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Last year, Jordan Wolfson got in touch with Thomas Bayrle. He is curating a show for a museum in China based on the work of the late German painter Michel Majerus, and was hoping Bayrle would contribute to it. He knew that Bayrle had once collaborated with Majerus on a project for the Brandenburg Gate, but he also sensed a more general affinity between the artists in their way of working with distorted images. As an artist himself, Wolfson is also very much involved with distorting images—his interest in animation stems from its ability to allow for infinite mutilation. Bayrle said yes.

Adorno once described the world as a place of distortions, and to make sense of it requires looking at it through a distorted lens—what we recognize are distortions of distortions. We need to mutilate images in order to see the mutilations, so to speak. To those of us in the age of the computer, this seems obvious.

Majerus heats it up, Jordan says. He goes with the flow, and speaks ugly to ugly. He rejects the tradition of heroic German painting and goes for the disfigured and the incomplete. If it's broken, don't fix it. His huge paintings are made of fragmented signage, warped graphics, and loud colors. For The Artist's Institute, Bayrle made new works based on Majerus paintings called *Smudge Tool* and *Degenerated*—he piled them on top of each other and accumulated their mistakes, like a spreading bacteria.

For a recent animation piece, Wolfson used a cartoon illustration of the HIV virus that once appeared in a Majerus sculpture. In many ways, the virus is the epitome of ugliness—a perversely shape-shifting organism that endlessly reproduces and repeats, each time mutating to an uglier version of itself.

Wolfson also made a series of sculptures with pornographic images glued to the surface of lobster claws. Distorted bodies bend around the uncomfortable shape and sharp edges of a dead animal, like a sex toy gone wrong—a perversion of a perversion.

As a bacteria heating up a bacteria, they are really sexy and really ugly at the same time. They say *fun* and they say *fuck*. They go well with Bayrle.

Jordan Wolfson gives a talk on Michel Majerus on March 1st, 2013. He also turns one of Bayrle's works into wallpaper, and installs his claws on top.