

10 Questions... about painting

Is painting still vital, or is it a dead language?
We asked the following questions of several
young painters working today

1. What is painting?
2. What is your favorite color?
3. Which artist or painter has influenced you?
4. Is there a work of art you would like to have in your home next to your own work?
5. What is the best way to exhibit a painting?
6. What are the limits of painting?
7. How do you start a work — do you have any rituals?
8. Is there a future for painting or you are one of the last survivors?
9. If you were about to be reborn, what would you like to be — still a painter?
10. Do you think that today painting is underappreciated?



Mathew Cerletty, *Blue Glove*, 2013.
Watercolor on paper, 20 x 25 cm. Courtesy the artist

Mathew Cerletty

1. Um, same as it ever was? I remember reading an interview with Francesco Clemente about ten years ago and all the questions were like "What is time?" And he had answers!
2. Every color is beautiful in the right context. I tend to be drawn to your basic blue sky, green grass, yellow sun... the classics.
3. I've probably learned the most from John Currin, Jasper Johns, Robert Gober, Brice Marden and Philip Guston. True Believers.
4. Fra Angelico's *The Mocking of Christ* (c.1440-41). It's Jesus blindfolded with all these floating hands hitting him and a head spitting on him. I'm pretty sure it's about not taking life too seriously.
5. I think having a painting in your house is the best. You can see it when you're in different moods, at different times of day; the things you appreciate keep changing. And if it's a good painting, the relationship will last.
6. Well, painting speaks a slow language, which is part of its unique charm and also makes it less accessible. It's hard for most people to adjust to the pace and to be around an artwork consistently over time. It's impractical.
7. Artwork is usually under development somewhere in my subconscious, often for many years. I first recognize it when it's about halfway done and then I start painting.
8. There will always be painting. Until the singularity!!!! j/k, robots will paint.
9. Hmm, maybe a musician? People are so much more susceptible to music as a conveyor of abstraction. Or a comedian like Will Ferrell? Or maybe a good person, like a kind doctor or teacher; most artists are horrible.
10. It's not for everyone, and that's fine, but I find most people really like paintings. I get annoyed when the tiny segment of the population that is most dedicated, the art world, seems obsessed with changing the form. It works!