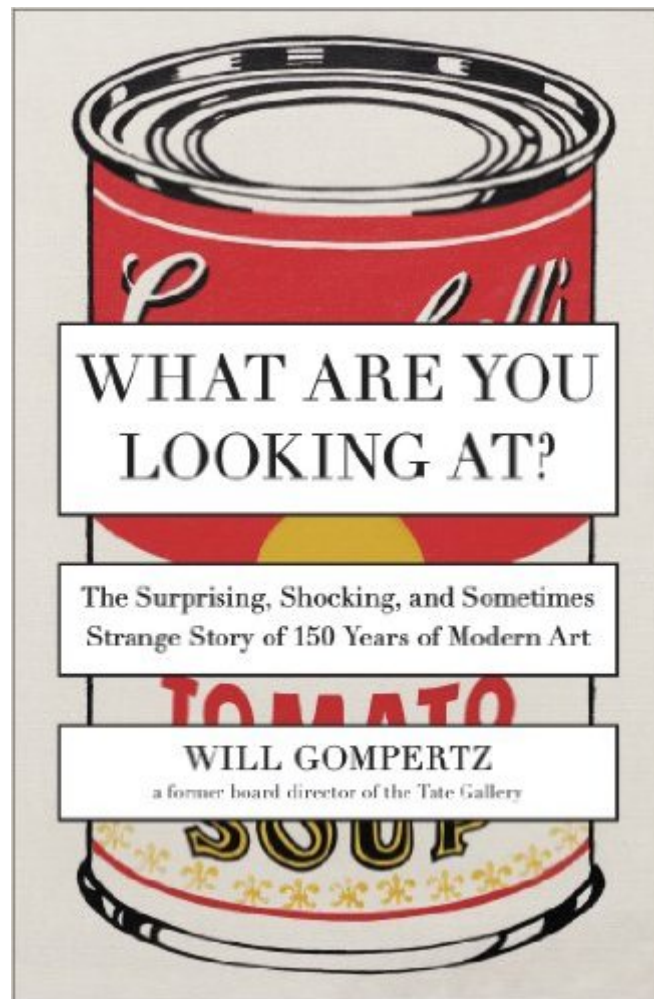


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# What Are You Looking At?: The Surprising, Shocking, And Sometimes Strange Story Of 150 Years Of Modern Art



## Synopsis

In the tradition of *Eats, Shoots & Leaves*, art history with a sense of humor Every year, millions of museum and gallery visitors ponder the modern art on display and secretly ask themselves, "Is this art?" A former director at London's Tate Gallery and now the BBC arts editor, Will Gompertz made it his mission to bring modern art's exciting history alive for everyone, explaining why an unmade bed or a pickled shark can be art—and why a five-year-old couldn't really do it. Rich with extraordinary tales and anecdotes, *What Are You Looking At?* entertains as it arms readers with the knowledge to truly understand and enjoy what it is they're looking at.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Here is a comprehensive, readable book for those ranging from art lovers who those looking at modern art and thinking, "I don't have a clue to what this is!" Beginning with a short overview of how art as investment increases for both living and dead artists, the author begins with the story of how Marcel Duchamp rocked the art world with his "Fountain," a urinal turned upside down with some drilled holes. The point? What do you see? The artist would say to keep looking and then the layers of meaning may unfold for the viewer - or - perhaps it's just a urinal which elicits a variety of responses from the viewer. Is Gustave Courbet's "The Origin of the World" pornography or much more than its surface physicality? These flagrantly different conceptions are comic yet also a window into the world of contemplation and artistic creation that spans 150 years, that which is called "modern art." The text then covers multiple schools of art, beginning with pre-Impressionism and Impressionism which is much more than many viewers perceive of as "just dots" and really convey the first time artists wanted to paint outdoors, carefully watching how light and shade

created beauty in nature's everyday scenes. It also describes how the artists of this period risked so much and even started their own schools to rival the prevailing "Academy" system, speaking for the passion of creativity that they felt deserved a larger, appreciative audience. So this story continues with coverage of Cezanne, Primitivism, Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Suprematism, Constructivism, Neo-Plasticism, Dadaism, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Conceptualism, Minimalism, Post-Modernism, and Art Now.

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