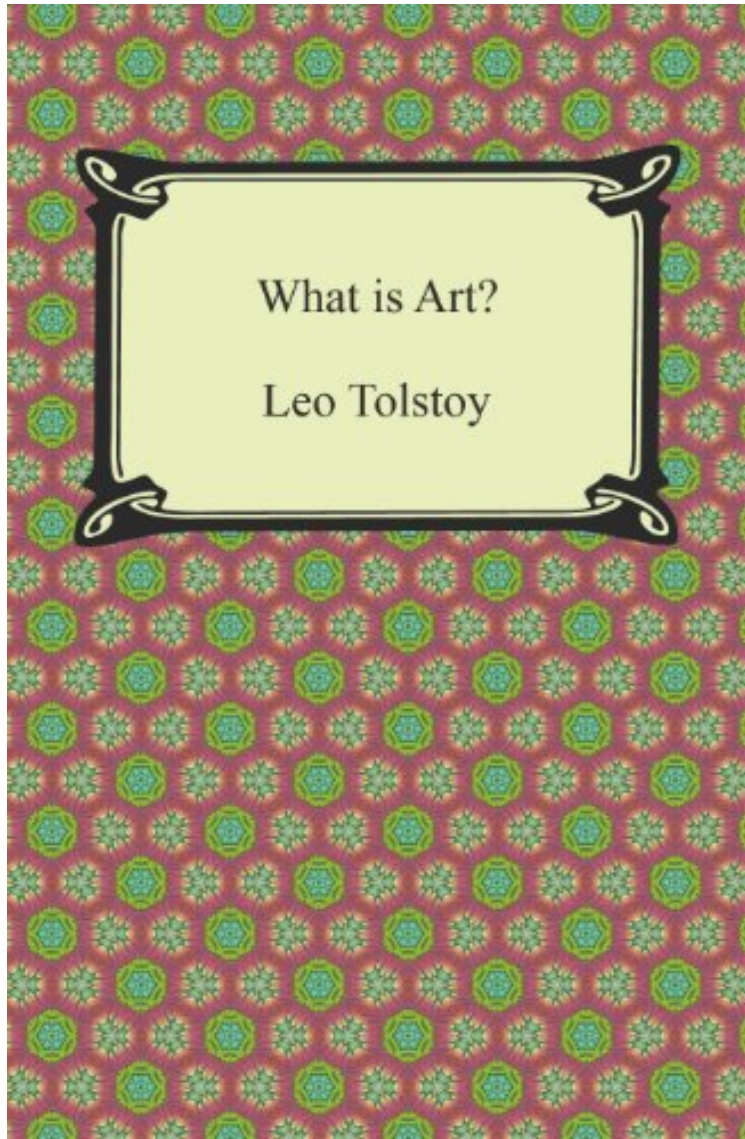


(Ebook free) What is Art?

## What is Art?

*Von Leo Tolstoy*  
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**Von Leo Tolstoy : What is Art?** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What is Art?:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.  
Confused about art? This is your guide written by a genius! Von Igor Otshelnik Do you have thoughts like "well, maybe it's just me... They say Monet is great, but perhaps I just don't understand it..." I say, maybe it's your own gut that tells you what is the true art and what is not! This work by Tolstoy is a summary of his 15 year spiritual journey and

research of art and what it's all about. And who is the author! A genius himself! In this piece he tells us in plain language that the whole art of his century (with a few exceptions) is a product of a rotten class of people, a select few, whose main concerns were far from being common with the feelings of any normal human being. "Art, nowadays, is for pleasure, not for bringing moral values in the form of genuine feelings to a reader". This is basically the general idea of the work. At first, you feel dumbfounded reading this, but after a few pages, his statements start to make sense. Only a true moral feeling expressed in the right form, not necessarily beautiful, but understandable and to the point, is a true piece of art. Now, let's go back and think for a minute: do I really like Shakespeare or is it the literary criticism that makes me feel that I am not a fully cultured person unless I acknowledge Shakespeare as the greatest of all, or at least one of the greatest writers (playwrights) ever? Even if I think that he was too verbose and vague to begin with? That sometimes you read him and whole paragraphs go by without you fully understanding what he's talking about? Mind you, he wrote for the theater, which means characters' sentences need to be pretty concise and clear, so that the audience could follow them. Anyway, Tolstoy will help you understand this problem. His main idea, again, is for art to convey the feelings of fraternity and love to the reader, not sexual desires, fake patriotism, shovivism or those exquisite feelings of the upper class. Art is about compassion, love, oneness of all people and good healthy humor. I totally agree with that. One more thing: in this work, Tolstoy confronts the idea of goodness with the idea of beauty, saying that for the sake of beauty, the contemporary artists disregard goodness. This is a very controversial statement, in my opinion, but there is a point there... Also recommended: of course, War and Peace, Anna Karenina, Resurrection, Childhood, Boyhood Youth, as true standards of literature, by which you can judge the works of others. All other fiction by Tolstoy is just as great and easy to read, especially his short stories, such as "Master and Man", "The Forged Coupon", etc. His other less known works that are revolutionary by their essence, are "My Confession", "What is My Belief (Religion)" and especially (really hard to find) "Critique of Dogmatic Theology", where he expounded his views on religion and traditional Church Christianity with all its absurd, useless dogmas, which only divert your attention from what Christ really taught. This is a very controversial work, which was prohibited in Russia of his day, but which is certainly worth reading. By the way, why doesn't Everyman's Library publish it? 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A must read for all arts majors Von Ein Kunde Tolstoy unleashes an intellectual argument as only he can as he provides a classical insight into the definition of art. Filled with lashings against Church Christianity and praise for true Christianity, and more lashings against universal art that is unoriginal and full of sexual erotica, Tolstoy argues that true art is reflective of the religious consciousness of the age and is measured by its degree of infectiousness to the consumer. It is valued by having particularity, clarity, and sincerity of feeling from the artist. Keep in mind this was written at the end of his life in the 19th century. Tolstoy also argues that governmental endowments given to art that only satisfies the sensual desires of the upper class is a great abuse of the millions of common people that work hard but will never even see the art, art that was produced at incredible expense using their money. In summary, Tolstoy offers a timeless definition of art. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. If you ever wondered aimlessly and clueless in a museum... Von Wences gigi814@aol.com then perhaps you ought to read this book by one of the greatest writers ever. Tolstoy was a man of vast knowledge and he displays that here with his meticulous study of beauty and what it means, which leads him to his own definition of Art. Art, he says, is whenever you, the artist, has transmitted his/her feelings to a universal audience. Clearness, simplicity, brevity, and comprehension are qualities of a work of art. Surprisingly, most people disregard this book while at the same time they put all his other books on a higher pedestal than the author himself does by his own definition! You tell me... but I think Tolstoy was on to something...

**Kurzbeschreibung** While Tolstoy may be best remembered as the talented Russian author of such monumentally great works as "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina", he also wrote prolifically in essay format on various subjects. In this volume Tolstoy turns his attention to the study of aesthetics and art in all its forms. Based on fifteen years of research "What is Art?" is Tolstoy's intellectual exposition into answering the titular question. Rich with criticism for his contemporaries as well as even his own writings, Tolstoy makes the central argument that art should be used as a force for good and betterment of mankind and that art that is borne out of vanity, sexual desire, or some other amoral ambition should be condemned. For Tolstoy, art has a religious significance, which is instrumental to the reader in explaining the philosophy for art that he crafts in this work. As a compelling and interesting examination of the place of art in our society, "What is Art?" is a must read for all artists, written masterfully by one of the greatest writers to ever have lived. **Kurzbeschreibung** While Tolstoy may be best remembered as the talented Russian author of such monumentally great works as "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina", he also wrote prolifically in essay format on various subjects. In this volume Tolstoy turns his attention to the study of aesthetics and art in all its forms. Based on fifteen years of research "What is Art?" is Tolstoy's intellectual exposition into answering the titular question. Rich with criticism for his contemporaries as well as even his own writings, Tolstoy makes the central argument that art should be used as a force for good and betterment of mankind and that art that is borne out of vanity, sexual desire, or

some other amoral ambition should be condemned. For Tolstoy, art has a religious significance, which is instrumental to the reader in explaining the philosophy for art that he crafts in this work. As a compelling and interesting examination of the place of art in our society, "What is Art?" is a must read for all artists, written masterfully by one of the greatest writers to ever have lived. Synopsis During his decades of world fame as a novelist, Tolstoy also wrote prolifically in a series of essays and polemics on issues of morality, social justice and religion. These works culminated in What is Art?, published in 1898. Impassioned and iconoclastic, this powerfully influential work both criticizes the elitist nature of art in nineteenth-century Western society, and rejects the idea that its sole purpose should be the creation of beauty. The works of Dante, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Beethoven, Baudelaire and Wagner are all vigorously condemned, as Tolstoy explores what he believes to be the spiritual role of the artist - arguing that true art must work with religion and science as a force for the advancement of mankind.