

# A Review of Contemporary Chinese Art Management Research

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### Abstract:

Art management, serving as a vital link between culture and society, plays a pivotal role in propelling the growth of the art industry and satisfying public aesthetic demands. This paper delves into three key areas: art market management, nonprofit arts management, and arts management education. In the context of art market management, we highlight the fusion of theoretical innovation with practical application, advocating for proactive arts management to foster the prosperity of the art market. Within the realm of nonprofit arts management, the focus shifts towards the significance of standardized museum management and adherence to legal compliance. Regarding arts management education, there is an emphasis on developing a discipline-theoretical framework characterized by Chinese features, along with the need to formulate an ecological education philosophy for arts management from an international perspective.

**Keywords:** Art management; art market; nonprofit arts management; arts education.

## 1. Introduction

Art management, acting as a bridge between art and the public, carries immense social, cultural, and economic worth. It not only stimulates innovation and development within the cultural industries but also serves as a critical conduit for disseminating and appreciating artistic creations. Particularly in contemporary China, where the economy is rapidly expanding and living standards are significantly improving, the demand for high-quality artistic experiences is growing exponentially. Consequently, the

significance of art management becomes even more pronounced, emerging as an indispensable component for propelling cultural industrial progress. While recent years have witnessed advancements in China's art management studies, with a growing number of scholars dedicating themselves to exploring foundational theories and practical applications, it remains undeniable that the discipline suffers from a relatively weak theoretical foundation. Moreover, comprehensive reviews of contemporary Chinese art management research are scarce. To address this gap, this article attempts to synthesize existing research on art

management, categorizing it primarily into three domains: art market management, nonprofit arts management, and arts management education.

## 2. Art Market Management

The art market functions as a global platform embracing the creation, trade, collection, and investment of artworks, directly mirroring the economic value and societal influence of artistic productions. Within this arena, art management efficiently facilitates the circulation and realization of value for artworks. Today, amidst the burgeoning globalization of the art market, traditional trading patterns are undergoing profound transformations, demanding more scientifically grounded art management theories for support. Against this backdrop, numerous scholars underscore the primacy of art management as a leading approach within the art market. Professor Li Jie posits that reinforcing art management, grasping industry development trends, and probing the interactive mechanisms between the art market and cultural industries can effectively elevate management standards, propel the flourishing of cultural industries, and precisely align with the cultural needs of the public. [1] His perspective acutely captures the standing of art management within the cultural industries, spotlighting the role of forward-thinking art management paradigms in industry progression. Moreover, several academics emphasize the synchronicity between art management and the art market. Professor Tian Chuanliu advocates for the establishment of “three major systems” in art management studies, highlighting the discipline’s uniqueness combined with practical applicability, and prioritizing interdisciplinarity and localization perspectives. This approach seeks to advance synchronous growth between art management and the art market, nurturing talents proficient in both theoretical knowledge and practical application. [2] Professor Tian’s proposal not only zeroes in on theoretical innovation but also stresses the integral connection to practice, aiming to forge an art management system that reflects global trends yet embodies distinctive Chinese characteristics via interdisciplinary lenses and localized strategies.

## 3. Non-Profit Arts Management

The realm of arts encompasses diverse areas such as creation, performance, display, and education, with the primary goal of accentuating the disinterestedness of art. Concerning arts institution management, scholars predominantly highlight institutional management issues pertinent to non-profit arts entities. For instance, Peng Jianbo underscores that visual arts should prioritize standardized

management of collections in art museums, coupled with proficiency in theoretical and legal knowledge. [3] Addressing this concern, Wang Chao further emphasizes that neglecting scrutiny over defects in disposition rights, copyright and privacy concerns, authentication of counterfeits, or overly catering to consignors’ demands may sow the seeds for future troubles. Specifically, ambiguities in defining disposition rights, defects in items, commission arrangements, timeframes, and handover protocols can escalate the risk of subsequent disputes. [4] Furthermore, staff management in art museums stands out as another significant area of research interest. Ma Fenghui believes that elevating the management caliber of art museums is essential, particularly highlighting that top executives like museum directors must possess global perspectives and professional competencies to adapt to swiftly evolving societal and cultural landscapes. He advocates for bolstering workforce development, emphasizing the cultivation of art museum administrators with international outlooks and specialized capabilities, thus ensuring museums remain responsive to contemporary challenges and foster innovative developments. [5] Collectively, Peng Jianbo and Wang Chao call for clearer demarcations of rights, responsibilities for defects, and transaction regulations to preempt potential controversies later. Meanwhile, Ma Fenghui zeroes in on the talent strategy for art museums, underscoring the imperative for leadership to hold international visions and expert skills to steer institutions through societal and cultural transformations. In sum, the viewpoints of these four specialists cover various dimensions of art museum management, including collection stewardship, legal compliance, and personnel excellence, coalescing into a holistic and insightful perspective that offers invaluable reflections and recommendations conducive to the wholesome advancement of the art museum sector.

## 4. Arts Management Education

Arts management education aims to cultivate managerial and operational talents within the arts domain, manifesting through various training modalities encompassing specialized courses among others. Specifically, arts management education integrates knowledge across disciplines such as art history, marketing, financial management, and project planning, with the objective of equipping leaders with innovative thinking and practical skills for deployment in galleries, museums, performing groups, and other cultural institutions. Additionally, it provides vocational skill instruction to enhance the professionalism of arts managers. Currently, arts management education is experiencing rapid expansion; higher education institutions are establishing relevant majors in response. As educational scale in-

creases, curriculum design for arts management programs is becoming increasingly sophisticated. These curriculums incorporate advanced managerial ideologies alongside a focus on practical skill honing.

Within this context, many scholars advocate for the deepening of arts management disciplinary construction, calling for the formulation of a theory system rooted in China's national conditions. Wang Hengxin proposes that the arts management discipline is in the process of constructing a theoretical framework imbued with Chinese characteristics, blending elements of art, markets, and sociology. Through reciprocal nourishment between theory and practice, the goal is multidimensional inspection, unearthing unique perspectives, and showcasing a fresh horizon for Chinese arts management under the contemporary milieu. [6]Echoing this sentiment, Zhang Rui, Li Zhao, and Zhang Jing argue that arts management education ought to deeply integrate frontline practical experience, catalyze innovative thinking, broaden latent opportunities, and realize pedagogical upgrades transitioning from studios to laboratories. [7]Wang Hengxin's viewpoint, in conjunction with those of Li Zhao and Zhang Jing, collectively outline a prospective roadmap for the future of the arts management discipline, underscoring the synergy between theory and practice. Simultaneously, Western scholars offer alternative perspectives on arts management education. Ximena Varela suggests that although arts management curricula exhibit some degree of convergence, inherent differences retain strategic importance. Comprehending and leveraging disparities amongst courses are crucial for refining instructional content and amplifying disciplinary impact. [8] Moreover, certain academics emphasize the development of a discourse system reflective of Chinese traits in arts management. Zhang Zhenpeng and Chen Shuting posit that the core proposition in constructing a Chinese-characteristic arts management discourse revolves around art ecosystem governance. Its intent is to optimize coordination within art ecosystems, fostering symbiotic coexistence among diverse stakeholders, thereby enhancing creativity, and invigorating developmental vitality within art ecosystems. Governance requires adaptive flexibility and anticipates collaborative wisdom contributions from all sectors. [9]Zhang Zhenpeng and Chen Shuting's stance elucidates the paramount importance of art ecosystem governance as a central theme, reflecting aspirations for equity and inclusiveness alongside acknowledgment of the intricacies embedded within art ecosystems.

## 5. The Concept of Art Management

Art management is a management philosophy that combines creativity and functionality, aiming to optimize the

operational efficiency of art projects while maximizing their social and cultural value. This concept actively promotes the integration of art with the market and society, stimulating innovation, and driving the sustainable development of the art industry. In addition, art management philosophy provides clear direction for art management, promoting efficient allocation of resources and enhancing the market competitiveness of art projects. At the same time, this concept improves the public's appreciation of art, deepens society's understanding and respect for culture, and achieves interaction between art and society. Today, the scope of art management has expanded beyond traditional boundaries, and it has moved forward toward cross-border integration, particularly in the areas of art and technology, commerce, and so on. This kind of cross-border attempt has produced a series of innovative creative methods and display approaches, providing artists with a broader stage, and attracting a more diverse audience, thus deepening the impression of art in the lives of the public and raising its social recognition and influence. In response to the rapidly changing arts and cultural industries, some scholars emphasize the urgent need for the cultivation of professional talent and reflection on the current state of management in the arts. Shi Lei points out that in the face of challenges brought about by the rapid development of the arts and cultural industries, it is necessary to cultivate professional talent, reflect on the current state of art management, and promote management that highlights artistic characteristics and timeliness.[10] In addition, Teng Xianliu and Fu Yajiang believe that the fusion of art and technology can prompt people to change the traditional process of artistic creation, operation mechanism, and management mode.[11]The views of Shi Lei and Teng Xianliu and Fu Yajiang jointly reveal key strategies for art management in the face of rapid changes in the arts and cultural industries. These two viewpoints complement each other, with Shi Lei focusing on talent training and management optimization, while Teng Xianliu and Fu Yajiang focus on the innovation of thinking. Their views collectively point out the path of future development for art management, that is, both internal reform and embrace the wisdom of cross-border integration, pushing art management towards greater efficiency and creativity. On the other hand, some scholars argue that big data has profound impact on art management. Guan Fengsen and Wang Mengmeng believe that the application value of big data ecology in art management is enormous, including scientific decision-making, customized production, reducing investment risk, and precision marketing. They emphasize the positive impact of big data on the main bodies of art management (the State, institutions, and enterprises), and construct corresponding internal mech-

anism frameworks. [12]The views of Guan Fengsen and Wang Mengmeng deeply reveal the potential value of big data in art management. These all have a positive impact on the main bodies of art management, and the method of combining big data technology with art management practice can provide a new perspective for people to view the relationship between art management and technological innovation, that is, the advancement of technology can greatly push the development of art management. At the same time, the success of art management can in turn promote the application and innovation of technology.

## 6. Summary

Art management grounded in the art market has emerged as a cardinal driver of innovation and growth within the cultural industries. By facilitating efficient capital allocation and resource mobilization, it not only fosters the worldwide circulation of artworks but also deepens the engagement between art and the public, underscoring its distinct value in socio-economic development. The governance of arts organizations, especially the proficient supervision of art museums and galleries, is critical in conserving and making cultural legacies accessible. By constructing strong platforms for academic investigation and societal education, it advances the growth of socialist cultural edifices. In the context of arts management instruction, the fusion of multidisciplinary educational blueprints alongside pragmatic teaching strategies is currently shaping a novel breed of arts leaders. These upcoming professionals possess firm theoretical backgrounds and are armed with real-world competencies, enabling them to deftly maneuver through convoluted market scenarios while instilling the area with exceptional energy and inventiveness.

Essentially, arts management is on the brink of a revolutionary period marked by heightened market presence and individualized services. Driven by the momentum of digital evolution and worldwide integration, the sector is set to capitalize on the might of leading-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics. As a result, arts management is forecasted to metamorphose into a more perceptive and data-centric discipline, adeptly aligning the ambitions of artists with the expectations of

audiences. Concurrently, this transition promises to spur pioneering advancements in artistic expressions and communication techniques.

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