From billion-dollar deals and battlefields to tech: how a Ukrainian founder is reframing our relationship with art

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A new global art platform, Subjektiv, has launched with a mission to make the art world more open, human and emotionally engaging. Founded by former UBS director Kateryna Serdiuk, the app was born out of the disruption of war and shaped by a belief that art should be accessible to anyone - not just those inside the traditional gallery system.

After stepping away from banking to help restructure Ukraine's healthcare procurement system during the early days of the invasion, Serdiuk found herself questioning how people make choices. Not just in high-pressure environments, but in everyday life. What shapes our judgement? What helps us feel, understand and connect? For Kateryna, art held part of the answer - not as a luxury, but as a vital tool for reflection and expression.

Subjektiv is the result. It's a platform built by outsiders, deliberately designed to sidestep the art world's usual gatekeeping. The online digital platform accessible by an Apple app allows artists to sell directly to buyers and makers across the world online and also provides an immediate in-person, direct-to-artist sale bypassing traditional galleries and encouraging a more diverse owner of art. Many of the works are under £500.

For the artist, Subjektiv offers wholesale access to an international logistics system that enables immediate international shipping to artists upon signing up to the platform.

The artist joins the app on a non-exclusive agreement, allowing them to keep control of their business.

Once sold, the artist only needs to worry about packaging their work securely to export, rather than the paperwork and technical requirements that usually create barriers to selling for individuals. The logistics companies and Subjektiv do everything else.

For the buyer, the "Discovery mode" similar to that of the discovery mode on major social media platforms allows the user to scroll through artworks that are suggested to them based on their emotive preference, categorised by the users loves, to find artists that the buyer is interested in where they can find profiles and the work of their new favourite artist.

They can then buy directly from the artist, no gallery or third party required.

For spaces, the app can also be used as an integrated shop for galleries, artist studios and spaces with a QR code linking the viewer in the space directly to the listing for the viewer to buy. This enables an immediate sales link for their own spaces, galleries and shop and are able to keep all the data for all sales. This first of its kind marketplace provides extra control and visibility.

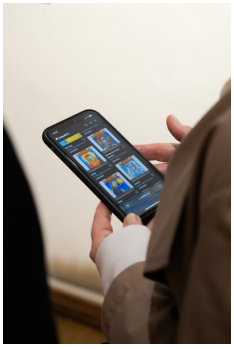
With Subjektiv artists can now warehouse and sell the work themselves, bypassing the need for galleries who can take a high commission and allows more points of entry to a market for artists of all levels and points in their career and buyers of all price points.

Early users describe it as "what the market is missing" and "a game-changer for the art world - effortless to use, artist-friendly, and designed to empower creatives at every step."

In its current form, the art world is currently dominated by galleries with few online platforms allowing artists to be able to access their own buyers directly and internationally.

Kateryna Serdiuk, founder of Subjektiv Art and a former Director of UBS, said: "Art isn't something that only exists in museums. You can feel it, you can understand it, you can live with it. With Subjektiv, we're moving away from cold, transactional experiences and creating space for emotional connection. We want people to discover art that speaks to them, to let them live with it and to let it go via secondary market when they feel to urge to discover something new. For artists, it's about giving them the tools and freedom to reach audiences directly and be fairly rewarded for their work. This is about making the art world more human, more open, and more inclusive."

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Subjektiv offers artists, collectors and exhibitors a flexible way to sell their work, whether through the main platform or directly to buyers. With Platform Sales, artists gain visibility among new audiences browsing Subjektiv's curated app. The process is simple: if the artworks are added to the discovery app as a listed buyer, buyers purchase directly, and Subjektiv handles the rest, from secure payments to global delivery and ownership tracking. A 30% commission applies, and artists can focus on creating while the logistics and administration are taken care of.

If they do not want to be part of the discovery platform, or, not accepted onto the platform, then one can still sign up for the Subjektiv app as a direct sales artist.

For artists selling through their own networks, Subjektiv's Direct Sales model allows even greater flexibility. By sharing a private purchase link with a buyer - say, through social media or personal contacts - artists keep control of the sale while benefiting from Subjektiv's infrastructure. The commission is reduced to just 7%, and the platform still manages payment, shipping and provenance. Getting started is straightforward: artists create an account, upload artworks, and complete verification. Once approved, they can set their prices and start selling, with moderation in place to ensure quality. Even if artworks don't appear on the public platform, artists can still use the backend tools to support private sales.

Beyond transactions, Subjektiv champions art as a mirror to humanity, fostering deeper connections between creators and audiences. Through exhibitions, strategic partnerships and collaborations, in app selections and curated collections, the platform showcases a diverse range of contemporary artists, amplifying their voices around the world.

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