

Interview El Mundo June 2016

-What does art mean to you, what's it all about?

It means all, all that counts to me. I believe that art is the way to reinvent the world. Art is autonomous. Autonomy is what gives an artwork its beauty and its absoluteness. I believe that Art can create the conditions of an implication, beyond anything. Art is resistance. Art resists facts. Art is positivity, and intensity. Art, because it's art, calls for equality. Art is universal. Universality means Equality, Justice, Truth, the Other, the One World. Art - because it's art - can provoke a dialogue or confrontation directly, from one to one. Each human being can get in touch with art, each human being can be transformed by the power of art.

-What age have you decide to be an artist?

To be or not to be an artist is not the problem. Everybody is an artist, as we know and as I believe, following the quote of Joseph Beuys. The problem is what work to do? The problem is what work can enter the history of art? The problem is with what term can I intervene in the field of art? The problem is with what form can I implicate the other? And the problem is which critical corpus can I establish?

-Do you have any kind of particular imaginary in your head? ¿Could you tell me about your references?

My references are the street, all kinds of media such as the internet, books, magazines, newspapers, television, social media, and my own way of being in contact with the world.

-I would like to know what kind of books you read and what kind of movies you like. I would like you to talk a little bit of yourself.

I like to read books of philosophers: Alain Badiou, Marcus Steinweg or Georgio Agamben. The last film I saw – in an airplane – was “The Revenant” by Alejandro Inarritu and I liked it very much! Next comes to my mind: “The road” by John Hillcoat, “Deer Hunter” by Michael Cimino and “Zero Dark Thirty” by Kathryn Bigelow. I like all the movies of Jean-Luc Godard – all of them. My absolute favorite film – forever - is “Stalker” by Andrei Tarkowski.

-What images keep you company in the space where you work?

A portrait of the Swiss artist Emma Kunz and many references for the current work I am doing.

-How do you choose materials to work with? Do you choose?

I love the materials I work with. To love does not mean to be in love or to lose oneself in one's material. To love one's material means putting it above everything else, working with it in awareness and insisting upon it. The decision about materials is essential, it is a political one. I can't change for something else or something new.

-What's the role of investigation in your work? Do you work with chances?

I am working with chance or - I prefer say - with grace. I want to do a work of art which is open to touch grace. I want to do a work of art which creates the conditions for chance –

chance as such, and I want to do a work which can grasp the unexpected, which can touch the precarious, which can reach serendipity. I understand chance, serendipity or grace as something constitutive to art.

-How has your work evolved since that you started?

It's always difficult to comment one's own work oneself, I rather leave it to the art historian. But I can tell you my guidelines: To keep faith and conquer-ship, to keep fighting, to keep the fire going for giving form, in all dimensions, possible spaces and locations. I want to keep working within complexity, and keep overwhelming myself first.

-Tell me about your interest about energy. Why your interest about it?

"Energy: Yes! Quality: No!" is an affirmation constitutive of my work, I have always been faithful to it. "Energy: Yes!" is the assertion that things which have their own energy are important. Energy is what counts, Energy is what I can share and Energy is what is Universal. "Energy: Yes!" is a statement for movement, for dynamic, for invention, for activity, for the activity of thinking. "Energy: Yes!" is the idea of a possible accumulation, like a battery. It is about saying "Yes" to something without establishing an exclusive criterion. I use the term 'energy' as a positive term because it includes the other, it is beyond good and bad - even bad energy is Energy - and beyond cultural, political, aesthetic habits. "Quality: No!" is the refusal to be neutralized by the exclusive criteria of Quality. Quality is the luxury reflex to keep distance with everything which doesn't have Quality. I don't know what has Quality. As an artist I refuse to adopt the term 'quality' for my work and I don't want to apply it to the work of others. Quality is always a try to establish a scale, to distinguish 'high quality' or 'low quality', but I don't know, myself - today - what has Quality. Quality is exclusive, luxurious and based on tradition, identity and particularism, today we I need another criterion: This is why 'Energy'.

-About *Equality Float*. Could you explain the idea of the project? What topics does it raise?

The aim of "Equality Float" is to assert a platform for 'equality'. The problematic which is developed and diffused by the float is 'Equality'. Equality, Justice, Truth and Universality are constitutive notions for art. Other words for 'Equality', are 'Universality', the 'Non-Exclusive Audience', 'Truth', 'The One World' or 'Justice'. I want to be engaged with art in absolute 'Equality'. 'Belief' and 'Equality' are both constitutive for art. The 'Belief' is to be absolutely convinced of this, and to follow it as a decision, as a hope, and to use it as a weapon, as an affirmation. I cannot understand the skeptical, the disappointed, the resigned, the cynical, the critical - nothing can be done when there is no belief in equality. Belief in equality is a power, it is active and it is a resistance to objectivity or neutrality. Art can build throughout 'equality' and 'non-exclusivity', a basis to engage directly 'The Other'. No artwork - that stands as such - can be based on inequality or exclusivity.

- What your opinion about *Equality* in the artworld?

Equality is not given - I must fight for it and can't avoid the battle under the pretext of circumstance or today's context. This counts for the world and for the 'art world' too because it's also part of the world. I don't think that the 'art world' is less egalitarian than the world. In order to stand up against inequality I must allow myself equality, I must authorize myself to assert being equal. Equality must be a competence - and I must decide and prove that I am competent for equality by my acts.

-Tell me about your iconography: pills, mannikies, flowers, placards...

“Equality Float” possesses the aesthetic of a float. It refers to the floats one sees in celebrations or parades. “Equality Float” is made with a wide range of simple, cheap, universal materials which are inclusive. I use this material because it is universal and not only used for doing art.

-What’s the meaning of language for you?

Language is important to me. I write, I read, I discuss and therefore I need language. I write because I want to use my very own terms. I do not want to use words or terms of others for my own work. I write because I want to fix things. In order to be committed to a form, and writing things down helps me be truthful to it, because once written, things are no longer hazardous or arbitrary. Art is an assertion of form, and to write is also an assertion, as an artist, to reinforce my assertion of form and insist with what is essential. Writing is not an explanation, a justification or an argumentation.

-What’s your relationship with actual reality? Are you talking about terrorism and refugees in your pieces? Do you think that art is also there to criticize society?

I want to do my work politically, which means to refuse to become a 'politicized subject'! To me art is the most important thing, this is what makes it political. I do not want to do politics and use art for it! My problem - as an artist - is: How can I make a work of art, which - in any cases - resists historical facts? How can I make a work of art which touches beyond the historical moment I am living in - right now? And furthermore: How can I do a work of art, today - in my historical field - which is a-historical?

-What’s for you chaos? Describe ‘chaos’

Chaos is the beginning, it is the core. Chaos is dynamic and creative, destructive and explosive. I am living – we are living in a chaotic world. I want to stand up in the middle of the chaos – with a clear consciousness – and I want to work in the chaos, in the hardcore of the chaos of the world – which is – I do not forget – my world, my own and unique world. I do not want to escape the chaos, I do not want to protect myself from the chaos, I do not want to dream in order to hide the incommensurable, the violence but also the beauty of the world I am living in.

-How do you deal with humor in everyday life and in your work?

Humor and irony – self-irony even more so - can be a tool in art. Because humor and irony can be used for creating an opening toward the other, toward the audience. Every human being has a sense for humor.

-How far can provocation in art go, before it becomes cynical and abusive? Does ‘good censorship’ exist? Are ethical decisions seen as more urgent in participation art?

If art is a provocation then, because it’s new, it’s a new form. A new form does provoke misunderstanding, rejection and resistance. If art is a provocation, it is never intentionally, ‘to provoke’ is never an intention because you cannot base a work of art on the guideline of provoking. But – as an artist – if your work is called ‘provocative’ you have to pay the price for it. Therefore, I believe, cynicism cannot be a tool in art and there is no ‘good censorship’ in art, censorship is censorship – even self-censorship.

-What do you think about museums? Is a museum a factory?

I am thankful to museums – beside their failures. Because thanks to Museums – I got in contact, I got touched, I got implicated into art. I never forget this and will always stay truthful to this, since in my family art played no role. But of course Museums have their failures as well. I reproach museums—in general—for not producing confrontation. I reproach museums for not believing in the autonomy of art and I reproach museums for not believing in the universality of art. A museum must believe and assert the intrinsic power of works of art by establishing a direct confrontation or dialogue—one on one. However, museums tend to offer less and less possibilities for a direct contact with art. Everything is designed to establish a distance: through history, through communication, through culture. The museum considers its public as consumers instead of thinking each person as someone sovereign—solitary—who can confront and face a work of art in a direct dialogue, without other preconceptions. The tendency is to try to neutralize art through culture. Art is accepted when it possesses a 'cultural surplus'. This 'cultural surplus' is a danger for the work of art. Tools (or guidelines) to avoid 'cultural surplus' are a true and uncompromising logic against the 'exclusive public' or 'exclusive audience', against everything 'exclusive' in general. The term 'exclusive' is continuously being used in art to argue, to intimidate, and to legitimize. 'Exclusivity' has become a positive criterion. On the contrary, art is inclusive; art never excludes. In other words, the 'non-exclusive public' is the opposite of a pre-determined, selected, and initiated public.

-What are your ambitions as an artist? Do you have any projects lined up in the imagery in your head you have not realized?

My ambition is to give form. To me – as an artist – art is a tool – or a weapon – to encounter the world, a tool to confront reality and a tool to live in the time I am living in, I want to use this tool or this weapon, I want and I need to use this tool, but nobody can tell me how to use this tool. Nobody can tell me how to use the tool the 'right way' and nobody can tell me how to use this tool "correctly".

-Do you think that contemporary art is much more ephemeral today than at that time?

I never use the term 'ephemeral' since the logic of 'ephemeral' is dead – the notion 'ephemeral' comes from nature. In contrary, I use the term 'precarious' because its logic is life, survival but life. The notion 'precarious' comes from human, it is human-made. My adherence to precarity comes from my life, from my experience, from what I love, from the precarious forms I love I understand 'the precarious' not as a concept, but as a condition. A condition that is a matter of accepting - frenetically and in awareness. And I have the ambition in doing my work to intervene - through the notion of Precarity - in the field of Art. The precarious must be affirmed and it is necessary to enter the camp of the precarious. The change, the new and the revolutionary lie in this affirmation - this is the political. The precarious is the dynamic, the path, the possibility and the movement that is offered to human beings. The future consists in the affirmation of this precarious. This precarious which is also the non-assured, the non-guaranteed, the non-stabilized and the non-established. It will be the future because the precarious is always creative, because the precarious is always inventive, because the precarious is in motion, because the precarious leads to new forms, because the precarious shapes a new geography, because the precarious starts with a new exchange between human beings and because the precarious creates new values. The question I have is: "Would it be possible, that instead of wanting to shield ourselves from the precarious, instead of wanting to deny the precarious and instead of wanting to turn away from the precarious, the opposite - its affirmation - could be the

universal? Wouldn't it be possible that Justice, Equality and Truth are constitutive of the Precarious - the precarious shared by so many today?"

-Can you talk a little about the newer works? Maybe the directions that they are going to?

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. 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. 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. 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. What also interests me is the fact that paradoxically, the use of pixels can lead to totally incomprehensible pictures and connect them aesthetically to forms of abstract art. 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. 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.

-We can defend everything in contemporary art?

Yes, because Art is Art. Yes, because Art is an affirmation. I am happy to do my work of art as a total affirmation: The affirmation of a form that wants to reach beyond argumentation. But Art – because it's Art - must be critical, it's an imperative. Therefore, there is no need to discuss the 'critical potential of art', and there never was. In being critical, art must turn against itself, if it doesn't it has nothing to do with art, it's just not art. Art is committed to itself and - at the same time - is engaged against itself. In order to be critical, art must stand at the edge of its own limit, therefore putting itself - already - in a 'critical state'. Art is made at the borders, at the margins. Art builds on what will come and is never totally completed. There always remains an unaccomplished part, because art - as something 'becoming' - is a promise. The artist's ambition is to establish a 'Critical Corpus'. This means working to constitute a corpus – through Form – which is critical, which is a criticism, which is something to be criticized, and in a critical state. This is something difficult, risky and complex to achieve, as it requires the courage of questioning one's own model, one's own outlook, and one's own 'body'. But it must be done - the artist must do it. In 'Critical Corpus' there is the term 'corpus', and the term 'critical'. Criticism without a body cannot be effective or taken seriously. Too many 'critical' things are enunciated in written, proclaimed, or spoken words, with the will of preserving the 'body'. An artist can never avoid the risk of giving form and establishing a body and consequently, of paying for it; because a form or body must necessarily turn against itself. This is how I define my competence, my artistic skills. Notions of 'form', 'body' and 'critic' must be one. A 'form' is critical as 'form', as itself, for itself,

within and against itself; this gives it 'critical' power. Because it is new, a form can criticize all others. Creating and asserting form is what gives art power, a 'critical' power. I want to give form, I want to make work that is critical and cannot be reduced to criticism 'about', or 'against' something. One assumes a bit too quickly that one is 'critical' by being on the 'right side 'or doing 'what's right', but it is purely self-neutralizing, self-depoliticizing, and self-harmless.

- What are you looking for? -What are you trying to achieve with your art?

I want the form – that I am giving – to make a break-through in the history of art. I want to establish - through my work - a critical corpus. I want to work – in all circumstances - for a non-exclusive audience. I always have in mind Andy Warhol's beautiful words: "Don't cry – work" or the thoughtful words of Jean Cocteau: "Ce qu'on te reproche, renforce-le!".