



What is Art?

Leo Tolstoy

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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.

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