

Thomas Hirschhorn

Pixel-Collage

January 9 - February 26, 2016

Paris, November 2015

Today, more than ever, I believe in the notions of Equality, Universality, Justice and Truth. Through my artwork, I want to give a form which insists on these notions and includes them. This is how I define my mission, and in order to fulfill it, I use art as a tool or as a weapon. A tool to understand the world in which I live, a tool to confront the reality in which I am living, and a tool to live within the time in which I am.

Pixel-Collage

Pixel-Collage is a new series of collages. With these works, I want to integrate the growing phenomena of facelessness in pictures reproduced today. What interests me more specifically in the aesthetic of facelessness is pixelation as its formal embodiment. I want to integrate into my work the increasing use of pixelation. "Pixelation" has become more and more common, there is an increasing use of pixels or blurring in the media. This phenomenon interests me because it seems that, in order to be authentic, a picture needs to be pixelated or partly pixelated. Pixelating - or blurring has taken over the role of authenticity. A pixelated picture must surely be authentic if it has unacceptable areas which are concealed. The acceptable is not-pixelated. It is interesting to observe that the use of pixels follows no common law at all. Sometimes parts of pictures are pixelated without logic or reason, as a proof that apparently somebody is taking care, has the overlook, knows and decides what is acceptable and what is not. Partly pixelated pictures look even more authentic and are accepted as such by viewers. It therefore seems clear that pixels stand for authentication: Authentication through authority. And, in our chaotic, incommensurable, contradictory and complex world there is a huge demand for authority. Pixels deliver an aesthetic to this demand for authority. The justification for pixelation or blurring is either to "protect the viewer", to keep something in the picture "protected", or to "protect" whatever information is supposed to appear in the picture. I don't accept anything "protective" and I don't think anyone - today - can take over such a thing as authority of protection. Using pixels obviously always comes from an authoritarian gesture. Therefore using pixels creates confusion, frustration - and willingly or not - makes things more 'hierarchical', and obviously the act of pixelation is definitely not based on emancipation or emancipating the viewer. Rather, "Pixelation" is clearly used as propaganda, it infantilizes or manipulates the viewer. Furthermore, pixelating a part of a picture might imply and indicate that there is worse, much worse, and that there is something incommensurable that is concealed. Another thing which interests me is the fact that paradoxically, the use of pixels sometimes leads to totally incomprehensible pictures connecting them aesthetically to forms of abstract art. Therefore I am interested in pixels - their abstraction can build up a new form, opening towards a dynamic and desire of truth, truth as such, truth as something reaching beyond information, non-information or counter-information. The point is to understand how an existing picture can become an abstraction. Truth is only manifest to the real viewer, truth is something visual for the one who will open his eyes. I want to use pixels as a new part of our existing, chaotic, complex, cruel, incommensurable, beautiful reality. Of course I do not use pixels to hide things or make them non-visible. With the body of work *Pixel-Collage*, I want to use pixels as a tool, a tool to connect and make links between things. I want to link the beauty and cruelty of reality. The pixels I use are 'handmade' - to 'pixelate' is not a technique but an artistic statement. Therefore the procedure must be that of a collage, with visible pasting traces because it is important to understand that pixels are included in my work as material for making collage, as magazine cutouts. Pixels are a visual bridge between two or multiple images of reality, between two or multiple existing realities, pixels make the incommensurable visible. I want to use pixels as an instrument to link the unspeakable with the abstract, to link reality with the real, to link the hidden with the known. I want to give form to the recognition of beauty and atrocity because it is important to insist on the absolutely wrong and cruel separation between these two registers. The *Pixel-Collage* is a try to use the "Pixel" key to enter a new picture, a new form, a new world.

Thomas Hirschhorn, 2015

Galerie
Chantal Crousel