary research, which will verify the accuracy of the information provided by the seller. This step is very important, as original sources may not always be accurate. The catalogue clipping which accompanies the purchased work, for example, will often erroneously cite references that, when checked by research, contradict other sources.

A recurring problem is the issue of the dates of the artist. Birth and death dates are normally accurate, verified through records of the artist's birth place and compiled into art references texts. However, when such dates are not available, the research must include either dates of exhibition, or dates in which the artist flourished. It is

very difficult to explain to a client the differences between these terms.

Recently, a client questioned the integrity of a work which was signed and dated "1875", while the biographical information on the artist indicated that he "flourished" between 1825 and 1867. One must be truthful in providing such information, assuring the client that the work is of exceptional quality despite the fact that it falls outside of these established dates. The salesperson insisted that research expand the dates, while Mrs. Schon required extra research in order to justify this change. Sales wanted to please the client, while the Gallery must protect its integrity. Such dilemmas often leave research in the middle of a power struggle.

Despite these difficulties, the researcher must depend upon empirical evidence for documentation. Once the painting is received and proper biographical and stylistic information has been gathered, the researcher will examine the painting for signature, and any identifying marks which might aid in the secondary steps of research. The signature is checked against a reference guide, and signature placement is noted, including any titling or date rendered by the artist's hand.

The measurements, framed and unframed, are then recorded and double-checked. Accuracy of painting dimensions is important for several reasons. Primarily, a client must

determine the size of a piece for display purposes. Additionally, comparison of presently recorded dimensions with records of the past will reveal if the canvas has been cropped, or otherwise altered.

Having satisfied the task of visual inspection, the researcher will then organize the information into a document, which is extended to the interested art buyer. Appendix B displays the format of this document. The text not only contains the aforementioned information on placement of signature, etc. and biographical data, but also incorporates a description of the painting which concentrates on the subject matter, as well as the stylistic technique. These elements of the fifth noted responsibility of research will be further examined in subsequent chapters, relating issues involved in proper research and presentation.

#### The Significance of Documentation

Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. takes pride in being the only Gallery of its echelon which maintains a research department, and Mr. Schon upholds the value of providing background information to his clients. The manuscript serves a dual purpose to the client, and to the art world.

Firstly, accurate records of the provenance and pedigree of a work will augment the client's confidence that the work purchased is an original, and is documented as such. The client is assured that, should he desire more information, he must only look into the references cited within the

documentation. Furthermore, the presence of published works on the painting, as listed in the bibliography of the research document, adds an additional security that the artist was a well-known and noted artist in his time, as well as in contemporary retrospect.

Secondly, history is as vital to the work of art as the medium, as the conditions under which a painting was produced often prevails upon its content. Context does indeed affect content, particularly in the dominion of nineteenth century work which deals with historically driven content, or "the bourgeois concept of individuals"<sup>13</sup> as coined by Carol Duncan.

In "Who Rules the Art World?", an excerpt intensely debated within a Fine Arts 6010 class, students came to realize the influence which the institution can exert upon the development of modernism. Likewise, a nineteenth century arts institution like the Royal Academy affected the evolution of the art of the period.

For example, the Victorian age fostered the examination of issues relevant to the unique problems that arose from the rapid growth of industry in England. Artists often featured subjects of the plight of the factory worker or the stonebreaker, presented in full-fledged realism, or sugar-coated with sentimental narrative.

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<sup>13</sup>Duncan, Carol, The Aesthetics of Power, (Cambridge: 1993), p. 179

Although the writer does not agree with the denigration with which Carol Duncan approaches any art work not borne of modernism, the researcher would support the statement that "art and discourse in the nineteenth century distorted and idealized the external world and celebrated it as Beauty."<sup>14</sup> Indeed, nineteenth century artistry did draw its inspiration from the visible world, thus the strong influence of figurative painting in this era.

The Royal Academy could present two works of different aesthetic approaches on the same social theme, one which would have utilize a highly realistic approach and another which would have presented the same subject matter in a more idealized manner. In drawing subject matter from the "visible world" and offering differing manners of portrayal, the exhibition records of the Royal Academy provide a strong visual testimony to the contrasting approaches to social issues in Victorian England.

Ms. Duncan, however, discounts the historical and descriptive functions obliged by such paintings of "Beauty", as she asserts that "modern art celebrates alienation from [the external] world and idealizes it as Freedom."<sup>15</sup> Although the writer, again, agrees that modern art ministers to a more internally-inspired creativity, Ms. Duncan neglects the fact that the nineteenth century public did not have the

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid, p. 179

<sup>15</sup>Ibid, p. 179

"freedom" of self-absorption. Thus, paintings at the Salon or Academy, as well as illustrations and other man-made graphics, served as a narrative as well as a visual delight of "Beauty".

Any arts organization should provide its public with the necessary tools for viewing the art work. A knowledge of the influence exerted upon artistic production by social mores, or by the specifics of patronage, will dispense proper presentation and context. This concern for enhancing the viewer's experience should be shared by both the for-profit and nonprofit sectors of the arts.

Of course, the modern museum of art encounters different presentation issues than the history museum, just as the contemporary art gallery experiences deviations from the fine arts gallery. For example, a trend in the communication of artistic modernism is the artist's statement on his intention for producing the piece. In contrast, the fine arts gallery depends upon a knowledge of the history which led to the production of the piece. At Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., research and documentation render this history.

With regard to the gravity of original context, Celebonivic attests that "a religious turn of mind is not indispensable to admire the art of the Middle Ages...yet if we know about the dogmas and moral laws of the faith which inspired the works of art of the medieval period, our judgment will undeniably become both more penetrating and more

objective."<sup>16</sup> Thus, Kurt E. Schon makes historical information available to its clients based on the belief that such an appreciation for context will lead to a better appreciation for the art work.

Indeed, what would one think of the Absolut New Orleans sponsored by the Contemporary Art Center in the Summer of 1995 without the benefit of knowledge of the product? In order to fully comprehend the implications of sponsorship by said company, one must have an idea about the cultural nature of the community. The documentation provided by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. helps to foster a historical understanding of the context in which a painting was inspired and created.

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<sup>16</sup>Celebonovic, Aleksa, Some Call it Kitsch: Masterpieces of Bourgeois Realism (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1988), p. 14



## CHAPTER 5 THE POWERS OF PRESENTATION AND SELECTION

The Graduate courses required for the Arts Administration degree focused on the museum as a typical nonprofit institution responsible for the curatorship of the collection. Although the private gallery does not adhere to the same public policies, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., as a for-profit counterpart to the museum, shares similar public powers.

As a presentation space for objets d'art, the fine arts gallery possesses the potential to affect viewer response. Through proper documentation, the Kurt E. Schon Galleries can strengthen the cultural understanding of the community, through the public accessibility of its Private Collection.

According to Carol Duncan in her article "The Ritual of Citizenship", the traditional museum serves as a "temple of contemplation"<sup>17</sup> which fills both ritualistic and political roles. One may find it helpful to trace the concept of the modern day museum from these standards, and discuss the emergence of the private art dealer in order to more fully understand the parallel of roles within these two types of organizations.

The emergence of the national museum began during the French Revolution. During this era, the state seized the King's possessions and placed them within the public accessibility of the public at the Louvre. The availability

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<sup>17</sup>Karp, Ivan and Steven D. Lavine, eds., Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display (London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), p. 92

of objects which had otherwise been isolated to Royal enjoyment demonstrates a civic-mindedness, and the concerns of the State with the culture of its citizens.

The museum, thus, began its service as a disseminator of culture, and a ritual by which citizens could reap the benefits of viewing art objects. One may note the resemblance of museum architecture to the temple or church, excepting, of course, modernly constructed museums which tend to follow contemporary architectural standards akin to the modern art trends displayed within. A patron entered the museum or gallery space with a reverence for the objects presented within, in worship of man's artistic achievements.

As a consequence of this evolution from the 16th and 17th century princely collection, which most often consisted of art objects secured as the spoils of war, the museum influenced civic pride, and emitted an appearance of cultural advancement. Concerning the proliferation of objects commissioned by religious sects, particularly Catholicism, the opening of the museum also projected an interest in the spiritual life of its citizens. The museum preserves past achievements and values, and thus provides for the common good.

The chronological ordering of the collection instituted during the Napoleonic era fulfilled this endeavor to present man's accomplishments as a progression of culture. The American museum has evolved from these European philosophies,

yet because its status directly emulated the "modern" European museum, the United States adopted classical forms which may seem inappropriate to the relative youth of this country. The American museum began as a public institution, thus conflicting with the natural development of the European museum standard from a private collection.

Indeed, American fine arts museums became a terminal in the international system of presenting a cultural standard to the public. The United States, however, had little artistic heritage to claim, excepting that of the native Americans whom the country has consistently ignored.

Nonetheless, the American museum fulfilled what it considered its duty in spreading the fine arts of Europe to the public sector. The 1850s witnessed the first loan exhibition, which would familiarize the American public with European trends. The more extensive support of the modern artist of American heritage, however, altered the singular status of the museum as a "conservateur". The museum granted commissions to the contemporary artist as a means of supporting the arts. Unlike the 19th century British Royal Academy and the Paris Salons which fostered contemporary European art as sanctioned, but not governed by the Royal state, the American museum took on a nonprofit status. In this way, the State and the museum took some control over shaping American culture.

The American Association of Museums began to institute

guidelines for the organizational structure in order to more effectively manage this public endeavor. Nonetheless, the persons who held the most power in the museum system were not the government patrons. Rather, the early museum demanded the talents of the "impresario", who possessed the erudition, and most often the social contacts and finances, to properly oversee the institution.

As Peterson suggests in "From Impresario to Arts Administrator"<sup>18</sup>, this power structure led to the dominance of the museum by an elite few with a secondary support group. Capturing grant funds and collection loans from wealthy acquaintances, the impresario ensured a quality collection.

As the museum came under the scrutiny of the State, the institution recognized a need to govern the arts organization in a more controlled manner. Thus, the 1980s experienced a rise in the profession of the Arts Administrator, who possessed both the financial understanding and hopefully, the appreciation for the arts just as the impresario once did. Yet, as one will witness in the decimation of museum funding as well as the decline in public patronage, this business-mindedness may have not been the best approach for the enrichment of society.

In this sense, the writer feels that the success of

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<sup>18</sup>Peterson, R.A., "From Impresario to Arts Administrator: Formal Accountability in Nonprofit Cultural Organizations", from di Maggio, P.J., ed., Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts (New York: 1986)

organizations such as Kurt E. Schon Ltd. resulting from a merging of skills. As an impresario, Mr. Schon initially dedicated his time to the organization without need of reimbursement. As a for-profit dealer, the organization takes on the capacity of administration, sensitive to the need for proper management.

The Kurt E. Schon Collection was established as a private collection, but now houses gallery spaces which are open to the public. Although the purchase of such works is limited to those with an appropriate budget, the organization realizes its role in serving the interests of the public. The high tourism of New Orleans insures high visibility of the collection, thus, affording Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. a position to enhance public understanding of fine nineteenth century European paintings.

#### Presentation Strategies

In maintaining an elegant space for the viewing of the Collection, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. can fulfill the dual roles which Greenblat defines as "Resonance and Wonder"<sup>19</sup>. Resonance refers to the methods which the museum, or gallery implements in the display of its art objects. In viewing a painting at Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., for instance, the patron may note the extensive bibliography of works in which the artist has appeared, and thus, assume the work to be of great importance.

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<sup>19</sup>Karp and Lavine, pp. 42-57

Through the resonance nurtured by supportive information, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. parallels the role of the museum, in providing a framework which will affect the response to the art object. The museum curator may, for example, establish a chronological according of the collection, an arrangement proposed by the Renaissance art historian Vasari. Chronological presentation would affect a means by which the viewer may witness the artistic experimentation which developed throughout the ages. Thus, as noted earlier, the "curator" of the Napoleonic era chose this chronological technique as the foremost means of communicating a sense of the progression of French culture. Presenting the collection in a monographic order, by displaying the production of one individual, will specifically follow the developmental style of an artist. This technique has of late been employed by the commercial gallery in publicizing the skills of living artists. Additionally, a monographic approach is well-suited to the presentation of one artist who greatly affected a particular art movement, such as the role of Claude Monet in the development of Impressionism.

A third method of presentation, the historical approach, most often accommodates the history museum, as its name suggests. Fine Arts 6010 students witnessed this paradigm of presentation through a tour of the Cabildo, which grants a cultural education by presenting relics, pictures and art objects as a social fact. Although each of these methods

are effective, studies verified by Alpers in "The Museum as a Way of Seeing"<sup>20</sup> have revealed that the success of an exhibit likely will result from the freedom of the viewer to wander the space. He cites that documentation should be placed before or after the picture, with more focus placed upon installation rather than written communicative attempts. He suggests that take-home information will also serve the educational enhancement of the museum experience.

Likewise, Greenblat praises the concentration on visual contact with the work, with the support of supplemental information. The writer would suggest, therefore, that both Alpers and Greenblat would approve of the presentation strategies practiced by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

#### The Presentation of the Kurt E. Schon Collection

While the Saint Louis Street Gallery requires that the patron be accompanied by a sales representative (mainly for insurance purposes), the organization encourages the client to stroll through the Royal Street Gallery at his/her leisure. Without sales pressure and opinions, the patron can more fully appreciate the "wonder" of the paintings in the Collection.

One may now refer "wonder", the secondary component of Greenblat's approach to object display, in asserting that Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. advocates visual contact with the piece before it offers supportive information. The Collection is not classified in any of the aforementioned methods; rather,

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<sup>20</sup>Karp and Lavine, pp. 25-33

arrangement depends upon the insight of the Collector. Thus, Mr. or Mrs. Schon choose to display particular works based upon visual interest, rather than any chronological, monographic or historical order.

Of course, the nature of the Collection determines this approach to display. As a dealer strictly in 19th century European art, the Kurt E. Schon Gallery avoids many of the issues involved in museum presentation. The Gallery categorizes works within "Schools": English, French, German, Spanish, American and the Continental Schools which include Austrian, Irish, Belgian, and Czechoslovakian. Should a work represent a particular style, such as "Impressionist" or "Barbizon", the wall card will denote such. (Appendix C)

In presenting the work in such an arbitrary manner, the viewer is freed from any preconceived notions and may enjoy the "wonder" of the painting. The Schon Gallery, however, is attentive to proper historical context. For example, Mr. Schon recently advised the research department that a French work should be categorized according to the era in which it was produced: Second Empire, Third French Republic...etc. This method allows the viewer to place a work of historical subject matter in the proper time frame.

In addition to relating the historical background of the artist, the wall card and informational document also allude to any previous provenance of the painting, whether private or public. In this way, the Gallery reveals the significant



sources of the work. Similarly, the museum patron must be able to recognize the reasons for the display of a particular work; as Gurian asserts in "Noodling Around with Exhibition Opportunities", "unsigned exhibitions reinforce the notion that there is a godlike voice of authority behind the choice of exhibitions."<sup>21</sup> Citing that a particular work was showcased at the Salon des Refusees, for example, would denote the novel nature of the work.

Such information on provenance will establish for the viewer the credentials of a particular work within art history. The Gallery, likewise, displays the literature and exhibitions in which a particular painting have appeared, although motivated by disparate concerns from the museum. The for-profit nature of the Gallery confirms its rank as a "connoisseur" of fine art objects; the documentation furthers this conjecture. The museum, however, often struggles with the question of whether a sampling of styles should be presented, or if display should be restricted to the "best" examples of the style. Supplemental information helps to identify the grounds for the selections of art objects.

Of course, the opinions of the curator can contaminate the definition of the "best", while the private gallery will objectively employ market standards as a gauge for quality and the selection of objects. The inclusion of the literature and exhibitions in which a Schon painting is noted serves to

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<sup>21</sup>Karp and Levine, p. 187

justify the choice consideration of the work. Financial promise also plays an obvious role in selection, but the writer can honestly assert that, in consideration of the selection processes practiced by the Schons, their purchases are equally guided by market strength and quality.

#### The Selection of the Collection

The limitation to nineteenth century European art by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. defines its selection process, thus negating any discussion of the ethnocentric focus which may taint a museum exhibition due to the misgivings of the curator. For example, the Fine Arts 6010 class focused upon the underrepresentation of women in many museum collections. The Kurt E. Schon Collection also possesses few works by women, due to the lack of artistic training granted to women in the nineteenth century.

Nonetheless, in its quest for "quality", Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. does present the work of the noted Rosa Bonheur, as well as several still-lives by women artists who managed to maneuver their way around sexist nineteenth century standards.

Additionally, one may argue that the European focus of this Gallery arises from the concentration of art production within nineteenth century Europe. Through the history of Academy exhibits and contemporary criticism, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. is able to recreate the original context of nineteenth century European culture.

In contrast to this focus on the art objects of a

particular heritage, the public museum often hopes to present a wider gamut of cultures. This desire to satisfy the public patrimony by avoiding under-representation or ethnocentric standards, however, can jeopardize the integrity of presentation.

For instance, the public museum may improperly present artifacts as objects d'art. Alpers contends that some cultures have no visually interesting objects, and that museums may transform cultural materials into art objects merely by context. To avoid this dilemma, the museum which wishes to present works of the Aborigine culture, for example, may reduce art historical references and respect the original context of the artifact. The exhibit of more utilitarian art forms may be best realized when accompanied by text which describes its historical use, rather than merely presenting the artifact as an object for meditation. Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. presents works which were created specifically as art objects in nineteenth century Europe, thus deflecting this particular of misrepresentation.

#### Documentation as Visual Assistance

The arbitrary methods of display utilized by the private gallery have been successful for Kurt E. Schon, as they concentrate on the sense of wonder radiated by the art object. Should the patron desire more factual assistance at the end of a tour through the Gallery, research documents are offered. Thus, the Gallery caters to the visual appeal of the work,

while also providing a means of furthering appreciation of the work.

The production of the research document, which embodied the main responsibility of the research Intern, consists of pertinent information on the artist's background, as well as the dimensions and medium of the work. These components of the synopsis are included for purposes of confirmation by the prospective buyer. The "note" which describes the painting, however, can affect the understanding of theme and subject matter.

The researcher compiles biographic and basic data on an artist and painting from scholarly investigation, while the description of the work included in the "note" requires a visual inspiration of the work in order to sympathize with the patron's approach to the painting. The visual study of the painting is also necessary to affect response to a work, through the visual analyses provided by the researcher.

Of course, inspection also verifies the data. For example, if an artist is cited as a strict proponent of the Impressionist technique, one would have to question the integrity of a work which, upon inspection, reveals an entirely Academic style of execution. In addition to providing a stylistic analysis of a painting, the "note" will alert the reader to subject matter, and also direct viewer attention to a critique of artistic elements such as composition and use of the palette.

There exist several levels of critique in artistic analyses. Historical criticism considers artistic intention in light of the artist's personal interest and cultural background. Thus, when the researcher approaches a "Barbizon" landscape, she views the painting in regards to its success in following the Barbizon School standards of capturing atmospheric effects.

Additionally, when the researcher encounters a work which has been influenced by several cultural histories, she must alert the viewer. For example, the Spanish portraitist Garetta, discussed in earlier pages, worked extensively in France during the "Belle Epoque." During this era, French culture took a great interest in Spanish culture as manifested by the establishment of the Musee Espagnol in 1838. Through this venue, the French State might shape the cultural image of Spain outside of its boundaries. Upon choosing to represent the "Belle Epoque" style of a Spanish-borne artist, the Museum could demonstrate the influence which French culture exerted over Spain. Thus, the selection of objects can affect the formulation of assumptions about a people.

Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., presents the works of several European countries, thus allowing the viewer to form his/her own understanding of cultural heritage. Through a well-balanced selection of examples from each school, the Gallery achieves a faithful and un-biased representation.

As the nineteenth century French art critic Benoist de

Matougues affirms, "L'etude des differentes ecoles est d'une haute importance pour l'intelligence de l'histoire et des moeurs de chaque peuple".<sup>22</sup> In presenting both Spanish "Belle Epoque" artists and artists of the Spanish Academy, Kurt E. Schon provides a sampling of that country's heritage, thus reducing any incorrect cultural assumptions via improperly biased historical criticism.

In contrast to this historical approach, the method of recreative criticism attempts to empathize with viewer response by anticipating the emotional reception of a painting and composing the "note" accordingly. Such a critique would include descriptive phrases which would remind the viewer of the success which the artist has recreated an emotion through color, line and composition.

The researcher most often utilized the two above mentioned methods, as it is important to avoid "critique" of a work within the for-profit gallery. One assumes that, in selecting a particular work for its inventory, Kurt E. Schon has taken into account the factors of stylistic quality. Judicial criticism, therefore, suffices as a guideline for the researcher, rather than as a strict basis for artistic judgement. Judicial criticism is a determination of artistic value based on its fulfillment of several criterion, including formal aesthetics and significance. According to students of

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<sup>22</sup>Lispschutz, Spanish Painting and the French Romantics (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 191

the judicial approach, art should possess both depth and breadth. For example, still lifes exhibit depth in the presentation and description of the objects, yet the subject matter is limited in breadth and catholicity of outlook.

Thus, in addition to fostering the objective skills of scholarly research to determine the history of a work, the research Intern studied critical and visual approaches to the painting in order to produce effective documentation. While such a record provides the facts of history and context, one must remember that art is also an aesthetic object composed of the colors, lines and textures which comprise the whole, which can also be broken down further for objective analysis of hue, clarity, depth, and intensity.

Greene asserts that "the painter must be enough of a scientist and craftsman in knowledge and technical manipulation of his primary raw material to ensure the efficiency at the artistic level".<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, the formal structure of a work can be affected by motif, categorized as either unitary or repetitive. The researcher may facilitate viewer comprehension of a work by isolating such motifs, and describing them as part of the compositional whole.

An understanding of historical style will also be of assistance to the client. Artistic style represents an individual and cultural revelation, documented by the

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<sup>23</sup>Greene, Theodore Meyer, The Arts and the Art of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 87

formation of "movements" and "manifestoes" of art. When the researcher discovers that a particular painting was composed under the Impressionist School, for example, the information will foster the acknowledgement of the artist's techniques.

In contrast to overall style, artistic intent dictates the organization of the media as a personal artistic choice. Whenever possible, the researcher will include writings by the artist within the research document.

On several occasions, the writer has discovered that the artist's interest in literature has directly affected subject matter. For example, a mythological figure portrayed by the Romantic artist de Beaulieu reflected his own writings on Romanticism. In providing this information, the researcher can enhance the client's understanding of artistic intent.

The researcher may also investigate the context of a painting through criticism which is contemporary to the production of the art object. Upon researching the credentials of an English landscape, for example, research would look to the nineteenth century writings of John Ruskin, a prominent figure in the field.

Most art historians and critics will agree with this approach to art research which combines historical and recreative criticism, while utilizing only the barest critical essentials of the judicial approach. Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. satisfies the needs of the patron, as well as the educational interests of the casual browser, with proper documentation



compiled by the research department.

In conclusion, the writer felt a particular affiliation with the art historian Vogel in his statement that the nonprofit museum, "should inform the public that what it sees is not material that speaks for itself, but material filtered through the tastes, interests, politics, and state of knowledge of particular presenters."<sup>24</sup> In providing provenance and pedigree, Kurt E. Schon reveals the source of the painting. In furnishing the background and intentions of the artist, the Gallery provides context. Finally, the inclusion of information descriptive of style and technique will enhance the viewer's appreciation of the painting. Thus, through proper documentation and display, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. can competently reinforce viewer response, while not intruding upon the visual enjoyment of the Collection.

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<sup>24</sup>Vogel, S., "Always True to the Art Object, in Our Fashion", p. 201, from Karp and Lavine, pp. 191-205

## CHAPTER 6 THE AFFILIATION BETWEEN SALES AND RESEARCH

A final role enacted by the research Intern at Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. was that of assisting the sales staff in several ways. Primarily, documentation provides the salesperson with a knowledge about the painting, and thus, the proper tools for salesmanship.

The documentation assists the salesperson in matching the client's preferences to the appropriate artist and painting. Additionally, sales and research work together in keeping one another notified on the trends in the market for nineteenth century art. Quite often, the sales staff referred the researcher to periodicals which discuss an artist represented in the Collection, thus providing the researcher with additional leads for the updating of information.

Publications such as Arts and Antiques should be read by both departments, and studied for any financial trends which involve the Gallery's holdings. In this way, the sales staff can provide the investment-minded buyer with indicators on the market value of a work.

Another means by which research served the interests of the sales staff was by providing cultural information. In a task completed within the scope of this Internship, the writer produced a document on the history of the formation of the Royal Academy of Arts in London, for use by the sales staff. In order to clarify the classification of artists of the English School, such as having studied at the Royal Institute,

or having exhibited at Suffolk Street, the research Intern provided a written history explaining the ranks of the Royal Academy. Such details are extremely important, particularly when the sales person is relatively new to the field of nineteenth century art.

The information which research compiled, and offers within Appendix D, supplies the sales staff with the context in which these paintings were produced. In comprehending the application process and ranks of Royal Academicians, sales can better evidence the significance of a work to the interested patron.

Additionally, this particular research project included a summarized description of the alternative spaces available to artists of nineteenth century England. Organizations such as the Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain and the Society of Arts maintained a comparable status to the well-respected Academy, as sanctioned by Royal charter. The sales staff must be knowledgeable about such offshoot organizations, in order to reassure the client of the artist's credentials.

Another means by which sales and research maintain a close affiliation is exemplified by the information provided by research when the Gallery decided to change the category of "French School" to periods relating to Napoleonic history. The document which is included in Appendix E lists significant dates relating to the "French School", and thus explains the

logic behind utilizing new categories.

Sales must be able to anticipate and answer any questions which the prospective client may have on an artist's training or background. Research and sales are concerned with similar issues, in meeting the preferences of the client, and providing accurate and pertinent supportive documentation. As in any small-scaled organization, departmental communication is of the utmost importance to the success of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

It is also important that the proper balance be maintained between dry, academic research and flashy salesmanship. Just as in the nonprofit world of theatre, for example, a proper amount of decorum must be coupled with crowd-pleasing tactics, so the salesperson of fine arts must avoid stratagems which would compromise the nature of the art product. We are not in the business of selling art, rather, the art work is placed into the proper care and appreciation of a suitable patron.

## SECTION III

## SPECIAL ISSUES

Having defined in the previous section the presentation goals which Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. shares with the public museum, it would be interesting to examine the other parallels to be made between the production of nineteenth century work and contemporary modernism. Just as the American museum derived from European cultural policies, so contemporary artists have looked to the nineteenth century for models of artistic practice.

Like the contemporary artist who works within the realm of public commissions or who presents within a commercial gallery, the nineteenth century painter sought escape from the conventional standards propagated by the Salon and Academy. Additionally, the art establishment of the past century encountered difficulties in the forum of public art.

Succeeding chapters will parallel the development of alternative spaces in our country to the European archetype, in light of the artist's need for personal freedom and inspiration. A discussion of public art will examine the ability of the State to promote the more progressive arts. Informing the sales staff of the pertinence of these comparisons is one way in which the Intern hopes to have benefitted Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

The issue of art in the public forum will lead to the writer's own notions on the future role of the Arts

Administrator. Primarily, the Intern feels that the struggling arts organization must concentrate upon providing the public with "quality" works, comprehensible but not stagnant in style.

Additionally, the arts organization should attempt to provide a framework by which quality can be judged. Within the public sector of the arts, "quality" must satisfy a wide spectrum of predilection for the value of art. In terms of evaluation, the historical nature of the Kurt E. Schon Collection offers readily available standards of critique. The Paris Salon and the Royal Academy were two main sources for the definition of quality. Thus, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. draws upon the records of these institutions in order to document pedigree and provenance. The authenticity and originality of the Collection is of utmost importance.

## CHAPTER 7: INSURING THE PEDIGREE OF THE ART WORK

A major necessity to the fulfillment of the Intern's duties is the accuracy of documentation in support of the Kurt E. Schon Collection. In addition to directing the client's attention to style and to providing historical information, research will confirm that the painting is of the highest and most truthful pedigree.

Authentication of the nineteenth century work of art insures the client of the status of the painting. Verifying that the work is of the original hand of the artist will not only involve ruling out forgery, but establishing that enough of the original painting exists through conservational and restorational overpainting to deem it an original.

Perhaps the most important responsibility which is upheld by the efforts of the research department is the assurance of the quality of provenance, and of authentication. Through verifying the signature of the work and proper research of pedigree, the researcher double-checks the information received with the painting.

As early as the time of Albrecht Durer, fraud was an issue in the art market. In 1506 the artist would take legal action against the Italian engraver Marcatoni Raimundo, who had been producing engraved copies of Durer's woodcut series of the "Life of the Virgin".<sup>25</sup> The issue was not one of originality

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<sup>25</sup>Jones, Mark, ed., "Fake? The Art of Deception" (London: British Museum, 1990)

or the reproduction of the actual design, but of benefitting from the unauthorized and fraudulent use of the artist's monogram to yield a high profit. Quite often, artists engaged in such practices for instructive purposes, from the vast studios of David to the copying of the Old Masters at the Louvre.

However, the issue borders upon our modern concept of the copyright. Durer protected his name by inscribing a warning upon his work: "Beware all thieves and imitators of other people's labour and talents, by laying your audacious hands upon our work".<sup>26</sup> Artists in our time and country, however, may take legal recourse under property rights which derive from the act of authorship, as recognized in 1976 by federal law.

As also studied in Arts Law, once ownership of an original work is transferred, the duplication or reprinting of the work demands the permission of the owners. Thus, Kurt E. Schon is free to produce a color copy of the Collection for use in brochures and advertisements, or in any publication which it deems necessary.

In the contemporary art market, forgery is a powerful weapon which can undermine both the financial value of a painting, as well as the visual comprehension of an artist's style. The practice of learning by copying has declined, as has the reservoir of artists trained in the academic style.

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 120



Thus, present day imitation is rarely innocent and the Gallery must accurately certify the pedigree of its Collection.

The need for restoration also introduces a dilemma unto the discussion of originality. While the eighteenth century "principle of restoration was universally acceptable...and it was almost unthinkable that a headless or armless torso should not have its missing parts replaced",<sup>27</sup> the modern dangers of restoration to the integrity of a work demands deeper consideration. Take for example, the 1995 case in which a Swiss collector made a claim for the return of the money she paid for an Egon Schiele painting at Christie's in London in 1987.<sup>28</sup> Upon examination, it was found that some 94 percent of the surface area of the painting had been overpainted, a portion significant enough to negate the value of the artist's original work.

The visual examination methods of microscopy, ultra violet lighting and x-radiography will reveal the integrity of the painting. Most often employed by Kurt E. Schon, Ltd., "black lighting" exposes the areas of the canvas which have been overpainted, thus affecting the artistic value of the work.

The best defense against forgery is the reputation and accountability of the source. Thus, the presence of

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid, p. 134

<sup>28</sup>"Judgement deferred in Christie's Schiele Case", The Antiques Gazette, January 1995, pp. 1-2

documentation will insure the client of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. of the originality and authenticity of each piece in the Collection.

## CHAPTER 8: TIMELESS ALTERNATIVES

In addition to serving as a presentation space, the American museum often incorporates the encouragement of contemporary artistic trends into the mission statement. Through artists' commissions, grants and publicly supported exhibitions, a museum might offer the artist a venue to display his or her work. Likewise, the commercial gallery of our time functions as a means by which an artist may attain a name in the arts community, and acquire the financial support required to continue his or her work. Thus, both the for-profit and the nonprofit arts organizations may stimulate the development of contemporary artistic trends.

Of course, a trade-off might exist. In return for the patronage received from such institutions, the artist may incur the expenses of exhibition rental space or high commission rates. Much more detrimental to the progression of artistic style, however, is the cost to the freedom of self-expression. In short, a danger exists to contemporary art when the art establishment takes over, whether via the public museum or the commodity-minded art dealer.

Through the historically-oriented nature of this research Internship, the writer has recognized that the difficulties in fostering progressive artistic trends through public patronage is not novel to our era. Nineteenth century France depended upon the prestige of the Paris Salon for the fostering of culture; protests from artists who were denied entry to these

public exhibitions resulted in an imperial decree by Napoleon III in 1863, ordering the establishment of a special Salon des Refusées for those artists who had been rejected.

Without the alternative exhibition space provided by the Salon des Refusées, the Impressionist movement would not have attained the grandeur which it holds today. In response to the development of the revolutionary avant-garde, the Academic Salon had begun to loosen the stringent controls which frustrated artistic development.

Thus, in 1881, the Salon was reorganized as the Société des Artistes Française with a jury elected from each previous year's exhibitors. Despite these attempts to more directly involve the artist in the development of style, the Salon remained resistant to new and creative artists.

The inherent conservatism present within any formal institution, particularly one which operates under the official seal of the State, can obstruct the creativity and originality so important to artists. In a desire to control their own artistic production and presentation, both nineteenth and twentieth century artists have founded alternative spaces in which artistic expression might flourish.

The twentieth century has witnessed the development of several options to the traditional arts venues of the museum and commercial gallery. As discussed in Fine Arts 6010 sessions, the emergence of cooperative galleries in the 1970s

initiated a trend of spaces which were managed directly by the artists. In eliminating, or diminishing the powers of the art dealer, the artist more directly influenced the presentation of his or her work.

With a concern for artists' rights and a belief that artistic expression should surpass the role of art as commodity, artists collaborated in such experimental spaces as the Tenth Street Galleries in New York.<sup>29</sup> By combining their resources, the artist member of cooperative galleries could obtain a greater level of visibility with smoother coordination of advertising and exhibitions.

Additionally, such galleries concentrated upon a commitment to exhibiting, in addition to selling their work. Operating on member dues rather than sales, the artists were freer to explore their own inspiration. The escape from the directive control of the trustees/managers induced an opportunity for newer, non-traditional artists to work and exhibit.

One might assume that the necessity of an alternative to the "art establishment" is novel to our century, considering the experimental and highly subjective quality of much of contemporary art. However, the writer found it interesting to note that the alternative spaces which have developed into artistic venues found a basis in the Salons and Academies of

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<sup>29</sup>Jeffri, Joan, The Emerging Arts Organization: Management, Survival and Growth (New York: Praeger, 1980)

nineteenth century France and England.

Indeed, the Royal Academy held a conservative standpoint similar to many American museums. As a safeguard of standards of professional competence, the Academy remained cautious of innovation and was slow to lend its approval to experimental novelty, such as that of the Romantic painters. The need for alternative spaces resulted in the formation of commercial galleries, as well as more conventionally-organized clubs and societies.

The Grosvenor Gallery (1877-1890), for example, was instituted by the amateur artists Sir Coutts and Lady Lindsay. This particular Gallery became the focus of the Aesthetic Movement of the 1880s, and was a favorite of the Pre-Raphaelite advocates. The New Gallery was founded in 1888 as a breakaway from the Grosvenor, and also became an important locale for the encouragement of contemporary trends.

Other organizations such as the New English Art Club and the London Group followed less commercial standards. The New English Art Club was founded in 1886 by a group of young artists as patterned on the aforementioned Salon des Refusées. Rather than utilizing a committee, the artists themselves selected the pictures for exhibit. The Club would become a center for French influence and Impressionism.

These organizations would eventually receive royal approval. In the nineteenth century, painting was viewed as a craft requiring disciplined training as well as creativity

and originality. The Academy had been formed in 1768 under royal patronage in order to foster:

"the establishment of a well-regulated School or Academy of Design, for the use of students in the Arts, and an Annual Exhibition, open to all artists of distinguished merit, where they may offer their performances to public inspection, and acquire that degree of reputation and encouragement which they shall be deemed to deserve".<sup>30</sup>

The cultural advancement and education of the people was considered a responsibility, and of benefit, to the State. Both English and French artists, however, found the formation of alternative exhibition spaces necessary to the advancement of culture. Similarly, alternatives to the Paris Salon and Royal Academy would serve as a model for American artists wishing to escape the conventionalism of the public museum, and the commercialism of the gallery.

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<sup>30</sup>Royal Academy, Beaverbrook Art Gallery Exhibition Catalogue (1987), p. 3

**CHAPTER 9: PUBLIC ART AND THE PROGRESSION OF TASTE**

As concluded in the previous chapter, European standards have served as a model not only for the American museum, but for the formation of alternative spaces in revolution against the establishment. The conventional tastes of the bureaucracy simply do not initiate progress in art.

Nonetheless, the American government has made attempts to enrich the culture of this country through public arts programs. Through projects such as Works in Progress and the policies developed in the Kennedy Administration, the American government expressed its interest in forming a cultural policy, with varied levels of success.

The intention of the Works in Progress program was to dispense culture through the decoration of federal buildings, and it succeeded in employing many artists through commissions gained by competition. The Program, however, supported conventional ichnography to develop a sense of civic pride, and disregarded controversial forms of artistic expression and political ideology.

Indeed, the forum of public art will, and has, consistently suffered this dilemma of orthodoxy. An illustration may be found in nineteenth century England. In 1841, a Select Committee was elected with the objective of promoting the arts in connection with the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament. The formation resulted in the recommendation of the appointment of a Royal Commission, which



subsequently invited the anonymous submission of cartoons and paintings to be executed in fresco on the walls of the new building.

The tendency for the Committee to limit the accepted work to what they deemed as applicable subject matter resulted in "dutiful, schoolboy exercises, produced at the instruction of the master on worthy subjects"<sup>31</sup>. The bureaucracy forced limitations upon the progressive spirit of the arts, and thus interfered with the generation of an art form which would have been more relevant to the enterprising society for which it was produced.

The phlegmatic nature of the bureaucracy, however, is not the only impediment to the natural progression of artistic style. An example of public hostility towards contemporary work was argued extensively in a Fine Arts 6010 seminar, on the subject of the public installation of Serra's "Tilted Arc". The open forms of the construction were designed with the artistic intent to embrace the public, yet resulted in community conflict and a court case involving the removal of the work.<sup>32</sup>

Indeed, the writer would question the justification for spending tax money on a work which the public would most likely never willfully support. Although I personally can

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<sup>31</sup>Reynolds, Graham, Victorian Painting (London: Hubert Press, 1987), p. 35

<sup>32</sup>Serra, R., "Tilted Arc Destroyed", Art in America, February 1984, p. 9-17

sympathize with Serra's artistic intentions and symbolism, I contend that the comprehension of such enigmatic work is slow, not to mention voluntary.

Perhaps the government believes that public acceptance will result from continued contact with the non-referential work. Indeed, art can shape our society, and the open constructions of Serra's work might have eventually imparted its humanistic message. Although artistic expression is utmost in initiating dynamic trends and in cultivating new languages of symbolism, the artist must sympathize with the difficulties of the public in encountering new iconography. Rather than forcing reformative canons and precepts upon the populace, the artist might also integrate more traditional forms within public projects. An incremental development of style would ease viewer transition to new forms and concepts.

The Victorian artist understood this subtlety of satisfying the public taste while adhering to personal politics. One may consider the careful approach taken by the Pre-Raphaelite William Hunt, who took on the subject of the moral plight of the mistress within his repertoire. Such subjects were taboo to the Victorians, yet artists were able to present such issues in an unoffensive manner.

Upon retrospect, we read these Victorian works with historical detachment, and perceive that the ingenuity of such a style goes beyond the development of a new means of priming

the canvas or applying the pigment. Rather, the artist has incorporated social issues within a framework which relates an astute observation on the dichotomy of Victorian values. While the works of the Pre-Raphaelite painters are still available for study within museums and private collections, Serra's sculpture may not withstand debates over public taste, in time for us to comprehend the moral it purports to relate. Whether symbolic or candid, artistic messages can not be force fed, no matter how prettily packaged, particularly when such messages are viewed as having originated from the bureaucracy.

The American public might more easily accept tax-funded work which serves commemorative and functional designs, as was the trend in nineteenth century arts patronage. Works of architecture particularly utilize comprehensible forms and symbols which will earn community approval. The abstract and non-referential nature of much of modernistic public sculpture, from Calder to Oldenburg, however, solicits a more personal response than public art which encompasses a visible community purpose.

As covered in the previous section, for example, the conservatism of the Royal Academy resulted in the development of artist-directed ventures. Eventually, Institutes such as those formed in Glasgow and Newcastle-upon-Tyne became centers of civic pride, and sources to which the State looked for artisans and craftsmen for public commissions of architecture, sculpture, and painting. Thus, rather than imposing a new

standard of taste upon the public in the name of "cultural progress", English society slowly absorbed new artistic trends into the municipal mainstream.

The writer would assert that the government does have a responsibility to foster artistic craftsmanship, through the development of arts programs in public schools, and at least verbal support for the arts institute. The failure of the National Endowment has proved that more directly funded projects are backed by good intentions, but often lack the component of artistic insight.

The introduction of arts professionals into the decision making process, an issue extensively addressed in discussions of the composition of the board of an arts organization, allows a passageway for the inspiration to collaborate with the intellect. The Victorians who witnessed the tragedy of the Parliament decor understood this; with the appointment of the artist Eastlake as secretary of the commission in the capacity of an arts administrator, the first step was taken to the appointment of professionals and trained art historians within the realm of public art funding. Eastlake, consequentially, was later elected President of the Royal Academy and director of the National Gallery.

Thus, while an emulation of the European concern for cultural policy is admirable, the American government must also take into consideration the public preoccupation with aesthetics, as well as the personal expression of the artist.

In summing up the effects of government guided projects, one might look to the words of the illustrious nineteenth century Realist painter Gustave Courbet. In defiance of the unyielding character of State commissions, the artist would refuse elections to the Academy, as well as refuse the Cross of the Legion of Honor. He held the belief that the "support" of the arts by the State was detrimental to the natural development of style, and tended to isolate the work from public tastes. He stated:

"The State is incompetent in matters of art. When it undertakes to distribute rewards it trespasses on the field of public taste. Its intervention is totally demoralized, fatal to art which it confines within official conventions and which it condemns to the most sterile mediocrity; the only wise thing for it to do would be to abstain."<sup>33</sup>

The writer would assert that public art might follow the more prosaic and pragmatic forms to which it is more naturally suited, while lending support to the progression of the arts through indirect funding. Instilling an interest and awareness of the arts through education is one step which the American government overlooked in its aspirations for a cultural policy. One would insist that more can be learned from the practices of European model for "culture", rather than the outcome.

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<sup>33</sup>Harding, James, Artistes Pompiers: French Academic Art in the Nineteenth Century, (London: 1978), p. 14

**CONCLUSION :****REFLECTIONS UPON THE ARTS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM  
AND THE INTERNSHIP**

An academic program which concerns itself with the management of the arts organization most often focuses upon the nonprofit, with the assumption that the for-profit gallery must be doing something right in order to have the word "profit" incorporated into its classification. Indeed, the health of the contemporary art market would suffer without tax breaks, grants and donations; such public support has become a substitute for the traditional definition of patronage.

Organizations such as Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. tend to carry on this conventional approach to the presentation of art. Although the Collection is publicly accessible to some extent, the success of the for-profit gallery is based not upon public funding, but rather upon public support. As the Intern, therefore, I have encountered great difficulties in finding criticism with the operations of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

As a private gallery, Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. need not open its doors to the public. Indeed, the "by appointment only" method of establishing and catering to a clientele would be of sufficient financial support to the business. Nonetheless, the Schons have "publicized" their personal collection, thus initiating their ability to affect the understanding of nineteenth century arts within the community.

I can not deny that many difficulties arise from the small-scale nature of the organization, particularly one which is limited to family ownership. Decisions regarding the selection and presentation of the Collection most often originate from personal opinion, rather than some managerial guideline imparted by Arts Administration courses. Nonetheless, I maintain that the endurance of Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. within a tumultuous market is sufficient evidence for the success of the methods employed by the organization.

As in any business, conflict exists. Contemporary support for the arts in America, unlike the Royal patronage of England and France, also consists of a variegated assortment of benefactors, each with conflicting interests and preferences. In our time and country, no Royal Academy exists to set standards for the quality of the nature or the work, nor does the Paris Salon offer honors or reviews. Rather, contemporary art trends are more closely attuned with the common society from which they stem.

The curious issues borne of this Internship, thus, extend beyond the for-profit status. Indeed, the market of the fine arts of the 18th and 19th century differs radically from the expansive contemporary art market which thrives in New Orleans. Had this Internship been in the capacity of the modern art gallery, whether in the area of for-profit sales or grants-writing for a nonprofit institution, issues governing the differences between the "high" and "low" arts would not

arise. However, concentrating upon the elitist status of the product will reveal several interesting points unique to this internship within Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.

Of course, the definition of fine arts can be deliberated over several pages. For the sake of simplicity, one might delineate the fine arts as a distinctly different category from either the "high" or the "low" arts, thus negating any offensive categorizations. One can assert, however, that the high arts involve a sense of skill, and a standard of quality by which the product is compared. The product is quite often commissioned for a specific purpose, rather than for the mere pleasure or self-serving interests of its producer.

The lesser arts imply a less superior standard, although the demarkation is merely made to distinguish work which involves a purely aesthetic or profound intent, as opposed to the product which serves a utilitarian purpose.

By this definition, one might argue that the vast antique market which exists in New Orleans would exemplify a field of the lesser arts, due to the practicality of its original context. Although the antique market does represent a utilitarian craft in the slightest definition, one would still consider the realm of antiques as worthy of fine art status. The craft involves a sense of skill, and a consistent style which pervades the period under consideration.

For example, one will find distinctions between the ornamental style of Art Deco works of the earlier part of this



century, as opposed to the Bauhaus School which had developed in Germany around the same time; both styles, however, can be found on a relatively equal level within the auction market.

Consistency in the training or aesthetic principles involved within the craft, therefore, plays a key factor in artistic quality. Very rarely will one find folk art or self-taught artists within the established arena of the "fine arts". However, if one simply listens to the responses of a wandering tourist to the artistic integrity of, for instance, the "Red Cat" (name changed to protect the innocent), one will hear the phrase "My kid could have done that" repeated incessantly. In contrast, the glory of a Rubens or Bougeureau will inspire gasps rather than words. Such is the substance of the fine arts: artistic skill combined with artistic inspiration.

Thus, the art product in question here is one which has established and continuously proven its value, not only in monetary terms, but in terms of lasting quality. Perhaps it is fitting that the artists of contemporary times, particularly of the American scene, will not produce works which will last for hundreds of years to one day be perceived as a measure of wealth. Indeed, from the inception of the readymade object by Duchamp, (who, on a side note, achieved most success in the New York circle of Dadaists and by the private support of the Arensberg and Guggenheim families), America has welcomed the transient and mundane into the realm

of high art. With the acknowledgement that industry and technology have not only highlighted the temporality of contemporary times but have increased it, it is quite appropriate that the objects invited into the exclusive arena of art would reflect our ephemeral nature.

As the English critic Alloway asserts on the questionable definition of the art object, we should not "reserve the word 'art' for the highest artifacts and the oldest thought of history's top ten, [rather] it needs to be used more widely as a description of 'what society does'".<sup>34</sup> In other words, the archival quality of an enduring art object does not necessarily insure that said art object is of value to the society in which it is produced. Art reflects and creates according to, and despite of, the spirit of the times.

And so, judging from the supply of works produced today, what exactly is it that society "does"? Does society produce too much waste? Does society depend upon packaging and outward appearance rather than quality and inner nature? Does society accept the concept of the temporary? Society does indeed.

The word "timeless" is nearly obsolete in the art world, unless one speaks of works produced without this concern with Futurist speed, or the submission to nature by Earth Art, or the recycling of the object through junk sculpture. It is not

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<sup>34</sup>Wheeler, Daniel, Art Since Mid-Century: 1945 to the Present (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1984), p. 122

to say that such works do not harbour intense artistic truths. Quite the contrary, such works perfectly reflect the society from which they are borne. The argument over quality arises in terms of the permanence of the work, and the expertise of the technique and the skill of execution. Are Arts Administrators, in our incessant chase after the elusive "grand endowment", merely surviving day by day in order to finance projects which will probably not outlast the funding which we are able to secure?

Such is the experience gleaned from this Internship. I have a new found admiration for the production of the modern art object under public patronage, yet, as part of the public, demand quality.

When Leonardo produced a fresco, the intent was permanence, so that the work would survive along with the architecture. Perhaps the justification for developing techniques which would produce an enduring art work arises from a much more optimistic world viewpoint, in which a church-governed state believed in divine justice, and the continuation of the world which they inhabited. Our society, in contrast, reflects a less idealistic attitude towards the importance of preserving a culture which is so rapidly displaced by new trends. Perhaps modern life will leave nothing behind. Like Rauschenberg's "Monogram", we make do with what is available---dust to dust, junk returns to junk. Preserve the Mona Lisa, but allow Duchamp's "Fountain" to sink

into oblivion.

We have established that while artistic merit does exist within the contemporary realm, the temporality of the modern art medium does not seem promising in terms of creating a pool of cultural icons for future generations to draw upon, or for future art dealers to profit upon. The Arts Administrator within the for-profit realm, thus, encounters an issue of an entirely different nature than the daily survival issues faced by the Arts Administrator within the nonprofit (most often contemporary) art sector.

The quality of the work with Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. has already been established concurrently with the painting, by the criterion set forth by Salons, Academies and other critical arenas. Such institutions not only coexisted with the production of the art work, but also had a vested interest in production. My role as a researcher with an Arts Administration background, thus, is not to judge the art work, but to verify the critique already provided.

I contend that the nonprofit arts organization might utilize its resources to preserve the culture of our country through conservation and community involvement. Public patronage, however, should not impose personalized artistic expression upon the public taste. Rather than dwell upon the failure of the National Endowment to provide continuing support for the contemporary arts, it is my understanding that the Arts Administrator must seek innovative avenues to secure

a place for the arts within the future of our country. We can not "wish" an arts public into existence; we must develop an audience by providing a framework for appreciation of the arts.

It would be idealistic to believe that, following the abolition of government funding, the arts will flourish as a result of public demand. Tragically, as stated so often throughout the Arts Administration curriculum, the American public has not demonstrated the innate desire for "culture" which nurtured European policy.

While we can draw an abstract notion of cultural policy from the European standard, the conservative nature of the American public requires a more discriminating approach to the fostering of artistic progression. Indeed, even political committees involved in arts policy decisions have resisted attempts to bring art, particularly of a contemporary nature, to the public. I assert that the Arts Administrator entering the next century must refocus his or her goals. Rather than demanding or even presuming that the public take notice of the arts, the arts professional might learn from the private sector in its concern with public demands. Rather than pleading with the government for endowments or commissions, the Arts Administrator must solicit the interests of the establishment with a plan for inspiring a desire for the arts within our communities.

Education is primary. The liberal arts must be

incorporated within our learning system. Our children must, quite literally, have a hand in shaping the direction of our society. In order to instill a respect for this world, one must regard the environment with the hope of permanence, or at least with the hope that the results of our efforts will remain beyond our lifetimes.

In providing school children with standards of judgement through art history, appreciation and techniques classes, the future community will be equipped with a developmental knowledge of innovative symbolism. As any arts proponent might nostalgically relate, a familiarity with the arts creates a need to remain familiar with the arts.

The knowledge gained from the Arts Administration curriculum has increased by awareness of the dilemmas faced by the arts organization. Like the consumer within the for-profit sector, the nonprofit patron demands certification of the quality of the product. A knowledge of the history of the arts and their role in the shaping of society is proof of the merit of the arts.

Thus, in my capacity as an Arts Administrator, I hope to utilize the understanding I have gained to redirect arts funding to the education within the public school system. Perhaps this approach is more time-consuming in terms of developing an arts audience. However, one can be assured that the investment in future patronage outweighs the benefits of a temporary arts endowment.

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**APPENDIX A**

Information on Incoming Paintings

APPENDIX B

Document Information

## APPENDIX C

Wall card Format

**APPENDIX D**

Document on the Formation of the Royal Academy, and the  
Development of Alternative Spaces

**APPENDIX E**

Document on the Arts in 19th Century France

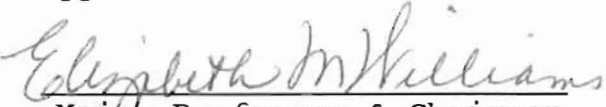
**VITA**

Elissa Ann Gydish was born in Staten Island, New York in 1971. After obtaining her Bachelors of Arts Degree at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, she moved to New Orleans to study for the Masters of Arts in Arts Administration. She currently maintains the position of Director of Research at Kurt E. Schon, Ltd. in New Orleans, and hopes to soon embark upon independent art research. She is also intent upon pursuing her Doctorate in Art History.

## EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT


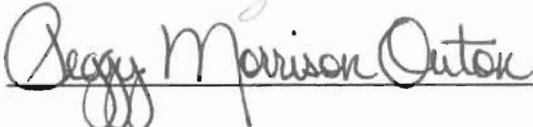
Candidate: Elissa Ann Gydish  
Major Field: Arts Administration  
Title of Thesis: An Internship with Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.  
of New Orleans, Louisiana

Approved:

  
Major Professor & Chairman

  
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

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