



Pieter Schoolwerth

Shifted Sims

September 3 – October 31, 2020

Petzel

456 W 18th Street New York NY 10011
Tel 212 680 9467 www.petzel.com



Installation view, Pieter Schoolwerth, *Shifted Sims*, Petzel, 2020



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #9 (Eco Lifestyle)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
72 x 110.5 inches
182.9 x 280.7 cm





Pieter Schoolwerth

Shifted Sims #20 (YouTuber Career: Impossible Burger Connoisseur)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

67 x 101 inches

170.2 x 256.5 cm



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #16 (Ultimate Alexa Mod: Pyromaniac Trait)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
85 x 115 inches
215.9 x 292.1 cm

Schoolwerth pressures painting to catch up to the surge of online profiles, identities without bodies, that teem at the surface of this “once-removed” existence.





Installation view, Pieter Schoolwerth, *Shifted Sims*, Petzel, 2020



Pieter Schoolwerth

Shifted Sims #11 (Into the Future PlantSim Challenge)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

72 x 101.5 inches

182.9 x 257.8 cm





Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #7 (Fashionista Career)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
48 x 84 inches
121.9 x 213.4 cm



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #12 (Cowplant Mod)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
95.5 x 131 inches
242.6 x 332.7 cm



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #14 (Luxury Party Stuff)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
80 x 112 inches
203.2 x 284.5 cm

Trailing every avatar is an estranged silhouetted double, snapped into existence by the “shift” of Shifted Sims.





Installation view, Pieter Schoolwerth, *Shifted Sims*, Petzel, 2020



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #13 (Covid-19 Expansion Pack)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
90 x 120 inches
228.6 x 304.8 cm

*What appears is a shadow realm of vestigial matter,
yanked into view on inkjet-printed canvases and
parceled in paint.*





Pieter Schoolwerth

Shifted Sims #6 (Tropical Romance Island Community Event)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

70 x 58.5 inches

177.8 x 148.6 cm



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #23 (Basemental Drug Mod)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
67 x 100 inches
170.2 x 254 cm

Schoolwerth renders the Sims' faces with striking impasto marks that "expressionize the avatar," humanizing these subjects through visibly manual, painterly gestures.

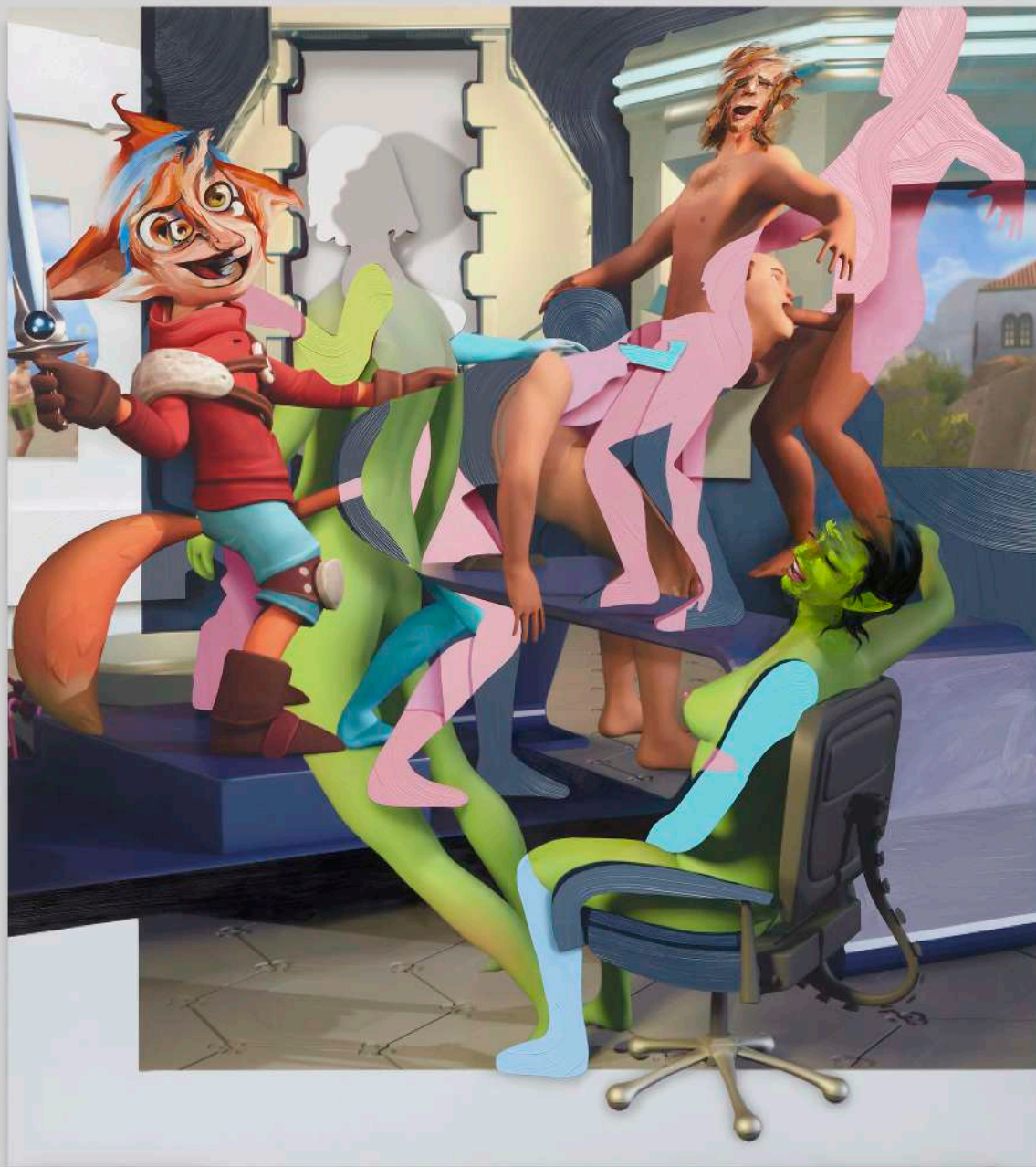




Installation view, Pieter Schoolwerth, *Shifted Sims*, Petzel, 2020



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #10 (Male Pregnancy Mod)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
85 x 115 inches
215.9 x 292.1 cm



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #17 (Wicked WooHoo Sex Mod)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
108 x 90 inches
274.3 x 228.6 cm



Pieter Schoolwerth
Shifted Sims #17 (Influencer Career)
2020
Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas
96 x 131 inches
243.8 x 332.7 cm

You're left with the dark thought that De Kooning's Woman would make a pretty good Snapchat filter.



Video Preview: Pieter Schoolwerth on *Shifted Sims*



Petzel

PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims

September 3 – October 31, 2020
456 West 18th Street

The hidden cost of 21st-century convenience is that you are stalked by a muzzy dread, a feeling that everything you do inflicts some distant unseen harm. The extraordinary events of 2020 sharpen focus on the disastrous and racialized consequences of this estrangement. In *Shifted Sims*, his first solo exhibition at Petzel Gallery in New York, Schoolwerth gives form to the condition of being “remote” and retreating into masks—from the N95 to the quarantine selfie. What’s more, he pressures painting to catch up to the surge of online profiles, identities without bodies, that teem at the surface of this “once-removed” existence.

Schoolwerth’s psychoactive tableaux depict CGI avatars let loose in the digital froth: a Baywatch-y beach, a fashion-brand showroom, a furry orgy. He pulls these scenes from screenshots of *The Sims 4*, the strategic life-simulation computer game where anything goes—or does it? Trailing every avatar is an estranged silhouetted double, snapped into existence by the “shift” of *Shifted Sims*. Each composition has been superimposed, askew, over the photograph of a handmade 3D relief sculpture of the image. What appears is a shadow realm of vestigial matter, yanked into view on inkjet-printed canvases and parceled in paint.

It is a taut braid of formal practice and allegory, one that questions painting’s viability in the age of the internet. In the 2019 monograph *Model as Painting*, he delineates how these “forces of abstraction” conceal labor and infrastructure under a late-capitalist mirage of frictionless, disembodied connectivity. This schism plunges down to the scale of the individual, pitting avatar protagonist against human penumbra. Western painting tradition, with its claims to authenticity and representation, is pulled into this Thunderdome of online subject-formation.

The works in *Shifted Sims* question expressionism’s historical claims to transcendent interiority. Schoolwerth renders the Sims’ faces with striking impasto marks that “expressionize the avatar,” humanizing these subjects through visibly manual, painterly gestures. But these subjective punctures of the digital network may be fleeting. Appearing on the canvas next to perfectly raked furrows of paint—Schoolwerth’s proxy for repressed physical infrastructure—expressionism becomes one style among many, attenuating its status as exalted painterly communiqué. You’re left with the dark thought that De Kooning’s *Woman* would make a pretty good Snapchat filter.

Scrambling to address the malaise of social distance, a startup recently launched voice-controlled avatars for video meetings, a real-time Sim who wears pants so you don’t have to. Schoolwerth’s paintings of (often pants-less) avatars counter these riptides of isolation, approximating a shared affective experience of the present moment: the monumental, and the berserk.

—Lucy Hunter

Petzel

Pieter Schoolwerth

Shifted Sims

September 3 – October 31, 2020



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #16 (Ultimate Alexa Mod:
Pyromaniac Trait)

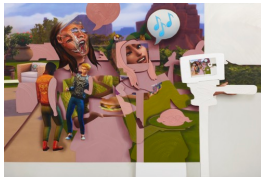
2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

85 x 115 inches

215.9 x 292.1 cm

(PS 20/023)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #20 (YouTuber Career: Impossible
Burger Connoisseur)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

67 x 101 inches

170.2 x 256.5 cm

(PS 20/022)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #15 (Tiny Living)

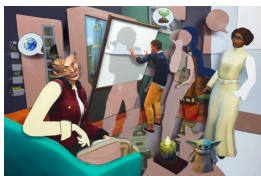
2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

85 x 120 inches

215.9 x 304.8 cm

(PS 20/024)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #9 (Eco Lifestyle)

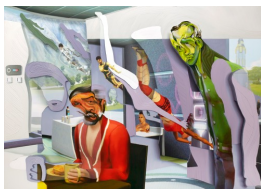
2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

72 x 110.5 inches

182.9 x 280.7 cm

(PS 20/007)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #11 (Into the Future PlantSim
Challenge)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

72 x 101.5 inches

182.9 x 257.8 cm

(PS 20/006)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #7 (Fashionista Career)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

48 x 84 inches

121.9 x 213.4 cm

(PS 20/013)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #12 (Cowplant Mod)

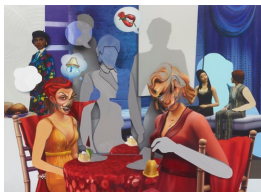
2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

95.5 x 131 inches

242.6 x 332.7 cm

(PS 20/003)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #14 (Luxury Party Stuff)

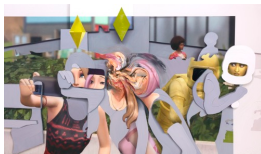
2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

80 x 112 inches

203.2 x 284.5 cm

(PS 20/005)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #1 (Get Together)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

54 x 93 inches

137.2 x 236.2 cm

(PS 20/008)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #17 (Influencer Career)

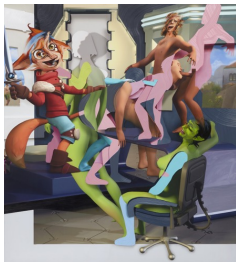
2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

96 x 131 inches

243.8 x 332.7 cm

(PS 20/025)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #17 (Wicked WooHoo Sex Mod)

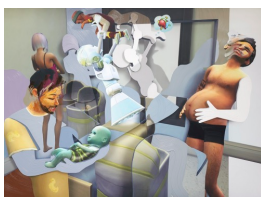
2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

108 x 90 inches

274.3 x 228.6 cm

(PS 20/020)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #10 (Male Pregnancy Mod)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

85 x 115 inches

215.9 x 292.1 cm

(PS 20/010)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #13 (Covid-19 Expansion Pack)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

90 x 120 inches

228.6 x 304.8 cm

(PS 20/004)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #6 (Tropical Romance Island

Community Event)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

70 x 58.5 inches

177.8 x 148.6 cm

(PS 20/009)



PIETER SCHOOLWERTH

Shifted Sims #23 (Basemental Drug Mod)

2020

Oil, acrylic, inkjet on canvas

67 x 100 inches

170.2 x 254 cm

(PS 20/026)