

1. What makes great art? Asma, what are your thoughts on this?

a. Great art has purpose: It tells us something about what it means to be a human being. Subtle observations about life or death or love can be presented in interesting and original ways. Artists that manage to do this ought to be recognized for their artistry.

2. What do you mean by that?

b. Some of the greatest artists throughout history, not just painters but also musicians like the Beatles, and Mozart, were very commercially successful. The two things don't always go hand in hand, but it is possible, yes.

3. Do you think that art made for commercial reasons, or art that is commercially successful, can be great?

c. That's a complicated question, and I think the answer will vary a lot from person to person. Part of what makes it tricky to answer is that there are many kinds of art: classical music, poetry, abstract painting, dance, and so on. Overall, though, what makes a piece of work great is that it tells us something about the human condition.