

Pseudographs. Digigraphs. An-iconology. Unframedness. Hyperrealism. Deepfakes.

Hyperrealistic replicas of the human face owe their documentary value to the belief that they result from mechanical reproduction. The idea that a picture is automatically produced through a process of imprint taking is often enough to convince the viewer of its truthfulness and reliability, thus contributing to giving images an aura of authenticity and to creating the myth of pure objectivity. But what happens when the link between hyperrealism, mechanicalness, and truthfulness is disentangled? In 2017, French artist Raphaël Fabre successfully applied for an ID card using a computer-generated picture where the real face was, in fact, an artificial, synthetic mask. Starting from this case study, the essay tackles the issue of the increasing overlapping of actual reality and digital (un)reality, particularly focusing on the concerns raised by the confusion between faces and masks caused by the rapid spread of so-called deepfakes in a world that speeds from documentality towards what I propose to call *mockumentality*.

Pietro Conte, Ph.D.
Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage
Ca' Foscari University of Venice
Malcanton Marcorà, Dorsoduro 3484/D
30123 Venice
Italy
pietro.conte@unive.it