



Artfinder

The Artfinder Gender Equality Report 2017

artfinder.com/equality



Introduction

Artfinder is a marketplace connecting 9,000 artists with over 500,000 art lovers around the world. In 2013, we launched our marketplace in London and it has since grown into an international business, with buyers and sellers in more than 100 countries.

Gender inequality in the art world is a huge issue that is too often ignored or shrugged off as something that can never be changed. We believe that it can, and we're starting by taking the step of sharing our own sales, stock and seller data to shine a light on the new ecosystem we've seen evolving over the last four years. By removing the gatekeepers and giving equal access to all, what results is greater equality of opportunity.

This is our first report based on data from our marketplace. It also included a survey of our 9,000 artists worldwide, who are 52% women and 48% men.

Letter from our CEO, Jonas Almgren

Four years ago, we launched Artfinder with just 14 artists, a small team and a big dream.

We knew that the art world wasn't fair or sustainable, especially for the eight million independent artists around the world who couldn't make a living from their art. We also knew that the world is full of people who value original, handmade items — people who probably didn't think they could afford original art.

Fast forward four years, six offices, a terrifying amount of take-out and a lot of hard work, we now have over 300,000 original artworks on our site - all for sale from as little as the cost of the above-mentioned take-out.

We've grown so quickly that we've barely had the chance to step back and think about the essence of what makes us different. But it's really that we believe in a community of artists and art lovers, and our focus for the future is to bring together both sides of that community.

We've known for a long time that our artists have pretty much a 50/50 gender balance, which is unusual in the art world. We have seen that in a even handed marketplace, female artists are not only as common as male artists, but they enjoy the same rate of success. Of our 10 best selling artists, 6 are women.

What we didn't realise was how much passion, emotion and anger this campaign would stir up. Women are still woefully underrepresented in the traditional art

world and it's remarkably overlooked as an issue.

One of the biggest problems is a lack of reliable data, so that's where we're starting. As well as publishing our own data, we're asking the world's art institutions, museums and galleries to sign up to a framework for gender data transparency. We know that will be a long and difficult road, but we're taking the first step by publishing our data, and we hope that others will take on that mantle.

Join our campaign by signing our pledge to support gender equality and encourage your local institution to share their data at: www.artfinder.com/equality

Jonas Almgren
CEO, Artfinder



Gender disparity in the art world

There are many industries where women are paid less than men for the same work. The current gender pay gap in the UK is 13.9%¹ and in the US it's 20%². But one of the reasons this campaign feels so necessary is that the differences in the high-end art world are not to the tune of 10% or 20%.

Just one out of the top 100 lots sold at auction in 2015 was a work by a woman. In 2004, when MoMA opened its new building, with a reinstallation of the permanent collection spanning the years 1880 to 1970, of the 410 works on display in the fourth- and fifth-floor galleries, only 16 works (that's 4%) were by women. By April 2015, still only 7% of the works on display were by women³.

The Guerrilla Girls, the best known feminist art collective of the last 30 years, had their first solo exhibition in the UK in 2016.

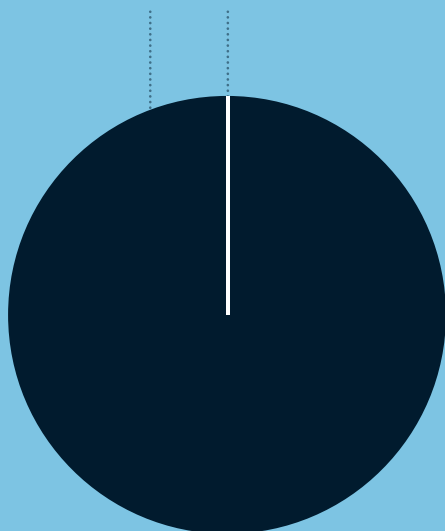
This issue is both timely and not as often raised as it should be.

Gender demographics at auctions and art museums

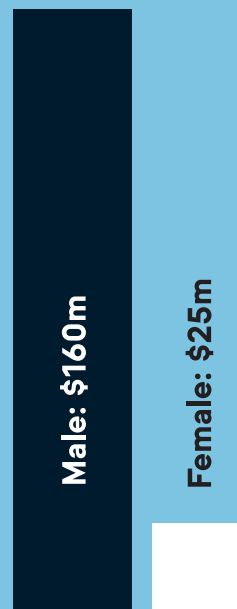
In the top 100 lots sold at auction in 2015, only one was from a female artist. The gap in value for the highest value items by male and female artists that year was

\$135 million (\$25 million for Louise Bourgeois' 'Spider', versus \$160 million for Picasso's 'Les Femmes d'Alger')⁴.

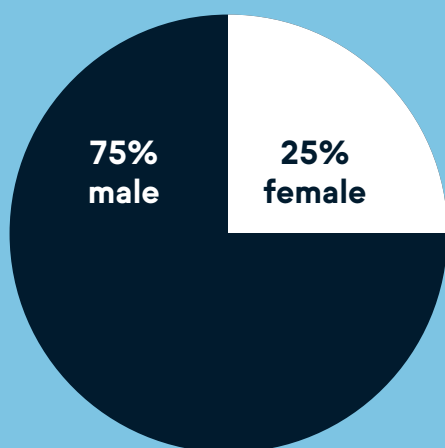
Male artists (99%) Female artists (1%)



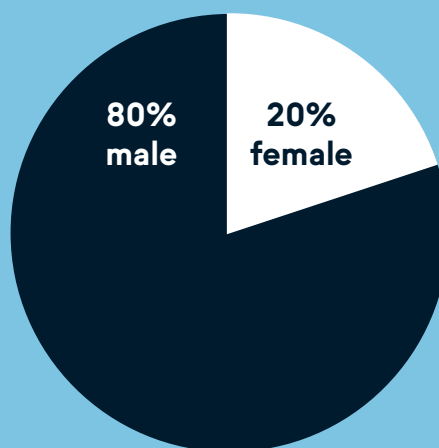
Gender split in top 100 sold auction lots (2015)



Gap in value of highest value items sold at auction (2015)



Between 2007 and 2014, **Tate Modern** has granted female artists solo exhibitions only 25% of the time⁵.



Between 2007 and 2014, **MoMA** has granted female artists solo exhibitions only 20% of the time⁶.

How are we different?



9,000

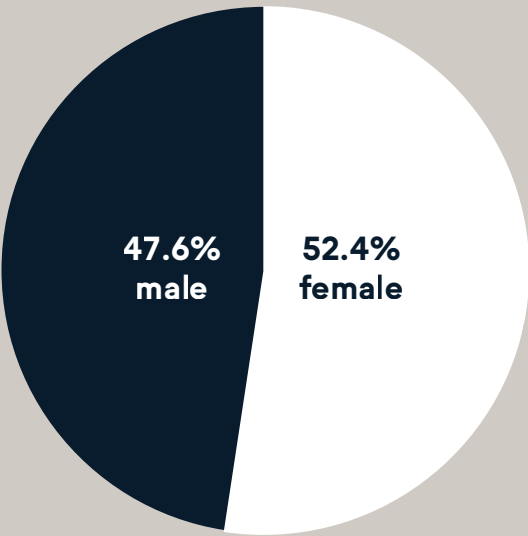
Number of artists selling on Artfinder.

108

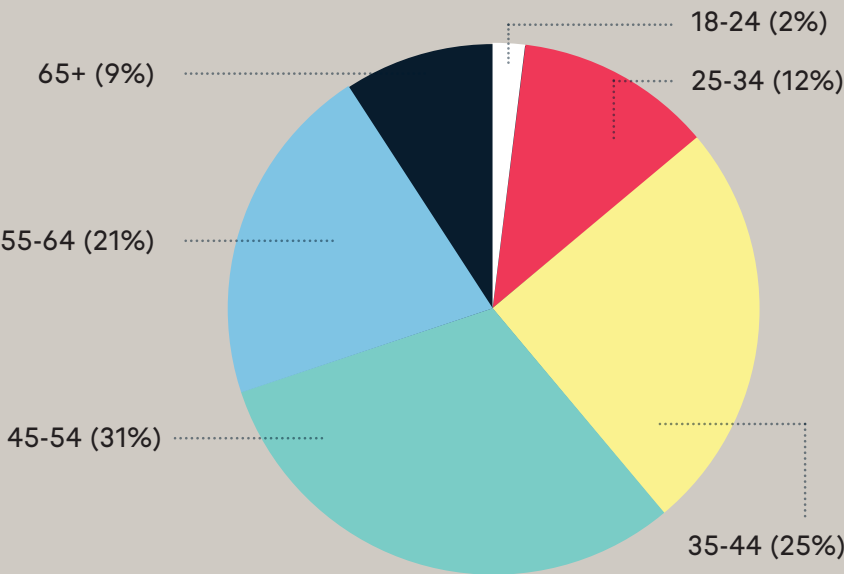
Total number of countries in which our artists create and sell.

15,000

New artworks added to Artfinder every month.



Global gender divide

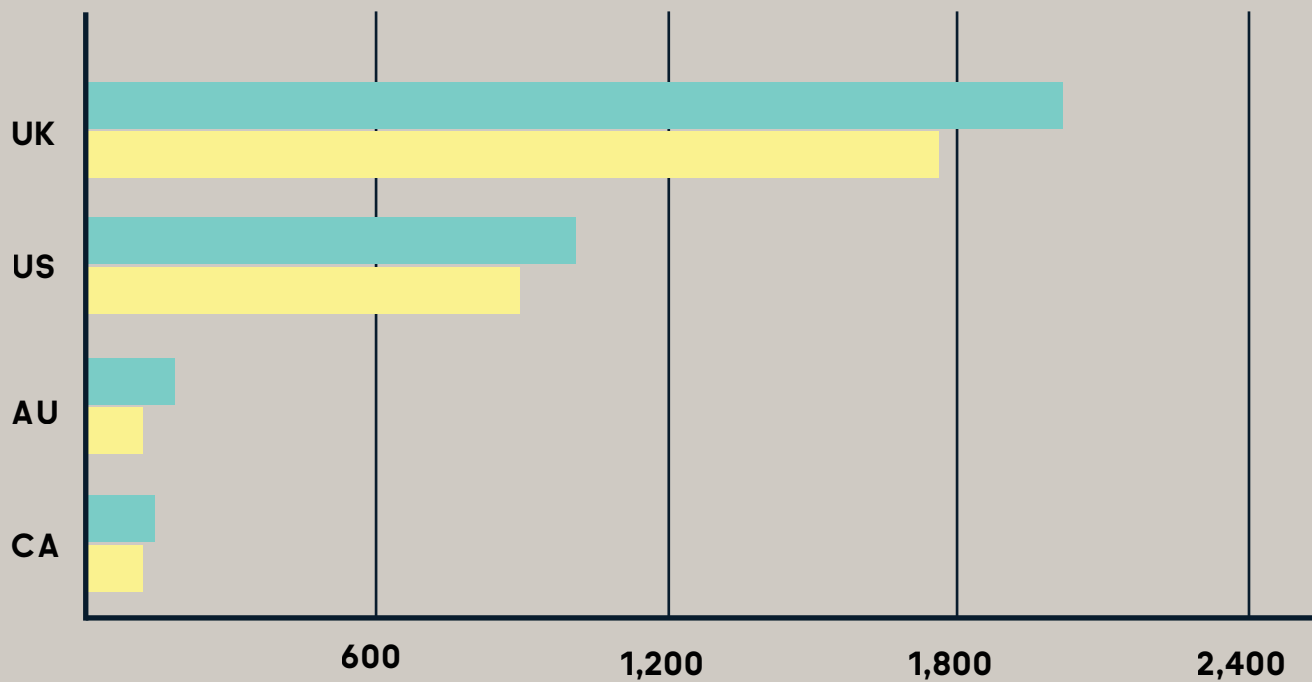


Global age divide

Gender split by country

The gender split of Artfinder artists is fairly consistent across our four biggest markets: the UK, the US, Australia and Canada. The most noticeable difference is that in countries with fewer artists, the percentage of women is higher, indicating that women are more likely to be Artfinder's early adopters in new markets.

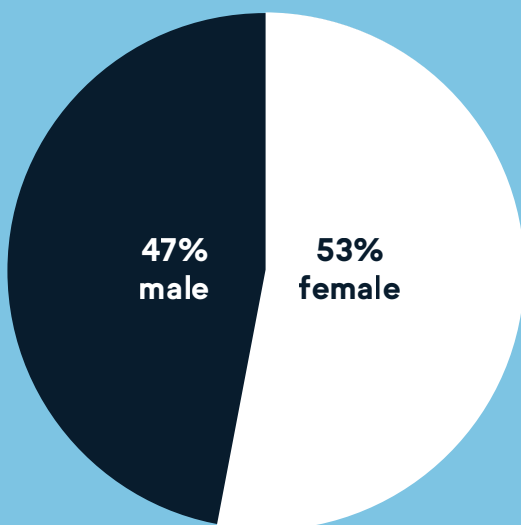
	UK	USA	Australia	Canada
Female artists	2,092 (54%)	1,057 (53%)	147 (64%)	115 (58%)
Male artists	1,776 (46%)	936 (47%)	81 (36%)	83 (42%)



Published artworks by gender

There are now over 300,000 artworks published on Artfinder. That's more than MoMA (200,000) and almost as many as the Louvre, who have 380,000.

Artists categorise their own work by medium, subject and style, giving us a wealth of data on trends and tendencies. To our own surprise, beyond the big categories which are almost evenly split, the data does show some clear leanings towards what might be categorised as 'traditional' subjects for men and women.



Published artworks:

Female artists: 156,413 (53%)
Male artists: 138,919 (47%)

Artworks by subject

Analysis of artworks published in our nine top level 'subject' categories shows that in the most popular categories, distribution is evenly split between men and women.

'Abstract and Conceptual' and 'Landscapes, Sea and Sky' represent 44.8% of all artworks by women and 49.8% of all artworks by men.

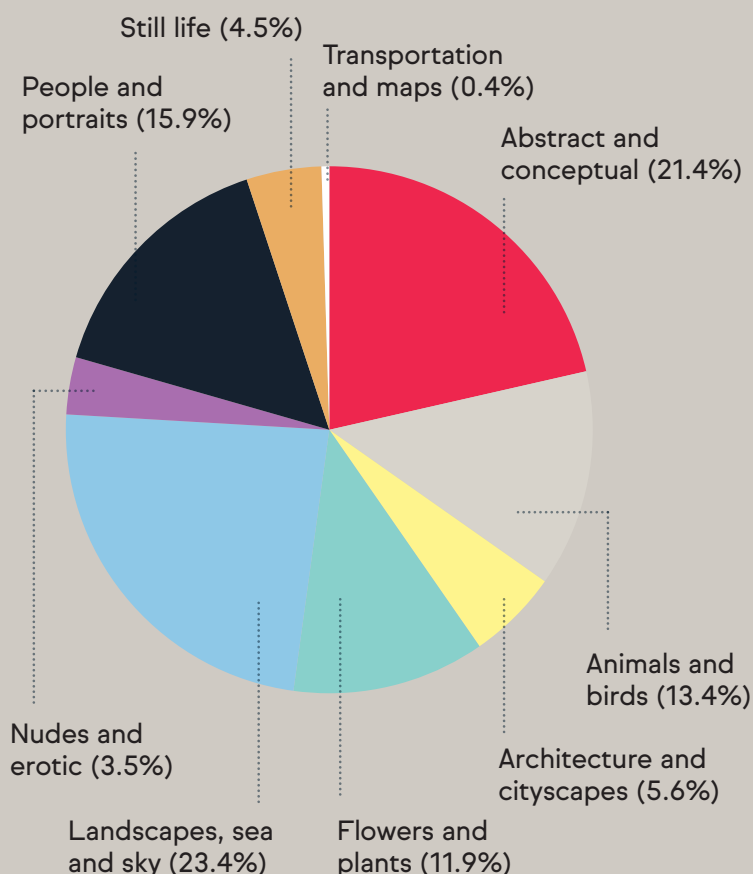
However big differences are noticeable in other categories.

Subjects dominated by men:

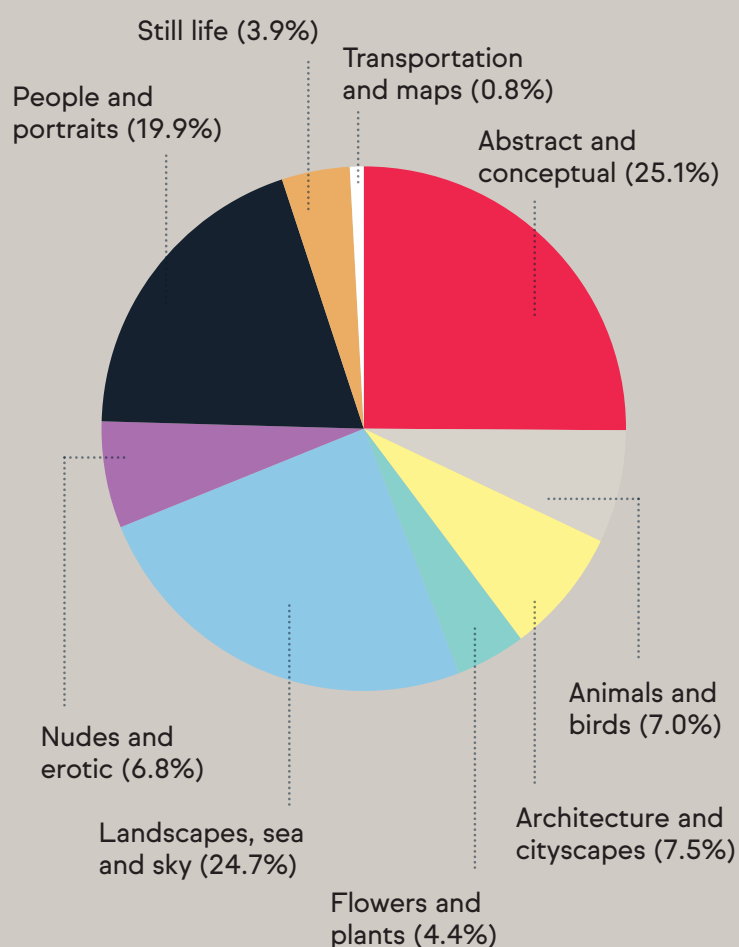
- Transportation and Maps: 64%
- Nudes and Erotic: 63%
- Architecture and Cityscapes: 54%

Subjects dominated by women:

- Flowers and Plants: 75%
- Animals and Birds: 68%
- Still Life: 57%



Subject popularity among female artists

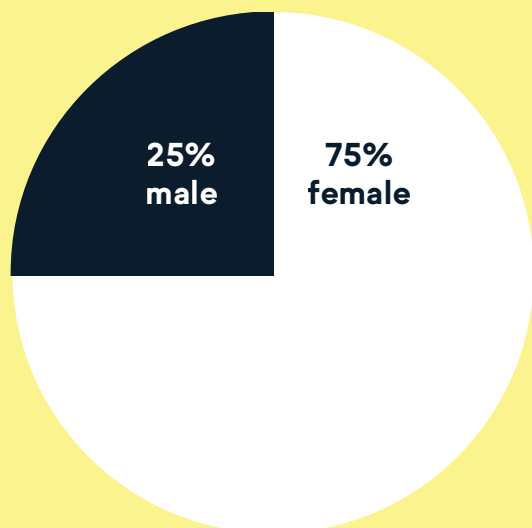


Subject popularity among male artists

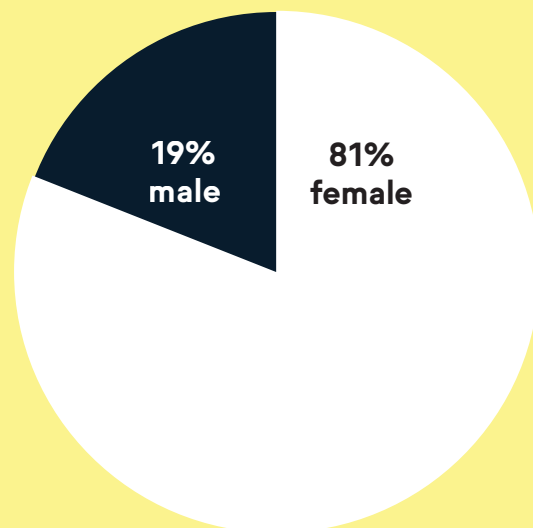
Florals and Nudes

An overwhelming 75% of all artworks categorised as 'Flowers and Plants' are by women artists, with men creating 63% of everything in the 'Nudes and Erotics' subject category. In fact, a fifth (19%) of all male artists have created at least one nude. The word 'nude' was our second most popular search term in 2016, behind only 'London.'

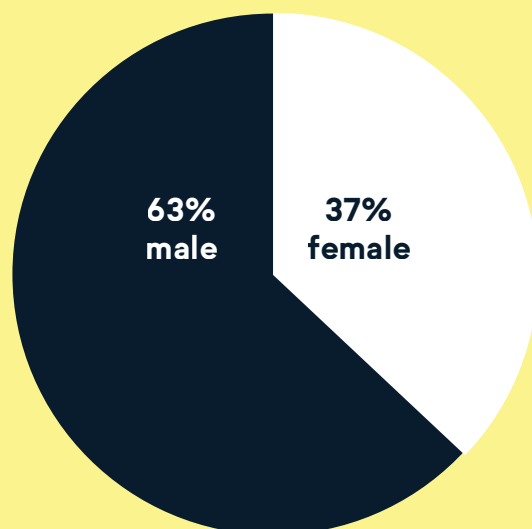
But, interestingly, although men create many more nudes, they sell only a few more. Of all sold nudes, 47% were by women.



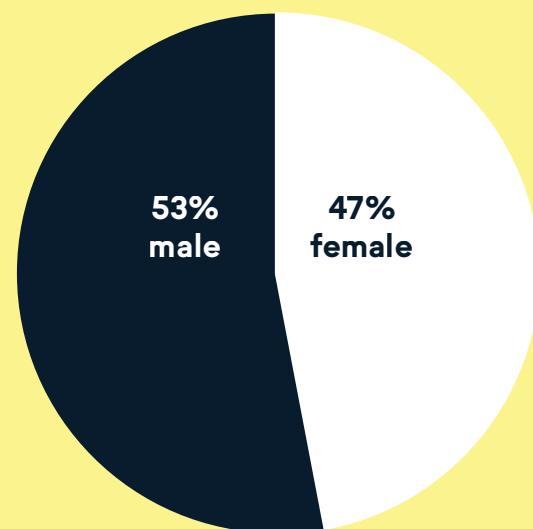
← Florals published



Florals sold →



← Nudes published



Nudes sold →

Sales by gender

Women on Artfinder sell more art than men, based both on total volume and total value.

Since we launched in 2013, our female artists have sold nearly **1.5** times more artworks than our male artists. Women artists, on average, reach their first sale on Artfinder **16%** quicker than men.

Female artists: Out of 4,946 published female artists, 2,446 have sold at least one piece. That's a sell-rate of 52%.

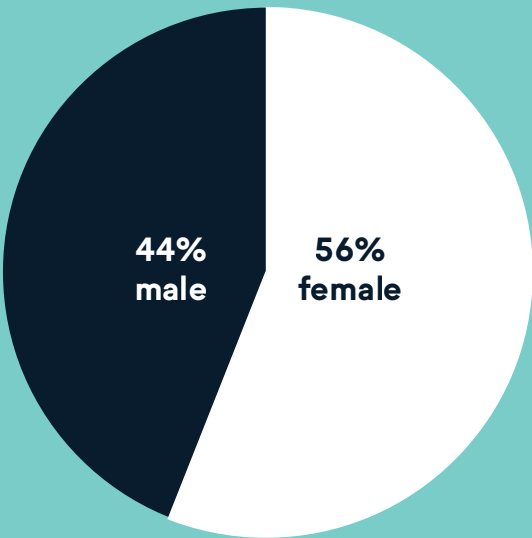
Male artists: Out of 4,497 published male artists, 1,959 sold at least one piece. That's a sell-rate of 44%.

For every **£1m** of artworks sold by men, women sell **£1.16m**.

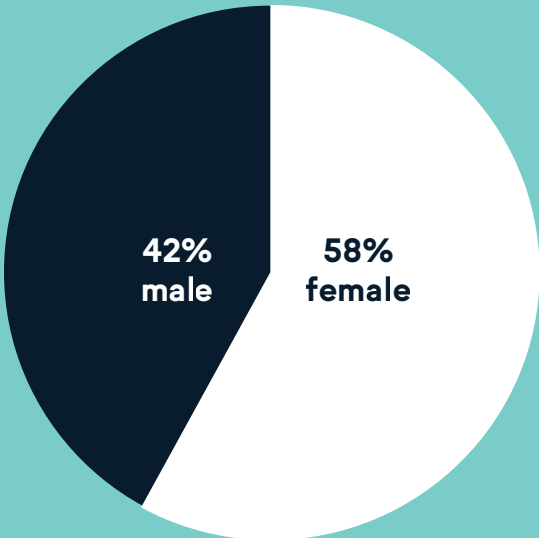
However, women also price their work lower. The average price per artwork for women is **£412**, compared to **£517** for men. The aggregate total value of women's artwork published on Artfinder is **£57m**, compared to **£81m** for men.

Do women sell more because their work is cheaper? Or is the gender pay gap in the art market so deeply ingrained that even when women get the chance to set their prices themselves they value their work at a lower price? We've asked some of our best-selling artists for their thoughts...

	Artworks published	Aggregate value of artworks	Average price per artwork
Female artists	156,413	£57m	£412
Male artists	138,919	£81m	£517



Gender distribution of artists that have sold at least one item through Artfinder



Gender distribution of artworks sold



Emma Cownie, Swansea-based painter

"I'm not surprised, as such, by that statistic. I think it is true that women tend to have less confidence in themselves and so tend to undersell themselves. As a woman I prefer a steady income and sale of artwork. I need to know that this is a runner long-term, that it is fairly reliable and regular and not too fraught with insecurity and uncertainty. Sales boost my confidence and motivation to paint. Not selling for a period of time does affect my motivation. I would say I have sold a lot of my work for about 25 – 35% less than I feel it's worth but that is not only to do with being a woman, other factors are also pertinent".

"I think that female artists have fewer opportunities than male ones - people don't take them as seriously, and it's more difficult to get exhibitions in 'bricks and mortar' galleries. I also suspect that people

assume (wrongly in my case) that a woman's income from art is not the main family income. Discouragement came in the early days when galleries would not take me on as I hadn't gone to the Royal College of Art, or some such art college. I don't think this had anything to do with being a woman. Encouragement has come from the success I have experienced at Artfinder and especially from fellow artists and art lovers who send me some really touching compliments."



Sally Fisher, Edinburgh-based printmaker

"I am surprised by such a big difference in price, but my initial thoughts are that perhaps women are more realistic about their prices which is why they are selling more and faster with greater total income."

"I'm really careful pricing my artwork as I want it to be affordable so I can keep making and selling, rather than hanging onto my work and waiting for a sale at a higher price. I get a lot of repeat custom and people buy several artworks at a time. I'd rather keep it fast and keep making and learning."

"I don't find it difficult being a female artist. It's hard work sometimes but always enjoyable. I've never really thought about the fact that being a woman might affect my prices. I know that there are statistics showing women in general are paid less for

doing the same work, so I'm surprised I've never thought how this relates to me! My experience of the art world has been 99.9% positive. I love getting nice feedback and compliments about my work. I've been an artist full-time for nearly four years now and I love the freedom it gives me."



Jennifer Dalton, New York-based artist

So what can we do to change the rest of the art world?

In the run-up to International Women's Day on March 8th, 2017, we're launching a campaign to raise awareness of gender inequality in the art world, at all levels, from all angles.

We're hoping to open-up debate and to start a discussion, because action can only come from greater awareness. We also hope to get some of the world's biggest art institutions to sign a pledge to commit to releasing some of their own data. We know that won't be easy, and maybe we won't get a single signature, but we're going to try. And we hope that you will join us.

We're working with New York-based artist and feminist Jennifer Dalton on a series of small works exploring Artfinder's data on gender.

And we're working with our community of 9,000 artists on a 'Gender Equality' project, through which they'll be creating art around the issue.

Sign the pledge.

Join us in supporting gender equality in the art world.

[**www.artfinder.com/equality**](http://www.artfinder.com/equality)

Sources

- ¹ The Fawcett Society
<http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/policy-research/the-gender-pay-gap/>
- ² American Association of University Women
http://www.aauw.org/aauw_check/pdf_download/show_pdf.php?file=The-Simple-Truth
- ³ ARTNews
<http://www.artnews.com/2015/05/26/taking-the-measure-of-sexism-facts-figures-and-fixes/>
- ⁴ ARTNews
www.artnews.com/2015/12/30/women-art-status-in-2015/
- ⁵ Timeout
www.timeout.com/london/blog/how-sexist-is-the-art-world-really-frickin-sexist-actually-111016
- ⁶ ARTNews
www.artnews.com/2015/05/26/taking-the-measure-of-sexism-facts-figures-and-fixes/

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Jennifer Dalton portrait © Micah Schmidt

Artfinder data

Data Set based on all artworks currently published on Artfinder by published artists represented by galleries or selling independently (up to 19/01/2017).

Gallery representation, exhibitions and age demographics data from a survey of Artfinder artists from 14/01/17 - 21/01/17.

3.3% of total artworks are from artists who define their gender as either 'neutral' or whose gender is 'undefined' (this means that they have not set their gender on their Artfinder shop). Less than 1% of total artworks are from 'neutral' artists.

Contact

equality@artfinder.com

90 Long Acre,
London WC2E 9RZ