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**A portrait of a woman as an artist:  
Some research results concerning the career  
paths of female artists.**

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## Introduction

This paper presents the labour market situation of Finnish female artists by summarising different empirical studies carried out in the Research and Information Unit of the Arts Council of Finland (ACF). These ACF-studies deal, among others, with the economic status of artists, the employment situation of graduated artists and the working conditions of grant recipients<sup>1</sup>. The aim is to examine the career paths of female artists by looking at their employment situation and working practices as well as income level and sources. The paper also reflects the possible obstacles in the careers of female artists. In addition to this, the differences in the situation of women in various art fields are also discussed. Special attention is paid to the fields of music, dance and fine arts. These fields represent both performing arts and creative arts, as well as freelance artists and employed artists. They also exemplify a male dominated and heavily supported area (music), and a female-dominated and low supported area (dance). The field of fine arts is an example of an area where the gender distribution is quite equal but the economic and employment situation is known to be difficult.

The issue of women's status in the arts is quite popular but by no means easy to analyse. It has been dealt mainly as a political question with action plans or programmes. However, the empirical data dealing with this subject matter is rather limited. Usually gender has been treated as one demographic factor among others. The difficulties connected with the attitudes or role models are especially difficult to indicate. These issues are usually subjects of artist biographies, which are undoubtedly very useful sources but are not used here.

In a paper published in 1996<sup>2</sup> the question of female artists and art policy was discussed in greater detail and that is why the issue is touched here rather cursorily.

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter 2 about the data.

<sup>2</sup> Heikkinen, M. – Karhunen, P. 1996. Does Public Support Make a Difference and for Whom? *Journal of Cultural Economics* 20.

## The data

The results of the ACF-studies contain much information on different aspects of artists' situation although they concentrate mainly on income and employment. Since these studies derive from different years and the methods used vary to some extent, there are some problems concerning comparability. However, these results make it possible to provide an overview of the existing data and also to reflect the effects of the different sources.

The sources used in this paper are summarised below. The SA-studies give the most reliable result since they deal with the whole artistic population. GA-studies include only artists with high education (art university) which naturally affects the results and excludes part of the group. The grant recipients (GR-survey) form the most selected research population and also serve as an example of "successful" artists.

SOURCE	FIELD COVERED	DATA COLLECTION	CARRIED OUT
Studies on the social and economic position of artists (SA)	Dance Cinema Graphic design Music Photographic art Theatre	artists' associations registers by artists' organisations and authorities	1993 - 1996 (data from 1989 and 1992)
Studies on the graduates from art universities (GA)	Theatre, dance Craft and design (including photography and cinema) Fine Arts Music	questionnaire to the graduates from Theatre Academy, University of Art and Design, Academy of Fine Arts, Sibelius Academy	1993 - 1998
Study on grant recipients (GR)	Dance Cinema Graphic design Music Photographic art Theatre Literature Fine Arts Architecture	questionnaire to the artists who had received a state grant in 1996	1997 -1998

## Is the corps of artists feminising?

The well-known fact is that the number of artists has been constantly growing everywhere and the artistic occupation is coming more and more attractive. At the same time the proportion of female artists has also increased<sup>3</sup>. In Finland, the proportion of female artists is also relatively high (41 %). The feature is typical to the Finnish labour market as a whole, as the proportion of women of the total work force is about half. However, in some fields of art the number of women is considerably lower than that of men, e.g. among musicians, composers and photographic artists. In the field of dance, the situation is vice versa: women represent the majority. Likewise, in some occupational groups in crafts and design the majority of artists are women.

*Table 1. The proportion of women of artist occupations according to census in 1970 – 95*

OCCUPATION	1970 %	1980 %	1985 %	1990 %	1995 %
Architects	25	29	32	34	34
Visual artists	28	31	40	41	44
Writers and critics	40	43	42	45	50
Designers	62	55	66	69	67
Performing artists in theatre and opera	NA	47	47	50	48
Musicians	12	19	30	36	36
Directors in theatre and cinema	NA	27	32	33	32
Photographers and cameramen	31	28	25	23	23
Artistic occupations	31	31	37	NA	41
Work force	42	47	48	49	49

Source: Population census/Statistics Finland

<sup>3</sup> E.g. in USA in 1990 47 % of artistic work force were women. Galligan – Alper 1997: 6. In Norway the figure was 46 % in 1993. Elstad – Pedersen 1996:23.

According to population census<sup>4</sup>, the proportion of women has increased during past twenty years in every field. The most considerable growth has been among visual artists and musicians. The occupational groups where the share of women is still rather small are photographers and cameramen, directors, musicians and architects. These have until now been considered as men's occupations.

*Table 2. The proportion of women according to ACF-studies*

ART FIELD	SA-STUDIES %	GA-STUDIES %	GR-SURVEY %
Cinema	25		50
Dance	81	64	80
Fine Arts	51	55	47
Graphic design	45		65*
Literature	44		64
Music	21	61	24
Photographic art	24		39
Theatre	43	48	52

\* Crafts and design totally.

The picture of the proportion of women changes when census is compared to the results of ACF-studies. The comparison is difficult as such due to the different definitions of artists in these sources. However, the results of SA-studies resemble to some extent the figures of census. The SA-studies are also the most thorough since the research populations represent the whole field. As can be seen from Table 2, the variations between different study results are quite notable. For instance, in the field of *dance*, when dealing with the artists with university-level training, the female majority remains, but the share of men grows considerably. This might be due to the fact that the Theatre Academy concentrates on modern dance which is an area with strong demand for male artists. Thus, it is possible that men are favoured in the entrance examinations. As a matter of fact, some of the male

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<sup>4</sup> The problems linked with the use of census as a source for estimating the number of artists are well-known. These are, e.g., the rough definition of occupations and the method of data collection which cause the situation where artist occupations either "vanish" or are grouped in a way which makes analysis difficult.

respondents of the given GA-survey did state that they probably succeeded in entering because they are men. Nevertheless, the results of the GR-survey turn the picture of gender distribution back to as it was; the share of women increases again. The grant recipients represent the whole field, naturally a very selected part of it, and since the majority of professionals are women most of the grant receivers are, too.

The proportion of women among *fine artists* does not vary very much but indicates, however, that the share of women is greatest among artist with high education and lowest among grant recipients. This might lead us to think that the recognition within art policy reaches better male artists than female and this thought is verified later when the distribution of grants is discussed.

Among *writers* women seem to be majority when looking at the grant recipients but a slight minority in the whole artistic group. The SA-study results date from the beginning of the 1980's but the supplementary information from 1994<sup>5</sup> confirms this result (the share of women 45 %). The greatest variation depending on source in the number of women seems to be in the field of *music*. Music is commonly known as a male dominated area, since most of the orchestra musicians are men, even though the distribution in orchestras is gradually changing<sup>6</sup>. Likewise, the occupations of conductors and composers continue to be male dominated and the few women in these occupations are treated as exceptions. In addition to classic music, the rock- jazz and entertainment music are fields with a strong male majority. However, as Table 2 shows, when music professionals with high education are concerned the gender distribution turns upside down. The graduated music professionals are mostly women, since in addition to musicians, opera singers, conductors and so on, the Sibelius Academy also educates music teachers (who are mostly women as all teachers) and church musicians (quite surprisingly – mostly women). Thus, if only performing musicians were under examination the gender distribution would be different.

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<sup>5</sup> Study for a use of a committee of the Ministry of Education.

<sup>6</sup> The share of women in professional symphony orchestras in 1997 was 29,5 %.



According to these results it indeed seems that gradually women will capture the artistic profession. This is happening globally since – in spite of the national and historical characteristics – artist work force seems to be amazingly similar in different countries. For example, in Australia the figures concerning share of women among writers, visual artists, musicians and composers are almost the same as in Finland<sup>7</sup>.

## Training as a means of equity

Training is in general considered as one of the main tools for equalising society. For instance, when authorities have wanted to improve women's position, one of the first steps has been to provide education. In Finland, the general training level of women has for years been higher than that of men. This development started after World War II and since the 1970s the majority of university students have been women<sup>8</sup>. Likewise, the share of women of top academic groups has increased considerably during last 20 years. For example, the majority of lawyers and doctors are at the moment women.

*Table 3. The share of women from lawyers and doctors in 1970s and 1990s*

	1971	1992
Lawyers	19 %	51 %
Doctors	27 %	62%

Source: EVA-raportti naisen asemasta yhteiskunnassa.

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<sup>7</sup> Throsby – Thompson 1995:20. The share of women from writers 45 %, visual artists 52 %, musicians 29 % and composers 9 %.

<sup>8</sup> Kivinen – Rinne 1995:32.

However, traditions are strong since the training programmes favoured by different genders have remained the same for decades; nurses and teachers still tend to be women as well as engineers men.<sup>9</sup>

The following tables show the share of women of students and of graduates at art universities. There are variations by years, but all in all the share of women of all art university students and diplomas is over half. However, it must be borne in mind that there are differences in degree programmes. For example, composers (the figures of Sibelius Academy) are mostly men, while music teachers are women. Among fine artists, for one, the sculptors usually tend to be men.

*Table 4. The share of women of students at art universities*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Academy of Fine Arts</i>	<i>Sibelius Academy</i>	<i>Theatre Academy</i>	<i>University of Art and Design</i>
1990	57 %	58 %	50 %	64 %
1991	52 %	57 %	54 %	67 %
1992	58 %	57 %	55 %	63 %
1993	59%	57 %	55 %	63 %
1994	63 %	56 %	55 %	63 %
1995	63 %	55 %	53 %	62 %
1996	66 %	55 %	55 %	61 %
1997	64 %	55 %	56 %	60 %

Source: KOTA-database.

*Table 5. The share of women of graduates from art universities*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Academy of Fine Arts</i>	<i>Sibelius Academy</i>	<i>Theatre Academy</i>	<i>University of Art and Design</i>
1990	57 %	70 %	86 %	58 %
1991	83 %	62 %	48 %	70 %
1992	61 %	57 %	63 %	62 %
1993	79 %	61 %	52 %	69 %
1994	67 %	68 %	47 %	67 %
1995	38 %	73 %	74 %	68 %
1996	68 %	62 %	66 %	67 %
1997	66 %	62 %	59 %	66 %

Source: KOTA-database.

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<sup>9</sup> Kivinen – Rinne 1995: 33 –38.

The growing importance of training inevitably has influenced the growth of the share of women in artistic occupations. This has been the case at least in photographic art and fine arts. Besides, in the field of photography, when women started (by means of training) to enter this field they changed it at the same time to a more "artistic" direction.<sup>10</sup> It seems that for women training is a way to become an artist, whereas men use more their personal network and strong self-assurance. Also Throsby and Thompson have pointed out that women artists are generally better educated and they wonder if the reason is that women feel they are obliged to get better education in order to manage as well as men<sup>11</sup>. This is likely to be one reason for the women's eagerness for education. On the other hand, women take diplomas because they are prepared to do art-related or non-artistic jobs where degrees are usually required.

The university-level training also gives a higher status to the occupation. Moreover, training can create new occupations or change the gender distribution of a given occupation. Examples of this are, say, dancers and light- and sound designers. Along the increase in training the share of men among dancers has increased and training might allure more men to the field. In the case of light- and sound designers, the occupation hardly existed before the university-level training started. The job was done earlier mostly by technicians (men). The training has brought into the field women with university degree, which has apparently caused some conflicts between newcomers (women) and those who have learned their profession on the job (men).

In all, it is evident that the growth in training possibilities has increased the amount of women in arts. Whether the training has increased the equality concerning, e.g., income level or employment possibilities, is not so self-evident.

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<sup>10</sup> Karttunen 1993:73

<sup>11</sup> Throsby – Thompson 1995:21

## Female artists at the labour market

In general, the labour market situation of women has some special characteristics which have made it both a subject of research and policy-making. The general labour market studies have indicated that there are gender differences in both salary and training level. In addition to this, there still are men's and women's occupations as was pointed out above. In Finland, women have been a central part of labour force for decades. However, the differences in salary still exist and according to some studies on equity they have not diminished in spite of the efforts which have been taken to gain equality.

Women's participation in the labour market has increased also internationally. However, the growing activity of women in the labour market as a whole does not necessarily mean occupational equality.<sup>12</sup> According to an article concerning the labour market situation of women in the EU-area, women are over-represented among atypical employment, namely, part-time and temporary work. The assumption is that when the female participation in the labour market grows it affects also the amount of atypical work<sup>13</sup>. In Finland, too, in the female dominated areas (commerce, nursing) part-time work is becoming more and more general. On the other hand, a general feature in the labour market is that permanent contracts are diminishing in all areas and this concerns both genders.

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<sup>12</sup> Plantenga 1997:86.

<sup>13</sup> Meulders – Plasman – Plasman 1997:81.

*Table 6. The employment status of the GA-survey respondents*

<i>Employment status</i>	<i>Number of choices</i>			
	<i>Fine arts (%)</i>		<i>Music (%)</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Employee	64	67	77	78
Freelancer/free artist	75	77	39	24
Unemployed	14	12	3	3
Other	4	28	6	22
N	81	98	409	636

The sum does not add up to 100 % since the respondents have chosen many alternatives.

With regard to (female) artists the atypical employment has been one of the characteristics even earlier. However, the network of subsidised art institutions (theatres, orchestras, education institutes) has guaranteed relatively steady employment especially for performing artists. Table 6 shows the employment status of fine artists and music professionals according to GA-studies. It is interesting that in both fields, as different as they are, there is a considerable number of women who have chosen the alternative "other" to describe their employment situation. This means that they are actually outside the labour market. It is no surprise that most of these women are "other" because of maternity leave or child care leave<sup>14</sup>. Among music professionals there were only two men who were at the child care leave, among fine artists none. The Table gives the total amounts of the choices between given alternatives. If the exclusive choices are examined the differences between genders are more clear. For example, among fine artists the share of women who work solely as a free artist is only 15 %, while 27 % of men worked as a free artist.

Among grant recipients 21 % of women were employed (permanent or temporary) and 83 % chose the alternative free artist/freelancer. The figures of men were 24 % and 81%, so we can not talk about sharp differences, if differences at

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<sup>14</sup> During the period of child care leave a child care allowance is allocated for a parent who stays at home taking care of a child less than 3 years. The maternal leave is actually parental leave which

all. As a matter of fact, this goes without saying, since the criteria for an artist grant is that the artist gives up permanent job. Only 3 % of grant recipients were unemployed, which is a very small amount and reinforces the assumption that this group represents the elite of artists.

In non-art occupations there are examples where the women have started to enter a field and, instead of keeping them out, some kind of new grading strategies are developed. This means that the work by women is graded lower than that of men.<sup>15</sup> Examples of this can be found in art fields, too, although they might not be so clear ones. However, there are some artistic occupations which are male dominated and have high status while some female occupations in the same field carry lower status. Or, on the other hand, the status of some occupations change (to a worse direction) when it is occupied by women. In music, e.g., the highest professional status is reserved to composers and conductors, occupations which are dominated by men. In theatre and cinema the director has a high status (mostly men), in craft and design, designers form the group with high prestige (men) while crafts people's (women) status is evidently lower.

Unemployment among artists started to increase in the beginning of 1990s when the economic recession reached Finland. Before that the unemployment among artists was low, in some fields of art almost unknown. The art forms which have, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Labour, suffered mostly from unemployment are music and architecture. Table 7 presents the share of artists who have received an unemployment benefit in a given year, which gives an indicative picture of the unemployment rate<sup>16</sup>. In every field except music the share of unemployed women was higher than that of men. The situation of music can be explained by the occupational distribution, since women usually work in "safe" jobs or have a side-job as a teacher while men seem to stick more on the pure

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can be divided between both parents. This way the legislation makes it possible also for men to stay home with the children.

<sup>15</sup> Witz 1992:32.

<sup>16</sup> The estimation of the artists' unemployment rate is difficult to do on the basis of the figures of the Ministry of Labour since the amount of the artistic work force is not known.

artistic work. In dance, cinema and photographic art the unemployment numbers of women were quite remarkable.

*Table 7. The share of unemployment benefit receivers<sup>17</sup> in 1992 by art form*

Art field	Men %	Women %
Dance	20	26
Music	16	11
Fine arts	NA	NA
Theatre	16	17
Cinema	19	29
Photographic art	14	24
Literature	NA	NA
Graphic design	14	17

Work force 1993: unemployment rate 18 % - men 24,7 % - women 19,8 %

According to the GA-studies there were gender differences concerning the satisfaction with the employment situation. In theatre over half of women stated that they had had problems with employment (men 42 %). In music 55 % of women made critical comments on their employment situation or work (men 45 %). Among fine artists there were no differences in respondents' statements but the overall situation indicated bias against women.

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<sup>17</sup> Taxable unemployment benefit during a year according to taxation authorities.

## *Working practices*

Concerning the working practices, sources used in this paper give evidence on the following subjects: the average working time, the share of artistic work from the total working time, the share of artistic income from total income and multiple job-holding. With the help of these results we can construct a tentative picture about the situation of women in certain art fields.

One problem of an artist is often that he/she has not got enough time for artistic work. This shortage is often related to family matters. According to Throsby and Thompson there was a difference between the hoped working time and the real working time especially among female artists. The domestic responsibilities were mentioned as a reason more often by women than by men.<sup>18</sup>

When studying the average working time of the graduated fine artists it came evident that for some reason or the other women work less than men. The proportion of those women who worked less than 20h a week was 28 % while 19 % of men were in the same group. On the other hand, almost one third of men worked more than 40 hours a week as compared to women of whom 25 % worked as much.<sup>19</sup>

There were no notable differences between the working time of men and women when analysing the results of the grant recipient-survey. Actually, the survey gave quite a satisfactory picture about the working time of artists with grants. This is self-evident since grant recipients have a possibility to concentrate on artistic work.

Another reason for the lack of time are supplementary jobs – which actually causes a situation where artistic job becomes supplementary. Artists can hold many artistic jobs or have art-related or non-artistic occupation besides artistic. Non-artistic work was a rarity among graduates in every art university but art-related work was more common. Art-related or non-artistic work was done by 41

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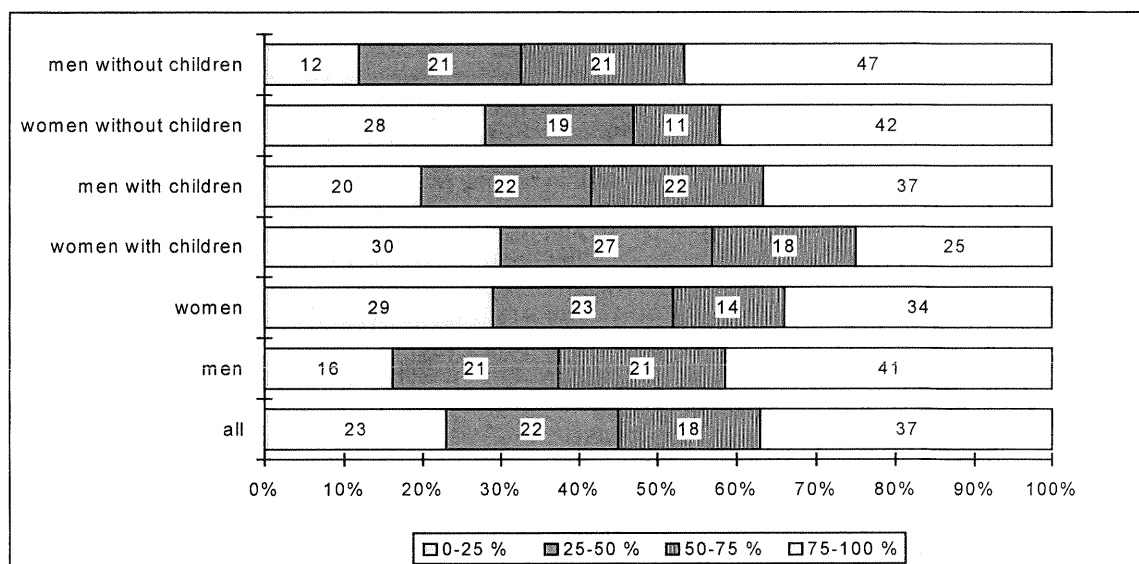
<sup>18</sup> Throsby – Thompson 1995:16.



% of fine artists, 12 % of music professional and 16 % of those trained in Theatre Academy. There were no differences between genders. According to SA-study on dance artists, the share of those who had done other than artistic work during a year was one third.

It seems that multiple job-holding is more common among women than men, at least this was the case among fine artists. This is indicated, e.g., by the fact that the proportion of artistic work from total working time was higher among male fine artists. 41 % of them announced that they used 75 – 100 % of their working time to art while one third of women worked mainly in artistic work. Only 14 % of female fine artists spent more than half of their working time on artistic work while the figure of men was 31 %. The share of women diminishes even more when dealing with the fine artists who got their whole income from artistic work (women 10 %, men 25 %).

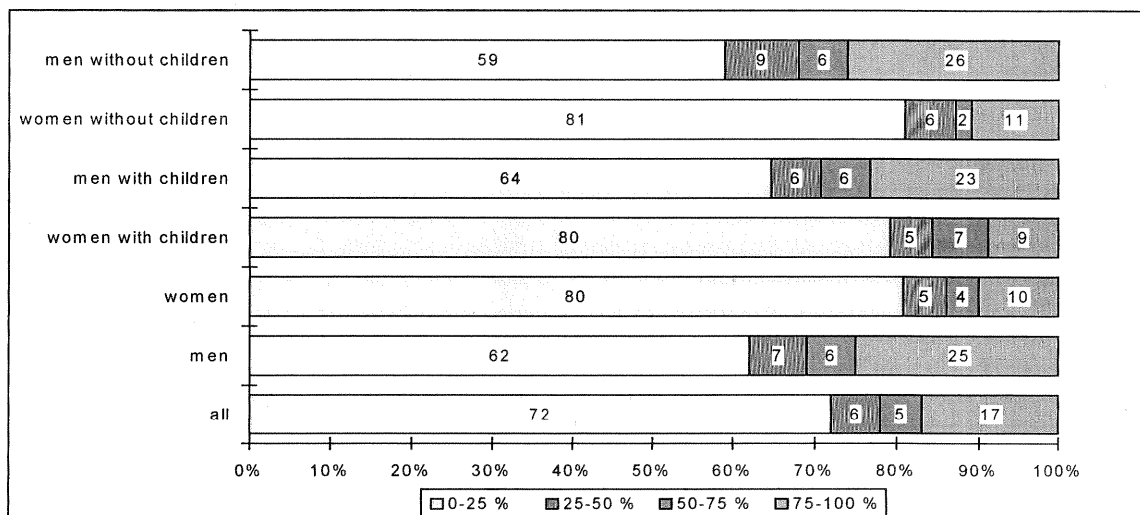
Figure 1. The share of artistic work (%) of fine artists' total working time



Source: GA-survey on fine artists

<sup>19</sup> The general working hours in Finland are 36 – 40 hours/week.

Figure 2. The share of artistic income (%) of the total income of fine artists



Source: GA-survey on fine artists

Figures 1 and 2 present the information on the share of artistic work and artistic income. Figures compare men and women, as well as men and women with or without children, in the field of fine arts in order to find out what kind of effect family has on this matter. According to these results children do not seem to affect on the working time or artistic income as much as gender but children affect men's and women's situation differently.

All in all, men do work more and they get more artistic income. There are, of course, personal reasons but most likely the family situation and supplementary jobs affect women's working practices.

### *Income level*

In general level, when studying the equity situation in society, one of the main indicators is the income level of different genders. The fact is that women are still underpaid with regard to men. According to official statistics, women's wages in

1992 were on average 76 % of men's<sup>20</sup>. This holds true with the women in the arts, too. This fact is indicated in several studies on artists' income level<sup>21</sup>.

Likewise, in Finland, the income level of women artists has proved to be on the average lower than men's in all art fields, but specially in fine arts, photographic art and dance.<sup>22</sup> Among *fine artists* female artists' income was about 70 % of male artists' mean income and in *photographic art* 68 % from men's. In the field of *dance* women's net income in 1992 was 76 % from men's net income. The demand for male dancers is obviously so much higher that it is possible for them to work more, and probably also for higher compensation. An other thing is that male artists in dance seem to be in occupations with higher status (performing dancers, choreographers). For instance, there were practically no men among dance teachers according to SA-study. In the field of *music*, there were not as considerable income differences as might be assumed because of the male majority (women's income 79 % of men's). The reason for the rather satisfactory situation of women is that most female musicians work in orchestras with a permanent salary.

In GA-studies one point of interest was the main income source of artists. All surveys indicated that art-related work (teaching) is of great importance as an income source. However, in many fields the artistic work was also rather important. The following table presents the two artistic fields in this respect, namely, fine arts and music. The attention is drawn, once again, to the women in the fine arts and the great share of those who mention "other" as their primary source of income. Gender differences are notable among fine artists as are the differences between these two art forms, too.

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<sup>20</sup> Income distribution statistics 1992.

<sup>21</sup> e.g. Throsby – Thompson 1994: 27, Elstad – Pedersen 1996:59.

<sup>22</sup> Heikkinen – Karhunen 1996: 352.

8. *The primary sources of income according to GA-studies*

	<i>FINE ARTS %</i>		<i>MUSIC %</i>	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Artistic work <sup>1</sup>	36	20	51	33
Arts-related work <sup>2</sup>	40	39	42	55
Other work (non-artistic)	5	5	4	4
Other (social security etc.)	19	35	4	8
N	81	97	397	618

<sup>1</sup> Includes grants and copyright income.

<sup>2</sup> Includes teaching.

When the situation of female artists was compared to the situation of women in non-arts occupations it could be seen that the incomes of women were lower in all occupational groups, but women artists were not in a significantly worse situation in this respect than women in non-arts occupations.<sup>23</sup>

*Career obstacles*

In spite of the statistical facts which point towards a quite reasonable equity, it is generally known that women have an inferior position in the labour market in general and also in the arts. Where does this standpoint derive from? The studies concerning artists' conditions have proved that there does not seem to be any evidence that the other gender would be more "successful" than the other<sup>24</sup>.

The obstacles in the career development of women in general and female artists specially are often invisible. Evidently, there is some kind of glass ceiling which is built of various elements. Concerning the problems and obstacles of the careers of academic women, the following obstacles have been named: family, personal factors and discrimination<sup>25</sup>. It is clear, that children usually mean a break in a woman's career and this break can affect both the career development and the economic situation. In GA-surveys, female respondents pointed towards family responsibilities when informing about their employment situation – men did not.

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<sup>23</sup> More information on this matter, see Heikkinen – Karhunen 1996: 348.

<sup>24</sup> Throsby – Thompson 1995:18.

The main thing linked with the family in this sense is that it causes the lack of time for work. However, family has also positive effects since it serves as a supporter and counterpart for work.

It goes without saying that career obstacles can also be personal. Among women they are often depended on motivation and self-respect, as well as on the expectations and the role models.

The discrimination against women can be hidden and is often difficult to verify. It shows more in attitudes than in actions. In arts, women tend to do "small" things and the Gown of Artist is still reserved for men. The bohemian artist is hardly imagined to be a woman – of course exceptions do exist. In the field of theatre it has also been pointed out that the growing share of women does not guarantee them a proper place in the field but on the contrary drives them to the margin (due to the shortage of female roles) and to participate in so called women's productions<sup>26</sup>.

## Female artists as grant receivers

Gender equity in Finland is provided by a special law, which is to be taken into consideration in all decision-making. This holds true with the artist policy decision-making, too. The central element of Finnish artist policy is awarding grants to individual artists.

The results of the ACF-studies and statistics do not point towards inequality against women in the distribution of grants. But, once again, there are differences across art forms. In music, the male domination is also seen in the grant distribution (Table 9).<sup>27</sup> The differences with regard to grants also became apparent among graduated artists. Specially this is clear among the fine artists (Table 10).

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<sup>25</sup> Naisten tutkijanuran ongelmat ja esteet 1982:16.

<sup>26</sup> Helavuori 1990: 70.

<sup>27</sup> Heikkinen – Karhunen 1996:344

Table 9. The share of artists receiving grant by gender and art form in 1992  
(SA-studies)

	Cinema %	Graphic design %	Literature %	Fine arts %	Theatre %	Music %	Dance %	Photo- graphy %	All %
Women	18	12	75	30	14	7	15	54	21
Men	15	5	70	36	11	12	19	41	18
All	16	8	72	33	12	11	16	44	19

Source: Heikkinen – Karhunen 1996.

Table 10. Grant receivers by gender according to GA-studies

Art form	Grant recipients %	
	Men	Women
Fine arts	51	32
Music	15	14
Theatre*	28	32

\* Including dance.

When it comes to women's share of applicants and grant receivers the situation seemed to be quite fair (Table 11). According to the ACF-statistics the share of women of applications and grants is on the whole almost the same but, once again, there are variations between art forms. In some art fields women have received even more grants than their share of the applicants was, but on the other hand, there are fields where women seem to be in an unfair situation (e.g., crafts and design).

Table 11. The share of women from applications and grants in 1995 – 1997

Art form	PROJECT GRANTS <sup>1</sup>		ARTIST GRANTS <sup>2</sup>	
	% of women of applications	% of women of grant recipients	% of women of applications	% of women of grant recipients
Critics	45	45	35	20
Cinema	31	31	31	58
Literature	47	60	57	53
Fine arts	55	51	53	46
Theatre	54	53	51	49
Architecture	57	67	33	37
Music	33	32	20	21
Crafts and design	64	52	66	46
Dance	83	86	76	63
Photography	44	39	38	50
Other	55	50	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Grant intended for a special project.

<sup>2</sup> Grant allocated for a period of 1-, 3- or 5 -years. Tax-free, amount FIM 73 400/year (FIM 1 = \$ 0.19, ECU 0.17).

## Concluding remarks

The empirical data discussed in this paper gives some evidence on the women's inferior position in the labour market compared to male artists. Female artists seemed to suffer slightly more from unemployment, they tended to have more side-jobs and their income level was somewhat lower. Also in some art fields women seem to get less artistic income than men. There is an inevitable bias if female artists are better educated but men get better income. However, if we look at the female artists as a whole, the situation is not dramatically different to that of men's. Compared to the women in non-art occupations the situation seems to be slightly better when it comes to, say, income differences. The studies dealt in this paper confirmed what many already knew: what really counts is the art form and employment status.

Nevertheless, gender seemed to be a rather important factor in some art fields, e.g., among the *fine arts*. For example, the share of women who were exclusively free artists was only 15 %, which indicates that they have (more often than men) problems getting livelihood purely as an artist. The women's inferior situation also came evident in relation to grants and exhibitions as well as sold or commissioned works. In the field of *dance*, the problems are linked with the employment status (majority are freelancers) and also the shortness of the career.

The amount of women in the arts is growing, but it does not mean improvement in the women's position – actually, it might mean the reverse situation since the number of female artists entering the field grows but they do not necessarily get a place in the labour market.

With regard to artist policy there were only few evidences of inequality. According to these results there seems to be no need for special art policy schemes for female artists. If the welfare-state works, the female artists have same possibilities as other women. It must be borne in mind that the role of (welfare) state is important concerning the situation of women in the labour market in general. The interaction between state and the status of women has special characteristics in Scandinavia and in Finland particularly. This interaction has been a subject matter of many so called women studies and should also be under examination in the art policy context.

There are problems related to artistic profession as such, namely, concerning taxation and social security, which might cause the situation where the artist "falls between" and is not treated equally with the other occupational groups. These problems do not require any gender-specific programmes, but since it is female artists who are likely to be more depended on social security than men, these improvement would affect women's position in the arts.

As the women's position is a constant issue in political discussion there is no reason to avoid it when talking about artistic workforce, even though there does not seem to be strong unfairness. In the earlier paper on female artists and art policy (Heikkinen –Karhunen 1996) the data did not make it possible to examine the labour



market situation very profoundly. Apparently, there is a need for more detailed data on artists' working practises and experiences which could be acquired by surveys and interviews. With this kind of data it might be possible to get a more thorough picture of the female artists' situation.

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