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## Interview with Paul Fabozzi

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### **Interview with Paul Fabozzi**

Having studied and exhibited internationally, Paul Fabozzi has a well established career as both a practicing Artist and a Professor in Fine Arts. Much of Paul Fabozzi's recent work is an exploration of his relationship with his current surroundings in New York. I really couldn't think of anyone better to share a few words of wisdom on exhibiting, education and generally being an artist in this city.

**IS: Through your work on your 'Spectral Variants' and 'Data Walks' you seem to have a very close relationship with the New York City and it's physical make-up. What is it about New York in particular that interests you? Or could these works have been carried out anywhere?**

PF: I tend to work in relation to my immediate environment. Prior to the two bodies of you mention I did an extensive project based on Rome. I have a hard time separating the psychological from the physical when it come to being in a location. My whole mental landscape is different depending on where I am.

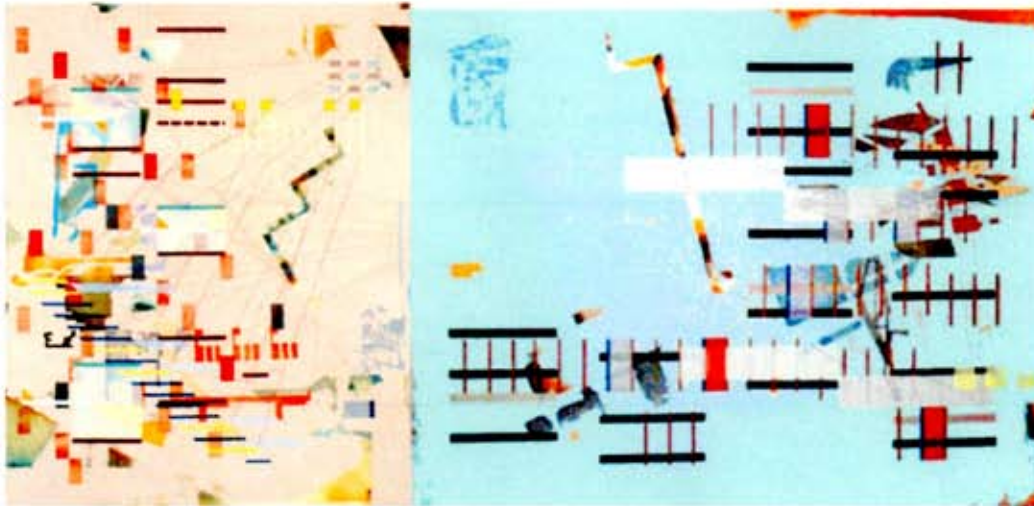
What I am drawn to about New York is its obsession with transformation. It has internalized

capitalism to such a degree that if things are not being taken down in order for new things to be built there is uneasiness. I mean this in terms of ideas as well as buildings. Also it is a physically and mentally intense place. You can almost feel it's mental hum.

This work needed New York to get to this point but might not in the future...

**IS: You have developed a specific visual language of vectors and geometric shapes within your work. How important do you think it is for an artist to develop a cohesive language throughout their practice?**

PF: Art making for me is investigation and as such a language develops. This has been very important for me. I like to know where I am so that I can move with a history behind me.



**IS: You are currently an Associate Professor of Fine Arts at St. Johns University. What are your thoughts on the role of art education within current contemporary art practice?**

PF: This is a big question. Keeping in mind that I teach undergraduates, I see my job as getting the students in touch with their innate abilities. Yet at the same time one must not be beholden to the past. Intuition needs to be developed by an awareness of what it means to be alive now.

Once one gets to the graduate level the pressures of the marketplace are very big, and not just for the student but for the institution. In general what worries me in art education at this level is a situation where over-rationalizations about what it means to be current, or hip overshadow the real work of developing a unique voice. This has the potential to create a situation where being beholden to galleries takes the place of the articulation of rigorous pedagogical positions. This is often not a healthy environment for creativity to be fostered.

**IS: How does teaching inform or affect your own practice? How do you balance the two?**

PF: I see teaching as the setting up of situations for students so that they can investigate things about making, thinking, and being. In this way it mirrors my art making practice. I balance the two by never missing an opportunity to be in my studio!



**IS: You have worked and exhibited internationally. What are the main differences you have noticed between the art world in both Europe and the United States?**

PF: It is hard to generalize. It depends more on the specific environment you are exhibiting in and their expectations rather than on it being in Europe or the US. With that said I would say that I had a few exhibitions in a small gallery in Rome that had been around for a long time. And one of the things they did was have a writer or critic present a public discussion about the work at the opening. This created an environment where the dialogue about the work was very rich. Ideas were more important than just the social aspect of the opening. I liked this a lot. In the US openings are just about drinks, chitchat and business.

**IS: What advice would you give to a young emerging artist in New York?**

PF: Work hard, show whenever you can, and build a strong community of support. Don't let the fact that New York is a big art market mess with you too much. Define success on your own terms.

[Paul Fabozzi on his Spectral Variants](#)