

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Thomas Hirschhorn *DE-PIXELATION*

530 West 21st Street

October 28, 2017 – January 13, 2018

Opening October 27, 6-8pm

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to present *DE-PIXELATION*, an exhibition of new work from Thomas Hirschhorn's *Pixel-Collage* series. Over the last two years, Hirschhorn has embarked on this deeply personal, political and socially-engaged body of work that explores the limitations and deceitfulness of imagery found throughout popular culture and the media. Employing a mix of collaging techniques, Hirschhorn's work from the *Pixel-Collage* series calls into question the legitimacy of imagery that has been altered to protect the viewer from unpleasant depictions of gruesome human suffering and violence. This exhibition marks the conclusion of the *Pixel-Collage* series.

In a statement from the artist:

"De-Pixelation" is the title of my exhibition at Gladstone Gallery. I will exclusively present new "Pixel-Collage". The exhibition will mark the ending of the "Pixel-Collage"-series that I have been working on for two years. My engagement in the problematic of 'pixelation' and 'de-pixelation' comes from the decision to see and look at the world as it is, and to insist in doing so. I believe that 'de-pixelation', 'pixelation', blurring or masking and furthermore censorship or self-censorship, is a growing and insidious issue, also in the social media today. I don't accept that, under the claim of 'protecting' - protecting me, protecting the other - the world is pixelated in my place. I want, I can, I need and I must use my own eyes to see everything in our world, as act of emancipation.

'De-pixelation' is the term I use to manifest that pixelating no longer makes sense. Pixels, blurring, masking, and censorship in general, can no longer hold back or conceal fake-news, facts, opinions or comments. Fake-news, facts, opinions, comments entirely take part in the "Post-Truth". We have definitely entered the post-truth world. Pixelation stands for the form of agreement in this post-truth world. I want to insist heavily on what makes me work in a kind of urgency and necessity: The world has to be 'de-pixelated'.

I want to question and integrate the growing phenomena of 'facelessness' today. What interests me about the aesthetic of 'facelessness' is its formal embodiment through pixelation. This phenomenon shows us that a picture needs to be pixelated, or partly pixelated, in order to be authentic. What interests me is that pixelating has taken over the role of authenticity. Partly pixelated pictures look even more authentic and are accepted as such. Pixels stand for authentication: Authentication through authority, because to pixelate is always an authoritarian act. What interests me is that pixelating - as an aesthetic - meets the demand for authority, for protection, for de-responsibilization and for de-emancipation. What interests me about this aesthetic, is that through pixels, abstraction can engage me in today's world, time and reality. How can I redefine my idea of abstraction today? What interest me is that I can understand abstraction as thinking, as political thinking. What interests me is that pixels build up a new form opening towards a dynamic and a desire for truth, truth as such, truth as something reaching beyond information, non-information or counter-information. Paradoxically - the authoritarian will to use pixelation in order to hide, 'protect', not show, or make something not visible, has become an invitation to touch truth. To touch truth does not mean verifying information; to touch truth is the beautiful gesture of emancipation. What interest me about the form of the "Pixel-Collage", is its 'belief' in the aesthetic of pixelation as abstraction. What interests me is that an existing published picture can become an abstraction. 'Pixelation' is a decision, not a technique or a

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system. Removing or adding a pixel - or even cutting it into smaller pixel parts - is a political decision.

"Pixel-Collage" are collages. A collage means pasting together at least two existing elements to create something new, a new world, a new image, a new light. Doing this means giving a response - through Form: Form is not just an idea, Form is the core. I want to give Form, and in giving Form I must show what I see, what I understand, what comes from myself without explanation or argumentation. In its own and non-systematic logic, the composition of each "Pixel-Collage" serves as the fundament: I want to reinforce the beauty of the pixelated part opposed to the non-pixelated part. I want to focus on its logic. Nothing is un-showable. The only thing which cannot be shown is what has no form. Everything within our world that is Form is showable and viewable, even when incommensurable. In order to confront the world, to struggle with it, with its chaos, its hyper-complexity, its incommensurability, I need to confront reality without distance. It is necessary to distinguish 'sensitivity', which to me means being awake and attentive, from 'hypersensitivity', which means self-enclosure and exclusion.

The "De-Pixelation" works will perhaps be judged 'difficult', but what is really difficult is to do an artwork today, in contact with complexity, in contact with reality, in contact with the time we are living in and in contact with the world. Today, more than ever, I need to see everything with my own eyes in our one world, no one can tell me what to see or not see. Therefore, I want to 'de-pixelate' the world, I want to live in a de-pixelated world.

Thomas Hirschhorn, Paris 2017

On Saturday, October 28, Hirschhorn will be joined by Hal Foster for a discussion about the *Pixel-Collage* series at 530 West 21st Street at 4pm.

Thomas Hirschhorn was born in 1957 in Bern, Switzerland, and currently lives and works in Paris. His work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions including at Kunsthall Aarhus; South London Gallery; Kunsthalle Bremen; Institute of Modern Art Brisbane; Dia Art Foundation, New York; Kunsthalle Mannheim; Museo Tamayo; Musée d'Art contemporain de Montréal; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona; Kunsthau Zürich; Art Institute of Chicago; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; and Secession, Vienna. Thomas Hirschhorn's 'Presence and Production' projects include among others: *Musée Précaire Albinet*, Aubervilliers, France, 2004, *The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival*, Amsterdam, 2009, *Gramsci Monument* in the Bronx, New York, 2013, *Flamme éternelle* at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2014, and *SPERR* at Wiesbaden Biennale, 2016. Additionally, he has taken part in many international exhibitions, including the 2012 La Triennale at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris; the Swiss Pavilion of the 2011 Venice Biennale with his work *Crystal of Resistance*, Documenta 11 in Kassel, Germany, where his large-scale public work, *Bataille Monument*, was on view; "Heart of Darkness" at the Walker Art Center; and "Life on Mars: the 55th Carnegie International." Hirschhorn was the recipient of the Prix Marcel Duchamp in 2000, the Joseph Beuys-Preis in 2004 and the Kurt Schwitters Prize in 2011.

Richard Prince
Ripple Paintings
515 West 24th Street
November 3 – December 22, 2017

Alfredo Volpi
130 East 64th Street
November 4 – December 22, 2017

Gedi Sibony
Grapefruits
12 Rue du Grand Cerf
November 17, 2017 – January 13,
2018

For further information, please contact Andrew Huff: ahuff@gladstonegallery.com
New York gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–6pm
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10am–6pm and Saturday, 12pm–6pm