

**Giorgio Fasol, Collector based in Verona, Italy interviews Alfredo Cramerotti, Curator based in the UK: Is The Art System Changing?**

*GF – The Artist, the Museum, The Critic, the Gallerist, the Collector, The Faire, all these I define as the fundamental "gears" of this system... How do you think all of them will behave in the future? How will their relationship change, how will it evolve? Do you think they will keep the same roles?*

AC – What you describe above as the ‘gears’ of the art system, together, they represent what I would call the ‘ecology of the art’. How this ecology would change is a question not about the disappearance of something and the emergency of something else, but of changing equilibrium from one element to another. Basically, it’s a concept of quantum physics applied to art. If fifty years ago the triad Artist-Critic-Museum was representing the gatekeeper and the vehicle for art in reset to society at large (and the Collector and the Gallerist were ‘supporting roles’) now the triad Collector-Gallerist-Fair have the upper hand, and in theory they can make / unmake any Artist, Museum, Curator or Critic as they please. I know it’s a bit harsh to state such matter-of-fact consideration, but the market is actually an incredibly powerful engine to determine also long-term investment and view in the arts. I am focusing here on contemporary art, obviously. How this will change in 50 years time nobody knows. I believe that, contrary to many expectations, the relation between local context and global visibility will strengthen rather than weaken. It means that artists, curators, collectors and gallerists alike will yes be acting on a global stage, but each time relating their work / project / investment with a local purpose. Art has always been quite globalised, and I can see some trends in which local relevance is taken on board and given international resonance through the work of the mentioned players. Emphasising difference amongst internationalism. It’s a thought speculation obviously.

*GF – What about the Kunsthalle? How will it be in the future? How would you like it to evolve? How would it be your personal one? What could be its substitute? What could be a new formula?*

AC – The Kunsthalle will thrive; it's yes less resourceful than museum but also more agile, able to work on shorter leading-up and preparation time, flexible enough to accommodate a short-notice reflection on societal and cultural matters, thus preferred vehicle from an artist's point of view precisely for that. The emergence of Kunsthalle-like privately funded institutions (many originating from collectors, but also from non-profit foundations that engage with public discourse and programmes open to all) is a clear example of the trend. Big museums will grow bigger and more relevant, absorbing small ones and playing an ever-important role in terms of public programs and engagement. Small and regional museums will struggle because of this 'centripetal' movement, and some of them could deaccess part of their own collections (non-core part of their assets) in order to gain more solidity and concentrate on core-activities. Again, perhaps not such a catastrophic scenario after all. Being more nimble means being more present on a territory and more flexible to adapt to circumstances.

*GF – Recently I was invited at a conference at the Verona University titled "Art care" and I was thinking about all the young students.... What could we do for them, how could we incline them towards the art world? What would be the right way to teach them?*

AC – My advise would be to teach students to keep one foot in art, and one foot somewhere else; not in the sense of doing another job, but in terms of bridging other 'systems' (of knowledge, of expertise, of work methods) with art in order to be more relevant, to expand the potential audience for their projects or work, to learn from other sectors and become both more relevant content-wise and more sustainable finance-wise. We can talk about art & science, art & media journalism (my personal playground), art & law, art & business, art & geopolitical expertise, and so on. You name it. Myself, having a design background that gave me a lot of 'soft skills' and project-management abilities, I recognise how important these features gained outside the art system have been in the development of my career. Art can be a wonderful idea also to understand better the various system governing, or establishing certain aspects of our life; to renounce to this opportunity would be to limit oneself to circulate within the art system only.

*GF – "No way..." I thought... They are the ones teaching me continuously... So I ask to you... Do you have a "very young" idea to introduce and some "very old" ideas that you would like to leave behind?*

AC – See answer 3 above. A refreshed approach to the arts (not new, since the Renaissance man was really about all disciplines combined: artist, scientist, architect, doctor, patron, collector, engineer, and so on) which see art as part of a circle of activities, for different times and spaces join one's life, and not as a separate world. This is both new and old. We may simply be at the tail end of a 'blip' that has considered the centrality of the finished work, and the specialisation on one category of cultural production, as central for the development of human culture. If we think about the history of dance, music, cooking - all were not tied to a certain 'finished' work, version, or receipt. They were, and still are, evolving constantly. Perhaps we could take this thought and mull over for a bit.

Alfredo Cramerotti

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