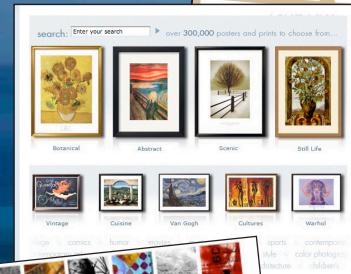


# Leveling the Playing Field



As we mentioned in Part 2, someone around the time of the Renaissance had a novel idea, which, articulated, could be “Maybe God is not the measure of all things. Maybe man is.” Whether or not the notion was introduced from the older, wiser China after Marco Polo traveled the Silk Road around 1300 is beyond our scope here. Regardless, it impacted a Europe which had been operating on a single-valued logic system (“It is God’s will.”) for a thousand years. It might have been heretical, but it was also an intellectual breath of fresh air. You could say it is an idea that caught on, and the world is changing even today because of it.

Basically, the primary authority was no longer the Church or the monarch’s divine right of kings, but Reason. With reason came education, and the storehouse of man’s knowledge has increased exponentially at ever-quickenning rates since.

Fast forward to 1957 and the Russian launch of Sputnik. America freaked out and began running a Space Race with the Russians as an adjunct to their ongoing Arms Race. That is relevant because the

military section of the military-industrial complex began working on ways to make information more readily transferable among the country’s radar networks. The concept of networking had much broader application and throughout the 60s and 70s precursors to today’s Internet were born. In 1983 the National Science Foundation established the first network between universities. Two years later, the first commercial network appeared and the rest is spam—er, history.

As of March 2007, more than 1.1 billion people use this network of networks called the Internet, with the most requested languages being English (30%), Chinese (14%), Japanese (8%), Spanish (8%), German (5%) and French (5%).

## WHAT’S ANY OF THIS GOT TO DO WITH ME?

Plenty.

Unlike traditional repositories of information, such as an encyclopedia or a library, the Internet decentralizes knowledge. Until the power elites

figure out a way to control the Internet to gain an unfair competitive advantage (and you can be certain they're working on it), the intelligence lies at the end of the communication lines, not at some corporately controlled nexus. The end of any single line in a network has a potential equal to any other.

So, your voice on the net is as loud as anybody else's. And many people are taking advantage of this golden age of democracy/equality/anarchy. Where there were hundreds of record companies, there are now tens or hundreds or thousands of independent musicians producing and releasing their own music online. Where there are still the big movie studios in Hollywood and Bollywood, there are now thousands of filmmakers producing independent films, not to mention YouTube. Despite predictions that the Internet would kill the publishing industry, more books are being sold now than ever. Instead of broadcast news, we have access to web logs that relay the actual events, not corporately controlled tripe.

All of these changes affect you as a participant in the society. As an artist, the Internet can affect you more than all the others combined.

## **YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR COMPETITION**

**T**he US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that in 2004, there were 208,000 people who

made their living in the visual arts in the USA. This breaks down to:

<b>Multi-media artists and animators</b>	<b>94,000</b>
<b>Art directors</b>	<b>71,000</b>
<b>Fine artists, including painters, sculptors, and illustrators</b>	<b>29,000</b>
<b>Artists and related workers, all other</b>	<b>8,500</b>
<b>Craft artists</b>	<b>6,100</b>

About two thirds are self-employed. Of the roughly one third who are not, many work in advertising and related services; newspaper, periodical, book, and software publishers; motion picture and video industries; specialized design services; and computer systems design and related services. Some self-employed artists offer their services to advertising agencies, design firms, publishing houses, and other businesses on a contract or freelance basis.

If you're reading this, you're likely among the 40,000 or so fine artists or crafts workers interested in finding out a way to survive or even flourish through your art. Before the Internet, the options to gain exposure for your work were more or less limited to art galleries, street fairs, local art centers and cooperatives. That's somewhat peculiar in light of the fact that one U.S. database firm claims to have a listing of 42,362 galleries and dealers.

*Be Sure to Read Part 1 and Part 2 of this Series!*

Representation by a dealer in a brick and mortar gallery is the stereotypical avenue to success for any artist, and has been for well over 100 years. But attaining that kind of exposure and marketing is no longer even necessary for success. Online galleries abound, representing a growing number of artists who are reaching a growing number of buyers resulting in a greater distribution of original artworks to more people than any time in history. Thanks to the Internet, art lovers no longer need content themselves with print reproductions of the Old Masters but are being brought together with artists of every stripe and school whose work resonates with them. Internet prices are more affordable to more people without the dealer middleman taking his 50% cut. More original art is hanging in more homes, offices and public spaces than ever.

## TRANSPARENCY IN THE MARKETPLACE

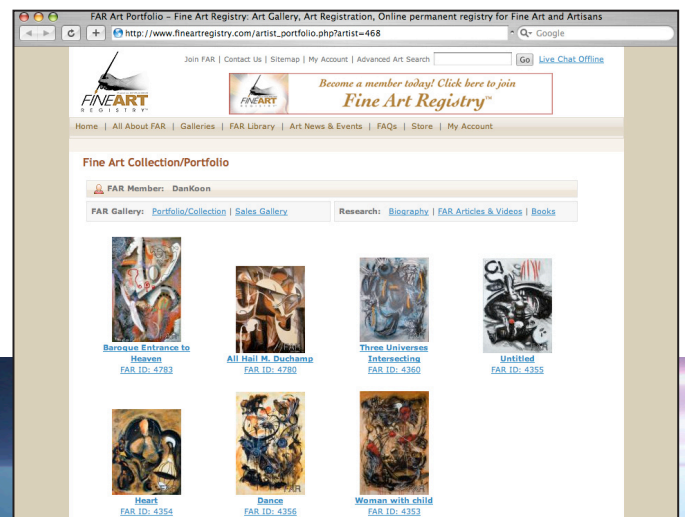
Within this profusion, Fine Art Registry™ is unique – it is the only online site that brings order to the marketplace while expanding it at the same time. The FAR® system of recording works in a permanent, publicly accessible database combined with patented identifying seals for every individual art object or collectible guarantees that a work of art is what it claims to be. From the

moment a piece is registered, its provenance is established and can be traced without question from that point forward. A FAR seal on the back of a painting adds value for collectors for that very reason. And as time goes by, FAR registration will prove valuable should the piece appear on the secondary market, when it is appraised and insured, when it passes into other hands as an inheritance, gift or donation or for any other number of reasons.

Such a system becomes even more necessary with buyers and artists living continents apart and conducting their business in cyberspace. The FAR tag means the piece can always be traced.

So, while the Internet has leveled the playing field and created a world of opportunities for any artist, Fine Art Registry is bringing a refreshing transparency to the marketplace.

And in our next installment we're going to look at an artist who has not only used the Internet to level the playing field, but tilted it in her favor. None of the actions she takes to market her art on the Internet are mysterious, but the success she enjoys is definitely remarkable. ↵



Learn More About Marketing  
Your Art – Join Fine Art  
Registry here.