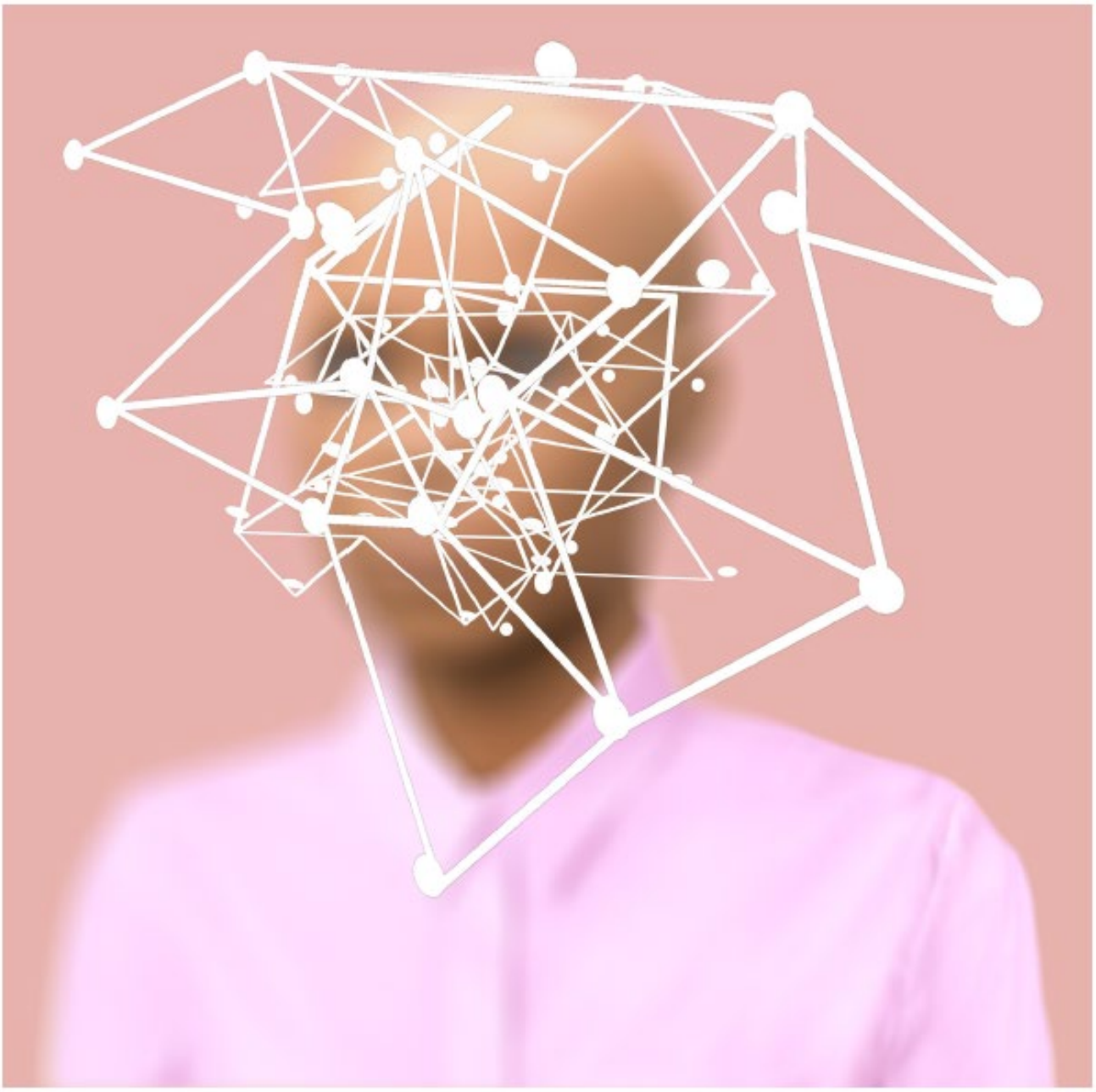


FACE CONTROL

The history of the face starts with masks from the Stone Age and currently ends with the portraits produced by digital mass media and algorithms. The life of the face, on the other hand, begins with a meeting with another person, the face opposite. Alone, we don't show ourselves. Alone, we are not seen. The conflict with the face ultimately emerges –as it always has– in the contrast between internal and external, between self-image and external image, and –more recently– between the real and digital face, from the recognition, storage and recording of the face –with the help of facial recognition software, on behalf of online companies or authoritarian states. The face is an ever-present connection between “you” and “me”, between internal and external, private and public.

The fixation with the face is reinforced by medieval icons, the images of saints and Renaissance portraits. For the first time, questions relating to individuality and identity emerge, of similarity and difference, authenticity and interchangeability. When Swiss pastor Johann Caspar Lavater published his presentation on physiognomy before the Swiss Society of Natural Sciences as a special edition in 1772, he had no idea of the avalanche that his work *Physiognomische Fragmente, zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniß und Menschenliebe* (Essays on Physiognomy Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind) would cause. In the four volumes, he provided detailed instructions on how to identify different characters based on facial features and body shapes. According to him, even the silhouette provides key information on a person's character.

There was resistance to this theory, for example from the German poets and philosophers Herder, Schiller and Lichtenberg, but even more agreement, including from dangerous sources. Lavater could not have known that doctors like Franz Joseph Gall from Germany, biologists like Charles Darwin, criminologist Alphonse Bertillon, physiologist Guillaume Duchenne, English natural scientist and author Francis Galton (and many more) would develop a burning interest in this type of insight into human nature. Cesare Lombroso's typologisation of criminals based on external physical characteristics was later used by the Nazis as a template for their race biology theories.

Physiognomy refers to attempts to use the physiological external features of the body, particularly the face, to draw conclusions about the mental properties of a person –in particular character traits and temperament. It had been circulating as secret knowledge since antiquity and became popular in the Age of Enlightenment. Giambattista della Porta was convinced that the whole world is a network of secret analogies: shapes from the plant kingdom, animal kingdom and the human body with similar traits indicate related features. So a person with a face reminiscent of a sheep therefore has the temperament of a sheep. At the end of the 19th century, it was used as a pseudo-scientific basis for racism and eugenics. And today, it is being brought to the fore again through the use of artificial intelligence.

Although life can ultimately not be depicted, and remains extraordinarily resistant to many standards and clichés, the issue still continues to come to the fore –particularly in relation to the face. Over the past few years, this has been seen in a volume, in an abundance, an offensive never before seen in the existence of the human race. The "FACE CONTROL" exhibition addresses this situation and follows two lines. Firstly, the increasing external control over the face, the perpetual attempts to gain political or economic control over each individual and the largest possible number of people by measuring, comparing and cataloguing faces. With the new digital tools and using AI in the billion range, through tracking and tracing, as well as assessing people, for example in an electronically guided job interview.

And secondly the internal control over the face. As people, we want to have the greatest possible control over how we appear in photographs or videos, driven by the publications in social media. We are willing to do almost anything to radically change our face to fit the ideal, to optimise it for publication online. Digital filter technologies, Photoshop and plastic surgery go hand-in-hand here in the modern age. Even though we may ultimately still look the same, just like everyone else, even if we push the artificial interventions to the limit so we no longer know for certain which person is real and which person was created artificially with AI.

If the internal and external can no longer be separated, if singular and plural, private, public and political merge together, danger areas are created. Permanent exposure, permanently being recognised, constant awareness, constantly being ready, is exhausting. The world becomes a battle ground. It is the age of turning away, hiding, concealing and transforming. The age of retreating by necessity. The face, the one unmistakable face, is in danger. The Tina Hage demonstrators wrapped up in hoodies, the clown faces by Roni Horn, smudged until they are unrecognisable, the people playfully concealed with masks by James Bantone and the Alma Haser portraits, which appear to carry their insides on their own face, visualise different states of admission and deflection. Filters that make the real and digital image invisible for recognition programs, for searching powers.

Tomb statue of Luty, Royal Personal Physician. Sakkara, Egypt.
Rijksmuseum van Oudheden Leiden.
Photograph: Rob Koopman

Simone C. Niquille / Technoflesh
Face Value, 2013
Duration: 1'39"

Alphonse Bertillon
Anthropologie métrique. Conseils pratiques aux missionnaires scientifiques sur la manière de mesurer, de photographier et de décrire des sujets vivants et des pièces anatomiques (Metric Anthropology. Practical advice for scientific missionaries on how to measure, photograph, and describe living subjects and anatomical parts), 1909
Facsimile. 2021

Giambattista della Porta
De humana physiognomonia (Human physiognomy), 1586
Facsimile. 2021

Guillaume-Benjamin Duchenne
Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine ou Analyse électro-physiologique de l'expression des passions (Mechanism of human physiognomy or electrophysiological analysis of the expression of passions), 1862
Facsimile. 2021

Cesare Lombroso
L'uomo delinquente: studiato in rapporto alla antropologia alla medicina legale ed alle discipline carcerarie (The offender: a study from anthropology, forensic medicine and penitentiary disciplines), 1876
Fratelli Bocca Editori, Turin. 1889

Francis Galton
Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development, 1907
Dent & Sons LTD, London. 1928

Leopold Szondi
Szondi-test. Experimentelle triebdiagnostik (Szondi test. Experimental diagnosis), 1947
Verlag Hans Huber, Berna. 1947

Johann Caspar Lavater
Von der Physiognomik (Physiognomy), 1772
Insel-Verlag, Frankfurt and Leipzig. 1991

Carl Huter
Illustriertes handbuch der praktischen menschenkenntnis (Illustrated manual of the practical knowledge of human nature), 1928
Carl Huter Verlag, Althofnass, close to Breslavia. 1928

Paul Ekman; Wallace V. Friesen
Unmasking the Face: A Guide to Recognizing Emotions from Facial Expressions, 2003
Malor Books, California. 2003

Mug Shots. Police Department, City of Fort Wayne, Indiana (USA)
Gelatine and silver print
Botland Collection

Thomas Ruff
Other Portraits, 1994-1995
C-Prints
Toluca Editions
Private Collection. Barcelona

Ruff created the group of works with the help of the Minolta Montage Unit, an image generation machine used by some Regional Offices of Criminal Investigation in the 1970s to create photofits. Two or more portraits were merged into one image, which Ruff photographed and used as a template for a screen print. The ghostly portraits are reminiscent of the composite images of Francis Galton, who attempted to use the composite photography technique developed by him at the end of the 19th century to create portraits, not of individuals, but of types.

Richard Hamilton
Fashion Plate, 1969/70
Colour-offset lithography and serigraphy (Ed. 5/70)
From the Collection of Ashley Heath

Fashion Plate is a complex collage made from a photograph of Sophia Loren from a fashion magazine cut into individual pieces, which were placed one above the other in the screen printing process and retouched with cosmetics by hand. The print offers a carefully produced mixture of the surface emotions and expressions of the model with the obsessive focus of the magazines on colour and style innovation. The collage is an outstanding example of Hamilton's fascination with the immediate coexistence of languages, media and shapes in contrast.

Lynn Hershman Leeson
Roberta's Construction Chart #2, 1975
C-Print
Collection Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland

American artist Lynn Hershman Leeson created a fictitious figure named Roberta Breitmore between 1974 and 1978, who she played herself. On the days when she was due to perform, she wore a blond wig, different make-up and different clothing.

Roberta had her own bank account, her own library card, a rented apartment. She had her own friends and lovers. When she was sick, she went to the doctor. Her creator carefully documented Roberta's journey through the world, and this record is the only thing that remains of her today.

Kodak «Shirley» Cards
Cut out photography.1960, 1969, 1971, 1975
First edition, first printing (1960); Third edition, second printing (1969); Fourth edition, second printing (1971); Fifth edition, second printing (1975).
From the Collection of Hermann Zschiegner

From the 1940s to 1990s, cameras were calibrated with the so-called "Shirley Card" from Kodak, presumably named after the white-skinned model first photographed with it. For decades, technicians focussed on the skin tone of the people depicted with regard to the colours of the picture development in the photo laboratory.

The photo material from Kodak was designed to depict light (skin) tones particularly well. Dark colours were somewhat monotone; the facial expression of dark-skinned actors or models was difficult to show without special lighting technology. The colour film also followed these standards. For this reason, Jean-Luc Godard refused to film with Kodak when shooting in Mozambique in 1977. He referred to the film material as "racist". Only in the mid-1990s did Kodak introduce a multi-ethnic Shirley Card with three women with different skin colours.

Daniele Buetti
Looking for Love – Fendi, 2008/2018
Photography, digital print

Shu Lea Cheang
Tracked, a self-portrait. 3D avatar and facial tracking, 2019
Photography, digital print

Paolo Cirio
Capture, 2020
Duration: 10'

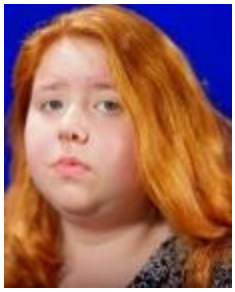
The Capture photo series consists of faces of French police officers. Paolo Cirio collected 1,000 public images of members of the police force from photos, taken during protests in France (150 of these were shown in the exhibition), and processed them with facial recognition software. He then created an online platform with a database of the 4,000 faces of police officers to enable them to be identified by name via crowdsourcing. Cirio also printed the portraits of the police as street art posters and hung them throughout Paris so they were on display in the public realm. Capture thus provided a commentary on the potential uses and misuse of facial recognition and artificial intelligence by questioning the asymmetry of power. The lack of data protection regulations for this technology was ultimately turned against the same authorities who are pushing for its use.

Simone C. Niquille / Technoflesh
Elephant Juice, 2020
Duration: 8'45"

The Late Estate Broomberg & Chanarin
The Revolutionary. From the series ‘The Spirit is a bone’, 2013
C-Prints
Courtesy of The Late Estate Broomberg & Chanarin and Goodman Gallery

The portraits in ‘Spirit is a Bone’ were produced, not by a camera, but a machine: a facial recognition system recently developed by software engineers in Moscow for public security and border control surveillance. "The aim is to take shots of people passing through places like border crossings, railway stations, sports halls, even cinemas," the artists told while still working on the project. "It is eerie and sinister: it captures the shape of a face in a split second, from multiple angles, using various lenses. It then constructs a 3D model of the head that can be closely analysed and stored for future reference." The process has been newly introduced as a method of surveillance in cities around the world. The implications for increased state surveillance are obvious, not just at border controls, but as a means of monitoring public protests or gatherings.

Eli Cortiñas
The Excitement of Ownership, 2019
Two-channel video for monitors, metal frames and vinyls.
Duration: 6’39” and 4’41”



Eva 0'Leary
Spitting Image, 2017
3 Channel Video. Duration: 3' 30"

Hannah
Olivia
Korell
Archival Pigment Print
Vontobel Art Collection, Switzerland

In this series and in the video, Eva O'Leary gives young women the opportunity to curate themselves, to showcase themselves in the studio. Here, we see mirror portraits, photographic images of young women who arrange and set themselves up in front of a mirror in the way that they like to see themselves and would like to be seen. O'Leary then photographs them through the mirror which is transparent from the other side. So, as observers, we are in the mirror, so to speak, watching as a self-image is gradually created and revealed to the public. O'Leary writes: "My own experiences are at the centre of my practice, and I source many of my images through vernacular photography of women's daily lives and rituals, which are collected in Instagram hashtags, Facebook albums, and homemade beauty tutorials. (…) Everywhere around me I see surfaces—skin, billboards, cake icing, photographic prints—that project fantasies. My work aims to address the psychological space in which men and, in particular, women must balance the ever-present reality of imagery that is insistently, but seductively, unreal."



John Yuyi & Fabiola Larios
yuyiGAN, 2021
Duration: 17"

yuyiGAN I
yuyiGAN II
yuyiGAN III
Photography, digital print

Fabiola Larios and John Yuyi explore here machine learning through the history of self-portraits and contemporary selfies, creating works that reflect on surveillance through the Internet and censorship in social media. In this case, they use self-portraits of John Yuyi for the machine learning process. As Fabiola Larios explains: “Yuyi's extensive artistic production of self-portrait photography is processed through a generative neural network (GAN) and results in digital reflections of the artist. The mass consumption of Yuyi's selfies & portraits are re-interpreted through the AI model that creates John Yuyi's portraits/selfies (yuyiGAN), further expanding on the meaning of the online digital self.”

John Yuyi
How to Photoshop Kiko, 2020
Art, direction and temporary tattoos by John Yuyi.
Starring Kiko Mizuhara
Duration: 3'18"

In *How to Photoshop Kiko* John Yuyi creates a temporary tattoo on Kiko Mizuhara. She describes her project like this: "My initial concept is that people always want to look perfect, so we have Photoshop and apps on the phone to make people look better in the picture than real life, and also Photoshop is the app I use the most. Those are the 2 inspirations. I've always wanted to do a project inspired by the concept of photoshopping a real human in real life using a temporary tattoo. And Kiko Mizuhara is the perfect fit for the concept, a lot of people see her as an icon. She's like girls' dream icon of styles and looks.

I'm trying to make it have some humour in it, even a bit of social sarcasm. She reached out to me to make a video with her, and then I immediately thought she's the one, I can finally execute this concept! And the background sound, I'm trying to create it as a person who's photoshopping Kiko in a quiet room like a normal working space for people who are retouching photos. Just simply the sound of all types of actions would be used on Photoshop or laptop. The steps are also the real order of how I'd do it when I do Photoshop."

Adam Ferriss
FFHQ Faces, 2020
Duration: 15"

"All the faces in the piece are created by machine learning. They are faces generated with the infamous ffhq styleGAN model. Same as the faces on the website thispersondoesnotexist.com." This work by Adam Ferriss was published in the New York Times to illustrate the article "The Secret Company That Might End Privacy as We Know It" with the following lead "A little-known start-up helps law enforcement match photos of unknown people to their online images — and "might lead to a dystopian future or something," a backer says." Written by Kashmir Hill, 18 January 2018 and updated online on 2 November 2021.

The topic of the article is: "Clearview AI devised a ground-breaking facial recognition app. You take a picture of a person, upload it and get to see public photos of that person, along with links to where those photos appeared. The system — whose backbone is a database of more than three billion images that Clearview claims to have scraped from Facebook, YouTube, Venmo and millions of other websites — goes far beyond anything ever constructed by the United States government or Silicon Valley giants. Federal and state law enforcement officers said that while they

had only limited knowledge of how Clearview works and who is behind it, they had used its app to help solve shoplifting, identity theft, credit card fraud, murder and child sexual exploitation cases. (…)"


Daniele Buetti
Are You Talking to Me? - C.K., 2018
Are You Talking to Me? - L.P., 2019
Cut out photographs

In the centre of the portrait - nothing. No, an empty space. Daniele Buetti cuts out the face and inserted a mirror. If we stand in front of it, we see our own reflection. "Are you talking to me?", the faceless nature controls us. No, it's not a dialogue. (…) We are looking at ourselves.

If we are honest, we can see for ourselves how eagerly excessive numbers of selfies are taken: We are living in a thoroughly narcissistic age. Or, to use a term from sociologist Andreas Reckwitz, in an age of "singularisation" of all kinds of life decisions. We are driven by the constant need to make our own life into something special. Everywhere, we see excessive self-preoccupation, self-realisation and self-marketing – and we are trapped in it ourselves. Countless times every day, we glance in the mirror – either intentionally or subconsciously – at home, in the lift, in reflective façades or in the glasses worn by the person opposite us. (…)

Are we all self-optimisers and narcissists? What characterises these people? Buetti's faceless portraits raise a host of questions: They invite the observer to think about sociological aspects, as well as topics relating to aesthetics and art history. (…)"

(Claudia Jolles, in: Kunstbulletin 4/2018)

Willem Popelier
Do It Yourselfie Guide: The Ultimate Selfie Guide to Capture the Best Version of Yourself, 2014
Book. Bis Publishers



Alma Haser
Patient #1
Patient #3
Patient #11

Inkjet Print, paperwork, acrylic box, 2016
Vontobel Art Collection, Switzerland

James Bantone
A Demon Hairstyle Guide, 2020
Fine Art Prints
Vontobel Art Collection, Switzerland

Roni Horn
Clownmirror (6), 2001
C-Print
Private Collection. Palma de Mallorca

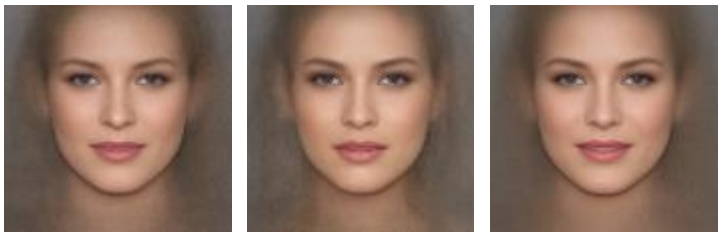
Tina Hage
From the 'Gestalt' series (*#007*, *#026*, *#004*, *#025*, *#003*, *#002*), 2012
Photographic print
Courtesy Thomas Rehbein Gallery and Tina Hage



Diane Arbus
Puerto Rican woman with a beauty mark, New York, 1965
A very young baby, New York, 1968
Woman with pearl necklace and earrings, New York, 1967

Gelatine and silver print, printed later
Mapfre Foundation Collections

J.H. Engström
Portraits. Excerpts from ‘The Frame’, 2021
Duration: 2'40



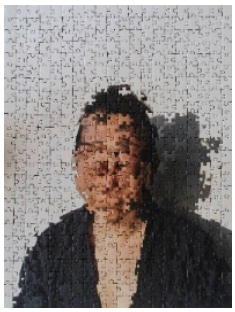
The Average Faces of Fashion (Vogue), 2018
Photography, digital print

An illuminating study has taken a look back at Vogue magazines from across the globe over the past 25 years in order to ascertain the average facial features of its cover models. Content marketing company NeoMam collaborated with data and technology specialist Giuseppe Sollazzo, who was able to extract the facial features of numerous Vogue cover models using a technique called ‘Delaunay Triangulation’.

The study, which was commissioned by MyVoucherCodes, has unveiled the average face of a model to grace the cover of the magazine over the past 25 years, in addition to the average facial features of Vogue cover models in the US, Russia, France, Japan, Brazil, the UK and Italy. When looking at all eight of the images, it is apparent that the majority of the individuals to grace the covers have been white, despite the magazine’s recent efforts to promote diversity and progression.

(Excerpts from a text by Sabrina Barr, in The Independent online, Friday 10 August 2018)

Maria Mavropoulou
The Average of Everything, from the series ‘Image Eaters’, 2020
Photography, digital print



Tommy Kha
Assemblies I to III (or Me Crying in Three Takes), 2020
GIF

Trevor Paglen
ImageNet Roulette, 2020
Screen, Camera, Computer elements and Aluminium frame
Courtesy the artist and Pace Gallery

ImageNet Roulette is an interactive artwork that classifies people's digitally-captured portraits according to one of the most widely-used datasets used for training and evaluating computer vision systems. Called ImageNet, the dataset is used to teach artificial intelligence systems how to classify images and was developed at Princeton and Stanford Universities in 2009. When a member of the public's image is captured by a camera and simultaneously projected on the gallery video monitor, the AI model categorises them according to the dataset.

The project is a provocation, acting as a window into some of the racist, misogynistic, cruel, non-scientific, controversial, and simply absurd categorisations embedded within ImageNet and other training sets that AI models are built upon.