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Call for papers. International colloquium

The Business of Art, *au féminin* :

Women's Enterprise in the French Art Economy (late 1600s to 1945)

26-27 September 2025

Paris, Centre André-Chastel, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA), salle Vasari.



Bringing together the history of art, the history of women, and economic history, this colloquium will investigate women's role in the financing of artistic production and development in France (painting, sculpture, architecture, decorative arts, engraving, photography, *etc.*). Embracing an extended time frame, we intend to interrogate both continuities and transformations in their roles across a significant period, starting from the policies and practices of artistic patronage initiated by Louis XIV up to the particular circumstances of the Occupation. Across this *longue durée*, women will be approached as agents making and moving the money required for artistic invention and production (their own as well as others') and as integral actors in the operation of art markets, within the bounds imposed by their marital and legal status.

The colloquium will particularly focus on strategies of adapting, circumventing, and assertion deployed by French women or women working in France to negotiate masculine circuits of capital(ists) – strategies that may have gone beyond a mere male/female coexistence to include collaboration, emulation, competition, and conflict. Determined by their access to education, knowledge, and economic information, this positioning emerges clearly in discussions about the financial and legal subordination of women, whether single, married, or widowed. We will study their ability to assemble capital, invest in their own names or via proxies, operate shops, form enterprises, and organize companies. We will also interrogate the limits of their range of action and empowerment, and inquire into the possible existence of economic practices specific to women in the arts.

Contributions will take the form of individual or collective case studies addressing, but not limited to, the following topics :

- Figures and dynasties of female merchants, gallery owners, publishers, sponsors, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, investors, shareholders, and borrowers ;
- collective modes of financing (religious orders, committees of female patrons, lay women's associations) and defense of women's economic interests (trade unions, networks of female solidarity, *etc.*) ;
- modes of wealth accumulation (inheritance, dowry, marriage, salaries), dissolution (sales, liquidations, bankruptcy, misappropriation), and transmission (legacies, gifts, succession) ;
- financing strategies (banking, personal loans, investment) and their institutional contexts (financing specific to wartime, black markets, *etc.*) ;
- the visibility or invisibility (purposeful or not) of women at the head of businesses and in financing operations ;
- the spectrum and specificity of artistic domains in which women invest (for instance, favored arenas like engraving and decorative arts).

Format

Proposals (in French or English) should be sent to the three organizers Nastasia Gallian (nastasia.gallian@sorbonne-universite.fr), Elsa Jamet (elsa.jamet@hotmail.fr), and Justine Lécuyer (justine.lecuyer@hotmail.fr) by 16 March 2025. Please include a summary of the paper (500 words maximum) and a short biographical note (300 words maximum).

This call is open to students holding a MA2 and to current doctoral candidates, as well as to all established researchers.

Presentations can be in French or English and will last twenty minutes. This is an in-person colloquium, though in exceptional cases the organizers may be able to accommodate virtual participation. The scientific committee will inform participants of their acceptance or rejection in early April. Publishing a volume of proceedings based on the colloquium presentations is envisioned.

Scientific committee

Jérémie Cerman, Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art History (France, Université d'Artois, CREHS).

Natacha Coquery, Professor of Early Modern History (France, Université Lumière Lyon, LAHRA).

Clare Haru Crowston, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Professor of History (Canada, The University of British Columbia).

Charlotte Foucher Zarmanian, Scientist, Modern and Contemporary Art History (France, EHESS, CRAL).

Nastasia Gallian, Associate Professor of Early Modern Art History (France, Sorbonne Université, Centre André-Chastel).

Charlotte Guichard, Professor of Early Modern Art History (France, École normale supérieure, PSL).

Melissa Hyde, Associate School Director, Professor and Distinguished Teaching Scholar (USA, University of Florida, College of the Arts).

Elsa Jamet, Temporary Research and Teaching, PhD in Modern and Contemporary Art History (France, Université de Lille, IRHIS).

Justine Lécuyer, PhD in Modern and Contemporary Art History (France, Sorbonne Université, Centre André-Chastel).

Kim Oosterlinck, General Director of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Professor of Finance (Belgium, Université libre de Bruxelles).

Anne Perrin, Professor of Early Modern Art History (France, Université de Toulouse – Jean Jaurès / FRAMESPA).

Élodie Vaudry, Associate Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art History (France, Sorbonne Université, Centre André-Chastel).

Alexia Yates, Professor of Modern History, historian of economic life (Italy, Florence, European University Institute).

Selective bibliography

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- LANZA Janine, *From Wives to Widows in Early Modern Paris : Gender, Economy, and Law*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007.
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- MARTINEZ Cristina S. et ROMAN Cynthia E. (dir.), *Female Printmakers, Printsellers, and Print Publishers in the Eighteenth Century : The Imprint of Women, c. 1700–1830*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2024.
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- YATES Alexia, « The Invisible Rentière : The Problem of Women and Investment in Nineteenth-Century », *Entreprises et histoire*, 2, 2022, p. 76-89.
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