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미술경영학 석사 학위논문

**“Art Won't Let You Down”  
- The Effect of Fluency  
in Art Consumption  
on Status Inference -**

미술 소비에서의 유창성이  
지위 유추에 미치는 영향

2019년 2월

서울대학교 대학원  
협동과정 미술경영 전공  
류수연

# Abstract

## “Art Won't Let You Down” - The Effect of Fluency in Art Consumption on Status Inference -

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Art has historically been a signal of wealth and therefore gained a connotation of luxury (Mandel, 2009). While such connotation stems mainly from purchase of original artworks, recent studies have shown that incorporating art in a product increases the perceived luxury of the product (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008a). Such finding highlights the potential of different art consumption modes as a means of conspicuous consumption. The current study investigates when and how art becomes a form of conspicuous consumption. In doing so, two modes of art consumption, possession of art prints (study 1) and exhibition visit (study 2), were observed.

The current research proposes that consuming art with low fluency (i.e. difficult to process and difficult to understand) could imply certain attributes about the consumer. Specifically, it is hypothesized that when a

consumer consumes fine art of low fluency, others will infer refined taste and high financial status of the person. Such is hypothesized, because there exists a 'culturally shared taste' (Reber, 2012), indicating that members of the same social class share certain taste and understand what is expected of them. The fact that members of the upper class have "refined" taste (Bourdieu, 1985) is a widely accepted lay belief. Thus, consumption of fine art of low fluency will imply proficiency in aesthetic comprehension, thereby implying taste levels and respective status. In addition, this effect is expected to be attenuated when the observer's expertise is high and the consumed art is of low fluency.

The proposed mechanisms were tested in two studies. In Study 1 (N = 140), participants rated perceived taste and status of an individual based on the individual's Instagram post of an art print. Results support that low fluency art consumption leads to heightened inference of taste and financial status. However, when observer of high expertise observed art with low fluency, the effect diminished.

Study 2 (N = 72) addressed two alternative hypotheses. In an open association study, many participants inferred higher creativity for lower fluency art consumption. To address this phenomenon, creativity measure was added in study 2 and was proven as insignificant. In addition, to rule out an alternative hypothesis of familiarity, a single stimulus was used with different framing in study 2.

This research provides novel findings on when and how art consumption becomes a status signal. Regarding the fact that art has been associated with luxury perception, the results of this study reveal which art is more suitable for such purpose and why.

**Keyword:** art, art consumption, signaling theory, status, taste, fluency

**Student Number:** 2017-26526

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## **ARTWORK INDEX**

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[Artwork 2] Georges Braque, <Portrait of a Woman>, 1911, oil on canvas,  
91x61cm

[Artwork 3] Georges Braque, <Man with a Guitar>, 1911, oil on canvas,  
116.2x81cm

[Artwork 4] Georges Braque, <Woman with a Guitar>, 1913, oil on canvas,  
130x73cm



# I. INTRODUCTION

In 2009, during a conversation with Takashi Murakami, Damien Hirst alleged "Art won't let you down." (Hirst, 2009). While the highly controversial British artist spoke in regards to the sanctity of art, the quote may have unknowingly revealed a hidden power of art in the consumption context.

The art world is expanding. Indeed, the definition of art in modern society has enlarged to a degree that art encompasses just about anything and everything. Accordingly, consumption of art is taking multiple forms, ranging from the classic museum visits and artwork trades to consumption of art-infused product to embodied experiences via technology. On the other end of consumption, with high accessibility to tools and modes of presentation, virtually anyone can claim to be an artist. Social media has allowed laypeople to engage in artistic activities and showcase their works to the world with nothing more than simple tabs on their smartphones.

Interestingly, recent body of empirical studies suggest that art carries connotations of luxury not just for the original artworks, but even for prints and duplicates (e.g. Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008a). The empirical finding and social phenomenon seem to provide a gap in understanding - how can something so common be perceived as prestigious? The current study aspires to fill in the gap and clarify when and how art consumption becomes conspicuous consumption. To elaborate, this research suggests that

observers infer taste and status when others engage in art consumption of low fluency.

By investigating this relationship, the study contributes to art consumption literature, where the social value of art consumption has been scarcely studied. In addition, the current study adds to the diversity in means of status signaling and conspicuous consumption, in an age where classic means of conspicuous consumption are atrophying. In addition to the theoretical contributions, the finding may provide artists and managers a practical guideline to creating more desirable artwork and applied products.

## **II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1. Art**

While most literature regarding consumption of fine art have dichotomized consumption modes as either possession (i.e. owning artwork) or access (i.e. visiting museum) (Chen, 2008) and investigated consumer interaction within the two consumption modes (e.g. Joy & Sherry Jr., 2003), more recent studies on art consumption have investigated consumption modes between and beyond the dichotomy.

Art and aesthetics have been an integral part of human activity throughout history and remains an important tool for communicating images and values. In the marketing context, aesthetic package design has been found to increase consumer's choice reaction time (Reimann et al., 2010) and affirm consumer's sense of self (Townsend & Sood, 2012). Even for domains seemingly irrelevant to aesthetics, such as financial decisions, aesthetics have been found to be of vast importance in perceiving company value (Townsend & Shu, 2010). Such scholarly findings provide support for including art in consumption activities.

As a matter of fact, as fine art has been a “go-to” source of aesthetic design for decades, empirical research on its psychological implications can provide meaningful managerial implications. A growing body of literature goes beyond pure aesthetics and shed light on incorporating fine art outside the art world. The art infusion phenomenon (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008a)

indicates that the presence of visual art leads to elevated product evaluation due to spillover of luxury perceptions, especially when the visual image and consumer's self-image are in congruence (Lee, Kim, & Yu, 2015) and the products are hedonic goods with unknown prices (Huettle & Gierl, 2012).

The findings provide a strong tie between art and prestige. Art has been a signal of wealth throughout history and has gained a connotation of luxury (Mandel, 2009). This relationship works in favor for managers, for visual art enhances brand image and perceived fit in brand extensions via transfer of luxury perceptions (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008b). Similarly, perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, perceived quality value, and perceived hedonic value for luxury brand were shown to increase in the presence of visual art (Lee, Chen, & Wang, 2015). Even before empirical studies, fine art has been elaborately incorporated in advertisement to promote prestigious goods (Hetsroni & Tukachinsky, 2005).

Whilst benefits of incorporating art for managers have been rather vastly investigated, the aftermaths of consuming art and art-infused products at a consumer level has been scantily analyzed. Despite the sufficient revision of the correlation between art and luxury, the question of when and how art consumption becomes a means of status signal is yet to be answered. The current study thus aims to resolve the gap in the body of art

consumption research, regarding how art consumption can serve as a form of conspicuous consumption.

## **2.2. Fluency**

Fluency of an object is caused by a variety of factors and can influence consumer responses. The determinants of perceptual fluency are twofold, encompassing objective stimulus attributes and experience with the situation (Reber, Schwarz, & Winkielman, 2004). The former indicates that when a stimulus is given, the mind processes certain information in comparison to other information. These features include, but are not limited to, amount of information (Attneave, 1954), symmetry (Garner, 1974), figure-ground contrast (Checkosky & Whitlock, 1973), and clarity (Whittlesea et al., 1990). The latter component is closely related to prior exposure and experiences with the situation. Repeated exposure (i.e. the mere exposure effect) (Zajonc, 1968), implicit learning of stimulus structure (Gordon & Holyark, 1983; Newell & Bright, 2001), and prototypicality (Martindale, 1984; Rhodes & Tremewan, 1996) account for perceptual fluency based on perceiver's experiences.

It has been found that people derive more positive aesthetic response when processing of an object is more fluent (Reber, Schwarz, & Winkielman, 2004; Belke et al., 2010). In real-life context, students and adults with accumulated exposure to paintings (as opposed to children with

less cultural exposure) showed preference for familiar paintings (Cutting, 2003). High fluency indicates familiarity and fluid cognitive processing and thus lead to heuristic information processing (Winkielman et al., 2003). On the other hand, low fluency signals errancy which calls for higher attention, ultimately resulting in analytical processing (Reber, 2012).

Fluency can also be understood from the ‘affect-as-information’ perspective, for individuals form evaluation of stimulus based on affect rather than the stimulus content (Reber, 2012). This effect is moderated by expectations and attribution. Specifically, the positive affect of fluency is caused when the source is unknown and fluency is unexpected. On the contrary, when people can attribute fluency to salient repetition, the positive affect no longer occurs (Van den Bergh & Vrana, 1998). In other words, for fluency to lead to affective judgments, source of fluency should not be too salient.

Such finding implies an inverted U-shape relationship between complexity and aesthetic pleasure (i.e. beauty) (Berlyne, 1971). This nonlinear relationship indicates that when complexity is low, the source of simplicity is attributed to fluency, reducing aesthetic pleasure and when complexity is high, source of perceptual fluency is not as salient, leading to increased aesthetic pleasure of the object. However, when complexity further increases, processing fluency will diminish, causing aesthetic pleasure to decrease (Van den Bergh & Vrana, 1998). In short, for positive

affect to occur from fluency, the source of fluency should be unknown. In the context of art, highly recognizable artwork may cause less positive affect, for individuals can attribute fluency to repetition. The findings may imply that for an artwork to be appealing, it should be relatively fluent to produce positive evaluations. Nevertheless, the current study proposes that low fluency has its own benefits by signaling high status via implications of refined taste.

Understanding the mechanism and effect of fluency in the art domain is important, as fluency is a decisive factor in art perception. Research conducted by Halberstadt and Hooton (2008) revealed that fluency explained about 60% of variance in attitudes toward paintings. Thus, fluency is expected to play significant role in assessing art consumption activity of others, as in the context proposed by the current study.

### **2.3. Taste and Status Inference**

According to Silvia (2007), people with high proficiency in art are not necessarily smarter or likely to have art-related college major. Rather, openness to experience led to higher proficiency in art. Hence, proficiency in art of an individual does not suggest they have education in art, but rather imply that they have been exposed to and are accustomed to certain level of culture. Reber (2012) suggests there exists a 'culturally shared taste', where members in the same social class share taste because they gain an understanding of what kind of taste is expected of their belonged class.

Identity motivation dictates that there exists a motivation to act accordingly to their class or culture (Oyserman, 2009) and differ from those with inferior taste. Social class operates as a ‘subcultural socialization agent’, leading subcultural groups to show different perception of what is appropriate for their hedonic consumption (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982).

Moreover, members of each social class are exposed to certain culture, allowing specific type of taste to develop in accordance with peers. Specifically, Pierre Bourdieu proposed that members of the upper class have “refined” taste (Bourdieu, 1984), which in the context of art, can be understood as proficiency in aesthetic comprehension. Thus, in the domain of art, inference on taste and inference on status are bound to be highly and positively correlated. In this research, ‘status’ will primarily indicate financial status. Social status can be determined by many different factors including the amount of respect, influence and prominence one is perceived to have (Anderson et al., 2001). However, the status conceptualized in the proposed mechanism has more to do with objective social class of wealth and high culture. Thus, financial status will be the primary measure of status in the research model.

Individuals engage in conspicuous consumption to portray desired status (Veblen, 1899). Costly material possessions, generally exemplified by the ‘luxury brands’, have been the classic object of conspicuous consumption throughout history. However, as Blumberg (1974) analyzed,



material scarcity has increasingly dwindled since World War II as poverty declined and material production became unprecedentedly abundant. Furthermore, it was predicted that such abundance in material would sabotage classic status symbol and other types of materials will replace the classic symbols (Blumberg, 1974).

In fact, consumers are engaging in other means of conspicuous consumption to signal status. For instance, consumers would consume larger product size (Dubois, Rucker, & Galinsky, 2011), because they believe larger portions signal power. Thus, as predicted by Blumberg, monetary value is no longer the sole mode of conspicuous consumption in the modern consumption culture. In a similar vein, the current study aims to obtain understanding of how art consumption can imply status and thus become a form of subtle conspicuous consumption.

As stated previously, art products have shown to elicit perception of luxury. Wiedmann and colleagues (2007) provided a conceptual framework of luxury value perception including financial, functional, individual, and social dimensions. Consumption of artwork can be said to incorporate financial, individual, and social dimensions of luxury value perception. However, consumption of prestigiously perceived goods will lose its prestige (and therefore socially functional) value and hedonic value (Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2009) if the prestigious evaluation of product does not affect the evaluation of the consumer using the product.

Regarding this perspective, consumption of art should not only be luxurious per se but ought to make the consumer seem respectively prestigious. With this in regard, the current study proposes that inference of refined taste in art will invariably lead to inference of high status, for there exists a well-accepted association between complex ‘highbrow art’ and high social class.

## **2.4. Expert vs. Novice**

Experience and consumption of art differ for experts and novices (Leder et al., 2012), due to components including different degree of immersion (Joy & Sherry Jr., 2003), different development of schemes (Axelsson, 2007), and different levels of knowledge in structure and motor priming (Kozbelt & Seeley, 2007). Art world is therefore highly exclusive, as can be exemplified by the valuation of art limited to experts participating in the artistic field (Beckert & Rossel, 2013). This structural exclusivity implies a clear-cut division between expert and novice in the art domain.

Likewise, expert and novice differ in their reaction to processing fluency when encountering art. Processing fluency refers to the ‘ease with which information flows through the cognitive system’ (Reber, 2012). In general, high fluency leads to positive affect (McWhinnie, 1965) for novice.

On the contrary, psycho-historical theory of art implies the opposite effect for experts. Psycho-historical theory of art (Bullot & Reber, 2013) indicates that artworks encompass an artist’s intention and the context of history, society and culture. Moreover, art novice and art expert differ in

their mode of reception. Whereas novices rely on emotional mode of reception, experts rely on cognitive mode of reception (Cupchick & László, 1992). Thus, appreciation of art is not only dependent on visual elements but also on understanding the intentions and context behind an artwork. Accordingly, proficiency in art will increase ease in perceiving art by allowing better understanding (Reber, 2012) of the subject matter beyond initial visual cues.

More importantly, not only do experts perceive and understand art better on ground of psycho-historical theory of art, they also make inferences about the meaning of the object (Song & Schwarz, 2008) when having encountered low fluency. Disfluency provokes analytical processing due to the alienation effect, where alienation of a situation leads to disfluency of events and analyzation of the situation (Brecht, 2014). Moreover, disfluency leads to interest and engagement (Labroo & Pocheptsova, 2016). As artworks with low fluency pose challenges, viewers with expertise build a predictable pattern (Leder et al., 2014) in attempt to answer the challenges. As they ward off challenges posed by disfluent artwork, reward is given in terms of aesthetic appreciation (Consoli, 2015). Due to such mechanism, art experts show higher interest for abstract (Hekkert & van Wieringen, 1996) and complex art and find them easier to understand (Locher, Smith & Smith, 2001; Silvia, 2006). Through this

dynamic process of aesthetic appreciation, experts experience reduced uncertainty.

The differences between novice and expert in art appreciation are important in the proposed model, for judgement of others are formed in relation to one's own perceptual and cognitive abilities. When in the presence of others, individuals naturally create judgement of others through social comparison and social observation. While some comparisons and observations are based on ranking (e.g. test scores), others are based on making inferences via comparison made against a standard (Foschi, 2000). By such mechanism, individuals infer information about others, such as taste or status, in a social surrounding. Status judgment based on social comparison can be exemplified by the Red Sneakers Effect, where nonconforming behavior can lead to inference of high status and competence (Bellezza, Gino, & Keinan, 2014). Similarly, busyness and lack of leisure time are interpreted as signals of high status, by inferring that the individual is high in demand (Bellezza, Paharia, & Keinan, 2017).

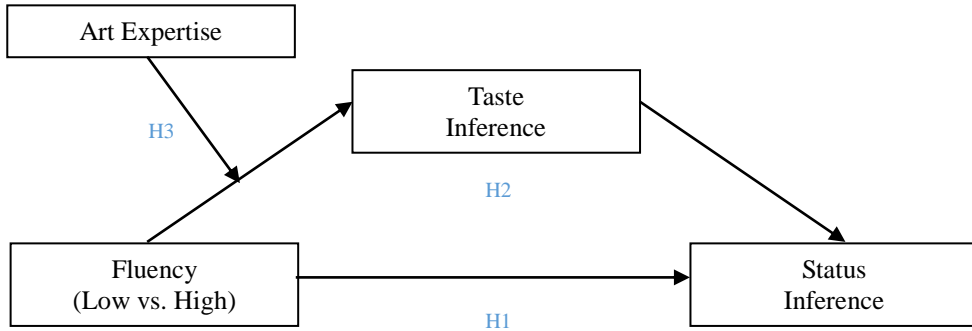
Applying the structure in the current research, novice would infer high level of taste to those who consume art that are low in fluency, when they themselves cannot process such art. In the case of art, sophisticated taste would imply higher social class, where refined taste (and thus ability to process art of low fluency) for the art is the norm. Thus, while art novice observers form judgment on disfluent art as complex and accordingly form

judgment on the art consumer as holding complex taste, art expert observers will initially form similar judgment but develop an understanding over time and ultimately do not form the same kind of taste judgment on the art consumer.

### III. RESEARCH MODEL

#### 3.1. Hypotheses

In accordance with the logical framework stated previously, it is hypothesized that consuming art with low fluency will lead to high taste inference and ultimately high status inference, but with different levels of status inference depending on the observer's level of expertise.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Model**

**H1:** Consuming art with low (vs. high) fluency can lead to high (vs. low) status inference.

The proposed mechanism underlying H1 indicates that consumers of art with low fluency have refined taste in art. Because culture such as art are based on 'culturally shared taste' (Reber, 2012), and social groups of high

status are understood to consume complex art, high status will be inferred for those with developed taste in art.

**H2:** Inference of high (vs. low) status based on consuming art with low (vs. high) fluency will be mediated by inference of high (vs. low) taste in art.

However, because novice and expert differ in their interpretation of fluency, and inference of status is based on comparison with subjective standards, the effect of H1 will be attenuated for consumers with high art expertise when the observed art consumption has low fluency.

**H3:** Inference of high status based on consuming art with low fluency will be moderated by whether the observer is novice or expert. Such effect will be attenuated when the observer has high art expertise.

The current study holds the proposition that while it is possible that the proposed hypotheses may be generalized to other domains where certain levels of culture is associated with certain social class, the effect best characterizes the art domain due to strong learned association between art and status. In attempt to clarify this proposition, a pilot study was conducted to point out how strongly the association of status and art domain exceeds

the association of status and other domains (e.g. sports, literature, music, etc.).

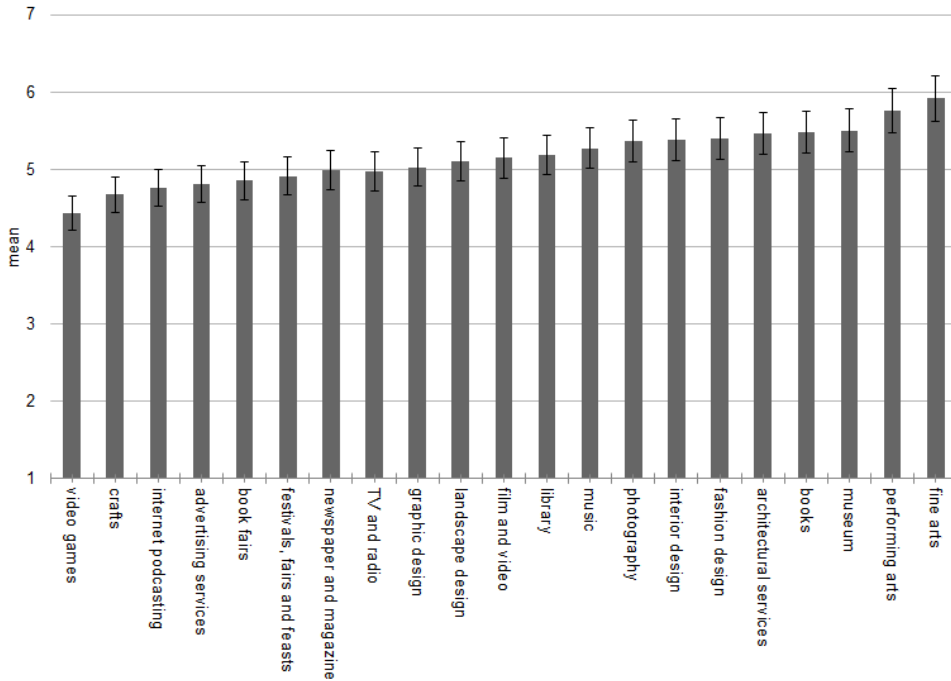
Participants (N = 105) were gathered on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and were asked to indicate to what degree they associate each cultural domain with status (7-point Likert scale; 1 = low status ~ 7 = high status). Cultural domains were presented in random order.

The domains were selected based on cultural domains arranged by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Cultural domains are divided into cultural and natural heritage (subdomains: museums, archeological and historical places, cultural landscape, natural heritage), performance and celebration (subdomains: performing arts, music, festivals, fairs and feasts), visual arts and crafts (subdomains: fine arts, photography, crafts), books and press (subdomains: books, newspaper and magazine, other printed matter, library, book fairs), audio-visual and interactive media (subdomains: film and video, TV and radio, internet podcasting, video games), and design and creative services (subdomains: fashion design, graphic design, interior design, landscape design, architectural services, advertising services) (UNESCO, 2009). Regarding the focus of the current research on inferences on individuals, domains in cultural and natural heritage were excluded except for museum, because ownership and management of these domains rests primarily in the government. ‘Other printed matters’ domain was also



excluded for its unclarity in the survey context. A total of 21 domains and corresponding questions were provided to the participants.

Two participants were screened for their failure to faithfully answer the survey (e.g. failure to answer to survey completion code, answering all questions with same value) and a total of 103 responses were examined. Results (see Figure 2.) revealed that while people associated cultural domains in general with high status, the degree to which they did so differed by each domain. Of all 21 domains, fine arts showed the highest association ( $M = 5.922$ ,  $SD = 0.987$ ). It is noteworthy to mention that museums, often associate with fine arts, also showed relatively high association ( $M = 5.505$ ,  $SD = 1.275$ ), ranking third among all cultural domains. From the pilot study, it can be concluded that cultural domains are generally highly associated with high status, but fine arts rank top above all other domains. The results of this pilot study confirm that the art domain is particularly relevant for status research.



**Figure 2. Association between Cultural Domains and Status**

### **3.2. Study Overview**

Two pilot studies and two main studies were conducted to test out the proposed hypotheses. The first pilot study was conducted to generate stimuli for subsequent studies and the second open association pilot study was conducted to attain preliminary evidence on the hypotheses. Study 1 examined the main effect between fluency and status inference as well as the mediating effect of taste inference and the moderating effect of art expertise. Participants were asked to form inferences about a person based on an Instagram post showing a recent purchase of an art print, where the painting content was manipulated by fluency condition and price was held

constant. Study 1 confirmed all three hypotheses. Study 2 replicated the results of study 1 and ruled out two potential alternative explanations. To hold familiarity of the artwork constant, a single stimulus was used with different captions to frame different levels of processing fluency. In addition, creativity measure was added to observe its effect on the proposed model. Study 2 successfully replicated the results of study 1 and ruled out both alternative explanations, making the proposed hypotheses robust.

## IV. STIMULI PRETEST

Processing fluency can be caused by various factors, including objective stimulus attributes (i.e. “good gestalt”) and experience with the situation (Reber, Schwarz, & Winkielman, 2004). Different artworks may propose different processing challenges and researchers have selected various factors among these to suit the purpose of their research. For example, Halberstadt and Hooton (2008) found correlation between processing fluency and prototypicality (of an artist’s style) and provided fluency task on determining whether an artwork is a specific artist’s painting.

Although the elements of processing fluency may be diverse and dependent on the nature of each research, processing fluency can be examined by measuring time required for processing an artwork. In Halberstadt and Hooton’s (2008) study mentioned above, response time was incorporated as the dependent variable. In a similar vein, in an experiment conducted by Hekkert and van Wieringen (1990), participants were shown 40 paintings while the time for their identification of recognizable figure was measured. Such ‘explicit classification approach’ is often adopted as a measurement of processing fluency, where the ease of identifying depicted elements is assumed to be equivalent to processing fluency (Kuchinke et al., 2009). Measure of response time as an indicator of processing fluency can be readily found in fluency literature (ex. Muller, Tauber, & Dunlosky,

2013). Regarding the purpose of this study, the stimuli pretest will incorporate such approach.

#### **4.1. Design and Procedure**

Because processing of different art types (e.g. representational art, cubist art, abstract art) can vary (Belke et al., 2010), stimuli was limited to cubist artworks, which have been empirically studied in similar contexts (Hekkert & van Wieringen, 1990; Kuchinke et al., 2009). The list of 39 artworks (Table 1) from an experiment by Hekkert and Wieringen (1990) was directly adopted to be tested on their processing fluency (i.e. identification ease). Not all artwork titles indicated by the original study were the official names but rather descriptive titles or a selection from a variety of translated names. Artworks closest to described titles and date were selected for replication in this stimuli pretest. *Portrait of Madame Leonce Rosenberg* (1917) by Gris was excluded because no image of the artwork could be found by provided information. To rule out any potential covariates, all artworks were transformed with Adobe Photoshop into equal size with 600-pixel width and 72 dots per inch (dpi).

Participants (N = 110) were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants were shown 39 artworks one at a time and were asked to press the ‘next’ button as soon as they identified a concrete object in each painting. Regarding the ease of given task, seven attention check questions were

randomly placed after seven different identification tasks, asking participants the object identified. Time in seconds was measured as time between the initial showing of the stimuli and participant's hitting of the 'next' button. Responses were filtered based on attention check questions, extreme values (e.g. less than one second per response), and realism (e.g. responses with majority of response time as 10 seconds were eliminated, as these responses were suspected to rely on auto page turn after 10 seconds and not reflective of an individual's art processing).

## **4.2. Results and Discussion**

Response time range from as short as 2.60 seconds for Pablo Picasso's *Portrait of Clovis Sagot* (1909, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg; Artwork 1) to 7.36 seconds for Georges Braque's *Portrait of a Woman* (1911, Private Collection; Artwork 2) (Table 1). Regarding the general color scheme of the painting, *Portrait of Clovis Sagot* (1909) by Pablo Picasso was selected as the high fluency stimuli (2.60 seconds) and *Man with a Guitar* (1911, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Artwork 3) by Georges Braque was selected as the low fluency stimuli (7.31 seconds). The entire list of artwork and test results can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1.** List of Cubist Artworks and Response Time

No.	Painter	Name of Painting	RT (s)
1	Braque	Le grand nu (1907-08)	5.46
2	Braque	Woman with a mandolin (1910)	6.61
3	Braque	Portrait of a woman (1911)	7.36
4	Braque	Man with a guitar (1911)	7.31
5	Braque	Head of a woman (1912)	6.24
6	Braque	Woman with a guitar (1913)	4.85
7	Braque	The musician (1917-18)	7.21
8	Capek	Cubist figure (1913)	3.31
9	Duchamp	Nude descending a staircase No.2 (1911-12)	7.07
10	Gleizes	Portrait of Jacques Nayral (1910-11)	3.62
11	Gleizes	Man on a balcony (1912)	4.50
12	Gleizes	Ballerina (1917)	5.69
13	Gris	Portrait of Picasso (1912)	3.68
14	Gris	Portrait of Josette (1916)	4.05
15	Gris	Harlequin with guitar (1917)	4.17
16	Gris	Harlequin at a table (1919)	4.82
17	Larionov	Promenade Venus de boulevard (1912)	5.35
18	Leger	Woman sewing (1909)	3.13
19	Leger	Seated woman (1913)	4.05
20	Leger	Soldier with a pipe (1916)	4.43
21	Leger	Composition (The typographer) (1919)	6.14
22	McDonald- Wright	Synchromy in purple (1917)	4.06
23	Mondrian	Female figure (1912)	4.38
24	Picasso	Nude with draperies (1907)	3.84
25	Picasso	Portrait of Clovis Sagot (1909)	2.60
26	Picasso	Nude woman in an armchair (1909)	2.79
27	Picasso	Portrait of Wilhelm Uhde (1910)	2.72
28	Picasso	Portrait of D. H. Kahnweiler (1910)	4.30
29	Picasso	Nude (1910)	5.50
30	Picasso	Seated female nude (1910)	4.96
31	Picasso	Femme nue debout (1910-11)	5.22
32	Picasso	Man with a clarinet (1911)	5.50
33	Picasso	L'homme à la mandoline (1911-12)	6.39
34	Picasso	Ma jolie (1911-12)	6.29
35	Picasso	Man with a violin (1912)	5.45
36	Picasso	Man leaning on a table (1916)	5.82
37	Picasso	Harlequin (1918)	3.09
38	Udaltsova	At the piano (1915)	4.14
39	Villon	Portrait of Madame Y.D. (1913)	4.53

Note. RT refers to response time for identification of concrete object. The current study replicated the lab results of Hekkert and van Wieringen (1990) with online panels.

## V. OPEN ASSOCIATION PILOT STUDY

As the proposed mechanism is a novel statement, an open association pilot study was conducted to check whether the direction of the study aligned with general understanding. Open association studies have been used in researches to see whether proposed hypotheses are worth examining (e.g. Fuchs, Schreier, & van Osselaer, 2015). A total of 80 participants were recruited on Amazon Mechanical Turk for a small monetary compensation. Participants were given a short scenario where they were in an art print store with two other people. In the scenario, Person A chose artwork A (low fluency art print), and person B chose artwork B (high fluency art print). It was explicitly notified that the size and price of both art prints were the same. Each artwork was shown separately in random order after reading the scenario. After looking at each artwork, participants were asked to imagine what each person would be like and were asked to write down the characteristics they would infer about person A and person B based on their choices.

In alignment with the proposed hypotheses, taste, education, and status were consistent keywords in the responses. Many participants inferred a high level of taste, education, and status to person A (who chose low fluency art print) (e.g. “Person A must be an educated intellectual person.” [#36], “Person A is highly educated because this piece is clearly emblematic of a certain art movement and is not immediately aesthetically pleasing to an



average person.” [#37], “I think person A is highly educated... I think that they are financially comfortable.” [#39], “A complex person who has sophisticated tastes” [#54], “Person A may be of the more refined type. Prone to ‘highbrow’ tastes.” [#66], “Seems to have an art knowledge. Comes from financially rich background and used to have artwork around his house since a young age.” [#77]). It is noteworthy that education in the responses were correlated with either taste or status. Interestingly, no inference on high status was made for person B (who chose high fluency art print).

Moreover, the open association study allowed the examination of potential covariates. Many people inferred attributes such as creative and imaginative from the low fluency artwork, as they were less intuitive and lacked realism. Thus, in study 2, perceived creativity was measured as covariate and its effect on the proposed model was examined to rule out the alternative explanation.

## VI. STUDY 1

The objective of this study was to establish the main effect from fluency to status inference along with the mediating effect of taste inference and moderating effect of art expertise. It is important to highlight that original art are valued more than identical duplicates, because it is perceived as a unique creative act and have higher degree of physical contact with the original artist (Newman & Bloom, 2011). Even when holding the price constant, purchase of original artwork would imply a certain level of wealth. The current study is interested in the value implied by consuming art with different levels of fluency rather than value implied by the objective monetary worth of artworks. Accordingly, none of the studies incorporated purchase of original artwork. Study 1 used art prints in room decoration as the stimuli to eliminate alternative hypothesis of original artwork valuation.

In testing the given hypotheses, artwork was organically presented as part of room decoration in an Instagram post. Social media is one of the most highly sought ways people engage self presentation, such as ‘humblebragging (an indirect form of showing off by self-deprecating)’ (Bellezza, Paharia, & Keinan, 2017). While each social media is devoted to different contents, Instagram serves as an effective tool for self-expressive impression management, due to its visual-concentrated user interface. Many users frame their lifestyle, such as living (i.e. #myroom: 1.4m posts), clothing (i.e. #ootd (outfit of the day): 211m posts), and eating (i.e. #food:

298m posts). Thus, this served as an appropriate context on which conspicuous consumption of art and inference on art consumption could occur simultaneously.

## **6.1. Design and Procedure**

Participants (N = 140, 61% female,  *Mage* = 35) were recruited on Amazon Mechanical Turk for a small monetary compensation. Participants were randomly assigned to either low fluency condition or high fluency condition.

Participants were exposed to an Instagram post by a person named Taylor displaying a room picture. The unisex name Taylor was selected to avoid any potential gender effect. Participants in both conditions were shown an image of a room with an art print (not an original artwork) framed and laid against the wall. The artwork displayed either Picasso's *Portrait of Clovis Sagot* (1910; Artwork 1) for high fluency condition or Braque's *Man with a Guitar* (1911; Artwork 3) for low fluency condition. Other than the artworks, all other details (e.g. background, 'likes' count, time, etc.) were held constant. In addition, the caption 'loving this new art print in my room. \$50 well spent. #art #interior' was inserted under the image to provide information that the artwork is a print and to hold price constant across conditions.

After seeing the post, participants rated items on perceived status. Perceived status was measured by two of the three items developed by

Bellezza, Paharia, and Keinan (2017), aimed to capture inference on financial status. This included two items: “Do you think Taylor is financially wealthy? (1 = “not wealthy” to 7 = “extremely wealthy”) and “Taylor has a high income level.” (1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree”) ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

Taste inference was measured subsequently as the mediating variable. An original single-item scale was developed to measure taste. Participants were asked to judge whether “Taylor is accustomed to ‘highbrow’ art.” (1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree”). Based on Bourdieu (1984), this measure captures both refined taste in art as well as a developed familiarity with ‘highbrow’ art.

In addition, participants responded to a set of questions on their art expertise, used as data for the moderating variable. Art expertise have been measured in various ways (Silvia, 2013), including experience and interest in art (Chatterjee et al., 2010; Locher et al., 2001). The version used in the current study was adopted from Silvia and Barona (2009), encompassing two questions: “How much training have you had in the arts?” (1 = “very little” to 7 = “a lot of training”) and “How interested are you in art?” (1 = “not at all” to 7 = “very interested”) ( $\alpha = .74$ ).

After these measurements, manipulation check was conducted to measure participants’ perceived fluency of the provided stimuli. Fluency was measured regarding two concerns, adopted from a study by Lee and

Aaker (2004): ease of processing (1 = “difficult to process” to 7 “easy to process”) and comprehensibility (1 = “difficult to understand” to 7 = “easy to understand”) ( $\alpha = .86$ ). An open-end question asking the content of the painting in the Instagram post was inserted as an attention check. Finally, basic demographics (gender and age) were recorded.

## **6.2. Results and Discussion**

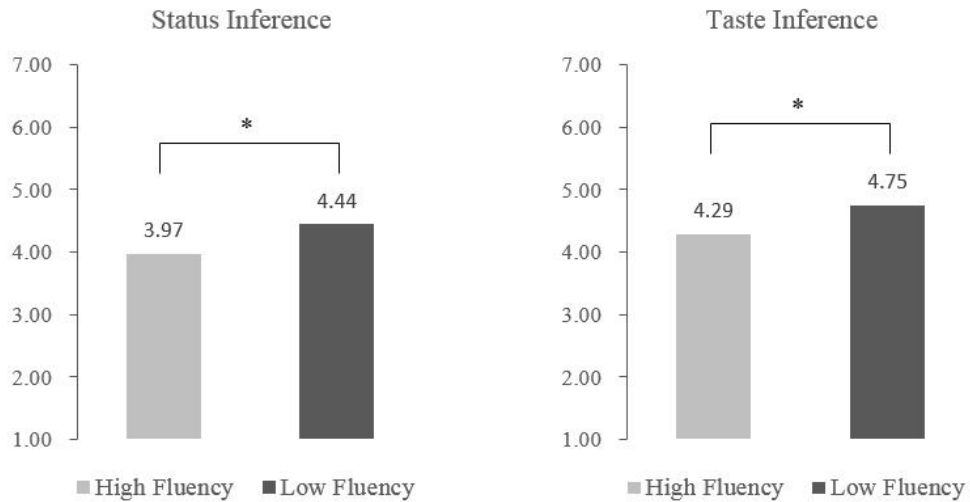
### *Manipulation Check*

One-way ANOVA confirmed that the participants in the low fluency condition experienced lower fluency (i.e. more difficult to process and more difficult to understand) than the participants in the high fluency condition ( $M_{\text{low fluency}} = 4.79$ ,  $M_{\text{high fluency}} = 5.57$ ,  $F(1,138) = 11.50$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

### *Main Effect*

One-way ANOVA on status inference revealed significant difference in the two conditions of participants’ report of status inference ( $F(1,138) = 4.97$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Participants in the low fluency condition reported higher status inference ( $M_{\text{low fluency}} = 4.44$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ) than the participants in the high fluency condition ( $M_{\text{high fluency}} = 3.97$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ) (Figure 3). Results support H1 in that consumers infer higher status when the processing fluency of art is lower.

Moreover, participants reported higher taste inference when fluency of art was lower ( $M_{\text{low fluency}} = 4.75$ ,  $M_{\text{high fluency}} = 4.29$ ,  $F(1,138) = 4.45$ ,  $p < .05$ ) Both main effects are depicted in Figure 3.



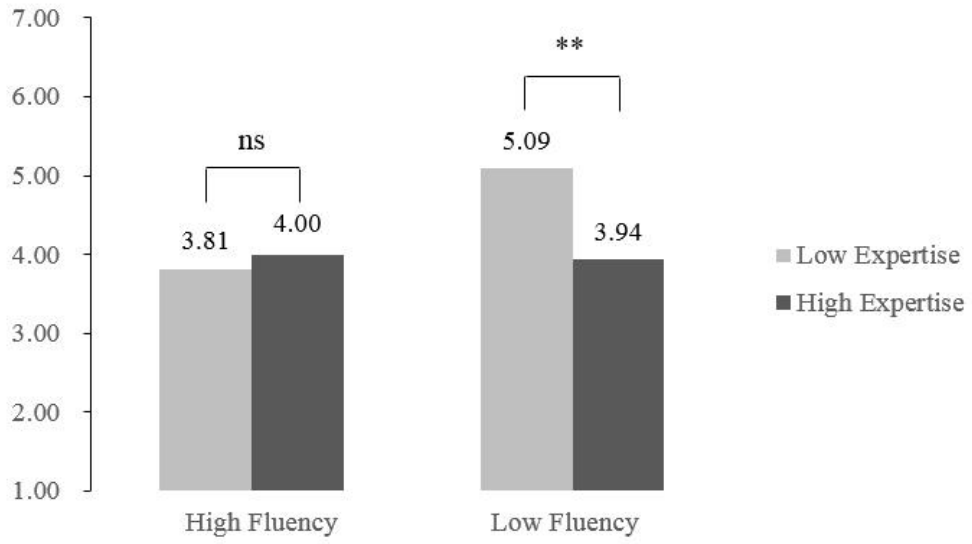
**Figure 3. Study 1 Results: Main Effects**

### *Mediation Analysis*

To check the second hypothesis of mediation, Model 4 of PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2012) was used with status inference as the dependent variable and taste inference as the mediator. In support of the proposed hypothesis, the indirect effect of fluency on status inference was significant (indirect effect =  $-.1949$ ,  $SE = .1081$ , 95% confidence interval [CI] =  $[-.4529, -.0234]$ ). Importantly, when the mediating variable was inserted in the model, the direct effect of fluency on status inference became insignificant (direct effect =  $-.2720$ ,  $SE = .1918$ , 95% confidence interval [CI] =  $[-.6512, .1072]$ ). These results revealed that the model is fully mediated by taste inference.

### *Moderation Analysis*

2 (low fluency vs. high fluency) x 2 (low expertise vs. high expertise) between-subject ANOVA was conducted to check the moderation hypothesis. Interaction between fluency and expertise was significant ( $F(1,136) = 5.04, p < .05$ ). Participants in the high fluency condition with low expertise reported status inference of no significant difference from participants in the high fluency condition with high expertise ( $M_{\text{low expertise}} = 3.81, M_{\text{high expertise}} = 4.00, t = -.04, p = .97$ ). In contrast, participants in the low fluency condition with low expertise reported significantly higher status inference ( $M_{\text{low expertise}} = 5.09$ ) than participants in the low fluency condition with high expertise ( $M_{\text{high expertise}} = 3.94, t = -3.22, p < .01$ ). Thus, it can be interpreted that when the artwork consumed by another person is difficult to process and understand, consumers with low art expertise will infer higher status than consumers with high art expertise will. This is believed to be the case because judgement of others depends on their own knowing, as inferences are made in comparison against a standard (Foschi, 2000).



**Figure 4. Study 1 Results: Moderation**



## VII. STUDY 2

The second study was conducted to replicate the results of study 1 and further eliminate alternative hypotheses. Willems, van der Linden and Bastin (2007) mentioned that it is “difficult to isolate the factors that contribute to processing fluency”. For such reasons, scholars have controlled various aspects that may lead to difference in processing fluency, including familiarity of stimuli paintings (Kuchinke et al., 2009).

The stimuli used in study 1 could have had different degree of familiarity to the participants. When having searched each artwork in Google, the keywords ‘Pablo Picasso Portrait of Wilhelm Uhde’ showed about 75,200 results, whereas the keywords ‘George Braque Portrait of a Woman’ showed about 3,400,000 results (as of January 24, 2019). The difference in the number of results may imply different familiarity to consumers. Thus, to manipulate perceived processing fluency without familiarity affecting the results, a single stimulus was incorporated. The mean response time of the stimuli from the stimuli pretest was 4.89 seconds. Based on this results, Georges Braque’s *Woman with a Guitar* (1913, Georges Pompidou Center, Paris; Artwork 4) was selected as the painting with the most neutral processing fluency (4.85 response time in seconds) from the selected list. A small description was added alongside the stimuli to manipulate perceived fluency.

Moreover, the open association pilot study suggested that many people perceived creativity in the low fluency condition. In order to rule out this alternative hypothesis, creativity was measured in both conditions and analyzed.

The stimulus was presented in an Instagram post, similar to that of study 1, but instead of depicting a purchase of art print, the post showed a picture from a recent visit to an exhibition. Replicating the effect with a different mode of art consumption would show the generalizability of the effect in the two major modes of art consumption.

## **6.1. Design and Procedure**

Participants ( $N = 72$ , 42% female,  $M_{age} = 38$ ) were recruited on Amazon Mechanical Turk in exchange for a monetary compensation. Participants were randomly assigned to either low fluency condition or high fluency condition.

As in study 1, participants were exposed to an Instagram post by a person named Taylor. The post depicted a blank wall with a hanging framed artwork. The caption read ‘an artwork I saw last night in the museum #art’. In the high fluency condition, a description was added above the artwork indicating that ‘most participants in our previous study found the artwork in the post to be easy to understand and easy to process.’. In the low fluency condition, the description indicated ‘most participants in our previous study

found the artwork in the post to be difficult to understand and difficult to process.’.

Participants were asked to rate their inference on status, taste, and creativity. Regarding the logic behind the hypotheses that observers will infer that the art consumer have been raised in and accustomed to a certain level of financial status, a single-item measure was employed from the three items developed by Bellezza, Paharia, and Keinan (2017) to capture the perceived wealth of the art consumer: “Do you think Taylor is financially wealthy?” (1 = “not wealthy” to 7 = “extremely wealthy”).

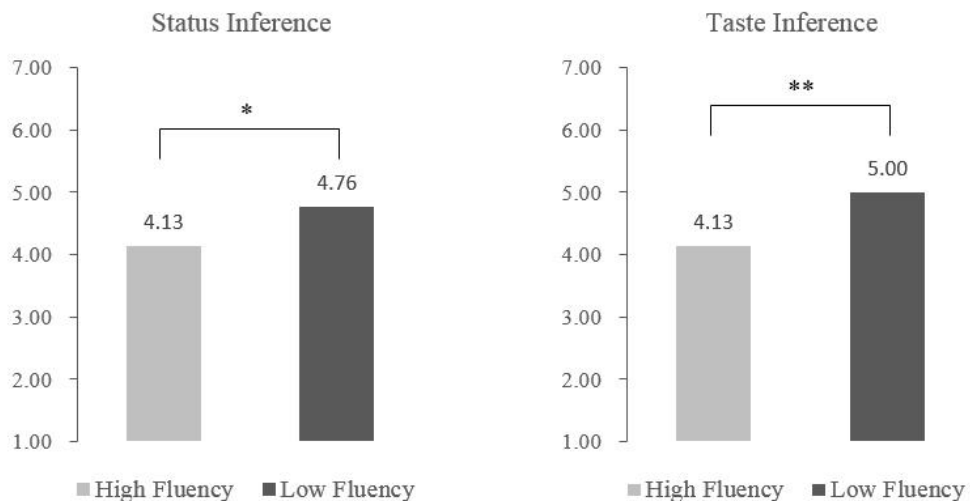
Taste inference was measured with the same measure as study 1. In addition, to rule out the alternative explanation of creativity, two measures of creativity adopted from Goncalo, Flynn, and Kim (2010) were incorporated: “Taylor is creative.” (1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree”) and “Other people will think Taylor is creative.” (1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree”) ( $\alpha = .85$ ). An open-end question was inserted as an attention check question, asking what the participants saw in the painting. Lastly, basic demographics including gender and age were recorded.

## **6.2. Results and Discussion**

### *Main Effect*

As in study 1, one-way ANOVA showed significant difference in the two conditions in regards to how participants infer status ( $F(1,70) = 4.84, p < .05$ ). Participants in the low fluency condition reported higher status inference ( $M_{\text{low fluency}} = 4.76, SD = 1.39$ ) than the participants in the high fluency condition ( $M_{\text{high fluency}} = 4.13, SD = 1.03$ ).

In addition, significant difference was revealed in participants' report of taste inference ( $F(1,70) = 9.67, p < .01$ ). Participants in the low fluency condition reported higher taste inference ( $M_{\text{low fluency}} = 5.00, SD = 1.09$ ) than the participants in the high fluency condition ( $M_{\text{high fluency}} = 4.13, SD = 1.26$ ). Interestingly, creativity revealed insignificant difference ( $F(1, 70), p = .319, M_{\text{low fluency}} = 5.18, M_{\text{high fluency}} = 4.88$ ). Thus, alternative explanation of creativity can be rejected.



**Figure 5. Study 2 Results: Main Effects**

### *Mediation Analysis*

Mediation analysis was conducted with Model 4 of PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2012). When having put status inference as the dependent variable and taste inference as the mediator, results supported the proposed hypotheses. The indirect effect of fluency on status inference was significant (indirect effect = .5616, SE = .2025, 95% confidence interval [CI] = [.2166, 1.10144]). Replicating the results of study 1, when the mediating variable was inserted in the model, the direct effect of fluency on status inference became insignificant (direct effect = .0678, SE = .2384, 95% confidence interval [CI] = [-.4079, .5434]). Study 2 also revealed full mediation of the taste inference.

Study 2 allowed a more robust confirmation of the hypotheses by rejecting two alternative hypotheses. Creativity measure did not differ across conditions, whereas both taste inference and status inference showed statistical significance in difference. In addition, framing a relatively neutral artwork with different levels of fluency led to the same results as in study 1, rejecting the alternative hypothesis of familiarity.

## VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION

### 8.1. Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The two main studies confirm the hypotheses that when consumers consume low fluency artwork, observers will infer higher taste and higher status than when consumers consume high fluency artwork (study 1 and study 2). In addition, this effect is attenuated when the artwork is of low fluency and the observer has high expertise in art, as these inferences are comparative to their own standards (study 1). Although many different inferences may be made based on art consumption including creativity, the open association study revealed that taste and status inference are the more common themes (open association study and study 2). Interestingly, although the inference on status was significantly higher for low fluency artwork consumption, even artwork with high fluency led to high level of status inference, as both studies showed a general trend towards high status inference in both conditions. Results reveal that while consumption of art itself it is a signal of status, consumption of low fluency artwork increases the effect. In addition, such inference is more meaningful in the art context, as it ranks the highest among other cultural domains in association with status (cultural domain pilot study).

The current study contributes to the fluency literature in that fluency was tested with real artworks, rather than design elements. In addition, the study confirmed the effect with both art prints and art

experience (i.e. museum visit), proving that different modes of art consumption can effectively lead to signals of status. Such finding reveals a novel attribute of art consumption, as prestige from art consumption primarily stemmed from ownership. Furthermore, while the positive affect of high fluency disappears when the source of fluency becomes salient (Van den Bergh & Vrana, 1998), the inference of status stemming from low fluency do not diminish even when the source is known (study 2). Combining the results of the current research and those of previous literature, it can be said that while high fluency art may provide higher aesthetic response, low fluency art leads to heightened inference of status.

The results of the study suggest an interesting insight for the status and conspicuous consumption literature. Fluency is a relatively subtle and unobvious cue of status. Indeed, consumers who are wealthy but have low need for status were found to prefer ‘quiet’ goods (Han, Nunes, & Drèze, 2010) that are recognizable only to themselves over ‘loud’ goods that have more obvious luxury connotation. For such consumers, incorporating art with low fluency can be a subtle but effective cue of their status.

On a practical level, the results of this research allow individuals to better represent themselves. For instance, social media serves as a representative platform on which people frame themselves in desired identities. In Instagram, users post millions of art-related contents (e.g. #art: 431m posts, #gallery: 20.m posts, #exhibition: 9.9m posts). Applying the

results of the study, users will be better able to portray themselves as having better taste and higher status. A novel form of conspicuous consumption and self presentation tactic could be developed accordingly.

In addition, managers can better develop products that fit the taste and preference of targeted consumers. Likewise, artists may be able to create art more desirable in the eyes of lay consumers. Many successful artists are incorporating their artwork into products, such as Takashi Murakami for Louis Vuitton. By understanding which art is appropriate for each level of social class, artists and managers will be better able to meet the demands of their consumers.

## **8.2. Limitations and Further Research**

To control for art type, only cubist artworks were used as stimuli in the present research. However, the effect could hold true across art types due to the same mechanism. For instance, *Dansaekhwa* (Korean Monochrome Painting) may show higher status and taste inference over realism art, for trained eyes will imply better developed taste and therefore higher financial status. Likewise, it could be worthwhile to investigate the difference in processing fluency of various art types and respective status inference stemming from such difference. By doing so, managers will be better able to incorporate art type more appropriate for target consumers.

In a similar vein, a more general investigation of the proposed model could result in increased managerial implication. The current study focused



on signaling and inferring information about an individual. Regarding the wide incorporation of art in management, including advertisement, product design, and CSR campaigns, it would be worthwhile to investigate whether incorporating art with low fluency would show similar effect at a corporation level. However, while the main effect may hold true, it is possible that the mediating variable would differ. Unlike individuals who are exposed to and become accustomed to certain types of art and culture depending on financial status, corporations do not necessarily share such life narrative. Corporations utilizing low fluency art may be perceived to have higher status due to inference on the characteristics of targeted consumers or inference on available resources.

An additional variable could be investigated in further research. Interestingly, when processing fluency was framed less fluent by providing information of how others perceived the stimulus, inference on taste differed more greatly between conditions (study 2). Hypothesis 3 suggests that people base status inference in relation to their own understanding of art. Similarly, people may base taste inference in relation to how others perceive a situation. The results in study 2 may shed light on a potential mediator in the relationship between fluency and taste inference.

Elaboration of the current research would guide scholars and managers on the optimal intersection of art and marketing and shed light on the fusibility of art in the social context. Indeed, art won't let you down.

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## X. ARTWORKS



[Artwork 1] Pablo Picasso,  
<Portrait of Clovis Sagot>, 1909,  
oil on canvas, Hamburger Kunsthalle,  
Hamburg, Germany.



[Artwork 2] Georges Braque,  
<Portrait of a Woman>, 1911,  
oil on canvas, 91x61cm,  
Private Collection.



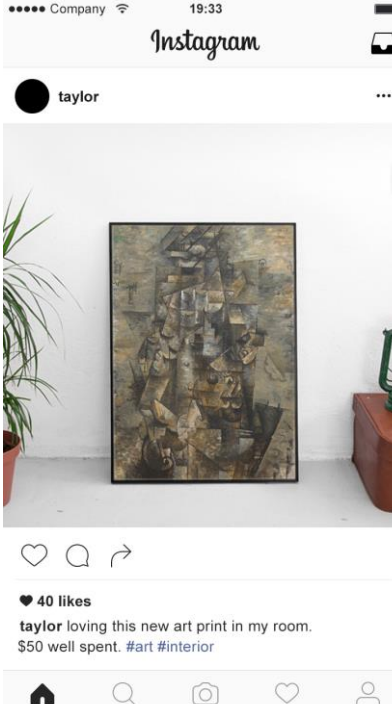
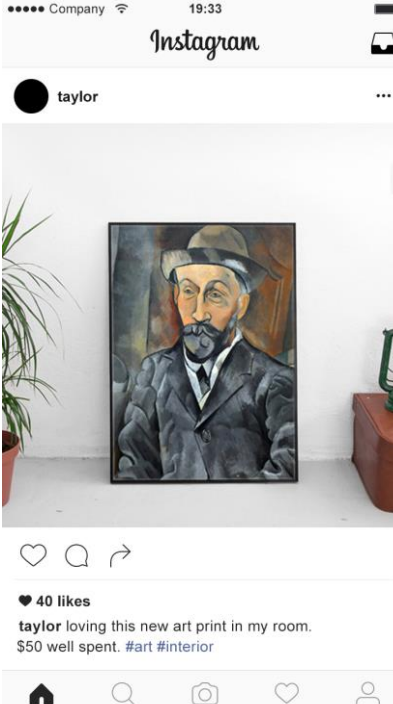
[Artwork 3] Georges Braque,  
<Man with a Guitar>, 1911,  
oil on canvas, 116.2x81cm,  
The Museum of Modern Art, NY, US.



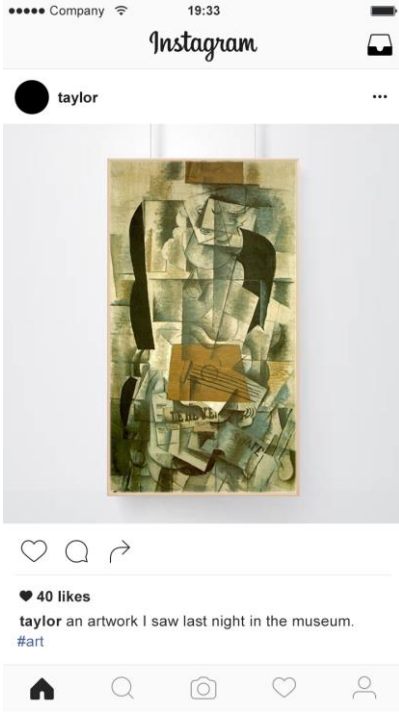
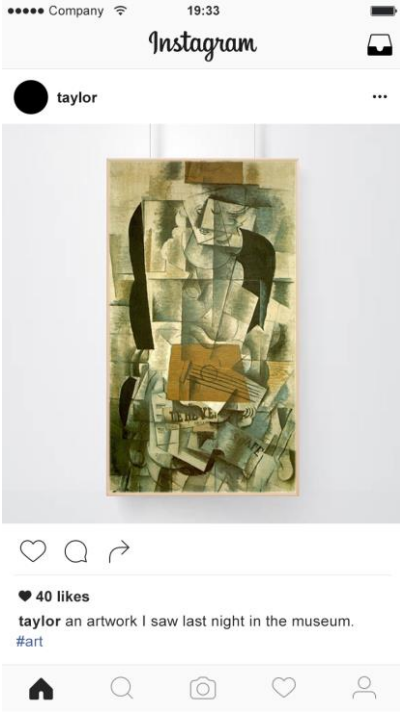
[Artwork 4] Georges Braque,  
<Woman with a Guitar>, 1913,  
oil on canvas, 130x73cm,  
Georges Pompidou Center, Paris, France.

# XI. APPENDIX

## A. Study 1 Stimuli

Condition	Low Fluency	High Fluency
Stimuli	 <p>The image shows a mobile phone screen displaying an Instagram post. At the top, the status bar shows 'Company' with signal strength, Wi-Fi, and battery icons, and the time '19:33'. The Instagram logo is centered. Below it is the profile picture and name 'taylor'. The main image is a cubist-style art print on a wall, flanked by a potted plant on the left and a small table with a green lantern on the right. Below the image are icons for heart, comment, and share. The caption reads: '40 likes', 'taylor loving this new art print in my room. \$50 well spent. #art #interior'. At the bottom is the navigation bar with icons for home, search, post, heart, and profile.</p>	 <p>The image shows a mobile phone screen displaying an Instagram post, identical in layout to the one in the Low Fluency condition. The main image is a realistic portrait of a man with a beard and a hat, wearing a suit, on a wall. The caption and other elements are the same as in the Low Fluency condition.</p>

## B. Study 2 Stimuli

Condition	Low Fluency	High Fluency
Stimulus	<p>“Most participants in our previous study found the artwork in the post to be difficult to understand and difficult to process”</p> 	<p>“Most participants in our previous study found the artwork in the post to be easy to understand and easy to process.”</p> 

## 요약 (국문 초록)

역사적으로 미술은 부의 상징이었으며 그로 인해 호화를 내포하게 되었다 (Mandel, 2009). 이러한 연관성은 주로 원본 미술 작품의 소비에서 파생되었는데, 최근 연구에 따르면 원본의 소비뿐만 아니라 미술 작품을 상품에 적용하는 경우에도 지각된 호화가 높아진다고 한다 (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008a). 이러한 결과는 미술의 다른 소비 형태도 과시적 소비로 이어질 수 있음을 암시한다. 이에 본 연구에서는 미술이 언제 그리고 왜 과시적 소비가 될 수 있는지를 탐구한다. 이를 위해 두개의 미술 소비 형태, 즉 미술의 인쇄본 (art print; 실험 1) 과 전시 관람 (실험 2) 이라는 두개의 맥락에서 가설을 확인한다.

본 연구는 낮은 유창성 (i.e. 처리하기 어렵고 이해하기 어려운) 의 미술을 소비하는 것이 소비자에 대한 특정한 자질들을 암시한다고 제안한다. 구체적으로, 소비자가 낮은 유창성의 미술을 소비할 때, 관찰자는 그에 대해 높은 취향과 높은 지위를 유추할 것이라는 가설을 제시한다. 이는 ‘문화적으로 공유되는 취향’ (Reber, 2012)에서 비롯된 논지로, 같은 사회 계급의 구성원들이 특정한 취향을 공유하고 자신에게 가해지는 기대치를 이해하고 있다는 점에 근거한다. 높은 사회 계급이 ‘고상한’ 취향을 갖고 있다는 것은 (Bourdieu, 1985) 널리 알려진 신념이다. 따라서 유창성이 낮은 미술을 소비하는 것은 미적 감상에 있어서의 숙달을 의미하며, 높은 취향과 그에 따른 높은 지위를 암시한다. 또한, 이 효과는 관찰자가 자신의 미적 능력에 근거하여 비교하여 유추하는

것으로, 관찰자가 높은 미술 전문 지식을 갖고 있을 때 약화될 것으로 예상한다.

제시된 가설은 두 번의 실험을 거쳐 입증되었다. 실험1 (N = 140)에서 실험참가자들은 미술 작품이 포함된 한 개인의 인스타그램 게시물을 보고 그에 대해 지각한 취향과 지위를 판단했다. 실험 결과는 제시된 가설과 같이, 낮은 유창성을 갖는 미술 작품의 소비는 더 높은 취향과 지위에 대한 유추로 이어짐을 증명했다. 그러나 관찰자가 미술 전문 지식 수준이 높을 때 이 효과는 줄어들었다.

실험2 (N = 72)는 본 효과에 대한 대안 가설 두가지를 확인한다. 개방 결합 실험에서 많은 실험참가자들은 유창성이 낮은 미술을 소비하는 개인에 대해 창의적인 것이라고 유추했다. 이런 현상에 대응하여, 실험2에서는 지각된 창의성을 확인했다. 분석 결과, 창의성은 제시된 모형에서 유효하지 않게 나와서 대안 가설을 기각할 수 있었다. 또한 작품 별 친숙도에 따라 결과가 다르게 나올 수 있다는 대안 가설을 확인하기 위하여, 실험2에서는 단일 자극물을 사용하여 유창성을 다르게 프레이밍(framing)하였다.

본 실험은 미술 소비가 언제 그리고 어떻게 지위를 나타내게 되는지에 대한 새로운 결과를 도출했다. 미술이 일반적으로 호화롭게 지각되는 것을 고려하였을 때, 본 실험의 결과는 미술을 마케팅에 활용할 때 각 목적에 더 걸맞는 미술의 형태와 특징을 제안할 수 있다.

**주요어:** 미술, 미술 소비, 신호 이론, 지위, 취향, 유창성

**학번:** 2017-26526