

## **Decapitations: the portrait, the anti-portrait ... and what comes after?**

---

**Michael Newman**

More portraits and self-portraits are being produced today than ever before. This is, of course, largely due to the digitalization of images, the global internet, and social media.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, artists are increasingly questioning the validity of the representational portrait based on visual resemblance, exploring other ways of producing portraits, and attempting to resist or at least stall the smooth running of the use of corporate and surveillance profiling – effectively a form of automatic portrait-making based on big data. However, the history of what we will call the ‘anti-portrait’ can be traced at least as far back as the second and third decade of the twentieth-century, to Dada protests against authority and to the Surrealist’s interest in automatism and the unconscious. The anti-portrait then re-emerges in the 1960s at a time of the circulation and commercialization of the celebrity icon, and manifests itself both in portraiture based on the direct registration of the body, and in portraits made purely of language. By the 1970s strategies of the anti-portrait were being used to challenge the dominant male, white and colonial gazes. The early twenty-first century has seen another wave of the anti-portrait, in the context of new forms of image and information dissemination, as well as emerging technologies of monitoring and tracking for the purposes of wresting financial value from every daily activity; transformations in the understanding and reconfiguration of life in relation to genetics; and the blurring of the boundaries between the human and animals, machines and other kinds of intelligence.

These changes have coincided with a series of crises of sovereignty. Because the validity of the portrait has historically been linked with that of sovereignty – from monarchy at the time when the portrait was a vehicle for the representation of the privileged and their power, to the democratization of the portrait through photography following the popular redistribution of sovereignty and the emergence of new forms of control through the monitoring of the body – experiments with forms of portraiture and anti-portraiture become ways of exploring the meaning and potential of these reconfigurations and, indeed, decapitations. The emergence of new approaches and strategies in relation to the portrait also provides the pretext for a retrospective rethinking of the history of the modern portrait.

The portrait as it emerges in the fifteenth-century, and the icon that precedes it, are supported by distinct ontologies. The icon connects through identification and participation, and holds in its gaze the worshippers who have a liturgical relation with it. In relation to the portrait, the viewer looks at the subject, his or her viewpoint constructed as a vanishing point; and if it is a self-portrait, the painting becomes a mirror of Narcissus. The worshipper might kiss or touch the icon in order that the grace that emanates from it might be communicated; with a portrait this would be considered the extreme behaviour of a lover, if not transgressive. The icon is conceived according to an ontology of analogy and participation organized in a vertical hierarchy, whereas the portrait exists in a neutral field of representation in which everything shares the same being, albeit in different modes.<sup>2</sup> Rather than grades of being, the hierarchy implicit in portraiture will come from either the exemplarity of the life depicted, or from social status and class. Eventually photography will offer portraits for all.

From the renaissance or early modern period, the portrait is understood to be a re-presentation of the subject: at once a second presentation which implies an intensification of the first, and at the same time an indication of a withdrawal from presentation.<sup>3</sup> That withdrawal comes to be associated with the interiority of the subject, an idea that derives from Christian notions of grace and salvation. This is perfectly exemplified by the Flemish Petrus Christus's painting *Portrait of a Carthusian* (1441) in which the monk in a silent order is shown in three-quarters profile, behind him a red box representing his cell – an interiority within an interior. The cells of a Carthusian monastery generally gave on to a little walled garden, in this case represented by the fly that has landed on the windowsill in front of the monk, with the frame of the window itself forming a *trompe l'oeil* frame for the painting. Instead of, as in the more typical perspective painting, looking at the world through the window equated with the painting, here we are looking inwards. The modern portrait emerges at a time when an expanding mercantile economy, with its interest in the value and visual experience of materiality, coincides with conflict between Catholic and Protestant, which places an emphasis on religious experience and the relation between outer ritual and inner resolve.<sup>4</sup> In the Protestant mercantile context, the architectural metaphor of the religious cell is no longer needed, having been replaced by the interiority of the subject itself as the supposed locus of sovereign decision.

It is during this time that nation states become consolidated as a political form distinct from feudal lordships and the imperium. With this development, portraiture of the monarch begins to adapt and evolve from the late medieval conception of 'the king's two bodies', the mortal

body which dies and the corporate body that continues and is passed on, in some cases via an effigy.<sup>5</sup> A fundamental shift in this Christological concept of sovereignty is exemplified by the frontispiece by Abraham Bosse to Thomas Hobbes' book *Leviathan* (1651). The monarch is depicted as unifying the people into a body politic and protecting them: the corporate body of the monarch mimics if not replaces that of the church, and he derives his legitimacy from their sacrifice of their individual sovereignty for the sake of his protection, rather than directly from God. The people are represented simultaneously as constitutive of his body, and as a multitude of individuals looking at him.<sup>6</sup> The idea of sovereignty as embodied comes to be carried over into the portrait in general: the portrait of the subject becomes an image of the embodiment of individual sovereignty, an objectification which comes to be understood as figuring the autonomy and will of the subject.<sup>7</sup> But just as in the earlier idea of sovereignty the king has two bodies, so the subject is a 'doublet', at once transcendental and empirical, subject and object.<sup>8</sup> The modern portrait is the attempt to represent the sovereignty of the individual subject, which becomes a private sovereignty over the self. Since the subject is itself split into both subject and object, it exists in excess of the objectifying operation of visual representation. Representation then becomes the surface of a depth that withdraws or looks out through it, a mask that hides something. With a crisis in sovereignty comes a crisis in the portrait.

The decisive modern change in the idea of sovereignty occurred with the French Revolution. If the nation, including its people, is identified with the king's body, what happens when he is decapitated? What becomes of the body once the head is removed? Does the removal of the head relocate sovereignty not only in the people, but also in the headless body? Could we consider 'headlessness' to be a general condition of modernity, as Georges Bataille suggests with the figure of the *Acéphale*?<sup>9</sup> How would such a headless bodily sovereignty differ from a sovereignty of the head? What is the relation between the portrait produced by cutting at the neck, and the production of a head as a mere object?<sup>10</sup> The historian Daniel Arasse characterized the guillotine as a 'portrait machine' analogous with the process of photography as described by Roland Barthes: the blade of the guillotine may be compared with the shutter of a camera – in the old, large format cameras which were used to make portraits the shutter which was raised and lowered was called a 'guillotine' – at the moment when the shutter catches the subject posed before the camera's aperture.<sup>11</sup> Both these instruments introduced an automatism into the production of portraits. Moreover, it was said that the portraits made by the guillotine were the only true ones, since the subject could no longer dissemble – in death interiority and exteriority collapse into each other.<sup>12</sup> But this was at the cost of reducing human heads to, as Hegel put it,

nothing more than cabbages.<sup>13</sup> According to her memoir Madame Tussaud searched the corpses of the guillotined to find heads from which to make casts, and eventually waxworks to bring the dead back into phantasmagoric life.

There is a moment when the interiority supposedly withdrawn from, but also revealed in the surface of the portrait becomes inaccessible in a way that introduces an irreducible opacity. This happens precisely at the same time as phrenology is popularised: by claiming to read the inner nature of an individual through the shape of their head, phrenology suggests that understanding a person can no longer be taken for granted, but requires the application of a 'scientific' technique. Through this procedure, the interiority that is pursued escapes by becoming merely another exteriority, ultimately comprising the nerves and synapses of the brain. Interiority becomes opaque coincides with an interest in images of the insane, such as those painted by Théodore Géricault between 1821-23 for a doctor friend, and which depict the inner life of the subjects as inaccessible. A little earlier Géricault had painted the heads of a man and a woman in bed, all the more shocking because it takes a moment to see that these heads have been decapitated, and that any inner life is entirely the viewer's projection.<sup>14</sup> What has occurred in the wake of the French Revolution and the guillotine, and in the context of changing conceptions of the relation between subjectivity and reason, is the splitting apart of the portrait and the head, each of which entails a different conception of depth. If the depth of the portrait is the soul or inner life of its sitter, the inside of the head is muscle, blood, bone, nerve and brain, different kinds of matter with an organic life independent of the subject. A chiasmus occurs between portrait and head: the head becomes the depth of the portrait, or the portrait the surface of the head. With Cézanne's portraits, notably *Woman with a Cafetière* (c.1895), the opacity of the subject becomes the norm as attention is drawn to the surface of the painting. A task for the artist now becomes to find a surface that is not a representation, and a depth that is neither 'soul' nor objectified matter, as well as to transform the very relation of surface and depth.

This divorce of exteriority and interiority, coupled with the sense, discussed by John Berger, that changes in subjectivity in modernity mean that the multiple identities of a person can no longer be captured by representation from a single point of view,<sup>15</sup> opens up the portrait to the anti-portrait, where forms that both precede and follow the portrait seem to combine: the shadow and analogue trace, the puppet, the robot. Early 'anti-portraits' might include Francis Picabia's mechanomorphic portraits from 1915, which depict Alfred Stieglitz as a broken

bellows camera, or Gabrielle Buffet as a pair of flapping glass screens. Representing people as machines after the beginning of a mechanized war, these images refer to the notion of attributes in pictures of saints and martyrs, while depicting the subject as thoroughly reified. Another mode of early anti-portraiture is suggested by the desecration of the image that we find in Duchamp's 1919 addition of a moustache and goatee to a reproduction of the *Mona Lisa*, which he inscribed with the letters L.H.O.O.Q. (in colloquial French, 'she has a hot ass'). Around the same time, working in the context of Dada, Raoul Hausmann produced savage portraits using collage made from photographs, magazines, and ephemeral paper material like tickets, including one of himself with the letters 'ABCD' pasted to his mouth.<sup>16</sup> Both Duchamp and Hausmann (who described his own collages as automatist) anticipate the way in which the anti-portrait became associated with dream-like imagery and the unconscious, as well as with linguistic operations which disrupt the traditional use of the proper name to designate the subject of the portrait and tie the image authoritatively to its referent.

A new type of anti-portraiture emerges in the 1960s, a period in which representation is simultaneously challenged and demanded, disrupted and exploited.<sup>17</sup> At this point, the anti-portrait breaks decisively with the iconic character of portraiture hitherto, and initially does so in two directions: towards the symbolic in the language portrait, and towards the indexical in portraits that involve the traces of and direct connections with the body of the subject. These developments align with a rejection of the well-established association of subjectivity with interiority, a paradigm which had emerged in the eighteenth-century and dominated Romantic and expressionist conceptions of the arts. This can be seen in Robert Morris' *Self-Portrait (EEG)* of 1963, which according to Rosalind Krauss was the artist's answer to the problem 'of how to make a pictorial mark that would have no interior, no connection to virtual space, no expressive overtones'.<sup>18</sup> Electrodes attached to Morris's head recorded his brain's activity resulting in an electroencephalogram of wavering vertical lines; the process was sustained for a period long enough to produce a graph equivalent to the length of the artist's body. While attached to the apparatus Morris 'decided that he would "think about" himself';<sup>19</sup> the 'portrait' thus parodies the idea of interior thought, which becomes a purely external record of brain activity. The work's function as self-portrait is achieved not through iconographic representation, but through the index in two senses: Morris's brain-activity-traces and the length of the lines that mark the artist's height. A similar approach can be observed in Brian O'Doherty's *Portrait of Marcel Duchamp* (1966), based on an electrocardiographic trace of

the great conceptual artist's heartbeat captured on paper by the younger, medically trained O'Doherty.

Several years previously, in 1961, answering a request for a work to be included in an exhibition of portraits of the Paris gallery owner Iris Clert, Robert Rauschenberg sent a telegram reading: 'THIS IS A PORTRAIT OF IRIS CLERT IF I SAY SO/ ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG'.<sup>20</sup> The statement takes the form of a 'performative' which, according to the philosopher J.L. Austin, changes a situation rather than, as in the case of the 'constative' statement, describing a state of affairs.<sup>21</sup> Rauschenberg's performative statement is a language act that changes the status of the telegram from a missive into a portrait. This transformation is authorized by the artist, the artist in this case being the authority who makes the performative effective. The work draws attention to the Romantic trope of the God-like status of the artist-creator, showing its structural basis in a self-authorized performative, even as it mocks and undermines it, marking a shift in the role of the artist from maker to one dependent on language, who speaks with an authority that comes from elsewhere, but who claims the capacity to achieve a paradigm-shift. This cannot exclude the possibility that the performative fails and that the telegram is not a portrait – that it is not enough for the artist to say so – and this is also the point. The statement is archived on the basis of its material support, the telegram, which is by now is an obsolete form of communication.

Mel Bochner claimed that Rauschenberg's *Portrait of Iris Clert* was on his mind when he made his *Portrait of Eva Hesse* (1966) – one of a number of word-portraits – comprising a tondo of graph paper, the word 'wrap' in the centre, and synonyms circling around it.<sup>22</sup> Bochner's word-portraits start with a word that the artist considers suitable to represent the subject; Roget's *Thesaurus* acts as a subsequent source for further words. The words become like objects as in concrete poetry, and in this case change the orientation of the viewer to the page. It is also the case that the words are synonyms of the 'origin' word, which loses its originary status by being absorbed into the circle of synonyms. A synonym is a likeness, as is, conventionally, a portrait. So, the relation of resemblance of the picture to the subject is replaced by the resemblance of the meaning of one word to that of another, which also, of course, draws attention to the degrees of difference of meaning between the words. The circle with 'wrap' at its centre – possibly an allusion to an aspect of Hesse's working process – also suggests radiating degrees of likeness, but the sequence seems contingent. This reminds us of the arbitrary nature of the word as signifier, which contrasts with the iconic resemblance of mimetic representation, but also

reminds us that representation itself has a linguistic basis. Portraits need to be read, not least through their dependence on the proper name of the sitter. Moreover, the portrait may be considered as a kind of wrapping of the subject, a concealment as much as a revealing. The refusal to locate identity and the sovereign will of the subject in a representational portrait has political implications: words take up the empty space left by the absence of a pictorial image, as if that were the condition for a discourse between subjects to take place. The word-portrait asks to be discussed rather than gazed upon and admired.

The word-portrait is exploited to different ends in the Japanese artist Kazz Sasaguchi's *Constellation* (2002) series, in which the brand names of cosmetic products are inscribed in gold leaf print on sheets of watercolour. In one such 'portrait', where the hair would usually be we find 'MOD'S HAIR Conditioner' above 'MOD'S HAIR Shampoo', below which is 'MANDOM Lucido-L Hair Wax', and on the forehead 'Hand Made Lavender Water'. Various creams and powders are repeated symmetrically for the two sides of the face, until we reach a mouth composed of 'OMI BROTHERHOOD Menturm Medicated Lipstick', and 'KOSE Luminous Lipstick, OR280'. The face is abstracted through the commercial products used on it, products which represent – in the sense of standing in for – the subject who becomes an adjunct to the abstraction of the commodity, to which the very materiality of language becomes subordinate. Like one of Guillaume Apollinaire's *calligrammes*, in which the features of the face become language, here language becomes material in a spatial arrangement reminiscent of Stéphane Mallarmé's poem *Un Coup de dés*, which itself ends with a constellation. But in Sasaguchi's *Constellation*, the face is transfigured into a configuration of brands, the names of which shine forth in gold.

From Duchamp's feminine alter ego Rose Sélavy, photographed by Man Ray and placed on a bottle of scent in 1921, via Andy Warhol's portraits and David Bowie's constructed personae, to Cindy Sherman's self-transformation into generic female types, certain practices of self-representation repetitively re-cite already existing images to suggest that the self is the result of a continuing performance, rather than an underlying essence.<sup>23</sup> The iconic performative portrait has come to channel the social imaginary of its time, generating new ways of thinking about the identity of the subject as multiple and gender-fluid. But these possibilities exist in a state of ambivalence or contradiction, because the identities that result from this malleability, which appear to be produced at the will of the subject, become the objects of exploitation by the new media industries and later corporations syphoning value from social networks,

exploiting a desire for self-invention that is in fact driven by conditions outside the subject. It could be said that this is precisely what the indexical and linguistic types of anti-portrait try to resist or evade, but without re-instating the idea of the autonomous individual.

### **Shadows and Shifters**

In the photograph *Que me veux tu?* (1928), a pale Claude Cahun doubles her shaved head so that one appears to whisper into the ear of the other, in a way that seems a further doubling of an already ambiguous gender identity. The double often appears in literature - in Dostoyevsky and Poe for example - as an agent of death or destruction. In *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890-91), a portrait of the eponymous character takes on his corruption in its appearance while Gray remains beautiful, until he is found murdered in front of the painting, a disfigured corpse, the painting returned to its former beauty.<sup>24</sup> If the portrait can be conceived as a double of the subject, so might the shadow: it is therefore not surprising to find the shadow placed at the origin of portraiture in Pliny's story of the daughter of the potter Butades. The girl traced the shadow of her departing lover upon a wall, from which her father made a relief portrait following, and thereby obliterating, the outline; once hardened in an oven, the portrait was finally placed in a temple.<sup>25</sup> The portrait relief as a re-presentation of the subject exchanges the shadow for its concrete delineation, transformed into an index of absence and loss, if not death.

The shadow is an event that is dependent upon, and reflective of, the conditions that are simultaneous with it. This directly counters the functional aim of the portrait which was to preserve for future posterity a resemblance beyond the moment of its coming into being, a conception connected both with classical ideas of fame and Christian notions of immortality. It should be noted however that, as Maurice Blanchot points out, it is the portrait that produces the resemblance and not the other way around: 'A portrait — one came to perceive this little by little — does not resemble because it makes itself similar to a face; rather, the resemblance only begins and only exists with the portrait and in it alone...expressing the fact that the face is not there, that it is absent, that it appears only from the absence that is precisely the resemblance....',<sup>26</sup> For Blanchot, the portrait is a version of the cadaver when the person becomes their own resemblance.<sup>27</sup>

As the photograph is to the shadow, so inscription is to what the linguistic theorist Roman Jakobson called the 'shifter,' such as the pronouns 'I' and 'you', 'this' and 'that', which depend

on their context of utterance to be filled with the meaning.<sup>28</sup> In 2007 Mark Wallinger made a ‘column’ in black fibreglass with spreading capital and base on a white plinth (the relation to Capital in the senses of letter, economy and for that matter head are at all play here), rendering in three dimensions the ‘I’ from the Times New Roman font, and titling it *Self (Times New Roman)*.<sup>29</sup> This may be compared with Robert Morris’s *I-Box* (1962), where a hinged wooden ‘I’ in the facade of a plywood cabinet painted in sculpt metal (a probable reference to Jasper Johns) opens like a door to reveal a named photograph of the artist, his head reaching to the top and feet to the bottom of the aperture: the general ‘I’ is here filled by a specific, sexed body with the penis at the mid-point, giving this appropriation of the first person singular pronoun a phallic inflection.<sup>30</sup>

Unlike Morris, Wallinger does not seek to occupy the ‘I’ himself. What he does with *Self (Times New Roman)* involves an operation of rotation into three dimensions of the print letter ‘I’, which connects this work to Renato Bertelli’s *Continuous Profile (Head of Mussolini)* (1933) (included by Wallinger in his curated exhibition *The Russian Linesman*),<sup>31</sup> as well as to many other works in Wallinger’s oeuvre that involve rotation. Times New Roman was the default font on Microsoft Word and came to be associated with business correspondence and legal authority; by using it as a title for the column on a plinth, Wallinger makes the work allude to the authoritarian and erect statue of a Roman emperor, implying a comparison between the image emanating political power and the multitude of selves who can occupy the ‘I’. While this may seem like a contrast, it is also the case that the modern abstract subject has one of its genealogical sources in the Roman concept of citizenship. However the withdrawal of the statue from old Roman times in Wallinger’s *Self (Times New Roman)* – the connection with the *Head of Mussolini* indicates precisely the disruption of the fascist dictator put into a spin – indicates the post-imperial, post-sovereign dimension of the democratic politics that it implies, where political will is no longer located in any kind of body, whether the body of the monarch, or the leader, or for that matter a corporate body. If sovereignty is now unrepresentable by the portrait, is it representable at all? Just as the photograph is an ‘iconization’ of the index, so *Self (Times New Roman)* is an iconization of the shifter, but a paradoxical one, since the iconized shifter is an emptiness, which does not function until the event of its occupation in an enunciation.

Since anyone can say ‘I’, *Self (Times New Roman)* is an icon of everyone. What seems to be the most ego-centric of gestures — as in the vast, apparently megalomaniac installation of *Self*

(*Times New Roman*) on the facade of the Baltic, Gateshead in 2012 — paradoxically produces, in principle at least, the most democratic of works. A (non)-colour of absence, the black of the ‘I’ could well signify that the place of power, instead of being filled by a body, is empty as, according to the political philosopher Claude Lefort, a condition for democracy.<sup>32</sup> Its print-blackness also draws attention to the whiteness of the majority of those in positions of power in the global North and West, and therefore the way that art incorporates and conceals social injustice. However, *Self (Times New Roman)* is different from a written ‘I’ in that the latter always tends towards the symbolic, towards its integration in the language system of differential signifiers, whereas Wallinger’s ‘I’ is freestanding, like an orphaned column which supports nothing. This also makes us wonder why in written English the subject refers to him or herself by a letter that is a vertical stroke or column. The psychoanalytic dimension of the self’s ability to say ‘I’ is extended by Wallinger to other works which also constitute self-portraits. In the painting series *Self-Portrait (Freehand)* (2013), which follows a series using different fonts, the ‘I’ is smearing into a blot; in the *Id Painting* series (2015) Wallinger presses himself to the canvas to create paintings with both hands so that in effect he is painting almost blind, inverting the canvas to continue part of the way through, forming large practically symmetrical shapes reminiscent of the Rorschach test blots. While produced most intimately by a free process of Wallinger’s own body and psyche, the paintings actually become meeting points between the single artist’s production and the multiple viewers’ projections, each of which will be unique. In the exhibition ‘ID’ at Hauser and Wirth, London, in 2016, these paintings were accompanied by an ‘epigraph’ work *Ego* (2016) comprising digital prints of the artist’s hands with index fingers almost touching, like those of Michelangelo’s God and Adam; and *Superego* (2016), a rotating glass mirror atop a steel pole based on the revolving New Scotland Yard sign, an image of universal self-surveillance. Together these works consider different ways in which the self is produced.

The black (non)-colouring of *Self (Times New Roman)* gives the appearance of a shadow: either the subject has become a shadow of itself, or the shadow has become orphaned from the self who casts it, raising itself off the ground, and taking on a freestanding status, like a portrait double.<sup>33</sup> Wallinger’s video *Shadow Walker* (2011) follows the shadow of the sandal-shod artist as he walks along Shaftesbury Avenue in London: the effect of this secular Calvary is that of a contact icon (like the Turin shroud) breaking away from its originating subject and becoming independent, a trace taking on a life of its own, a shifting self-portrait that becomes strangely excessive and independent in relation to its source. Via the shadow-as-index this portrait draws

on its pre-modern iconic status, but is emptied of participatory power and re-contextualized as part of the ocular ceremony of art rather than the sacrament of religion. Through this gesture Wallinger also reveals the return into (anti)-portraiture of the theological ontology of analogy: he is not the first to do so.

Joseph Cornell combined iconographic representation (images taken from art and mass culture) with a method of analogy which he found in French Romantic and Symbolist poetry, applying these methods to the objects, images, clippings and documents that he gathered from his visits to thrift shops, dime stores, libraries and publishers during his wanderings in New York City. That he conceived of this as portraiture is clear from the title of the exhibition held in the Hugo Gallery in New York in 1946, 'Romantic Museum (Portraits of Women): constructions and arrangements', where Cornell displayed both the boxes compiled from his discoveries, and the dossiers where his sources of knowledge and inspiration were ordered and archived. One of the most striking of the boxes, *Untitled (Penny Arcade Portrait of Lauren Bacall)* (1945-46), was exhibited with the dossier dedicated to it (which is unusual since other dossiers mostly relate to series, sources for material, or themes). It could be argued that since it was exhibited, the dossier itself is also a work: dossier and box together form a portrait of the movie star Lauren Bacall, a strange anticipation of the way in which today the internet links together the profile with consumer desire. Cornell's practice indicates the necessity of what might seem extrinsic, the *parergon* or supplementary work of the container and the archive in the constitution of a portrait: from frame to file, vitrine, open-sided box, casket and coffin. The prototype for this is of course Duchamp's *The Green Box* (1934) of notes for *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (Large Glass)* (1915-23), and the collection of his miniaturized works in the salesman's suitcase, the *Boîte-en-valise* (1935-41).<sup>34</sup>

The Bacall box has a symmetrical construction as if to give order to disruptive desire: in the centre, peering through a window, is a three-quarter profile image of Bacall's face taken from a publicity still for the film *To Have and Have Not* (1944); small childhood photographs of the actress and her pet cocker-spaniel are displayed to both sides; to the top is a rectangle with city scenes of skyscrapers, and to the bottom a wooden ball placed in front of a mirror. This mirror would reflect the viewer, who would thereby appear in the box, although separated from Bacall, who is made even more remote by her positioning behind blue glass in three smaller frames placed below the central one. The overall *mise-en-scène*, with its play of nearness and remoteness, and not unlike that of Duchamp's *Large Glass*, is one of solipsistic desire and

frustration, suggesting a publicity machine generating aura and a cult image; this might be seen as a gesture towards the private appropriation of publicity. The analogical dimension is even more emphatic in boxes where there is no visual representation of the subject, such as the earlier *Homage to the Romantic Ballet* (1942), a velvet-lined casket containing seven cubes of artificial ice and an inscription on the inside of the lid describing how the ballerina Marie Taglioni danced for a highwayman ‘upon a panther’s skin spread over the / snow beneath the stars’. The predominant tonality of both boxes is dark blue, as if they contain the infinity of the night sky. The use of objects experienced in terms of analogy allows the combination of nearness and distance, presence and absence, whether or not the human subject of the ‘portrait’ is represented.

A similar analogic approach to portraiture develops in the 1980s, particularly in response to the impact of AIDS.<sup>35</sup> In Felix Gonzalez-Torres’ “*Untitled*” (*Perfect Lovers*) (1987-90), which is usually read as a double portrait of Gonzalez-Torres and his partner Ross Laycock, two just-touching wall-mounted clocks begin synchronized, but eventually cease to keep time together: shared time becomes also a time of separation and an anticipation of death; however the clocks may be perpetually reset, and therefore the work is infinite. If one of the clocks stops or ceases to work, it can be fixed or replaced. The tactic of doubling is repeated in a number of works, including “*Untitled*” (*Double Portrait*) (1991) which consists of stacked sheets of paper printed with two barely-touching gold circles, with visitors able to take away the sheets; and the billboard poster “*Untitled*” (1991), which comprises a large-scale photograph of an unmade double bed with two slept-on pillows. (1991 was the year in which Ross died of an AIDS-related illness). In the individual portrait, “*Untitled*” (*Portrait of Ross in L.A.*) (1991), candies wrapped in multicoloured cellophane are substituted for Ross’s absent body: at the beginning of the installation one-hundred-and-seventy-five pounds of candies corresponding to Ross’ ideal body weight – ‘If I do a portrait of someone, I use their weight’ Gonzalez-Torres has said<sup>36</sup> – are piled in the corner of the gallery, with the exact configuration varying depending on the installation. Visitors may remove sweets from the pile – although they are not specifically invited to do so, leaving the decision up to them – and the installation’s mass will thus diminish as Ross’s ‘body’ became subject to the effects of AIDS-related wasting. The pile may be returned to its starting weight when the confectionary is replenished by the curators or owners (a process that, in effect, will by implication continue endlessly as the work is remade), or else for a particular installation at the discretion of the collector or curator the candies may be completely removed without being replenished. The ‘ideal weight’ may also be interpreted

in other ways, such as the approximate weight of a healthy person, thus generalising the work from the focus on one individual – the same ‘ideal weight’ was used in “*Untitled*” (*Portrait of Dad*) (1991) – while at the same time raising questions about this normative ‘ideal’ in relation to a white, Western, Classical ideal of sculptural representation, with its implicit racism, which Gonzalez-Torres’s anti-portraits contest. All three of these ‘portrait’ works draw on analogy, with the final one taking a form that alludes to the sacrament of the mass, returning behind the representational portrait to ‘pre-portraits’ such as icons and relics. Gonzalez-Torres also goes in the opposite direction, as he puts it in a letter dated December 3, 1994 to a subject whose portrait he had made the previous year, “*Untitled*” (*Portrait of Robert Vifian*), from ‘the denoted’ to ‘the connoted that I consider to be the most intriguing, and exciting’.<sup>37</sup> The connoted will include ‘social / cultural / gender / economic background that can be “read” into the picture.’ What Gonzalez-Torres does is take this aspect and render it precisely as writing to be read, inscribed in print high along the wall under the ceiling as in “*Untitled*” (*Portrait of the Wongs*) (1991), or when outside beneath the roof as in “*Untitled*” (*Portrait of the Stillpasses*) of the same year, where one might find a frieze on a temple or memorial (a way of presenting through words and names that recalls Lothar Baumgarten’s way of honouring tribal peoples by their names without appropriating or fetishizing their culture). However, the word-strips are also reminiscent of ticker tape, setting up a tension between time passing and fixity. Needing to encompass also how his subjects change beyond the moment of authorship of the ‘portrait’, Gonzalez-Torres envisaged that ‘these pieces can and should be altered’. They include dated historical events, personal occasions and associations, playing between the intimate and the public, the particular and the universal. Where the portraits are of couples the associations will be shared, but other viewers might also find something in common. Instead of the approach of ‘reading’ or decoding the portrait-image, it is up to the viewer to visualise the image of the person that might go with the words and dates. Gonzalez-Torres seems to be suggesting that it is not through representation, but only through language that we can get beyond ‘how we look’ to ‘what we are’: in effect, the anti-portrait is the only true portrait.

### **Confrontations and Substitutions**

The use of analogy and resemblance to avoid the visual fetishization involved in objectifying representation has been employed in self-portraiture by women artists, artists of colour and artists critical of colonisation.<sup>38</sup> While representation is ‘univocal’ (as a mode which applies equally to its objects regardless of their intrinsic differences), analogy involves a play of

likeness and difference, so that something unlike that to which it is referred (in representational terms) may be like it in other ways. This was apparent in Deirdre O'Dwyer's exhibition *Stranger* in 2009 at Julius Caesar, Chicago, which involved both a truncated representation, and analogies between different modes of art. The exhibition comprised the following components: some nine abstract paintings arranged slightly higgledy-piggledy along a wall and round a corner, some just-touching (suggesting a personal arrangement that doesn't quite conform to the rules of exhibition), and one of which had some red hairs caught in the paint; a photograph of a woman with long red plaits, cut off by the edge at the eyes; and a pile of self-burned CDs of Willie Nelson's album *Red Headed Stranger* (1975) in jewel cases, the white jacket of each marked with a red X, suggesting the 'nothingness' of the subject as the basis for its identifications and materializations. It is as if the curtailment of the representational photograph at the eyes invites us to read the other objects (including the abstract paintings) analogically in relation to what is not seen or known, so that taken together in its disparities the whole exhibition becomes a composite and analogical self-portrait where the distinction between the real and the fictional breaks down in the combination of distinct materialities with acts of self-negation, impersonation, and disguise in a process of self-revelation and withdrawal.

The title of Cornelia Parker's *Self-Portrait as a Triangle, a Line, a Circle and a Square* (2015) recalls Cézanne's dictum 'Treat nature in terms of the cylinder, the sphere, and the cone, the whole put into perspective so that each side of an object, or of a plane, leads towards a central point.'<sup>39</sup> By painting the geometric shapes in blood, Parker's self-portrait raises the question of whether geometry, rather than drawing out the essence, acts as a masculine defence against the feminine. The title draws us to infer, rightly or wrongly, that the blood comes from the artist's own body. It may be menstrual, the product of the woman's body and associated with taboo; geometry becomes a means of controlling dirty 'matter out of place'.<sup>40</sup> In the contrast between the indexicality, materiality and abjection of the blood, and the 'ideal' status of the geometric shapes, what is avoided altogether is representational resemblance, the classic mode of portraiture.

Classic, representational portraiture is often rendered problematic by the position of the gaze – historically white, male, colonial – that determines it. Important strategies of anti-portraiture have been developed to confront this. In Lorna Simpson's *Twenty Questions (A Sampler)* (1986) the black female subject wearing a white shift turns her back, so that rather than the

visage we are faced with somewhat straightened hair, in circular gelatin silver prints, suggesting mirrors. Underneath are text panels which phrases evoking epithets directed at women: 'IS SHE AS PRETTY AS A PICTURE' 'OR CLEAR AS A CRYSTAL' 'OR PURE AS A LILY' 'OR BLACK AS COAL' 'OR SHARP AS A RAZOR'. These show how marked attitudes concerning black women are affected by assumptions associating whiteness and beauty. These 'mirrors' reflect back on the viewer her or his own attitudes, as well as forcing a positional distinction between black and white viewers, and men and women. This is stark in a picture by Carrie Mae Weems, "*Mirror, Mirror*" (1987), which shows a black woman holding a framed mirror in which appears a white-faced woman in tulle holding a silver star, and underneath is the text 'LOOKING INTO THE MIRROR, THE BLACK WOMAN ASKED, "MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL, WHO'SE THE FAIREST OF THEM ALL?" THE MIRROR SAYS, "SNOW WHITE YOU BLACK BITCH, AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT!!!"'<sup>41</sup> If *Twenty Questions* reflects the gaze of the viewer, "*Mirror, Mirror*" shows how the white gaze is insidiously incorporated into that of the black woman at herself. However, for the subject of the portrait to turn away is also to create a space sheltered from the dominating gaze.

Further than an inversion of depth, it is necessary to question the model of a subjectivity that moves from interiority to exteriority in relation to the political question of the ways in which the subject is positioned by projections from outside, which may be racist or sexist. Rasheed Araeen's slide projection work *Paki Bastard (Portrait of the Artist as a Black Person)* (1977) shows the artist blindfolded and gagged with one of his abstract *Structures* projected over him, as a response to the way in which his access to acceptance in the modernist avant-garde was blocked by then new cultural position of 'multiculturalism' which demanded that artists should express their 'ethnic' identity. Identity may involve solidarity rather than fusion. Donald Rodney's responses to outright racism towards black men in Britain was to paint *Self-Portrait as Clinton McCurbin* (1988), depicting as his self-portrait an image of a man who had died during an attempted arrest by police in a Wolverhampton shopping centre in 1987, identifying himself with a victim of police violence. Of another work comprising images of black men on lightboxes arranged in a T-shape on the wall, titled *Self-Portrait: Black Men Public Enemy* (1990) Donald Rodney said:

I've been working for some time on a series...about the black male image, both in the media and black self-perception. I wanted to make a self-portrait. [Though] I

didn't want to produce a picture with an image of myself in it. It would be far too heroic considering the subject matter. I wanted generic black men, a group of faces that represented in a stereotypical way black man as 'the other', black man as the enemy within the body politic. The pictures came from *The Sunday Times* and a book on blood diseases and the final black and white picture is an identikit picture from *The Evening Standard*.<sup>42</sup>

This approach draws on Duchamp's *Compensation Portrait* of 1942; rather than use his own image to represent himself in the catalogue for the *First Papers of Surrealism* exhibition, Duchamp substituted a photograph of a poverty-stricken white woman taken by Ben Shahn while working for the Farm Security Administration in 1935. All the artists in the show were similarly represented in the catalogue by portraits from the history of modern photography. In this way, as Sarah E. James puts it, 'Duchamp annihilated the link between the subject represented by a portrait and the subject it depicted'.<sup>43</sup> However this move could also be regarded as a cynical appropriation of the impoverished, which is precisely the contrary of Rodney's approach to solidarity.

What of absent subjects for portraiture whose images do not exist and whose stories have barely been told if at all? Canadian-based artist Joscelyn Gardner has created several series of 'portraits' from the position of her white Creole heritage from Barbados in relation to the experience of slave women on Caribbean plantations in the eighteenth-century. Given that images of the particular women concerned do not exist, and their stories are mostly derived from the white plantation managers, and thus under a racist colonial gaze, mimetic representation of the subjects is excluded. These women have to be represented in other ways, that would speak to their experience without substituting for it. Each of the lithographs which comprise her *Creole Portraits III* (2009-11) includes three elements: an illustration of an elaborate contemporary hair style associated with women of African heritage, a representation of the instruments of constraint, oppression and punishment, and beneath that a plant illustration. While botany was at the time a popular object of enlightenment scientific knowledge, the plants in Gardner's lithographs refer to the knowledge not of the scientists but of the women themselves: they are plants used to induce abortions by women who had been made pregnant, usually by rape, in part to increase the slave population. A slave woman who aborted would be severely punished, including by being forced to wear one of the iron collars depicted. If the traditional portrait is an honorific genre based on the representation of the face

associated with the proper name, Gardner's *Creole Portraits* honour the anonymous women, pay tribute to their knowledge, and draw attention to the oppressive conditions of colonial slavery, while at the same time avoiding representing the women through the forms of knowledge implicated in the power structures of the colonial project.<sup>44</sup>

Benjamin Buchloh argues that to make a traditional portrait now would be to belie the collapse of subjective identity and autonomy into objects as commodities in capitalist consumer society.<sup>45</sup> But what if those objects that represent the subject to herself are gifts given by others? Commodity fetishes become displaced into another economy, or even an an-economy of the gift.<sup>46</sup> Roni Horn describes the archive of photographs she has made of objects given to her since 1974 as 'a vicarious self-portrait'. This has appeared in various forms: as the installation of framed photographs *The Selected Gifts* (1974-2015), as a book of these photographs, *Roni Horn: The Selected Gifts (1974-2015)* and as a chap book *My Gifts, A Selection (1960-2015)*. She continues, 'It is a reflection through the warped optic of others that shows a level of accuracy beyond that of any mirror. A portrait that I could not have imagined without the unwitting aid of friends, acquaintances, and knowing strangers.'<sup>47</sup> The objects reflect how the givers see the artist, so together make up a heterogenous portrait by proxy.

### **Resemblance and Replication**

The critique of and departure from mimetic portrayal has also affected the return to more traditional modes of portraiture in ways which incorporate their own displacement and problematisation. Thomas Struth's family portraits, such as *The Smith Family* (1989), by basing the search for resemblances on the idea of family, imply that likenesses, as well as disparities, have a genetic basis. This poses the question of what the relation might be between the portrait photograph as the production of a resemblance, and the biological production of children combining traits of both parents. What is the difference between making a photograph and making a child? Can the child be regarded as a hybrid 'portrait' of the parents? Many would probably find this idea slightly abhorrent, with eugenic implications. Nonetheless, we are on a cusp where through the growth of interest in genetics, processes of replication might come to displace mimetic representation as a model for image production, offering new possibilities for portraiture, and rendering the portrait more like a 'child' of the subject rather than a faithful copy of its visual appearance.

One aspect of portraiture which has contemporary ramifications for the anti-portrait and beyond is the extension of the 'bio-portrait' into the domain of replication. In social practices of identification, in which portraiture and even more emphatically photographic portraiture participate, we see two developments – already taking place in the late nineteenth-century – which depart from mimetic representation: one is identification through a subject's indexical bio-trace (for example, in the use of fingerprints); the other is the use of statistics drawn from large data sets.<sup>48</sup> The anti-portrait, while departing from or even opposing mimetic representation and the ontology of the subject that this implies, draws on these alternative modes of identification without necessarily affirming their normative social uses. For example, just as Struth mines the uncanniness of family resemblance, so Thomas Ruff in his *Other Portraits* (1994-5) returns to the method of the superimposition of facial images pioneered by eugenicist Francis Galton, not to identify racial 'types', but to destabilise the relation of the face to the portrait in such a way that the composite face becomes distinct from the portrait as a representation of a self that is identical with itself.<sup>49</sup>

An alternative model of portraiture-by-replication grows out of the indexical anti-portraits of the 1960s such as Morris's *Self-Portrait (EEG)* and O'Doherty's *Portrait of Marcel Duchamp*. An example of portraiture-by-replication would be Marc Quinn's *Self* (1991), a portrait made from a cast of the artist's frozen blood; every five years the process is repeated in order to register the subject's ageing. The idea of the life-mask is hence linked to a biological substance framed by a technology (the freezer) that refers to the sterile hospital environment and a medicalized relation to death. A later portrait made by Quinn which abandons resemblance altogether, *A Genomic Portrait: Sir John Sulston* (2001), is made from a sample of DNA from the sitter's sperm, using bacteria to replicate the DNA segments.<sup>50</sup>

Both collectively and in specific artworks the process of portraiture may now take place through replication rather than representation. This applies both to biological processes, and to the digital medium. The portrait would be formed not by making a representation based on resemblance to the subject, but by the replication of a piece of the subject. Heather Dewey-Hagborg constructs faces from DNA. While she has made a self-portrait in this way, mostly she uses genetic evidence left in hair, fingernails, chewing gum and cigarette butts to create the portraits of strangers. She sequences genomes and enters the data into a computer, allowing an algorithm to generate the face of the person concerned using 3D printing.<sup>51</sup> The portrait is thus not the copy of a model, but the materialisation of code, in a way that exemplifies a forensic

relation to the image — the image or trace as evidence — rather than one based on mimesis. What is produced in this way is not a copy but a replication.

The idea of replication applies to the way in which images that spread rapidly and widely on the internet are described as being ‘viral’.<sup>52</sup> If replication has become the basis for a certain kind of anti-portrait within a conventional framework of distribution, the ‘selfie’ marks a remediation of representation within a quasi-biological technical form of replication as a mode of distribution. The selfie, even if high-definition, is what Hito Steyerl has dubbed a ‘poor image’; that is, an image that is light enough to travel easily (with the state of technology, images no longer need to be so condensed in order to do that).<sup>53</sup> A particular genre of selfie involves the self-depiction of the subject’s body, often using a mirror so that the act of making the picture is itself reflected. While the networked quality of the selfie is new, this visual format is well-established in the history of portraiture, for example in Johannes Gump’s *Self-Portrait* (1646), which shows the artist from behind both reflected in a mirror and painting his self-portrait on a canvas; the similarly structured comical version in Norman Rockwell’s *Triple Self-Portrait* (1960); or Ilse Bing’s *Self-Portrait in Mirrors* (1932) where Bing photographs herself head-on in a mirror while being reflected in profile in another. More recently Amalia Ulman’s *Excellencies and Perfections* (2014) has played on the mirror trope, exploiting the sequencing made possible by Instagram to create a fictional narrative self-portrait, and distributing the constituting images in such a way so as to obfuscate their identification as artworks.<sup>54</sup> This goes in precisely the opposite direction to the Brechtian approach to self-representation in the 1960s, for example in Dan Graham’s *Performer/Audience/Mirror* (1977), where the artist faces a mirror opposite the audience, so both he and they are reflected; Graham verbally describes what he sees in such a way that the performance becomes a deconstruction of self-portraiture.

By using the technologies of networking, the selfie also transforms the traditional perspectival theatre of representation that is the basis of the portrait. The ‘audience’ becomes the multitude of self-portraitists in a way that is no longer centred theatrically and according to the position of the privileged vanishing point or camera, but rather rapidly distributed in a global network structure. This does not mean that power is democratized or redistributed, as was the aspiration behind the decapitation of the sovereign: rather, it loses its location. If portraiture functioned primarily in the ancient world on coinage, where the profile of the ruler served to legitimate the value of the coin just as the circulation of the coinage showed the reach of his power, it is

the process of circulation that validates and indeed capitalizes the selfie, indicated, for example, by the number of ‘likes’ on Facebook, which generates advertising revenue for the corporation. Portraiture in the West has always been connected with value. From the sixteenth-century onwards it also evokes a relation of intimacy. The selfie thus emerges at the high-point of the financialization of intimate life that has been underway since the eighteenth-century.<sup>55</sup>

### **From Bio-power to Data-power**

The portrait has always faced two directions simultaneously: towards death and towards life. Death is evoked in the portrait’s anticipation of outlasting the subject; life in the portrait comes to be that which is susceptible to bio-power.<sup>56</sup> During the nineteenth-century the portrait is associated with bio-power through physiognomic metrics; through the use of photography to identify criminals and other ‘types’; and through its uses in colonialist ethnography. Life becomes the object of knowledge, surveillance, control and exploitation, with the portrait as one of the places in which this project is secured – and continues to be in the facial recognition technology incorporated into passports. In the twenty-first century bio-power is converted into data-power: from indexical registration (the identity photo, biometric measurement, the fingerprint, and so forth) to data registration (websites visited, purchasing history, financial records, even browsing habits, such as for how long and how far down one reads or looks at something on the screen). Whereas the profile for bio-power in its classical period derives from and is represented in the visual, the data-portrait creates a profile through algorithmic operations that connect the individual subject’s data with big data. The visibility of surveillance is replaced by code. Rather than looking in a mirror, the subject monitors the data produced by their own body and their activities.

While using different methods, data profiling poses a similar question concerning the relation of life to biometric identification. From the 1870s, Alphonse Bertillon, a police officer, developed a method of applying biometrics to the photograph as a way of identifying criminals; Cesare Lombroso sought to produce a taxonomy of criminal types by measuring facial features with the aid of photography; and Francis Galton tried to identify the physiognomy of criminal types by overlaying photographic images.<sup>57</sup> All these procedures normalize life through comparative measurement and do so by relating the individual photographic portrait to the archive.<sup>58</sup> Individuating features become information that can be transmitted quickly. Big data means that the population for comparison and algorithmic analysis has increased enormously.

How might art respond to these modes of identification based on the measurement of life, whether that be via the appearance of the body or the registration of its actions?

At one time, in response to identification based on visibility, the alternative would have been provided by strategies of mimetic disruption: Breton's self-portrait *Automatic Writing* uses collage to present both at the same time, the frozen self-portrait photograph and the dream-life, and Cindy Sherman uses a prophylactic mimesis of genre stereotypes of femininity. In each case the concept of depth (whether that is soul, interiority, or reason) has changed from that of the traditional portrait. For Breton, 'depth' manifests as automatism and the shock of collage; for Sherman in certain images as either an out-of-frame, or the abjection of a forensic *mise-en-scène*. *Ten Photographic Portraits of Christian Boltanski* (1946-64, 1972) consists of ten black and white photographs of their subject with his age and the date the photograph was purportedly taken written underneath. Only the last one seems to have a resemblance to the artist as an adult, but even of that we cannot be sure, and the pictures may not even all be of boys. Nonetheless, they capture a moment in a child or young person's life, and are referred to the archive, specifically the family photo-album. But, most likely found photographs, they refer rather to a collective archive, serving to throw into question the representation of an essential and continuous individual naturalised by the traditional portrait.<sup>59</sup> The individual is replaced by the relation between the singular and the generic, which provides also for their ethical basis: in each case the sitter was a singular, irreplaceable person in front of the camera who left his or her trace and memory on the celluloid. The generic in effect stands for the threat of oblivion. For Sherman and Boltanski, the portrait as representation relates not to an interiority but to the archive.

With the advent of digitalisation, the internet and the accumulation of vast files of data, interiority has been turned inside-out by surveillance and data-mining, in a way that collapses the distinction between private and public. Today the anti-portrait offers a way of dealing with a system of data profiling which in effect turns the subject's every online action, or credit or loyalty card transaction, into unpaid labour. The supermarket at which you shop wants to create a portrait of you. In the 1960s artists such as Robert Morris responded to consumer culture's mass media depictions of the subject by rejecting the iconographic in favour of the indexical; today that approach no longer works, since it is life at the level of the indexical that is being converted into data. Hence the renewed recourse by artists to fiction, metafiction, para-fiction

and quasi-fiction in an attempt to baffle identification and reveal the real functions of virtual entities.

If the traditional self-portrait implies a privileged access of the self to itself, and an ontology of ‘possessive individualism’,<sup>60</sup> this is thrown into question both by the idea of the unconscious – that at the most intimate level of ourselves there is an opacity or blank – and by our consciousness of the variously mediated character of all representations. If the self-portrait is capable of intimating a truth unknown even to the artist, what happens when that which escapes the artist migrates from the interior to the outside? Or, to be more precise, when the interior *becomes* the outside, not only in the sense of mediation through already existing representations, but also through the way in which the self is constructed – and in terms of information ‘portrayed’ – by an Other.

The algorithmic construction of the subject by digital profiling and surveillance – the shadow that falls from the internet onto the subject – is only to a small degree voluntary.<sup>61</sup> Whatever the individual subject compiles is exceeded by the tracking and digital surveillance conducted by external parties, including multiple commercial and government agencies that one might composite into a big Other. Erica Scourti’s artist’s book *The Outage: Her Story* (2014) is a ‘ghostwritten memoir’ as it is described by the publisher Banner Repeater; the ghostwriter J.M Harrington was provided with material on the artist gleaned by internet security experts that she had commissioned to investigate her, drawing on her web presence in social media, URLs from her searches, Amazon recommendations, and what could be obtained of her emails. This bears comparison with Sophie Calle’s *La Filature* (variously translated as *The Detective* or *The Shadow*), for which the artist asked her mother to hire a private detective to follow her around Paris taking surveillance photographs of her activities, which were then published alongside the detective’s report. Calle’s project depends on the referential status of the photograph as a trace of the subject, since, according to Calle, these would ‘prove of her existence’.<sup>62</sup> This contrasts with the collection of digital information in Scourti’s project, another kind of trace that does not have the same existential connection with the subject’s presence as does the photograph, but is rather used by comparison with databases to predict future behaviour and choices. The implication of this is that we are all continually being algorithmically written; Scourti’s conceit using a ghostwriter is a way of simultaneously taking and relinquishing control: on the one hand, she takes control of what otherwise takes place outside the subject; but at the same time, she relinquishes personal control to the ghostwriter who becomes a

conduit for recovering the expropriation of the self by corporations and advertisers, while avoiding the claims to autonomy, authenticity and privileged truth of autobiographical self-appropriation. If individuation is now performed by the Other, in the form of corporate data-harvesting for the purpose of targeted advertising, rather than attempting to withdraw or taking the act on oneself, an alternative way out might be to commission another other, a 'ghost', to create a 'memoir' (in the sense of Breton's *Nadja*), to approach the real of the subject through a mode that is undecidable in relation to fiction and reality, which is appropriate to a world in which the virtual is real while bodies enjoy, suffer and die.

If the portrait has shifted from an artistic genre to a generalized expression of power and monetization, the struggle inherent in the pose of the portrait has also shifted from the confrontation with the portraitist to one with the very technologies (both hardware and software) through which life today is lived: Facebook and Google as our portrait painters at the service of Capital.<sup>63</sup> If this is the case could it be that resistance, rather than being inherent in performance as a taking hold of the processes of revealing and concealing (as it would be in the classic portrait), takes place in non-performance as a maintaining of opacity as non-disclosure. If a crucial moment of the portrait is that of the performative, of the subject self-constituting through the repetition of citation, then non-performance would be a refusal of what is on offer, a withholding of potential that is inherent in the very notion of potential itself.<sup>64</sup> This may perhaps be the most radical moment of the 'anti-portrait'.

### **Diaries and Data-Portraits**

The slide between the index and data is the focus of Susan Morris's work, which may be characterized as an exploration of the possibilities of the anti-portrait in such a situation. In a series of prints, including *Medication* and *Mood Swings* (both 2006), Morris presented charts and diagrams based on conventional year planners where 'data portraits' (drawing on Edward Tufte's visual information design) replace pictorial depictions of the temporal subject. As portraits, we might read these as the unruly subject's self-disciplining into a formal system, while also leaking out of that very system. There is a divergence between structure, which follows from the temporal sequence of the events on the year planner, and the creative decisions concerning colour, which are undetermined in relation to function. The diagram's usual purpose of producing knowledge is reversed, and it becomes opaque in relation to the inferences that we are forced to draw from its unreadable patterns. Abstraction is therefore

given a double valence: on the one hand, it mimes the conversion of experience into data which renders exchangeable the singularity of the indexical (there at that moment the subject was in an unrepeatable situation which can be segmented into standardized units and tagged), while on the other hand it produced an experience which we could name 'aesthetic', marking the work as resistant to decoding. Morris's 'year planner' works are anti-portraits not only because (unlike the conventional portrait) they are non-representational, but also because as abstractions they exist in this double condition of standardisation and opacity. They also become an indication of 'real abstraction' in Capital: the way in which abstraction functions concretely in life, and subject become abstract and exchangeable.<sup>65</sup> The anti-portrait may become a way of both reflecting and creating a glitch in this process.

Long before it became a popular thing to do, Morris wore a device on her wrist, a medical Actiwatch, that recorded her phases of activity and slumber for five years (a reference to the song by David Bowie), recording different periods of activity and ambient light, activity only, and ambient light only.<sup>66</sup> Returned to the lab, the data was used to produce diagrams, or 'actigraphs'. Biological life is converted into data which becomes information to be organized, from which can be read periods of sleep and wakefulness, and the routines and irregularities of bodily existence. Just as the conventional portrait is the representation of a being who exists over time in a spatial image, these anti-portraits organize temporal information in a 'graph'. Made into Jacquard tapestries for a commission by the Wellcome Trust for the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, completed in 2012, and continuing afterwards, the vertical axis of the *Sun Dial: Night Watch* series shows the activity over 365 days of one year, while for the horizontal axis one thread is allocated to each minute of every day, making the height 1440 threads, thus (depending on the thickness of the threads) determining the size of the tapestry. The production process contributes to the materiality into which the data is translated: the width of the loom fixes the width of the tapestry, with the thickness of the yarn threads determining its height. Subjective time converted into data is literally woven on a Jacquard loom, a machine that was the original model for Charles Babbage's 'analytical engine', the predecessor of the computer developed in the 1830s, for which Ada, Countess of Lovelace produced what has been claimed to be the first ever algorithm.<sup>67</sup>

Instead of the relation to a mirror-image, which implies an open-eyed self-consciousness, what may still — just — be called a self-portrait has become a self-monitoring over time through technology that records with equal attention the phases of wakefulness and the fall into sleep.

As Margaret Iversen writes, ‘In effect, the medical device created an aniconic self-portrait restricted to bodily motion in time.’<sup>68</sup> As ‘aniconic’, narrative, whether fictional or not, is also excluded: the only continuity of the self is the temporal sequence of its archiving. The tapestries are based on the conversion of an analogue continuum into segments of data, and thus involve the very process of digitalization in sound recording and digital photography, which involves the ‘sampling’ of light or sound.<sup>69</sup> Included in the final diagram are ‘blanks’ where uploading was either in the process of taking place or had been forgotten, points of elision or non-information which mark the place of the Real of the subject.

While the traditional portrait is a representation made to resemble the sitter who knowingly presents him- or herself, with this kind of anti-portrait emphasis is placed on the less conscious or controllable aspects of registration, as in the shadow and photography. But whereas the performative dimension of the portrait involves an act of enunciation and self-presentation as its basis, this is not the case with Morris’s anti-portraits which derive in a first step from automatic procedures, bio-physical processes and affective intensities. This raises the question of how, in such a situation, subjectification takes place, and how its relationship to self-representation might be understood.

If through the application and generalization of a photographic model and its relation to the shadow, the portrait comes to be perceived as a precipitate, and if this notion of precipitation is extended to our digital lives, how might this reflect back on the diary as an episodic form that disrupts the closure of the self-portrait? Susan Morris’s work-in-progress, provisionally titled *De Umbris Idearum*, comprises twelve volumes of diaries produced using the software *Evernote* corresponding to the months of the year 2011. The volumes are designed to recall the Penguin Freud Library, raising the question of the relation of the diaristic subject to the psychoanalytic one, and of what constitutes the unconscious in the epoch of the digital and the internet. The title, ‘On the Shadows of Ideas’, is taken from *The Rings of Saturn* (1995) by W.G. Sebald.<sup>70</sup> The book displays Sebald’s interest in seventeenth-century texts that precede the modern novel, including the doctor and antiquary Sir Thomas Browne’s *Urn Burial, or, a Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns lately found in Norfolk* (the county where Sebald lived) which Sebald uses as a model for his own approach. The seventeenth-century mode of writing involved compilation, a gathering of quotations from various sources including the Classical authors, but also here-say and gossip, that together formed an archive. The author was a collector and conduit, rather than being conceived as an original creator, as came to be the case

from the eighteenth- to the nineteenth-centuries.<sup>71</sup> Whereas the analogue author reads in the library or goes out to research, the digital author searches on the internet and saves selected items from the results. This is not the private expression of the eighteenth- or nineteenth-century diarist writing in an enclosed room, which presupposes an essential interior being of the subject that remains to be discovered (an idea already challenged in the eighteenth-century by *Tristram Shandy*), but rather a subjectivity formed in exteriority, the 'I' fading into the 'outsides', the shadows.

Traditionally, daily 'impressions' are what the diarist records in the diary.<sup>72</sup> The subject is a relay between impression and inscription, and the requirement that it is done daily reduces the delay, which increases the truth value by minimizing second thoughts and ultimately retrospective closure. The end of the diary is marked by abandonment or death. Implied here is a contradiction between the subject as an autonomous and free source of thoughts and actions, and the subject as an inscribing machine. The truth of automatism is that the subject is already dead when it seems most alive, nervous like the twitching legs of Garvani's electrified frog. Technology has enabled the archiving and self-archiving process to be speeded up from daily or hourly to instantaneously. The subject may be constantly receiving/inscribing, and the reception may be nothing more than a capture or grab. Whereas in the diary the impression is synthesized at least on a micro-level with some degree of second reflection, in the contemporary technological situation in a programme like Evernote there is no synthesis, only parataxis, one thing beside another, ready for algorithmic searching.<sup>73</sup> If these grabs are considered as comparable to photographs, then they 'describe the world seen without a self', as Anne Banfield puts it quoting Virginia Woolf.<sup>74</sup> According to Banfield, photography is paralleled in writing by the '*style indirect libre*', whereby 'the novel contains sentences with deictics which can be said to represent the perspective of no one; not objective, centreless statements, but subjective yet subject-less, they render the appearances of things to no one, akin in this to the light-sensitive plate'.<sup>75</sup>

Perhaps the rendering of 'no one', this subject of subject-less sentences, would involve a precipitation out of parataxis, something emerging like a crystal from the dataflow, a self-portrait revealed out of saves and annotations, a kind of accretion around the empty and deictic 'I'. This is the inverse of Mark Wallinger's reflections on the self-portrait, where the separation of the 'I' as rendered massively iconic as a black column equal to his own height on a pedestal in *Self (Times New Roman)*, contrasts with the *Id* paintings (2015), gestures in black paint on

white canvas keyed to his body height, which in their symmetry resembling vast Rorschach ink blots for psychological testing. Susan Morris's project in the diaries is different: to constitute the 'I' in and out of the index, where the index is extended from the mark by contact to the actual process of registration and precipitation over time. The 'column' of the 'I' is replaced by the 'pilotis' of the notes, to use a term Dennis Hollier applies to the index cards favoured by Michel Leiris and Roland Barthes.<sup>76</sup> Instead of being either full or empty, or both at once, the shifter flickers.

Another model for Morris's project is Moyra Davey's *Index Cards* in the book *Speaker Receiver*, which has entries describing the artist's life, apartment, illness, reading, projects, and travel, and includes many quotations.<sup>77</sup> Davey's work, which includes photographs, films and writing, could constitute an indirect self-portrait comprising analogue traces, photochemical images (some of which are of vinyl records), and dust. In her book *The Problem of Reading* Davey remarks on Virginia Woolf's discovery in a second-hand bookshop, of a wool-merchant's chronicle of a business trip through Wales written a century before, and describes the elicitation of hollyhocks and hay that it offers Woolf as 'an almost Proustian evocation of the serendipitous, sensory retrieval of memory'.<sup>78</sup> Of course the difference with Proust is that the memory is not her own, whether 'her' here is Woolf or Davey; we could say that it is a memory that has become orphaned, unowned, like the subject-less precepts of the *style indirect libre* and the photograph. Rather than pre-existing in a continuum, the subject is produced through these chance encounters, and revealed through links that are as much a surprise to the author/artist as to the reader or viewer. The temporally alternating activity and exhaustion of Davey's work, tinged by accumulation and *memento mori* and unfolding slowly in essays conducive to rumination, contrasts with the pace set by the digital archiving process in Morris's Evernote captures where annotation virtually accompanies registration, although the latter are ultimately and ironically returned to the 'slow' book form and psychoanalytic production of the 'I' through a trail of associations that Morris shares with Davey.

If the 'classic' portrait is an iconic sign of an Imaginary 'me', the anti-portrait as it emerges in the 1960s articulates the Symbolic (word-portraits like those of Bochner), and the Real (indexical portraits like Robert Morris's *Self-Portrait (EEG)* and O'Doherty's *Portrait of Marcel Duchamp*). Susan Morris's anti-portraits, beginning with the problem of the 'I' in relation to its intermittences, blanks and shadows, takes something like a fourth position, not so much a move from icon to symbol and index, or from the imaginary to the symbolic and

real, but rather a process akin to a destructive/productive knotting and unknotting, or weaving and unpicking. The connection of unpicking to Freud's description of mourning in 'Mourning and Melancholia' should not be missed here,<sup>79</sup> and returns us to the scenario of Butades' daughter, and her father's act in creating a portrait from her circumscription of the shadow, concealing the trace through its presence, with the anti-portrait as an undoing through a paratactic shadow-writing of this determination by the Other.

### **Remarking Singularity and the Face**

If the idea of representation is what links the baroque absolute monarchy with modern democracies, it is also the paradigm that underwrites portraiture. Foucault evokes analogy in *The Order of Things* and *This is Not a Pipe* as a murmuring or rumbling of difference and similitude that continues beneath the uniform order of representation, emerging in a dissident or outsider avant-garde.<sup>80</sup> This kind of analogy is no longer the hierarchical analogy of medieval theological ontology, leading upwards through participation and identification to God, but rather a flat analogy, where anything can be like and unlike anything else without hierarchy. This means that each artwork has to establish its own procedure of likeness and difference.

In his essay on Archimboldo, Roland Barthes compares the sixteenth-century Italian painter's composite heads named after the seasons to 'the game known as Chinese portraits: someone leaves the room, the others decide on someone to be identified, and when the questioner returns he must solve the riddle by the patient interplay of metaphors and metonymies: If it were a cheek, what would it be? –A peach. If it were a ruff? –Ears of ripe wheat. If it were an eye? –A cherry. I know: it's Summer.'<sup>81</sup> Through the double articulation of the portrait – as face and agricultural produce – Archimboldo introduces the play of analogy. His *The Lawyer* (1556), composed of meat and fish, is supposed to be the portrait of a specific person, maybe Calvin: the analogy produces monstrosity that transgresses the separation of realms and surprises metamorphosis. The possibility of the anti-portrait relies on an 'as' that exceeds 'seeing as' to the extent that it posits and depends upon an ontology of analogy rather than representation.<sup>82</sup> We could equally say that in an age of visual surveillance (the age before our own as the modality of surveillance has changed and magnified) the anti-portrait is an attempt to maintain the withdrawal that was essential to but could no longer be sustained by the representational portrait.

‘Anti-portrait’ can be read in two ways: against the portrait, and alternative to the portrait. The ‘against’ moment was an anti-representational one that repeats itself in the avant-garde and the neo-avant-garde, culminating in Conceptual art. Each time this move also opened up new avenues for portraiture, from the performative portrait (already present in Duchamp’s *Rrose Sélavy* persona), to the word-portrait and the analogical object-portrait. Digitalization, and the emergence of networked communications, both reframed the analogue as a mode of portraiture through trace, and resulted in new relations to and uses for information, including self-monitoring, personal information, and profiling in relation to big data, which are manifest in the data-portrait. There is no doubt that the questions ‘how are we represented and how do we represent ourselves’ have received new answers. But is it any longer a question of representation at all? Data works not by representation, but through the interplay of sameness and difference. The individual is configured as a result of this process, not as its origin. The task for the contemporary artist is to find ways of stalling or interrupting that process, through obfuscation and ‘obtuse meaning’, indeterminacy, or the foregrounding of singularity insofar as that has not already been algorithmically programmed.<sup>83</sup> The face, according to the philosopher of the ethical, Emmanuel Lévinas, is one of the ways in which the immediate demand of the other, that precedes knowledge and representation, is sensibly felt prior to any intentionality: ‘The face of the Other at each moment destroys and overflows the plastic image it leaves me’; it is a face that speaks.<sup>84</sup> If the portrait makes an ethical claim as face rather than as representation, it need not be literally a face. Donald Rodney’s *My Mother, My Father, My Sister, My Brother* (1997), is a miniscule house-like structure made with the artist’s own skin, discarded from a hip operation resulting from his sickle-cell anaemia (which only affects those of African descent), held together with pins. This has been photographed in the palm of the artist’s hand, with the photo work titled *In the House of my Father*.<sup>85</sup> This could be regarded as a portrait of his family, as a house, made from a piece of himself, the skin unique to him as a singular being but also marking his heritage and his relations with others.

We have moved from confrontation with an order as if there were an outside to it that we or at least the other could occupy, to a provocation of anomalies within it. It is no coincidence that Lisa (voiced by Jennifer Jason Leigh), the one character in the film *Anomalisa* (2015, dir. Charlie Kaufman and Duke Johnson) other than the protagonist (a public relations book author, voiced by David Thewlis), who has a voice that is different from all the others (all of whom are voiced by the same actor, Tom Noonan), has a burn scar on the side of her face. The faces of all the characters in this stop-motion animation film are shown by their seams to be masks

over their dummy workings, which makes our identification with them all the more remarkable. We might recall here the moment in Rainer Maria Rilke's *Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, when the narrator sees an old woman who raises her head from her hands, leaving the face behind,<sup>86</sup> a horrifying image, except that in *Anomalisa*, instead of flesh, there is nothing behind it but mechanism. It is an anomaly in the face itself that marks out Lisa as not just 'individual' – the instance of a type, which she also is, as a shy call centre operator from a small town – but rather as singular. This is not the withdrawal that characterized the traditional portrait, but an obtuse mark, a disruption to the normal surface. If the source or narrative of this mark or scar is withheld, this is perhaps because, in the refusal to mitigate it by a story, it is nothing other than a mark of singularity.<sup>87</sup> If the face and the head are ways of interrupting the representation associated with traditional portraiture, what would serve as the interruption of data flows and the kinds of exploitation and control associated with them? And if that interruption is an 'anti-portrait', what would come after? Would it — could it — manifest itself in a wholly other kind of possibly inhuman or post-human portraiture?

---

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See the discussion of the selfie in Nicholas Mirzoeff, *How to See the World: An Introduction to Images, From Self-Portraits to Selfies, Maps to Movies, and More* (London: Penguin, 2016), pp. 31–69.

<sup>2</sup> Johannes Hoff, *The Analogical Turn: Rethinking Modernity with Nicholas of Cusa* (Cambridge: Erdmans, 2013). See also Eric Alliez, *Capital Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 197–239.

<sup>3</sup> Jean-Luc Nancy, *L'Autre Portrait* (Paris: Galilée, 2014), pp. 59–60.

<sup>4</sup> For Protestantism and portraiture, see Mary G. Winkler, 'Calvin's Portrait: Representation, Image, or Icon', in *Seeing Beyond the World: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition*, ed. by Paul Corby Finney (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 243–63; Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 411; Joanna Woodall, 'Introduction: Facing the Subject', in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, ed. by Joanna Woodall (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pp. 1–25 (p. 10).

<sup>5</sup> Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 423.

<sup>6</sup> For the 'paradox of sovereignty' that 'consists in the fact that the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order', see Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock, 1970), pp. 3–18.

<sup>8</sup> For the subject as a transcendental-empirical doublet, see Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 347.

- 
- <sup>9</sup> See the journal that Georges Bataille edited during 1936-39, with the figure on the cover drawn by André Masson; *Acéphale* (Paris: J.M. Place, 1936).
- <sup>10</sup> See Julia Kristeva, *The Severed Head: Capital Visions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); and Regina Janes, *Losing Our Heads: Beheadings in Literature and Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).
- <sup>11</sup> Daniel Arasse, *The Guillotine and the Terror* (London and New York: Allen Lane / Penguin, 1989), pp. 134–41; for Barthes on the relation of the click of the shutter to death, see Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), p. 15.
- <sup>12</sup> See Frances Larson, *Severed: A History of Heads Lost and Heads Found* (London: Granta, 2014), pp. 111–14.
- <sup>13</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 310, §589; and Rebecca Comay, *Mourning Sickness: Hegel and the French Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011) for the implications of this in terms of pure negativity.
- <sup>14</sup> Théodore Géricault, *Guillotined Heads*, 1818.
- <sup>15</sup> John Berger, ‘The changing view of man in the portrait’, *The Moment of Cubism, and Other Essays* (New York: Pantheon, 1969), pp. 41-47.
- <sup>16</sup> Michel Giroud has used the phrase ‘antiportrait, phonétique et syllabique’ to describe Hausmann’s collage *Gurk* (1919) published in *Der Dada*, No.2, a portrait of a poet in which the face is replaced by clippings of text including ads and nonsense words, in Raoul Hausmann and Michel Giroud, *Je ne suis pas un photographe* (Paris: Chêne, 1975), p. 24.
- <sup>17</sup> For a detailed account of non-mimetic portraiture in 1960s America see Kathleen Merrill Campagnolo, ‘In the Company of Cultural Provocateurs: Radical Portraiture in the 1960s’, in *This Is A Portrait If I Say So: Identity in American Art, 1912 to Today*, ed. by Anne Collins Goodyear, Jonathan Frederick Walz, and Kathleen Merrill Campagnolo (New Haven and London: Bowdoin College Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 61–89.
- <sup>18</sup> Rosalind Krauss, ‘The Mind/Body Problem: Robert Morris in Series’, in *Robert Morris*, ed. by Julia Bryan-Wilson (Cambridge, Mass. and London, UK: MIT Press, 2013), p. 78; thanks to Mark Godfrey for reminding me of this work.
- <sup>19</sup> Krauss, ‘The Mind/Body Problem: Robert Morris in Series’, p. 80; see the illustration on p.79.
- <sup>20</sup> Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, ‘Residual Resemblance: Three Notes on the Ends of Portraiture’, in *Face-Off: The Portrait in Recent Art*, by Melissa E. Feldman (Philadelphia: Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, 1994), p. 56.
- <sup>21</sup> J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 1–11.
- <sup>22</sup> See Mark Godfrey, ‘Language Factory: An Interview with Mel Bochner on Words, Portraits, Roget’s Thesaurus, Colour, Jorge Luis Borges, Humour, Nostalgia and Political Engagement’, *Frieze*, December 2004 <<http://www.frieze.com/article/language-factory>> [accessed 3 April 2016].
- <sup>23</sup> This is congruent with Judith Butler’s account of the performative constitution of identities in Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).
- <sup>24</sup> See also Donna Gustafson, ‘Couples and Doubles: Reflections on the Double Portrait’, in *Striking Resemblance: The Changing Art of Portraiture*, ed. by Donna Gustafson and Susan Sidlauskas (Munich, London and New York: Prestel / Zimmerli Art Museum, 2014).
- <sup>25</sup> Pliny, *Natural History: Books XXXIII-XXXV* (London: Harvard University Press, 1952); for a discussion see Michael Newman, ‘The Marks, Traces, and Gestures of Drawing’, in *The Stage of Drawing: Gesture and Act: Selected from the Tate Collection*, ed. by Avis Newman

---

and Catherine de Zegher (London and New York: Tate Publishing and The Drawing Center, 2003).

<sup>26</sup> Maurice Blanchot, *Friendship*, trans. by Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 21.

<sup>27</sup> Blanchot developed this idea in ‘Two Versions of the Imaginary’, in *The Space of Literature*, trans. by Anne Smock (Lincoln NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), pp. 254–63.

<sup>28</sup> Roman Jakobson, ‘Shifters, Verbal Categories, and the Russian Verb’, in *Selected Writings, Vol. II* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971).

<sup>29</sup> There is an excellent discussion of this work in relation to Alfred Jarry’s *Ubu Roi*, in Rye Dag Holmboe, ‘The Ubu Effect’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University College London, 2016).

<sup>30</sup> Morris had previously also made the ‘dance work’ *Column* (1960), in which a column the height of a person was supposed to topple over with the initial idea that the artist was to make it fall from inside, until a rehearsal caused him an injury, and the sculptural piece *Untitled (Box for Standing)* (1961), into which, as evidence by photographs of the work, he just fits.

<sup>31</sup> At the Southbank Centre, 2009.

<sup>32</sup> Claude Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory* (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell, 1988).

<sup>33</sup> Orphan shadows in metaphysical and surrealist art, and the iconisation of the indexical sign, are discussed in Dennis Hollier, ‘Surrealist Precipitates: Shadows Don’t Cast Shadows’, trans. by Rosalind Krauss, *October*, 69 (1994), 110–32; Hollier is drawing on the discussion of the shifter in modern art in Rosalind Krauss, ‘Notes on the Index’, in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, UK: MIT Press, 1985).

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion of the box-container in relation to the role of the file card in literary self-portraiture, see Dennis Hollier, ‘Notes (On the Index Card)’, *October*, 112 (2005), p. 40.

<sup>35</sup> For a discussion of anti-portraiture in relations to HIV and AIDS, see Fiona Johnstone’s essay in this present volume, ‘Relics, Remains and Other Objects: Non-Mimetic Portraiture in the Age of AIDS’.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Nickas, ‘Felix Gonzalez-Torres: All the Time in the World’, in *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, ed. by Julie Ault (New York and Gottingen: Steidl, 2006), pp. 39–51 (p. 49).

Gonzalez-Torres is referring to another series of works, with ‘Lover Boys’ in the title, where he uses his and Ross’s together for the pile of candies: for example, “Untitled” (Lover Boys) (1991) [candies individually wrapped in silver cellophane, endless supply. Ideal weight: 355 lb.] and “Untitled” (Lover Boys) (1991) [blue-and-white candies individually wrapped in cellophane, endless supply. Ideal weight: 355 lb.].

<sup>37</sup> This and the quotes that follow are from the letter to Mr. Robert Vifian reproduced in *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, ed. by Julie Ault, pp. 170–171.

<sup>38</sup> While I discuss a number of anti-portraits by women artists, an adequate and systematic discussion of the anti-portrait in relation to feminism and the portrait, and feminist self-portraits, would require a separate essay.

<sup>39</sup> Joachim Gasquet, *Cézanne: A Memoir with Conversations, (1897 - 1906)* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), pp. 163–164.

<sup>40</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 44.

<sup>41</sup> For an excellent discussion of the work of Carrie Mae Weems and Lorna Simpson, including “*Mirror, Mirror*” and *Twenty Questions (A Sampler)*, see Kimberly Lamm, ‘Portraits of the Past, Imagined Now: Reading the Work of Carrie Mae Weems and Lorna Simpson’, in Christa Davis Acampora and Angela L. Cotten, *Unmaking Race, Remaking*

---

*Soul: Transformative Aesthetics and the Practice of Freedom* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), pp. 103-140.

<sup>42</sup> *Shocks to the System. Social and political issues in recent British art from the Arts Council Collection* (London: National Touring Exhibitions, South Bank Centre, 1991), p. 66, quoted in Eddie Chambers, 'The Art of Donald Rodney', in *Donald Rodney: Doublethink*, ed. by Richard Hylton, (London: Autograph, 2003), p. 34.

<sup>43</sup> Sarah E. James, 'Thomas Ruff: Portraying Modernity' in *Thomas Ruff*, ed. by Iwona Blazwick, (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2017), p. 184.

<sup>44</sup> For excellent discussions see *Joscelyn Gardner: Breeding and Bleeding*, exh. cat. (Whitby, Ontario: Station Gallery, 2012). I thank Ros Gray for drawing my attention to Joscelyn Gardner's work.

<sup>45</sup> Buchloh, 'Residual Resemblance'.

<sup>46</sup> See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. by W. D. Halls (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990); Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) and *Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996).

<sup>47</sup> Hauser & Wirth online description of the exhibition 'Roni Horn', 27 Apr – 28 Aug 2017, New York. <https://www.hauserwirth.com/exhibitions/3084/roni-horn/view/> [accessed 24 Jan 2018].

<sup>48</sup> Both fingerprinting and the use of statistics in relation to identification are discussed in Allan Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive', *October*, 39 (1986), 3–64.

<sup>49</sup> See *Thomas Ruff: Andere Porträts + 3D* (Cantz: Ostfildern, 1995).

<sup>50</sup> See Frances Stracey, 'Bio-art: the ethics behind the aesthetics,' *Nature Reviews Molecular Cell Biology*, vol. 10, no. 7, 2009, pp. 497 <<https://www.nature.com/articles/nrm2699/figures/1>> [accessed 4 August 2018].

<sup>51</sup> See 'A face built from a single hair: Heather Dewey-Hagborg explores the future of genetic surveillance' <<https://www.infringe.com/heather-dewey-hagborg/>> [accessed 4 August 2018]; and 'Bio-Art: 3D-Printed Faces Reconstructed from Stray DNA' <https://www.livescience.com/50146-art-genetic-data-privacy.html> [accessed 4 August 2018].

<sup>52</sup> For what is probably the first discussion of this distinction in social philosophy, in terms of the application of contagion to mimesis, see Gabriel de Tarde, *The Laws of Imitation* (Gloucester, Mass.: P. Smith, 1962).

<sup>53</sup> Hito Steyerl, 'In Defense of the Poor Image', *E-Flux*, 10 (2009) <<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/>> [accessed 16 December 2017].

<sup>54</sup> See *Performing for the Camera*, ed. by Simon Watney and Fiontán Moran (London: Tate Publishing, 2016), pp. 210–11; Amalia Ulman <<https://www.instagram.com/amaliaulman/?hl=en>> [accessed 7 April 2016]; and Michael Connor, 'First Look: Amalia Ulman - Excellences & Perfections', *Rhizome*, 2014 <<http://webenact.rhizome.org/excellences-and-perfections> and <http://rhizome.org/editorial/2014/oct/20/first-look-amalia-ulmanexcellences-perfections/>> [accessed 7 April 2016].

<sup>55</sup> Initially this occurred primarily through the novel. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 49–51.

<sup>56</sup> 'Bio-power' is used by Michel Foucault to refer to the techniques for the regulation and control of bodies and populations that comprise a new formation of power that exploded in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century, involving a shift from man-as-body to man-as-species, and from government to monitoring and control of behaviour that increasingly becomes self-monitoring. See Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

- 
- <sup>57</sup> These techniques are returning using artificial intelligence to analyse the data; see Yilun Wang and Michael Kosinski, 'Deep Neural Networks Are More Accurate than Humans at Detecting Sexual Orientation from Facial Images', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 114.2 (2018), 246–57.
- <sup>58</sup> See the important discussion of this in Sekula.
- <sup>59</sup> See Sarah Demelo, 'Autobiography and Self-Portraiture in the Works of Christian Boltanski and Sophie Calle' (unpublished unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Essex, 2011) <[https://www.academia.edu/3483769/Autobiography\\_and\\_Self-Portraiture\\_in\\_the\\_works\\_of\\_Christian\\_Boltanski\\_and\\_Sophie\\_Calle\\_PhD\\_University\\_of\\_Essex\\_2011](https://www.academia.edu/3483769/Autobiography_and_Self-Portraiture_in_the_works_of_Christian_Boltanski_and_Sophie_Calle_PhD_University_of_Essex_2011)> [accessed 4 August 2018].
- <sup>60</sup> See C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962). This is applied to the portrait in Sekula, p. 7.
- <sup>61</sup> For the algorithmic construction of the subject, see John Cheney-Lippold, *We Are Data: Algorithms and the Making of Our Digital Selves* (New York: New York University Press, 2017).
- <sup>62</sup> Quoted in Demelo, p. 4.
- <sup>63</sup> For the portrait as pose see Harry Berger, *Harry Berger, Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).
- <sup>64</sup> My application of the idea of 'non-performance' to the anti-portrait has been inspired by a lecture by Fred Moten, 'Blackness and Non-Performance' delivered at MOMA, New York, Sept. 25, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2leiFByIIg> [accessed 24 December 2017]; and by Giorgio Agamben on Herman Melville's story 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' in Giorgio Agamben *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 243-271, 'Bartleby, or On Contingency' (1993).
- <sup>65</sup> For a discussion, see Alberto Toscano, 'The Open Secret of Real Abstraction', *Rethinking Marxism*, 20.2 (2008), 273–87.
- <sup>66</sup> From 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2012, Morris wore a watch that recorded both her activity and the levels of light in her immediate environment, which required a data upload every three weeks; for the following two years she wore a watch that recorded activity only, and required an upload every six months.
- <sup>67</sup> See Sadie Plant, *Zeros and Ones: Digital Women and the New Technoculture* (London: Fourth Estate, 1998).
- <sup>68</sup> Margaret Iversen, 'Marking Time: Susan Morris' Tapestries and Diaries'', in *Sun Dial: Night Watch Tapestry Dossier*, artist's book (London: Wellcome Trust, 2015) <available on [www.susanmorris.com/marking-time](http://www.susanmorris.com/marking-time)>.
- <sup>69</sup> This was anticipated by the spinning disk shutter that Étienne-Jules Marey made for his camera so that it would sample movement over time without blurring the images produced. See Iversen.
- <sup>70</sup> W.G. Sebald, *The Rings of Saturn* (London: Vintage, 2002), p. 272; Sebald attributes it to the title of a book by King Solomon in a museum, which may be imaginary, of Sir Thomas Browne; *De Umbris Idearum* is also the title of a 1584 book by Giordano Bruno, which is discussed in Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).
- <sup>71</sup> See Markus Krajewski, *Paper Machines: About Cards & Catalogs, 1548-1929* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2011), pp. 49–63.
- <sup>72</sup> Michael Levenson, 'Stephen's Diary in Joyce's Portrait--the Shape of Life', *ELH*, 52.4 (1985), 1017–35.

---

<sup>73</sup> It is notable that parataxis is characteristic of the seventeenth-century pre-novelistic writing of Robert Burton (1577-1640), Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) and John Aubrey (1626-1697).

<sup>74</sup> Ann Banfield, 'L'Imparfait de l'objectif: The Imperfect of the Object Glass', *Camera Obscura*, 8.3 (24) (1990), 64–87 (p. 74).

<sup>75</sup> Banfield, p. 77.

<sup>76</sup> Hollier, 'Notes (On the Index Card)', p. 39.

<sup>77</sup> Moyra Davey, *Speaker Receiver* (Basel, Berlin and New York: Kunsthalle Basel and Sternberg Press, 2010), pp. 9–32.

<sup>78</sup> Moyra Davey, *The Problem of Reading* (Los Angeles: Documents Books, 2003), p. 22.

<sup>79</sup> Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', in *On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Volume XIV (1914-1916)*, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth Press & The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1993), XIV (1914-1916), 243–58.

<sup>80</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 64, 76–78, 114, 131–32; Michel Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 30, 34, 37.

<sup>81</sup> Roland Barthes, 'Archimboldo, or Magician and Rhétoriqueur', in *The Responsibility of Forms* (Berkeley and LA: University of California Press, 1991), p. 130.

<sup>82</sup> The phrase 'seeing as' refers to Wittgenstein. The use of 'as' as a way of extending a function from one kind of object to another is based on a landmark exhibition 'As Painting: Division and Displacement' and its catalogue *As Painting: Division and Displacement*, ed. by Philip Armstrong, Laura Lisbon, and Stephen W. Melville (Columbus, Ohio, and Cambridge, Mass.: Wexner Center for the Arts and MIT Press, 2001).

<sup>83</sup> I am thinking here of the 'obtuse meaning' in Roland Barthes, 'The Third Meaning', in *The Responsibility of Forms* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), pp. 41–62; and of the singularity of the ethical relation in Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (The Hague and London: Nijhoff, 1969), pp. 187–219. For the ways in which algorithmic inference involves bio-political control of individuality, see John Cheney-Lippold, 'A New Algorithmic Identity: Soft Biopolitics and the Modulation of Control', *Theory, Culture & Society* (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, and Singapore: SAGE, 2011), Vol. 28(6): pp. 164-181.

<sup>84</sup> Levinas, p. 50–51; 52.

<sup>85</sup> Donald Rodney, *Donald Rodney: Doublethink* (London: Autograph, 2003), p. 9.

<sup>86</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, trans. by Stephen Mitchell (New York: Vintage, 1985), p. 7.

<sup>87</sup> We might see it as the trauma in representation of a singularizing 'Thing' beyond the substitutions of desire (see Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis 1959-1960: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book VII* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 43–70), whether these be representational or analogical: the singular as that which is neither the same nor different.