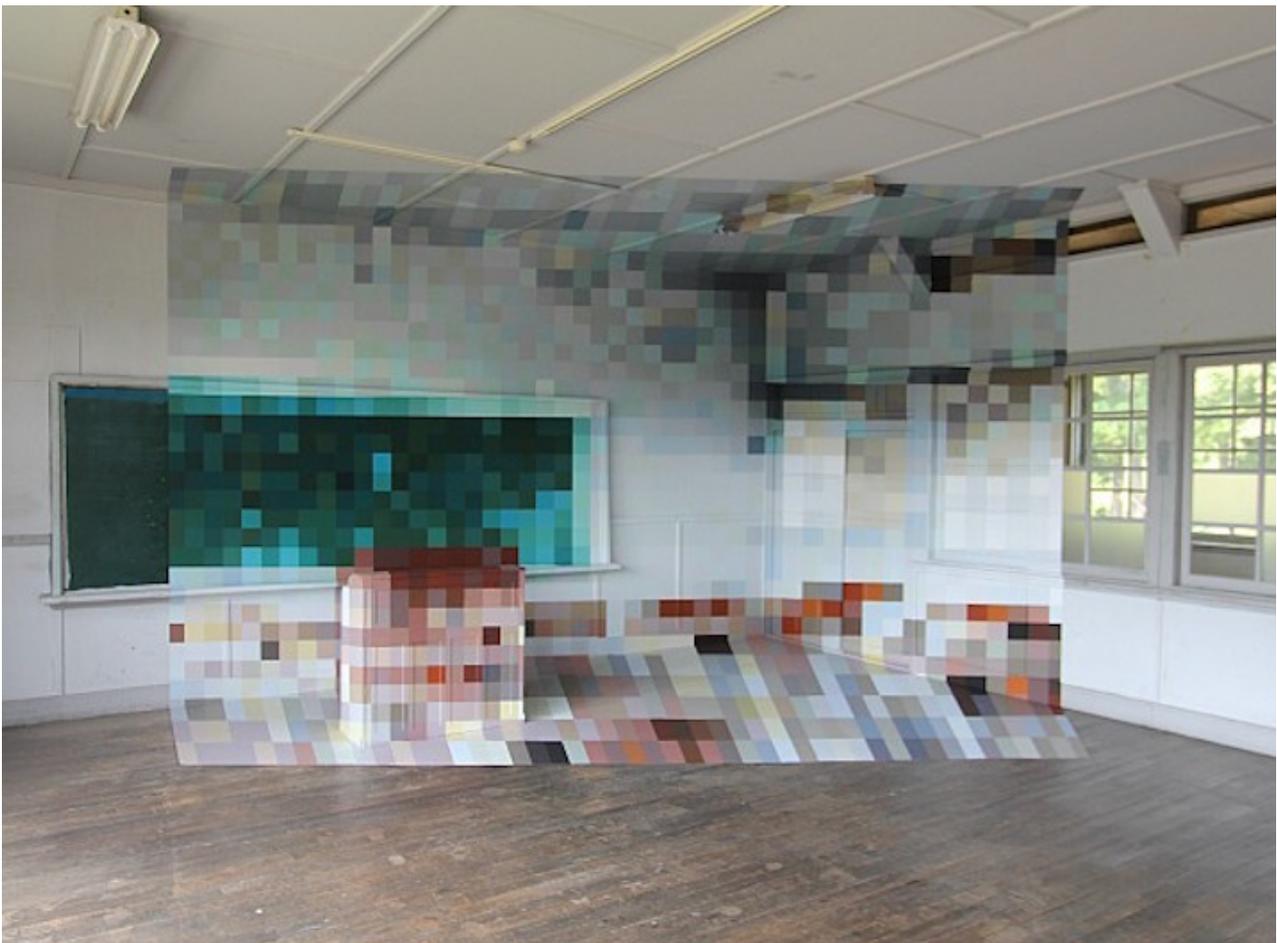


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# PIXEL WORKS

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An encounter with a painted installation created by the art unit Couch, also known as Hiroki Miyazaki & Reiko Asao. This introduction was first published on [gensojapan.org](http://gensojapan.org) (now offline).



**'Pixel Works', Couch (Hiroki Miyazaki & Reiko Asao) (2013). Nakanojo Biennale 2013.**

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Painted pixels obscure the corner of a classroom. Made from mostly greens and greys, with a few clay-coloured blocks that cloak the wooden floor and furniture, it looks as though a digital curtain has been thrown over part of the room. If you're in the space itself, it asks that you align yourself to look through a seemingly digitised viewfinder, but if you've stumbled across an image online, any such alignment is unnecessary; as you've already arrived at an optimal viewpoint.

Created as a temporary, site-specific installation at a disused Junior High School in a mountain village in Gunma Prefecture for the Nakanojo Biennale 2013, “Pixel Works” was made by the art unit Couch. Otherwise known as Hiroki Miyazaki and Reiko Asao, they collaborated to transform a physical environment into a pixelated facsimile of a blackboard and backdrop.

Paraphrasing a vocabulary familiar to every computer user or digital television viewer, Couch’s installation shares pictorial similarities with elements as disparate as ancient mosaics, Georges Seurat’s Post-Impressionist paintings or the video game Minecraft. The result is a work made for both analogue and digital reception.

Format aside, what does it mean to simulate part of an empty classroom in a former school? As this isn’t the only occasion that Couch have applied this method – they installed a similar, public mural under a railway bridge in Yokohama as part of the Koganecho Bazaar during the same year – it isn’t social commentary that festers beneath its painted blocks, but rather a perceptual enquiry that uses the blocks to examine how we see. Even when you see their work in situ, it’s easy to catch yourself waiting for the image to load fully. Couch simply describe “Pixel Works” as an “enquiry for the eyes”.



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