

Artisan Global Value Fund

quarterly Commentary

Artisan Partners Global Funds plc

As of 31 December 2023

For Institutional Investors — Not for Onward Distribution

Investment Process

We seek to invest in high-quality, undervalued companies with strong balance sheets and shareholder-oriented management teams.

Undervaluation

Determining the intrinsic value of a business is the heart of our research process. Intrinsic value represents the amount that a buyer would pay to own a company's future cash flows. We seek to invest at a significant discount to our estimate of the intrinsic value of a business.

Business Quality

We seek to invest in companies with histories of generating strong free cash flow, improving returns on capital and strong competitive positions in their industries.

Financial Strength

We believe that investing in companies with strong balance sheets helps to reduce the potential for capital risk and provides company management the ability to build value when attractive opportunities are available.

Shareholder-Oriented Management

Our research process attempts to identify management teams with a history of building value for shareholders.

Team Overview

Our team has worked together for many years and has implemented a consistent and disciplined investment process. Our team is organized by geographic regions, but within those regions we are generalists who look across all industries. We believe this model enables our analysts to become broad thinkers and gain critical insight across all economic sectors.

Portfolio Management



Daniel J. O'Keefe Portfolio Manager (Lead) Managing Director



Michael J. McKinnon, CFA Portfolio Manager Managing Director

| Investment Results (%) | | | Average Annual Total Returns | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| As of 31 December 2023 | QTD | YTD | 1 Yr | 3 Yr | 5 Yr | 10 Yr | Inception |
| Class I USD—Inception: 01 Mar 2011 | 12.14 | 26.68 | 26.68 | 8.23 | 10.92 | 7.10 | 9.12 |
| MSCI All Country World Index (USD) | 11.03 | 22.20 | 22.20 | 5.75 | 11.72 | 7.93 | 8.13 |
| MSCI All Country World Value Index (USD) | 9.17 | 11.81 | 11.81 | 7.33 | 8.24 | 5.46 | 6.02 |
| Class I EUR—Inception: 14 Dec 2015 | 7.35 | 22.80 | 22.80 | 11.94 | 11.73 | _ | 8.80 |
| MSCI All Country World Index (EUR) | 6.42 | 18.06 | 18.06 | 9.41 | 12.49 | _ | 9.97 |
| MSCI All Country World Value Index (EUR) | 4.63 | 8.02 | 8.02 | 11.05 | 8.99 | _ | 7.62 |
| Class I GBP—Inception: 14 Jun 2016 | 7.29 | 20.09 | 20.09 | 10.80 | 10.92 | _ | 10.77 |
| MSCI All Country World Index (GBP) | 6.31 | 15.31 | 15.31 | 8.24 | 11.70 | _ | 11.96 |
| MSCI All Country World Value Index (GBP) | 4.52 | 5.50 | 5.50 | 9.86 | 8.22 | _ | 9.26 |
| Class A USD—Inception: 06 Aug 2013 | 11.83 | 25.54 | 25.54 | 7.30 | 9.97 | 6.19 | 6.92 |
| MSCI All Country World Index (USD) | 11.03 | 22.20 | 22.20 | 5.75 | 11.72 | 7.93 | 8.52 |
| MSCI All Country World Value Index (USD) | 9.17 | 11.81 | 11.81 | 7.33 | 8.24 | 5.46 | 6.09 |
| Annual Returns (%) Trailing 12 months ended 31 December | | 2019 | | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
| Class I USD | | 23.86 | 5 | 6.89 | 15.63 | -13.44 | 26.68 |

Source: Artisan Partners/MSCI. Returns for periods less than one year are not annualized.

Past performance does not predict future returns. Performance is NAV to NAV, including reinvestment of dividends and capital gains, if any, and is net of fees and expenses, excluding any subscription or redemption charges which may be levied. At the moment, the Fund does not intend to charge subscription or redemption fees. The Fund may be offered in different share classes, which are subject to different fees, expenses and inception dates (which may affect performance), have different minimum investment requirements and are entitled to different services. Funds are actively managed and are not managed to a benchmark index.

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Market Overview

"If something cannot go on forever, it will stop."

—Herbert Stein, Chairman of President Nixon's council of economic advisors

Much of what we will say here we have already said. We have quoted Herbert Stein at least once before in these pages. It seems fitting to do it again. Repeating something doesn't make it less true, just easier to ignore.

Stating the obvious, markets ripped in Q4 and for the full year. And they did so in a way to which we have all become accustomed, numb even. Big Tech trounced everything. For the quarter, the Magnificent Seven had an average gain of 13%, outpacing the S&P 500° Index's 12%, the MSCI World Index's 11% and the MSCI EAFE Index's 10%, all in US dollars. For the year, they averaged a gain of 112%, beating the S&P 500° Index's 26%, the MSCI World Index's 23% and the MSCI EAFE Index's 18%, again all in US dollars. (China was the only major stock market to post a loss, down 4% during the quarter in US dollars, as it struggled against a slow post-COVID recovery and geopolitical tensions.) The tailwind for the market in general and the Magnificent Seven in particular was the emerging consensus for a soft landing and subsequent rapid cuts in interest rates. Inflation does indeed appear to be coming down toward central bankers' preferred levels.

Interestingly, the divergence between growth and value in the US during 2023 was about as extreme as we have ever seen it. The US market broadly was up in 2023, with the MSCI USA Index up 26% driven by Big Tech, while the value segment rose only 8% as measured by the MSCI USA Value Index. Wow. But outside the US, something very interesting happened: Value held its own. The MSCI EAFE Value Index was up 19%, while the MSCI EAFE Index was up 18%. The MSCI Japan Value Index was up 24%, while the MSCI Japan Index was up 21%. Outside the US, value actually outperformed growth. It must be said, however, that the growth versus value distinction outside the US is a subtle one. We would argue the MSCI EAFE Index overall is a value index, as is Japan more broadly. There is no dynamic, globally relevant tech industry outside the US. After decades of massive underperformance versus the US, international stocks can broadly be characterized as value or perhaps more accurately, "old economy" and/or "cyclical." Still, it's notable that the performance of value stocks outside the US was strong—particularly in Q4.

The emerging consensus for falling rates in 2024 is an interesting one to explore. Growth stock investors took that expectation to the bank in 2023, as we pointed out. But are falling rates really the ticket to growth stock nirvana? Will continued economic growth and falling rates be more beneficial to stocks with already high valuations and expectations or to those that are more cyclical and much cheaper? History has an opinion on this question. According to Bloomberg, there have been 11 falling rate cycles since 1954. In 9 of those 11 falling Fed Funds cycles, value outperformed growth. The two exceptions were a 20-month stretch starting in 1959 and, of course, the one we are all familiar with, the seemingly neverending fall in rates following the financial crisis of 2008.

But we don't invest based on interest rates and predictions of the future. Neither should you. Growth versus value, soft landing versus hard—who knows? Over the past few years, we had a pandemic come out of nowhere, followed by an orgy of monetary and fiscal stimulus, followed by hopes for a sustainable boom in growth, followed by an inflationary spiral, followed by near certainty of recession. Now, the overwhelming bet is for a soft landing and falling rates. If anyone still believes they know the future or where markets are heading, they should stop by the nearest doctor's office for an examination.

We anchor on fundamentals as best we can. Essentially, there are three sources of return from stocks: growth in earnings, dividends paid and multiple expansion/contraction. Every investment must weigh those variables in order to frame potential return versus downside risk. Instead of trying to predict the future from the top down, let's compare the fundamentals for our top seven holdings to the Magnificent Seven, which are the top holdings for both the MSCI AC World Index and the S&P 500° Index.

Our top seven holdings are Samsung Electronics (the leading global manufacturer of memory semiconductors), UBS (the world's leading global wealth manager), Danone (global food and nutrition), Novartis (global pharma), Heidelberg Materials (global cement and aggregates), Elevance (a leading US health insurer) and Alphabet (global Internet search). The Magnificent Seven are well known, but we will list them anyway: Amazon, Tesla, Nvidia, Microsoft, Apple, Alphabet and Meta. These seven stocks make up 28% of the S&P 500° Index and 17% of the MSCI AC World Index. Our top seven holdings account for 31% of our portfolio.

First, let's look at valuation. The divergence is dramatic. For simplicity, we used the readily available consensus estimates for both groups. On this basis, the Magnificent Seven trade at 25X earnings on the low end (Alphabet and Meta) to 76X earnings on the high end (Tesla), with an average PE of 41X 2024 earnings. Our top seven trade for 15X 2024 earnings with a range of 8X on the low end (Heidelberg) and 25X on the high end (Alphabet). (We could argue 2024 valuations in the case of UBS and Danone fail to capture embedded earnings improvements due to restructuring and improvement programs at both companies. But for this analysis, the stated numbers are the stated numbers.) The average dividend yield of our top seven holdings is 2.2% versus 0.2% for the Magnificent Seven, as only Microsoft (0.8% yield) and Apple (0.5% yield) pay a dividend.

Portfolio Weight %

Est. Consensus EPS High

19.7%

3-Year Est. CAGR

41X

Average PE (2024)

25X

Est. Consensus EPS Low

8X

3 Number of Sectors

6

0.2%

Average Dividend Yield

2.2%

Exhibit 1: Comparing Fundamentals Between Magnificent Seven and Global Value Seven Stocks

Source: FactSet/GICS/S&P. As of 31 Dec 2023. Magnificent Seven stocks are the top seven holdings for both the MSCI AC World Index and the S&P 500® Index: Amazon, Tesla, Nvidia, Microsoft, Apple, Alphabet and Meta. The Global Value Seven are the top seven holdings in Artisan Global Value as of 31 Dec 2023: Samsung Electronics, UBS, Danone, Novartis, Heidelberg Materials, Elevance and Alphabet.

Is the Magnificent Seven's valuation premium justified? They are indeed great businesses, but they are not perfect. Apple faces significant headwinds in China, not only in terms of product demand but also supply chain stability. Tesla is the leading electric vehicle (EV) manufacturer, and EVs should grow in the global auto mix. But the potential for EV demand to hit a wall should not be discounted, nor should the rising competitive intensity of the industry. At the end of the day, Tesla is an auto manufacturer. Making cars is a crummy business. Nvidia dominates artificial intelligence (AI) chip manufacturing. AI will certainly grow, but at this valuation, it will need to grow significantly for many years in a historically cyclical industry.

The question of whether a valuation is justified ultimately comes down to earnings growth. So let us ask a leading question: Which group of companies do our readers think has a higher expected earnings growth rate? If you guessed our top seven, you are correct. According to Bloomberg estimates, our top seven have a three-year estimated compound annual growth rate of 21.5% versus 19.7% for the Magnificent Seven.

Our top seven are certainly not as dominant or as profitable collectively as their Magnificent Seven counterparts. But they are durable, attractive businesses with good growth prospects. Samsung is coming off one of the worst memory semiconductor downturns in history, and we expect a strong recovery over the next few years. It is a leader in memory chips, which will also benefit from growing AI demand. UBS is the leader in an attractive growth industry and just absorbed Credit Suisse at a fraction of its book value, giving it solid value creation potential. Danone has a strong portfolio, and the current management team is returning it to growth and margin expansion. Novartis has a great portfolio and pipeline, and it should grow earnings nicely for years.

Let us return to our basic investment analysis framework. The dividend yield of our holdings is 10X higher than that of the Magnificent Seven. The PE multiple is almost one-third. The expected consensus earnings growth is essentially the same. Our holdings seem to us like a much better proposition than a concentrated bet in the same seven stocks that have powered the

market for the past decade. Are those seven stocks really worth three times the multiple as ours?

We have made our bet. Let us agree to return to this analysis in a few years' time and examine the results. We suspect at some point in the near future that which has appeared to go on forever will have come to a stop, and we can thankfully find another topic to write about.

Portfolio Update

Our top performers this quarter were UBS, Samsung and BNY Mellon.

UBS' share price rose by 26% in US dollars in the quarter and by 71% for the year. The acquisition of Credit Suisse (CS) is going very well. We wrote extensively about the acquisition in our Q1 letter and have provided updates along the way. The credit quality of the CS balance sheet is in line with or better than expectations. The cost-cutting programs, which are critical to delivering the expected synergies, appear to be on track. Most importantly, the outflows CS experienced prior to the acquisition have stabilized. All of these factors bring earnings power and capital generation for the combined entity into clearer focus, and they suggest a very attractive valuation. We estimate a valuation today close to tangible book and a business that we believe should earn a mid-teens ROE.

BNY Mellon rose 23% in the quarter and 18% for the year. Rising rates have been a mixed blessing for BNY. Clearly, they provide a tailwind to earnings. Customers park a lot of cash on BNY's balance sheet as part of the custody relationship, and BNY invests this cash to earn a spread. As rates rise, however, the tailwind of a larger spread can be offset by customers who demand BNY pay higher rates on their deposits or who move their cash into other higher yielding instruments. This meant the benefit from higher rates peaked at the beginning of 2023. At the same time, the company's capital return program was squeezed a bit by the impact of higher rates on its capital ratios. Now that it appears the rate cycle has peaked, BNY's stock has reacted favorably. The year-to-date share price decline heading into Q4 was more than erased by this quarter's large gain.

Samsung rose 21% during the quarter and 41% for the year. Its shares rose as signs that the worst memory semiconductor downcycle in over a decade was coming to an end. Over the past year, the industry has been plagued by a supply glut that created massive pressure on memory chip prices. The industry responded earlier this year with unprecedented manufacturing capacity reductions. This supply discipline appears to be having the intended effect. Inventory levels are normalizing, and prices for key memory products have started to rise. In addition, there is strong demand for AI servers, which require lots of higher end memory products. As the market leader, Samsung will benefit meaningfully from the cyclical recovery in the memory market. In addition, it was the only company in a financial position to weather the downturn and maintain its investment levels, so it should emerge from this cycle with an enhanced competitive position. The shares remain attractive at 7X our estimate for normalized EBITA.

Pretty much all of our holdings rose during the quarter. Only one stock declined by more than a couple of percent—Alibaba, which was down 9% for the quarter and 11% for the year. This investment continues to be a disappointment. We estimate the shares are trading at around 5X EBITA—a valuation normally reserved for a company with evaporating profits. While it's true Alibaba is underperforming its peers in the market, the fact is it remains the market leader in its core businesses, and the business is still growing. In the most recent quarter, revenues grew 9% and profits grew 26%. It's not evaporating. The management seems to be making meaningful changes designed to enhance shareholder value, including structural changes to improve profitability and restore its competitive position. It is monetizing non-core assets and making improvements in capital allocation. A lot of good things are happening that are not yet recognized in the share price. There are reasons—primarily geopolitical—for this, but at the current valuation, we could easily see the shares double, and they would still be cheap.

We added no new positions during the quarter. We exited Willis Towers Watson and Sandoz Group. In the case of Willis, we simply lost confidence in the management team. Sandoz was spun out by Novartis to its shareholders. It is a generic drug manufacturer, and we found neither the business nor the valuation compelling.

Equity investors had a great quarter and great year, pretty much across the board. Our strategy performed well and notably was driven by broad-based performance rather than the narrow industry-specific performance that drove the index. We have no idea what the next year holds. The world today is very different from the one we have known over the past decade. Inflation is, in our opinion, likely to remain higher than pre COVID. Geopolitical risk is greater. Government debt levels are a real concern. We will continue to do what we have done for more than a decade: work hard every day to grow our clients' savings alongside our own while managing risk the best that we can.

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