

# **My Sentiments toward Painting**

By Han Yuguang

1. Good paintings are neither elaborate nor decorative. They often just possess clean structures and modest tones. They present simple, unpretentious, restrained, and non-provocative colors and strokes to the viewers – neither strange nor overbearing. They bring us aesthetic beauty that is enduring and enlightening.
2. Structures and tones by themselves are not beautiful because beauty can only be created from the heart and soul. Beauty is mysterious. It exists in humans, beings and objects; in colors and behind the canvases. It unites lives and minds. This is beauty – the kind of beauty that I am after.
3. Some like beautiful colors. Some like beautiful structures. Some like beautiful lines. I love beautiful textures on canvases.
4. To depict the reality faithfully may not lead to a good painting. Even it fulfills the requirements for a color scheme and plane architecture, the beauty is absent. It is just a drawing, not a theme.
5. The objective of paintings, from its inception to final completion, is to pursue an ideal structure and organization. My objective is to seek the rhythm, harmony, and balanced relationship of these two elements, while avoiding a formulistic approach. I do not like dogmatic themes, but rather prefer exploring scenes in our imagination, using materials that are familiar to people. They are keys to my creativity and provide me with endless possibilities.
6. Vertical and horizontal lines are something that I use often. On canvas, they bring stability and balance. I choose objects with similar geometric lines to construct a harmonious and wholesome feeling. I contemplate every shape and symbol on the canvas for their connective relationship and harmony. The challenge I face as an artist is to organically (?) tell a whole story on the canvas, without neglecting or isolating any scene and plot.

7. Art is becoming multidimensional, but the difference between art and non-art is becoming ever more blurry. I believe artists need to be sensible and rational in order to make real art. I do not follow the trends. I paint because it is an expression of my emotion and sentiment. Still life has become the best conduit for me to explore emotions. Sometimes, I rearrange the jars and bottles in search of new space, new sentiment, and new frames of mind.

July 28, 2004

The essay was translated by Ann Chao, a student majoring in Social Studies and East Asian Studies at Harvard College (Class of 2009).