

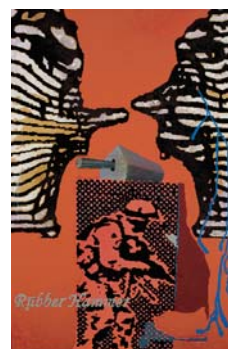
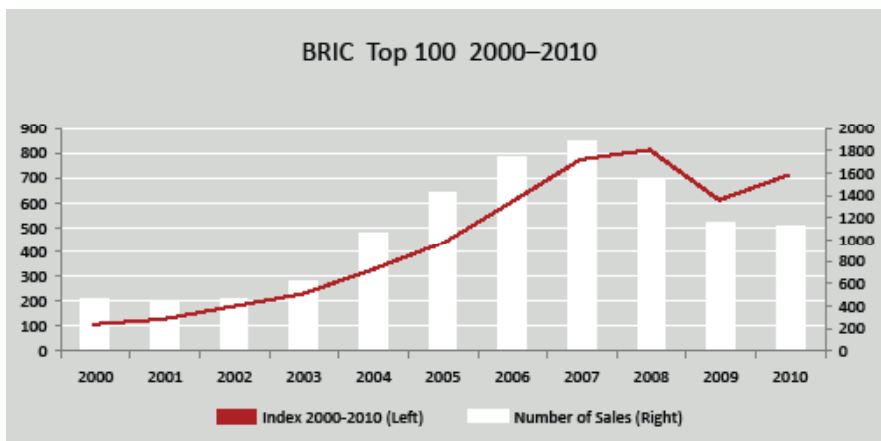


# BRIC BUILDING

When the acronym BRIC was coined a decade ago to denote the rapidly developing nations of Brazil, Russia, India, and China, few could have predicted the impact their explosive economic growth would have on the markets for their art. As newly wealthy consumers emerged in those countries, which account for more than 40 percent of the world's population, so did demand for works made by their national artists. Auction houses, quick to seize on the opportunity, have been instrumental in shaping the market for BRIC art, holding specialized sales and opening offices from which they can more easily reach their new clientele. With economists predicting that in several decades the combined economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China will dwarf those of the current world leaders, we decided to analyze just how well their art has fared over the past 10 years, from January 2000 through October 2010. Using auction data for paintings culled from the Blouin Art Sales Index, we created an index for the 100 highest-grossing BRIC artists, to show how the sector has done as a whole, plus separate indexes for each country's 100 biggest earners, and graphs based on the volume of works each group sold. With paintings by some contemporary BRIC artists fetching upwards of \$1 million at auction and demand for more-traditional standbys rising as well, there's little "emerging" about this market any longer.

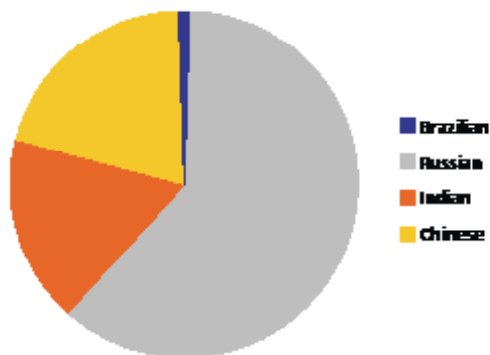
BY ROMAN KRAEUSSL

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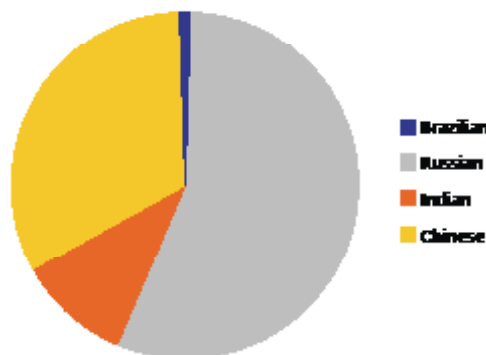


Jitish Kallat's undated *Rubber Hammer* tripled its high estimate to sell for \$197,225 in Mumbai auctioneer Saffron-art's summer 2008 sale.

BRIC Top 100 Artists by Volume 2000-2010

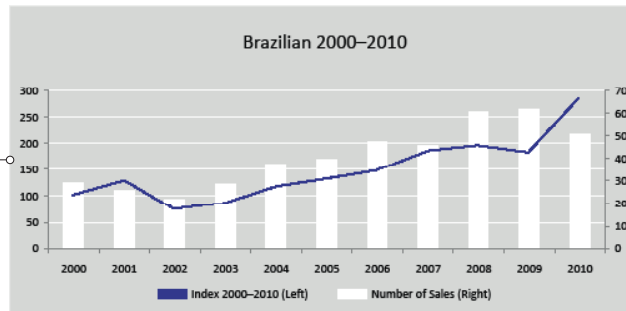


BRIC Top 100 Artists by Turnover 2000-2010



## BRAZIL

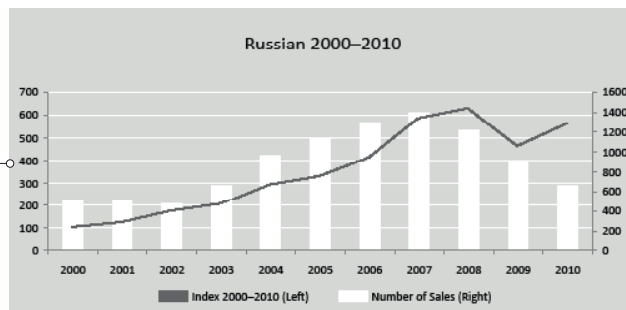
Incorporating artists ranging from Lygia Clark and Beatriz Milhazes to Candido Portinari and Adriana Varejão, this index reveals the most moderate growth of the group, peaking at 275 points in 2010, possibly because comparatively little Brazilian work hit the market during the period overall. But it also shows the smallest recession-era slump and a spectacular growth of 57 percent in 2010.



Beatriz Milhazes's *O Mágico*, 2001, shot over the \$350,000 high estimate to \$1,049,000 at Sotheby's New York in May 2008.

## RUSSIA

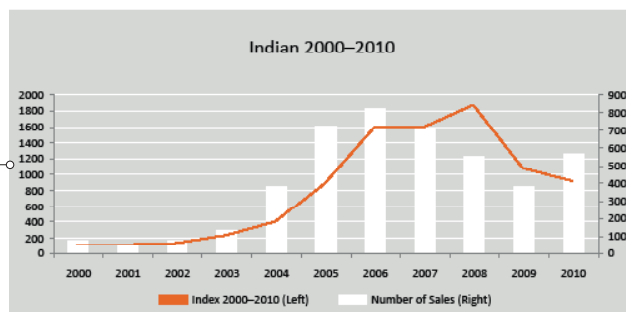
This graph shows the largest number of sales, close to 10,000 between 2000 and 2010. The average price paid, however, is lower than that for Chinese paintings. Included in the index are Komar & Melamid and Erik Bulatov, as well as such blue-chip stalwarts as Wassily Kandinsky and Marc Chagall, whose solidly high auction performances make this the least volatile of the four.



Oleg Vassiliev's oil on canvas *Walking Away*, 1978, brought £180,500 (\$363,000) at Sotheby's London in March 2008.

## INDIA

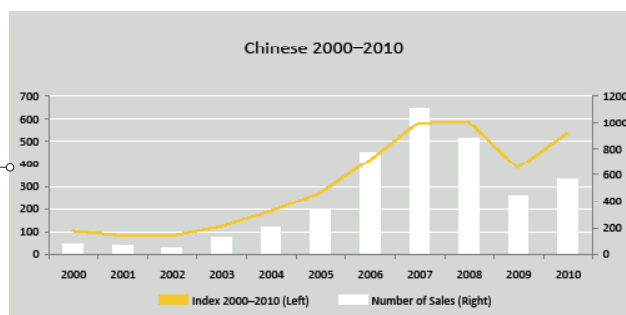
The index has an average annual return of 34 percent, the highest of the group, but it also displays the most volatility. Indian artists, from contemporary darlings Subodh Gupta and TyeB Mehta to modern masters F.N. Souza and S.H. Raza, compose around 17 percent of the BRIC 100 in terms of number of sales and just 11 percent in terms of earnings.



TyeB Mehta's *Untitled (Figure on Rickshaw)*, 1984, fetched £982,050 (\$1.9 million) at Christie's London in June 2008.

## CHINA

The Chinese market grew significantly from 2003 through 2007, resulting in an average annual index return of 23 percent. Although Chinese artists, led by Zao Wou-Ki, Zhang Xiaogang, and Zeng Fanzhi, account for about 20 percent of the BRIC 100 sales volume, they generated a third of its earnings, because Chinese art commands the highest average prices of the group.



Liu Ye's *The Happy Family*, 1988, earned £569,300 (\$1.2 million) at Christie's London in October 2007.