

# PAINTING BY NUMBERS

The queries 1. If not now, when? 2. If not here, where? and 3. If not you, who? lay the foundation for Los Angeles-based visual artist Knowledge Bennett's Painting By Numbers series. The artist asks himself these questions daily, because when it comes to pushing the envelope, he believes we must act diligently. Procrastination doesn't serve us, he explains, and the sooner we can work toward our objectives, the more we can reap the benefits of our labor.

Each piece in the series features Bennett's signature black acrylic paint and diamond dust, plus a code written out in large matte black font, made from cut vinyl digits used to mask the black painting, with four lines of hyper-legible numbers on each canvas. The digits represent letters that formulate specific words, existing in the confines of a special code the viewer must decipher. The overarching goal of the series is for the viewer to work for the jewel they'll receive once they crack the code depicted on the canvas.

Painting By Numbers is in this way a statement on productivity: an introduction to the artist's number series, enabling him to work in the same medium as always, all while employing a new process where the viewer is asked to interpret a coded message. Because if not now, when?

Through this lens, Bennett reveals the pains we take to enjoy the benefits we might one day reap. The works in Painting By Numbers are large-scale and all-encompassing—an intentional feat—and critical to our education as we move through the world. There's a protocol to working hard and keeping informed, and the labor that goes into gaining knowledge and wisdom reinforces that we must embrace feedback, constructive criticism, and the challenges that stem from refining a work in progress.