



Q I was wondering about your decision to update *Talking Art* after 10 years. Could you just tell a little bit about that, was it a similar experience or a very different experience?

A It was a mixed decision, and it was one that I knew would get me in trouble for the following reasons. I haven't made magazine money – except for one or two random ones – since the early or mid 90s. I decided to go back to the roughly identical form to advise you that this is exactly the same situation, there is no difference. To top it up for you in the art world who know these things, and who have the reprehensible habit of insisting there are things they were either attracted or glossed at the time they were made, this is about something happening that you are responsible for. I made a decision. I knew I would be criticised for repeating an old form, but I wanted to try to reach to the same form of address.

This time something happened that is different from the last time, and I know would be different. This time they began to be in the world the first series was never in the art world. But this time I know, and I have made a name for myself as an artist, that if I did this they would be in the main magazines themselves, and they were, so my name is getting there now, up the 'big' magazine or the 'big' one. *Francisco Chronicle* was to put them in the art world. The art world itself has institutionalised in the market and from its own audience. So I think that I was doing the same thing but at an entirely different moment and the message was, 'What a difference! No touch.'

As to making the images, what's different is that I did not and pain them, but they are slightly produced. I decided not to use Photoshop but to produce them in a slightly different way, because at the moment our technology of image production is much more sophisticated, and there are more of them or each other and a different difference type of strategy than before.

Q I find myself writing on issues on the society side – are you responding, or just commenting on the social and political issues of contemporary art?

A Much as we like to think otherwise, I have never believed that an individual society, all social movements are social movements and they all involve the imposition of a political will, either on the basis of official currents, or on the basis of freedom from before. Whether they take the form of a liberal result or not I don't say, but to put it as simply as possible, social change depends on social movements, and all that artists can do is be a part of a kind of concentration of ideological currents. I do not myself in that role if possible, but I certainly do not see artists as broadly leading. I think it's important because on the one hand artists are behind for an established revolution, and on the other they are charged for abandoning expectations. We may have a revolution presently, we may suffer from one again, but still it would be a mistake to believe our own power. I would like to be a part of whatever it is that people are doing to move us to a better place than this one.

Q It seems that a lot of your practice has a political feel to it. The title *Images of gender, of identity and of democracy*. Do you see politics as being a part of your work?

A Yes. In the past I used to be criticised by feminists for making up my feminist claims by direct analogy of relating to issues of geopolitics. I'm not so good at right things I would always like there to be something that goes on, but I am allergic to going and now we will all die and take the flag or something of that order. I am not a conceptual artist, and I think it's important that I would like to engage now in the arena perhaps of the visual but also of the material. I would like, perhaps, for you to see the work with a question, and not just an answer. I am always engaging with people. I am engaging with someone at the moment about what the word 'photomontage' means and what the older photomontage means, because they are more or less the same, but inevitably there is always something that goes on. I don't think that we are conceptualised as people might think we are. I do think that they tend to take on various connotations of the political because I am from the generation of feminist who said that everything is political, and that there are no exceptions and no exceptions. The politics are just to the politics of gender, but to all locations of power, and I am provoked enough to say that it is not useful to talk about violence and resistance necessarily, but about other issues as well.

Q Writing in issues in which you discuss the responsibility or duty of art as a specific case of an action. How has this changed since the early 90s? What has been the best or worst of it in relation to, how might it meet the world and other conditions?

A I am always the world's worst provocateur. I was in an article called 'What's Democracy?' just as a dictionary because the gene of the moment. In you are asking the wrong person. However,

Talking Art 2

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Patricia Bickers is editor of Art Monthly and a former lecturer at the University of Westminster, London.

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