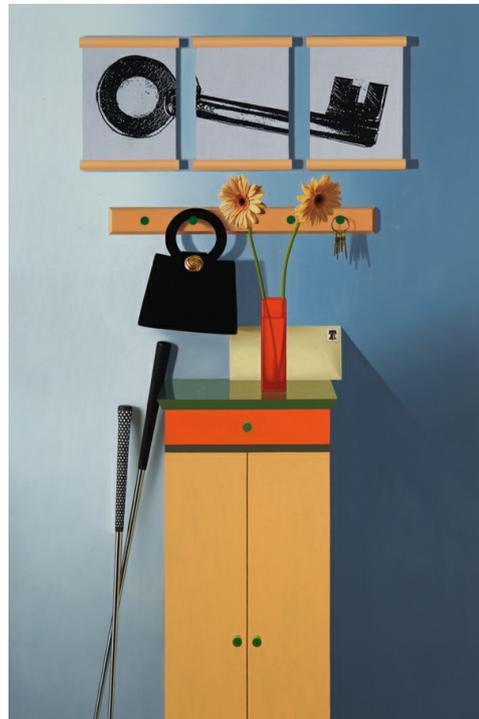


# Interview



## Mathew Cerletty Makes Memories

IKEA, 2010. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND ALGUS GREENSPON

With great humor and clarity, New York artist Mathew Cerletty delivers significance to the subjects he decides to paint. These subjects have included, in no particular order, his grandmother with two ice pops; lifestyle-connoting logos like The North Face and Diet Coke; mint chip motifs; himself imagined as a topless woman. For "Susan," his first solo show in over four years, at Algus Greenspon in New York, Cerletty began with his favorite images in an Ikea catalogue he kept as a child. "I've always loved interior decorating imagery, and these allowed me to paint in a variety of ways all in one painting," says Cerletty. Indeed, the paintings are executed with such dexterous perfection as to appear uncanny. "I think the longer you look, the less familiar they might seem," he adds.

The new paintings are eerie, familiar, funny, and warm. In one Ikea painting, a lamp and a small dollar-store alarm clock rest atop a plain wooden bedside table. It's painted in utmost naturalism, with daylight falling upon the elements to create an intimate interlocking of shadows. Elsewhere, design objects take on anthropomorphic qualities: a towel hook appears like a nipple, for instance. Of a generation that's naturalized appropriation in painting, Cerletty blows up a fabric motif for a delicate yellow-on-white abstract wash. His subjects are memory and the emotional resonance of brand names, household objects, architectural details, fabric patterns and sunny interiors. Cerletty makes transformative paintings that turn common images into heartfelt, self-aware icons.

*MATHEW CERLETTY'S "SUSAN" IS AT ALGUS GREENSPON THROUGH DEC. 17.*