



# La supermodelo y la caja de Brillo: Los entresijos de la industria del arte contemporáneo

*Don Thompson , María Morés (Translator)*

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«Esto es arte porque yo soy un artista y digo que lo es». Así de tajante se muestra Grayson Perry a la hora de valorar su obra. Ejemplos como éste salpican este nuevo libro de Don Thompson quien, como ya hiciera en El tiburón de 12 millones de dólares, se introduce en el mundo del arte contemporáneo para cuestionar la misma idea de arte y a la vez descifrar los mecanismos que llevan a ciertas obras a ser vendidas por cifras económicas astronómicas.

Como un brillante y divertido eco de sociedad, por sus páginas desfila información privilegiada de marchantes, abogados y ejecutivos de las principales casas de subastas de Nueva York, Londres o los nuevos mercados de los países del Golfo y China, desgranando sus planes para adquirir colecciones de arte masivas, porque comprar arte tiene que ver con la pasión y la lujuria, pero también con el marketing y con la historia que acompaña a una determinada pieza, con la relación entre dinero y estatus e incluso con la fama.

Un libro imprescindible para saber qué es y hacia dónde va el arte contemporáneo y la industria que le acompaña.

## La supermodelo y la caja de Brillo: Los entresijos de la industria del arte contemporáneo Details

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# From Reader Review **La supermodelo y la caja de Brillo: Los entresijos de la industria del arte contemporáneo** for online ebook

## **Ilya Kavalero** says

A slightly disappointing sequel to "The \$12 Million Stuffed Shark." Much of the message in that book is recapitulated in the first few chapters here, and the first third feels like an acceleration of \$12 Million Stuffed Shark and thereby pretty good.

Same concepts of dealer and artist brand being responsible for making social markets for the top 0.01%.  
Quotes like:

“Artist careers progress through a process that the art world calls validation and the business world knows as brand equity.”, “The dollar value of the back story can be huge” and, in the context of art fair attendance: “Buying makes you feel connected to what is going on.”

But all this good stuff is in the 1st third. There are also some entertaining anecdotes about the biggest artists, and collectors, of our day.

But after the halfway point the whole book starts to drag. There are laundry lists of just about everything, prices, artworks, museums, curators, whatever. So its pretty boring. Overall, the book doesn't add much to its predecessor, other than the entertaining anecdotes, which are maybe a quarter of the book in page count.

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## **James McGrath** says

Half of it is an interesting update and incremental information to his previous book but you find yourself reading a lot of the basics again

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## **Olga Zbranek Biernátová** says

Jak prodat voskovou figurínu své manželky?

Don Thompson p?ichází po knize Jak prodat vycpaného žraloka za 12 milion? dolar? s dalším výletem do sv?ta um?ní. Supermodelka a krabice Brillo mapuje dobu od roku 2008 a na rozdíl od p?edchozí knihy nabízí mnohem širší perspektivu, než je te?kovaný sv?t Damiena Hirsta. ?t?te celou recenzi:  
<http://nlx.cz/jak-prodat-voskovou-fig...>

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## **Suzanne** says

The emperor has no clothes.

This seems to be the undercurrent of this book, that examines the economics of the upper echelon of the

contemporary art market, without ever discussing the intrinsic value of the various pieces of art that comprise today's contemporary art scene. For example, Thompson poses the question of what is the difference between a \$5000 painting and a \$50,000 one, and his answer boils down to status. Status of the dealer, status of the artist, status of collectors of the artist... with nary a peep about the intrinsic value of the art being discussed. From the illustrations in the book (which are of high quality but not as prolific as I would like), it is clear that some works are better than others, regardless of current auction and dealer prices. The high-end contemporary art bubble, which has burst before (and which Thompson does a good job of analyzing) could deflate way more in the future than it has in the past.

Thompson does a good job of giving the uninitiated a glimpse of what goes on in the art market. He describes auctions, dealers, private sales, art fairs and the like in a breezily descriptive manner which makes for an easy read. Unfortunately, he also litters this book with short anecdotes that go nowhere, and his treatment of many of the topics seems superficial and facile. Perhaps he is afraid that the general reader would not understand a more in-depth analysis, in which case I believe he underestimates his audience. There could be more economic content and/or more art analysis without losing a broad readership.

I both enjoyed and learned from reading this book; I just wish that I had done more of both.

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### **Writerlibrarian says**

Less stellar than his first work on the subject. He traces the portrait of the contemporary art market after the 2008 crisis but not as well as he did in the previous book and covered the period before 2008.

Quite a few things were repeated from the first book, remixed but at core same facts. It gives a feeling of *déjà vu* to the work. Still Thompson's style is clear, accessible and over all interesting.

Less engrossing but still interesting.

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### **Biblio Files (takingadayoff) says**

Don Thompson is an economist, not an art critic. To be honest, I'm tired of the "let's look at every subject through the lens of economics" genre, so it's a good thing I didn't realize I was reading such a book until I was well into it and pretty much hooked.

Thompson has a lot to say about the art market, but his main point is that a good backstory is vital to selling a work for the most money possible. Everyone loves a good story. It could be that the art was owned by a movie star or that the artist is a Chinese dissident, or that the art was forgotten and only rediscovered recently. How about this one -- remember a few years back when Las Vegas casino owner Steve Wynn was showing off his Picasso, *Le Reve*, and accidentally put his elbow through the canvas? He figured it lost a good chunk of its value, had it repaired so that the rip wasn't visible and was able to sell it for even more than before. Apparently the story of his errant elbow was good enough to ADD value to the painting.

Thompson also tells some stories that will have your head spinning if, like me, you have a hard time defining what art is. Damien Hirst, who is possibly the wealthiest artist today, or perhaps ever, is famous for a series of paintings of dots. They are perfect dots, equidistant from each other and uniform in size. They are painted

by one of the technicians who work in his factory. He signs the paintings and freely admits that someone else painted the dots. People pay millions of dollars for the paintings. Are they paying for his signature? For his concept, which to the uninitiated look like a wallpaper pattern? For the chance to sell the painting for even more millions in the near future? Who knows?

My favorite story isn't even about an artist, it's about the collectors Herbert and Dorothy Vogel who spent decades collecting pieces from new artists. They bought what they liked. They were government workers living in a rent controlled apartment in Manhattan and they enjoyed visiting galleries and exhibits and meeting people who loved art. They amassed a collection worth millions, but never sold any of it. When it overran their small apartment, they donated it all to the National Gallery. Now that's a great story.

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### **Bonnie Brody says**

Don Thompson, author of *The Supermodel and the Brillo Box*, is an economist. He writes about contemporary art from an economist's vantage point which is a very interesting perspective. The reader is privy to the reasons behind the valuation of art and the trends in the art market. Mr. Thompson carefully analyzes several topics of interest including collecting and investing, contemporary artists, the role of auction houses, galleries, status, and the prices of art as they fluctuate in the market.

The author is very clear that he is not an artist but is reporting on trends. He looks at issues such as the role that status plays in collecting, even analyzing the fact that where a particular piece of art is displayed informs one about the collector. More expensive pieces tend to be shown in high traffic areas of the home while art of lesser value is placed in rooms not often seen by the public.

While I enjoyed this book, I was hoping for a more aesthetic approach to contemporary art which I did not find here. I did learn, however, about the role of uber-galleries and the more traditional galleries in relation to the artist. I also was fascinated by the way that different nations entered and participated in the art market.

As a lover of art, I appreciated this book but my heart is not in the economics of art. It is the appreciation and love of creativity that moves me. I am touched by certain pieces and untouched by others. As the author states, "This book is about the themes that swirl around the top of the art market: about collectors, artists, auction houses and dealers, and prices." If these are things you seek to understand, this is the right book. I probably would have done better in the early eighteenth to early twentieth century where "most artists or art collectors would have said that art is about beauty."

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### **Ninette Gyorody says**

A great read about the secondary art market and how it operates unto itself. Accessible with anecdotes and jaw dropping stories of what happens with the billion dollar plus club. Helped me understand economic terms related to desire and need. I knew I would never get to own a Warhol, now I definitely know I won't! Chapters delve into art fairs, online art auctions, dealer behaviour, collector behaviour, the most sought after contemporary living artists and the auction houses.

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## **Don Thompson says**

With the price of contemporary art sometimes beyond comprehension Don Thompson (not me) tries to explain why this is from the viewpoint of an economist. Why does Damien Hirsts work inspire such devotion? In essence he tries, somewhat successfully, to explain that this is like the futures market, art collectors are 'gambling' on success. But in the background is the shadier side, the sellers of this art are not necessarily arbiters of taste, they are profit seekers. The point he makes, and makes well, is that this is advertising on a huge scale. You are being sold a product. The style of the writing and the concept of art as economics works well, the downside is that after reading it you feel a bit grubby. Also one just has to remember Van Gogh sold one picture in his lifetime.....

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## **Jenna says**

Abandoned at page 142.

This sequel to The \$12 Million Stuffed Shark falls flat. It had its moments in the first half, but I was trudging through it more than I ever did with its predecessor, and ultimately I have admitted defeat.

But there is one chapter that is totally worth reading and I found just as enjoyable and interesting as the entire first book: "The Art Market Crash of '08." The economic down turn happened almost right after the release of The \$12 Million Stuffed Shark and it brought an opportunity to explore how such an event specifically effects the buying and selling of the art world. Which is great. And interesting and captivating and I literally perked up a bit when I got to this section.

("Authenticating Warhol" was another chapter that sticks out in my mind as new and different...)

Overall though, I found this book to cover the same concepts I had read before just bolstered with different examples. All that stuff was enlightening and fascinating the first time around, but this sequel is more like a remixed repeat than an extension of a really interesting topic.

Except for "The Art Market Crash of '08." Go read it. Third chapter.

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## **Sara says**

Just bloody brilliant - well-researched, so convincingly argued, page-turning pacing

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## **Jackie says**

If you are curious about the modern art scene, this book is for you. The author gives an interesting and simple explanation of what drives the people involved in contemporary art. Artists, art auctions, and marketing methods are all explored in the making of art economics. And it's pretty crazy.

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## **Arnied says**

I love modern art. I love it a little less after reading this book. Seems dealers control this world and drive up prices for the big artists. In a great deal of cases they create the demand for those artists. However, there are some really fun stories about exhibitions I wish I had seen...especiallly some of the more stunt-like pieces. One artist actually copies all the pieces from a show across the street and that is his show. Good stuff. And there will always be artist like Banksy that can take on the world via the internet.. So I am still a fan...but the inside look was a little to business business business for me.

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## **Marc Delgado says**

**La supermodelo y la caja de Brillo** , de Don Thompson no es tanto una crítica sino una fotografía panorámica del mercado del arte contemporáneo de hoy en día. Superada la barrera que el arte tiene que ser bello y placentero a los sentidos para convertirse en un medio de expresión, la diferencia de lo que vale una obra de arte de otra hoy en día es algo borroso que responde a diversas confluencias, entre ellas la frivolidad de los que compran arte por tenerlo.

Aún así, este es un libro necesario para todo aquel estudiante de arte, economía, empresa o, simplemente para entender mejor el tipo de cliente que puede entrar en una galería de arte y cómo se vende este.

Thompson también es un escritor sólido y la traducción está bien ceñida. También es un buen entretenimiento.

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## **Theremin Poisoning says**

The economics are somewhat interesting, but the "back stories" are LIFE.

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