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## CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT STAGES OF ART FAIRS

**Abstract:** The article considers the issues of the origin and stages of development of the art fair. As an event in the life of mankind, the fair has a deep history. Based on the study of extensive literature, it is concluded that art fairs provide a platform for artists and galleries to demonstrate their works to a wide audience of professionals, collectors and art lovers. It is noted that they allow the exchange of ideas and points of view on all issues of the current and future development of art.

**Key words:** fair, international art fair, art, culture, audience.

**Introduction.** One of the forms of familiarizing society with culture and art are art fairs, which are held annually around the world. The etymology of the word “fair” (*yarmarka*) goes back to the German word “Jahrmarkt” (where Jahr is a year, and markt is a bargain), literally meaning “annual bargaining”. From German this word migrated to Russian, and from there to Azerbaijani. The equivalent of this definition in English is “fair” (in Old French “*feire*”, “*faire*” – market) [1].

The Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language defines a fair (*ярмарка*) in the first meaning as “a large trade usually with amusement, entertainment, held regularly in the same place and at the same time”; in the second meaning “a periodically arranged arrival of trade and industrial organizations... for the wholesale sale and purchase of goods according to the samples exhibited” [2]. A similar meaning of the word “fair” (*yarmarka*) is given by the Explanatory Dictionary of the Azerbaijani Language [3] and numerous other explanatory dictionaries.

**The interpretation of the main material.** Despite the fact that, like an exhibition, a fair involves a demonstration of items, there is a significant difference between these two events. So, a fair is an event, the main purpose of which is the purchase and sale of exhibited goods, the conclusion of trade and other transactions, that is, the commercial component is the basis of the essence of this event. An exhibition is a demonstration of works of culture and art, science or industry, the main purpose of which is to stimulate public interest, promote manufactured products, expand trade or illustrate progress in various areas of human existence.

As an event in the life of mankind, the fair has a deep history. The first mentions of these events are found fragmentarily in written documents and fragments of sculptures and various dishes in Ancient Greece and Rome. As a rule, they were held during major events, for example, the Olympic Games in Ancient Greece. In Ancient Rome, fairs were held on a regular basis due to the fact that trade played a leading role in the economy. Numerous wars of Rome led to the expansion of the empire. The increase in the flow of goods into the territory of the empire contributed to the further development of trade relations. The demand for various goods, including food, textiles, metals and luxury goods, increased. All this was sold at numerous fairs held throughout the Roman Empire. The growth of trade led to the adoption of special laws guaranteeing fair trade and protecting the rights of traders and buyers.

Fairs became an important attribute not only of the city-states of Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. Historical materials testify to fairs held in the centers, cities of the Middle East. The holding of fairs in China dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC. However, unlike fairs in the Roman Empire, fairs in the mentioned territories were timed to coincide with religious holidays.

Fairs occupied a special place in the life of Medieval Europe. The first information about fairs dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, in 629 AD, King Dagobert I granted the monks of Saint-Denis a charter allowing them to hold a fair “for the glory of God and in honor of Saint-Denis and his holiday”. This event, held near Paris, in the fields near the town of Saint-Denis, was repeated annually for more than a thousand years [4].

Since the church played a huge role in the political and socio-economic life of European nations, medieval fairs were held on religious holidays at first and were concentrated directly in the squares of Christian temples or churches located in various cities and other populated areas. However, with the growth of trade, fairs became part of the daily life of medieval Europeans,

and the places where fairs were held, that is, “fair squares”, were transformed into important trading centers that significantly influenced the economy of medieval states. Regular holding of fairs (and not only on “holy days”, that is, on religious holidays) significantly increased the income of the church, since churches and temples charged merchants a fee for the privilege of setting up a trading stall at fairs. Enriching the religious institutions, the raised money allowed them to use some of the funds to develop and protect the trading areas.

As the fairs became more established, they were granted royal charters that legitimized their holding and encouraged the growth of trade. By the 12<sup>th</sup> century, fairs in European cities had become significant events, attracting people from different places, and lasted for long periods of time. This evolution meant that fairs moved from an event influenced by the church to a civic event with great economic and socio-cultural influence in the countries of medieval Europe. The economic influence of medieval fairs became a significant factor in facilitating the exchange of goods and services throughout Europe. These events allowed local and foreign traders to sell textiles, spices, handicrafts and other goods. Taxes and various fees from the transactions of purchase and sale generated huge revenue for the church and secular authorities, which emphasized the interrelated nature of trade and power in the Middle Ages. However, medieval fairs were not only commercial events, but also centers of social and cultural activity. They provided residents with a break from the hard work of everyday life and a place for entertainment and social interaction. Fairs were accompanied by various entertainments, including performances by singers, jugglers and musicians, scenes depicting biblical stories. These fairs were an occasion for celebration, and music, dance and games contributed to the festive atmosphere. The social and cultural aspects of medieval fairs played an important role in strengthening community cohesion and creating a sense of common identity among its participants.

The late Middle Ages, marked by the further development of trade, the creation of the first industrial enterprises, and advances in transport and communication, significantly reduced the influence of medieval fairs in economic life. As a result, the emphasis of fairs gradually shifted from the commercial component to the predominance of their social and cultural elements.

Thus, at a certain historical stage, medieval fairs addressed the economic, social and cultural needs of society. They served as the main markets for

traders and provided a place for the exchange of various goods. Over the course of several centuries, the function of medieval fairs evolved from religious ceremonies to commercial markets and, ultimately, to centers of social and cultural life. This evolution underlines the historical significance of fairs throughout the Middle Ages.

A new stage in the development of fairs occurred with the beginning of the development of capitalist production relations in the era of modern history, the second half of the 17–19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the form that it was in the Middle Ages, the fair ceased to have any serious influence on trade relations. With the growth of cities, fairs could no longer fully satisfy the needs of the urban population. This required daily trade in each city. The further development of capitalism led to the expansion of domestic and international trade relations, contributed to the creation of trade exchanges in various cities of Europe. Despite this, fairs continued to function as wholesale trade centers. Beginning with the 19<sup>th</sup> century, large wholesale fairs turned into exhibitions of product samples, where trade was carried out as on a commodity exchange.

The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was marked by the beginning of holding international fairs, which were characterized by the broad participation of various countries, companies and individuals. They showcased all the achievements of science and technology at the time of the fair. Most international fairs widely represented works of art from participating countries, as well as exhibits from private collections of individual amateur collectors.

International art fairs originate in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the first exhibitions of modern art which organically arose from the historical events of the Renaissance, when European cities were the epicenters of art and culture, were held in Europe. The squares and markets of cities such as Florence and Venice were filled with works by artists of that era, displaying their creations in the hope of attracting the attention of a potential patron or art lover. Although these were not art fairs in the sense of today, they were certainly precursors representing a combination of trade, culture and creativity.

An important starting point in the development of international fairs was the Exposition Universelle of 1855 in Paris. The event was more large-scale than just an art fair. It featured a wide range of art from around the world, consolidating Paris's status as the world's capital of art. These events paved the way for specialized events devoted exclusively to art.

The first international art fair was organized by the French government in 1867, featuring works from over 30 countries. This event marked the

beginning of the modern era of art fairs where artists could showcase their work on an international stage [5].

In the following decades, many other international art fairs were created around the world, including the Venice Biennale (founded in 1895), the São Paulo Art Biennial (founded in 1951), and Art Basel (founded in 1970). These events became important venues for contemporary artists to showcase their work and gain recognition. Today, international art fairs have evolved into major cultural events, attracting millions of visitors each year. In addition to their cultural component, they stimulate the economic development of the host cities, generating income through tourism and art sales. They showcase the work of contemporary artists and cultural figures, defining the contours and directions of the future of art. One of the most prestigious art fairs in the world is Art Basel, which unites three major companies – Art Basel MCH Swiss Exhibition (Basel), Art Basel U.S. Corp and Art Basel MCH Group Asia Ltd. Hong Kong. This international art fair was organized by Basel gallerists Ernst Beyeler, Trudl Bruckner and Balz Hilt in 1970 and since the first fair it has received international recognition. The fair featured 90 galleries and 30 publishing houses from ten countries. More than 16 thousand people visited the first exhibition to see the works presented by art and cultural figures from 90 galleries and 30 publishing houses from 10 countries [6]. Being one of the most prestigious international art galleries, it is held annually in Miami Beach, FL. It showcases works from over 200 galleries from around the world [5]. The fairs feature panel discussions with leading figures from the art world, providing first-hand insight into various aspects of collecting and exhibiting art. Panelists include renowned art collectors, museum directors, biennial curators, artists, art critics, and architects.

Between 2010 and 2017, Art Basel presented its first exhibition in Hong Kong, which attracted over 60,000 visitors. In September 2014, Art Basel launched its Crowdfunding Initiative with Kickstarter (a website to attract funds to implement creative, scientific and production projects under crowdfunding scheme) to support non-profit crowdfunding organizations (public financing that is fund-raising from persons interested in art development) in the visual arts. During Art Basel 2015 in Hong Kong, Art Basel and BMW presented the first version of BMW Art Journey, a joint initiative to recognize and support emerging artists around the world [6].

The Basel fair brings together the international art world, showcasing the work of over 4,000 artists from 200 leading galleries representing five

continents. Numerous exhibitions are held simultaneously in and around Basel, creating a week-long atmosphere of artistic celebration [6].

The next fair, Frieze Art Fair, is held annually in London, showcasing the work of established and emerging contemporary artists. Frieze Art Fair London was founded in 2003 by Amanda Sharp and Matthew Slotover. The fair is one of the world's most significant contemporary art fairs, showcasing the work of contemporary artists from all areas of contemporary art. It takes place every October in Regent's Park, central London. The fair's exhibition galleries feature some of the most exciting artists working today, from emerging to iconic, and a team of leading international independent curators advise on the thematic sections, enabling performance work and ambitious presentations by emerging galleries. Over the past few years, Frieze Art Fair London has attracted over 60,000 visitors annually, including curators, artists, collectors, gallerists and critics, as well as a wider audience of contemporary art lovers [7].

A special place among international art fairs belongs to Art Dubai, which is one of the leading international art fairs in the Middle East and takes place in Dubai every spring. Art Dubai was established in 2007 by Art Dubai Group.

Over the years, Art Dubai has become a major catalyst for local, regional and international discussions on art of the Middle East and surrounding regions (the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia) and promotes art from these regions to the international arena. As one of the most prestigious international art fairs in the world, through its gallery sections presentations, Art Dubai promotes meaningful interaction of the global cultural heritage with the rich cultural heritage and contemporary artistic practices of the regions of Southeast and Central Asia, the African continent and Latin America.

Art Dubai has become a launching pad and platform for the development of successful careers for artists, curators and art professionals and continues to promote the arts through its extensive fair programmes and initiatives. In addition, Art Dubai works closely with its partners to develop innovative artistic programming and support the cultural community. Art Dubai currently brings together over 30 initiatives, including Dubai Design Week, the Middle East's design platform; Downtown Design, the region's leading design fair focusing on high-quality and original design; Prototypes for Humanity, the world's largest and most diverse gathering of scholars working on social and environmental issues; and the Global Art Forum, an annual interdisciplinary summit on art issues. Art Dubai represents galleries from all over the world,

from emerging artists to renowned centers, solo and group exhibitions. During 2024 alone, hundreds of works by cultural and artistic figures from many countries were presented in the 64 galleries of the fair [8].

The next prestigious international art fair is Paris Photo. It has become the largest international art fair dedicated to photography, which is held every November in the heart of Paris. Since 1997, the mission of the fair has been to promote and develop photographic creativity, as well as the galleries, publishers and artists who stand at its origins. Paris Photo brings together up to 200 participants from all over the world, offering collectors and enthusiasts the most diverse and high-quality presentation of projects related to photography. The leading galleries of ParisPhoto display historical and contemporary works of art from contemporary masters to young talents. Specialized publishers and art book dealers present unique and rare editions, as well as book presentations and autograph sessions with many of the most famous contemporary artists [9]. Among the art events taking place in France, an important place is occupied by the annual Paris Contemporary Art Fair (Foire International d'Art Contemporain), which is considered one of the largest European contemporary art fairs.

A special place among international art events belongs to the Artissima contemporary art fair. Since its foundation in 1994, it has united the international art market with an emphasis on experimentation and research. Galleries from all over the world take part every year. In addition to the fair itself (Main Section, Monologue/Dialogue, New Entries, Art Spaces and Editions), Artissima also consists of three curatorial sections, headed by a board of international curators and museum directors and dedicated to emerging artists (Presence Future), the rediscovery of pioneers of contemporary art (Back to the Future) and drawing (Disegni). The three curatorial sections are housed in an exhibition pavilion with monographic stands and on a special digital platform ArtissimaVoice Over [10].

An important event in the art world is the international art fair Armory Show, founded in 1994, which annually brings together representatives of leading international galleries of contemporary art in New York [11].

In addition to the above, several dozen other international art fairs covering various continents are held annually. Among them: Art Felix, Los Angeles and Independent, New York (USA), Frieze, Seoul (Korea), Zonamaco, Mexico City (Mexico), Sydney Contemporary Art Fair (Australia), Art Toronto (Canada), Art Russia, Moscow (Russia) and others.

Along with international art fairs held in major cities of the world such as New York, London, Paris, Hong Kong, Dubai, Moscow, art fairs are held in large and small cities of many countries of the world that have national or regional significance.

International art fairs have important socio-economic and cultural significance for the countries that organize these world art forums, as they generate income not only for galleries and artists, but also for host cities and countries. According to the Internet portal Statista, the value of transactions in the global art market in 2023 amounted to 65 billion USD. Moreover, 58% of art collectors made purchases at art fairs in 2023[12].

**Conclusion.** International art fairs are important not only for the art market, but also for cultural exchange. They provide a platform for artists and galleries to present their work to a wide audience of professionals, collectors and art lovers. In addition, fairs allow for the exchange of ideas and points of view on all issues of current and future developments in art. They facilitate the establishment of cooperation between cultural figures both within one artistic movement and with figures from other artistic movements.

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#### **İNCƏSƏNƏT YARMARKALARININ YARANMASI VƏ İNKİŞAF MƏRHƏLƏLƏRİ**

Məqalədə incəsənət yarmarkasının yaranması və inkişaf mərhələləri nəzərdən keçirilir. Bəşəriyyətin həyatında baş verən hadisə kimi yarmarka dərin tarixə malikdir. Geniş ədəbiyyatın tədqiqinə əsaslanaraq belə qənaətə gəlinir ki, incəsənət sərgiləri rəssamlar və qalereyalar üçün öz əsərlərini geniş peşəkar auditoriyaya, kolleksiyaçılara və sənət seyərlərə nümayiş etdirmək üçün platforma yaradır. Bildirilir ki, onlar incəsənətin indiki və gələcək inkişafının bütün məsələləri üzrə fikir və mövqe mübadiləsinə imkan verir.

**Açar sözlər:** yarmarka, beynəlxalq incəsənət sərgisi, incəsənət, mədəniyyət, tamaşaçı.

### **Сабина Бабаева (*Азербайджан*)**

#### **ЭТАПЫ СОЗДАНИЯ И РАЗВИТИЯ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННЫХ ЯРМАРОК**

Статья рассматривает вопросы зарождения и этапы развития художественной ярмарки. Ярмарка как событие в жизни человечества имеет глубокую историю. На основе изучения обширной литературы сделан вывод о том, что художественные ярмарки предоставляют платформу художникам и галереям для демонстрации своих работ широкой аудитории профессионалов, коллекционеров и любителей искусства. Отмечается, что они позволяют обмениваться идеями и точками зрения по всем вопросам текущего и будущего развития искусства.

**Ключевые слова:** ярмарка, международная художественная ярмарка, искусство, культура, аудитория.