



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2007 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Megan A. Futscher	Project Number S0305
Project Title Art or Not?	
Abstract Objectives/Goals The purpose of my science project was to find out how what people consider art compares with what is considered art by critics and art museums, and whether this consideration would be affected by art style or the age of the person surveyed. Methods/Materials I chose 21 pieces of modern art by different artists and in different styles. I made up a survey and a slide show of the art pieces. Then I surveyed 45 students and 18 adults. I recorded the results and used them to do statistical analyses. Results I found that younger students tended to decide whether they thought a piece was art based on whether they liked what it looked like or liked its message. Adults tended to have a more general theory on what art was and then made their decisions based on this theory. When I did statistical analyses of the data (using the chi square distribution test), I found that overall there was no significant difference between the responses of adults and the responses of students. However, there did prove to be significant difference between the responses to the different styles of art. More often than not, people tended to consider most of the pieces art, though less so with the more abstract pieces. Conclusions/Discussion People tended to be less accepting of abstract art pieces, though only the more minimalist ones showed a significant difference in the number of people that thought they were art. Overall, students did not have a statistically significant difference in opinion when compared with adults. One of the most interesting things about this science project was reading the comments, and it was amazing to see how similar some of them were. The comments often centered on the apparent amount of effort that went into making a piece (usually to the effect that if very little effort appeared to have been put into the art work, then it was less legitimate). It is possible that if I had had a larger sample of adults a bigger difference from the students would have shown up.	
Summary Statement My project explores what people consider art and how they decide if something is art, especially focusing on modern art.	
Help Received My science teacher helped me develop my project, and helped me do the chi square distribution test. My mother discussed my ideas on the project with me, and helped me to focus them.	