



AiA Art News-service



# Blockchain and Art: A Match Made in Heaven?

Blockchain is emerging as a solution that promises the most significant impact on the artistic world, but will it be able to put money back in the hands of artists?

Blockchain is democratising access to copyright protection. It is both allowing artists to instantaneously claim copyright on their work, and showing them exactly where their work is being used. [The use of blockchain](#) is a promising solution to combat the lack of transparency and rebuild trust in the industry.

As global art sales exceeded \$63bn in 2015 alone, being able to crystallise deals and transactions on the digital ledger will ensure art collectors are acquiring full title to the artwork they purchase.

As transactions recorded in the [blockchain](#) are non-repudiable with validations being reached through consensus, the entire transaction history of a work of art will then be publically available and protected.

Issues regarding origin, copyright, and authentication will no longer prove to be a hindrance once this revolutionary technology is adopted.

## **Funding Mechanisms**

The use of blockchain will allow artists to be treated as equal partners by allowing them direct the flow of funding and see whether their projects are completed as per the agreed terms – terms spelt out in smart contracts. Artists can use these [blockchain](#) smart contracts as a fund mechanism to raise venture capital.

For example, a blockchain based crowd-sale platform, WeiFund, is being used by LeBeau, to fund part of her debut thriller, Braid. WeiFund turns its contributors into investors and allows them to have their share in the profit, should a film become profitable.

## **Incorporation of Revenues and Monetising**

Self-executing smart contracts divide profits justly and without any delays based on an individual's contribution to the creative process. This benefits everyone involved in the venture, be it actors, directors, screenwriters or designers.

Furthermore, the transparency blockchain provides ensures everyone can see how much a film is generating and what percentage of the profit goes into whose pocket. Moreover, filmmakers can monetise their films for online viewers using Wiper, an encrypted messaging app that comes with a bitcoin wallet.

## **Analysing and Managing Data Analytics**

Blockchain helps artists attract the right merchandisers, distributors, and [crowdfund](#) for creative collaborations with the help of advanced and efficient data analytics.

Additionally, it helps deploy smart contracts to maximise the value of digital rights in a database through its Digital Right Management (DRM) feature.

## **Piracy Protection**

It allows artists to exchange their assets securely with customers over networks. This is because it allows piracy protection. For example, a South African startup, Custos Media Technologies, has deployed the [bitcoin blockchain to track media piracy](#) allowing producers of art content to identify pirated versions of their content.

## **Conclusion**

It remains to be seen whether the mainstream art world would adopt and embrace [blockchain technology](#). Though many companies with varying business plans have already introduced this concept, they are still waiting to realise its benefits.

But as far as artists are concerned, blockchain will surely allow them to feast at the centre of their own environment rather than starving at the borders of many others.