

M@terial

Mathieu Merlet Briand

Alexandra de Viveiros gallery is happy to present to you « M@terial »
the solo show of Mathieu Merlet Briand.



Mathieu Merlet Briand, *Google Basalt*, 2016

Opening
Friday, April 20
6 pm - 9 pm

Exhibition
20.04 - 19.05.2018

Sustained by an immeasurable force that tends to absorb all the stuff of the world, the exodus towards the “virtual”, wasn’t simply reproducing the non-digital world. Pre-digital concepts, ideas, ideologies, philosophies, thoughts and objects of all sorts circulate and shape the inner structures of our digital networks and environments. However, things got convoluted... lately new objects, concepts, materials, perceptual and existential modes emerge from this intertwined, and indivisible whole that envelops digital, non-digital and nature. It seems impossible to see it otherwise.

M@terial, a solo show by Mathieu Merlet Briand embraces this idea.

The artefacts presented here look like archaeological remains from a digital environment or assets removed from a video game level. Whatever they are, wherever they came from, they announce the end of a dualism — digital and non-digital matter are now one. They are both there, present-at-hand, even if these artefacts are devoid of any electric voltages.

In this post-Google world created by Mathieu Merlet Briand, basalt, marble, silicon and other elements usually found in nature gain a new materiality. These artefacts embody the ways in which Google perceives, represents and maps the world, using massive collections of images and complex sets of data.

As in digital assets, behind the facade of Google Red Marble, we won't find nothing but empty space, so our eyes keep wandering and wondering through these mysterious and hypnotic textures. These algorithmic collages result from a shared process between artist, computer and Google, that always starts with a search query: "red marble", "silicon", "basalt" ... Google Images provide the raw material: the images, these are then filtered, processed and abstracted by algorithms designed by the artist, and they are finally printed out in different materials and shapes.

But don't be deceived by names... M@terial is not an exhibition about materials, whether they are new or old. If it's about something, then we should look elsewhere. The three glass windows, an early-project by the artist, seem to give us a hint. They remind us that our digital interfaces are still windows to the world. Yet, the way they display it, what and how they frame it, oscillates between opacity and transparency. This swing, we shouldn't forget, is intrinsically ideological and political. Google Red Marble and the other artefacts on the show are not only materials generated after Google Images. These artefacts are another proof that digital apparatus and networks are not only creating surfaces that attempt to represent the world, they are the world as well! These surfaces envelop us, influence and filter our perception, and as a consequence, create new worlds.

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