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Art & Capitalism

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Recommended Citation

Pesqueira, Tristan, "Art & Capitalism" (2023). *Research Days Posters 2023*. 72.
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INTRODUCTION

- Capitalism is the dominant system, perceived as “best”
- Production & Consumption of art changed by capitalism
- Paper is founded on the idea that art is purely an expression of human mind & emotion
- Capitalism perverts this idea, “art” is created for financial gain
- Artists are grossly underpaid, with the only exception being “celebrity artists”



METHODS

This research looked at a wide array of primary sources and philosophical statements including studies of the salary of artists when compared to other professions, studies of the sale of pieces of art, as well as personal statements from artists such as Pablo Picasso. The sources were evaluated for data pertaining to the influence of capitalism on art, in order to determine the effects which a capitalist economic system has had on art.

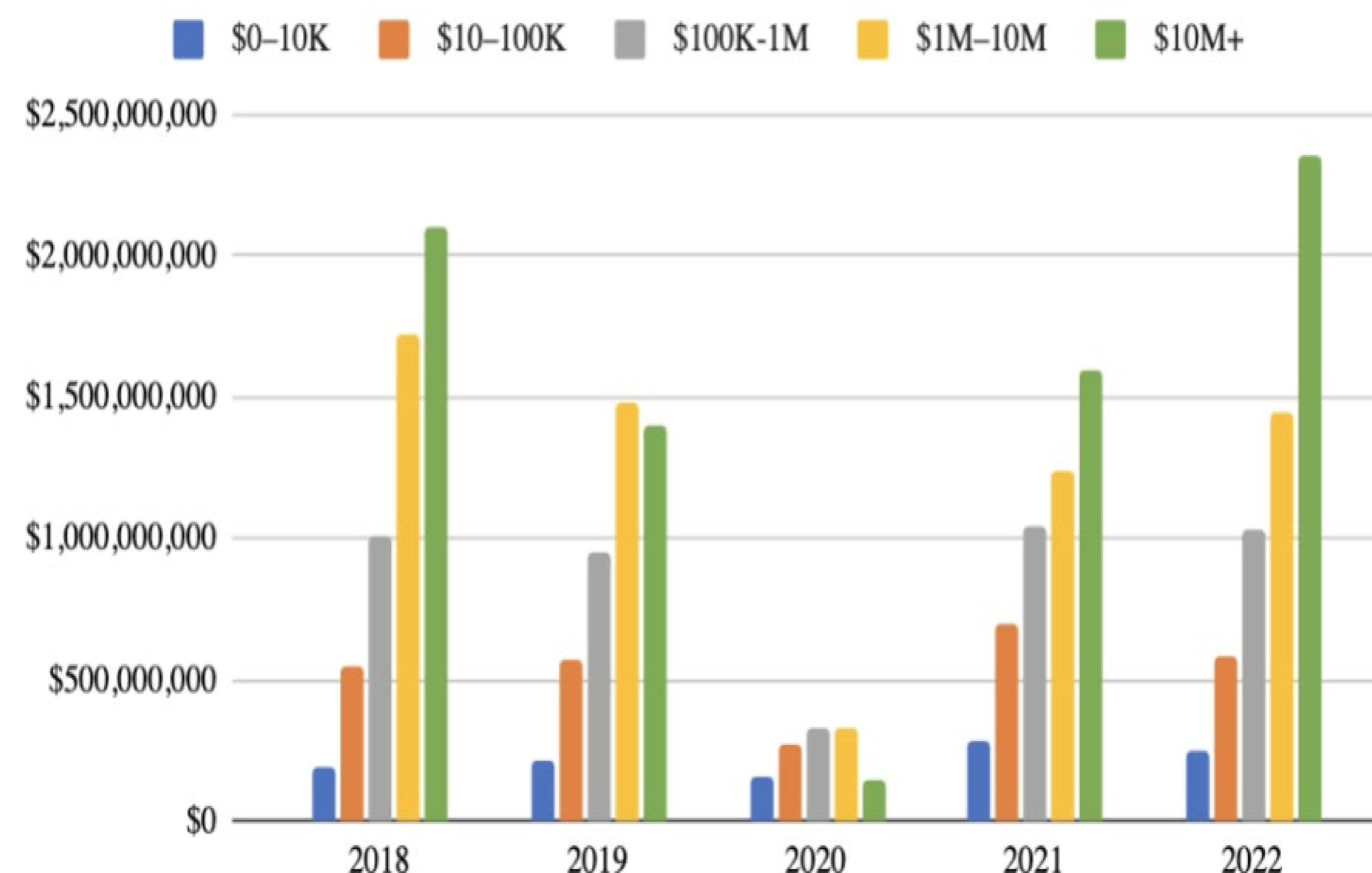
CONCLUSION

Art takes a different form under capitalism; one which, like most things, is more like an industry made to generate capital, rather than a labor of love and/or emotion. Artists who are unable to garner large amounts of attention and propel themselves into the realm of the “celebrity artist”, will often be unable to sustain their living through being an artist. Art in its natural form is unable to coexist, on a large scale, with a capitalist system.

RESULTS

- Artists are generally unable to earn a livable wage
- The small percent of superbly expensive art (>\$1m) accounts for the largest portion of sales
- Art being produced for profit is considered by many to be wrong
- Art is purchased more often as a status symbol, rather than just to be appreciated.
- Expensive art is sometimes purchased as a method of tax evasion.

Total Fine Art Sales (USD) by Price Band (Jan 1–May 20)



Source: Artnet Price Database and Artnet Analytics

ABSTRACT

