

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Thomas Hirschhorn, "DE-PIXELATION," *Artreview Asia*, Summer 2017

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1 DE-PIXELATION

I am concerned by today's phenomena of 'Facelessness' and one of my missions will be to do 'De-Pixelation'-work. I think that 'pixelation', or **BLURRING**, masking and furthermore **CENSORSHIP** or self-censorship, is a growing and insidious problematic, also in regard to the new social **MEDIA**. Obviously I don't accept what has been pixelated in my place 'to protect me' and consequently don't pixelate what is **USUALLY CONCEALED** and meant to be removed, frustrate, censor or make nonvisible. I can, I want and I need to use my own eyes as an act of emancipation - this is the detonator of 'De-Pixelation'. I want to **SHOW PIXELATION** or blurring or **MASKING** in its abstract aesthetic and question: how can I redefine my idea of abstraction today? What interests me specifically about the **AESTHETIC OF FACELESSNESS** is its formal embodiment through pixelation. To clarify, I want to explain in nine points my **INTEREST** in pixelation and why I want to do 'De-Pixelation'-work:

1. **DECISION:** I am interested in pixelation because to pixelate, to **BLUR** or to mask - or not - is always a matter of decision. Deciding what part, what area to pixelate, **ADDING** or **REMOVING** a pixel or choosing the size of the pixels is a decision. It's a political decision.
2. **AUTHORITY:** I am interested in pixelation because it is important to understand that authority is always what **MOTIVATES** pixelation. Truth appears through pixels beyond concealment, non-information or **COUNTER-INFORMATION**. Today, more than ever, I need to see everything with my own eyes in our one world, and no one can tell me what my eyes should see or not.
3. **ABSTRACTION:** I am interested in pixelation because its logic leads to abstraction. To me, pixelation is a response - **THROUGH FORM** - to the question 'How can abstraction be understood today?' How can abstraction, through pixelation, **ENGAGE** me in today's world, time and reality? Pixels in their abstraction build up a new form, opening towards a dynamic and **DESIRE OF TRUTH**. The political thinking is the **BELIEF** in truth - truth not as a verification of facts - truth as a form, a form as such, truth as an **ASSERTION**, truth as **RESISTANCE**, truth as abstraction.

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4. **FACELESSNESS:** I am interested in pixelation because it stands for the time of facelessness that we see in **TODAY'S WORLD**. What interests me specifically about this aesthetic of facelessness is its formal embodiment through pixelation.
5. **PUSHED TO THE EDGES:** I am interested in pixelation because it pushes information from the centre to the edge of a picture. It obliges to look and search elsewhere, away from the **CENTRAL FOCUS** to find information or indications of what has been concealed.
6. **AESTHETICS:** I am interested in pixelation because of its powerful aesthetic. The aesthetic power comes from the **OPPOSITION** between the **BEAUTY** of the pixelated part and the nonpixelated part, and from the nonsystematic logic of pixelation.
7. **THE WORST IS CENSORED:** I am interested in pixelation because what is pixelated is considered as the worst. The worst is not shown, the worst is censored. Pixelation is used as a **MORALISTIC** arbitration between what to see and what is too **IMPROPER** to look at. Nothing is **UNSHOWABLE**. What cannot be shown is what has no form.
8. **HYPOCRISY:** I am interested in pixelation because it reveals the hypocrisy of the one using it.
I don't accept pixelation in my place 'to protect me', when the one pixelating claims the opposite, and is in fact **PROTECTING** himself.
9. **AUTHENTICITY:** I am interested in pixelation because pixelating has taken over the role of authenticity. Something pixelated always seems more authentic and is accepted as such. It therefore seems clear that pixels stand for authentication: authentication through **AUTHORITY**.

The thinking, the politics and the form of my work '**DE-PIXELATION**' is the belief in abstraction, the belief in the aesthetic of pixelation and the belief in 'De-Pixelation'.

THOMAS HIRSCHHORN

2

AGNES MARTIN

Her life and art led me to rethink the function of art and the **ROLE OF THE ARTIST**, and to **SEARCH FOR MEANING** in today's world of sound and fury.

LIU JIANHUA

57