For-Profit Research:

Reference Work in an Art Gallery

Arielle Cohen, Librarian and Researcher Gagosian Gallery Libraries in the Context of Capitalism February 1, 2018

Gagosian Gallery – Some Context

- Est. 1980
 - Started in LA and expanded all over the globe
- 17 galleries worldwide, with the flagship on the upper east side of New York City
- In addition to selling art, the gallery:
 - represents or works closely with artists and artists estates
 - Curates exhibitions
 - Publishes exhibition catalogues



Acquisitions

- Purchase materials (mainly books):
 - related to the exhibition schedule of the gallery
 - for artworks that have been brought in on consignment
- Focus on larger institutions, generally
- Supplement the gallery's collection with that of other institutions

General Reference

Provide reference assistance to all members of staff:

- Directors
- Salespeople
- Publications department
- Researchers
- Tasks consists of anything from finding a book to tracking down the correct dates or titles of artworks

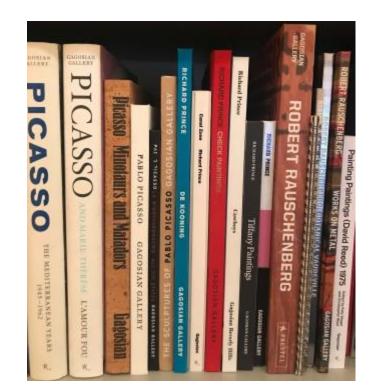
More Extensive Research

Create research documentation to be sent to clients

- For-profit culture affects:
 - Turn around time
 - Contending with past decisions
 - Ex: Anonymization of names
 - Confidentiality

Deviations from the Gallery Routine

- Exhibition curators
- Publications Department
 - Scholarly essays
 - Catalogue Raisonnés



Closing Thoughts and Sources

- The gallery library is different from your typical information institution, as its end goal is to facilitate the sale of art
- The gallery librarian must still provide quality service Our job hasn't changed, just the needs of our patrons



Gagosian Gallery website: <u>www.gagosiangallery.com</u>