

Day 8 - Khrystyne Wilson

Branding is a powerful tool in the art world, as it leads art buyers to certain dealers and galleries, based on their level of quality rather than the art they possess. More and more, consumers are buying art that is popular, rather than unique, and other consumers will not purchase a piece of art that has not been approved by a knowledgeable and trustworthy dealer. This is how many dealers have become as, if not more, popular than the artists they sell. Branding, however, helps both the dealer and the artist, because through this type of marketing, the artists gain exposure, and thus are more likely to sell more pieces, meanwhile the dealer gains credibility and money for each piece they are able to sell, whether or not it was through marketing and branding. The success of the artist helps the reputation of the dealer, and the reputation of the dealer helps the success of the artist, hence branding can be very powerful and useful in the contemporary art market.

With this being said, many dealers have taken advantage of their position in this branding art market, and thus have used the art market solely for monetary purposes, rather than to introduce to the market, new artists and pieces that are unique, but may not sell as well. One of the dealers that has not altered based on his branding was David Zwirner, who owns a gallery in Chelsea in New York City.



David Zwirner has helped artists such as Luc Tuymans, and Neo Rauch to begin their careers, and also represents international artists such as Michael Borremans, Raoul De Keyser, Stan Douglas, Marcel Dzama, On Kawara, Toba Khedoori, Jockum Nordström, Raymond Pettibon, Thomas Ruff, Katy Schimert, Yutaka Sone, Diana Thater, and Christopher Williams. Zwirner focuses on pieces that are historically relevant, while also prompting viewers to feel something through the art. He states in an interview by WSJ Magazine: "When I look at an artist for the first time, the initial reaction I'm hoping for can be anything from discomfort to puzzlement. I go up to any artwork with a huge storage of information that I've accumulated over the years, and if I can't file it or it makes me angry, I think, "Interesting.""

Zwirner also dislikes the industries manner of being stereotyped as haughty and intimidating, and believes that art fairs are overvalued. He believes that art is for everyone, and that galleries are the entry point for collectors, not art fairs. One of his major problems with the art market is how Auction houses will buy a piece of work from an artist at a relatively low cost, and then turn around and sell it for an exorbitant amount of money, with none of this income going back to the artist. He believe that there should be a 25-year moratorium on selling living artists' work at auction so that the artists can worry less about how much the next piece they create will make them, and more on the actual creativity of the piece itself. I believe that although David Zwirner is now a brand that consumers trust and rely on to purchase contemporary art pieces, he is also very loyal to his artists, and is trying to help the art market, rather than just himself, and for this I believe he is a successful dealer.

[<http://www.davidzwirner.com/>]

David Zwirner Gallery:

