

# A Photograph for the Next Century

## (2022)

Ogulcan Ekiz\*

In this physically-incomplete-but-conceptually-finished project, I tease the longevity of the copyright term. The work is supposed to be a physical card in the size of a business card, in a transparent wrapper – like the football player cards from my childhood. The golden figure could be scratched to reveal the human figure underneath. I thought of printing 100 copies of this work, and maybe I would do so one day. However, the conceptual message is ready to be shared on this issue.




Much has been said about the copyright term by scholars, lawmakers, and artists. *A Photograph for the Next Century* is not an attempt to address those that have already been said. It is to point out an unintended consequence of copyright terms that I find amusing. There is a photograph somewhere I don't know, possibly in my mother's house, that I haven't seen in ages, that I don't remember what it

\* Dr Ogulcan Ekiz is a Lecturer at the HRC School of Law, Swansea University. Ekiz's research areas primarily concern copyright law, its theory and practice in relation to photography, film, fashion, and visual arts. Ekiz is a collaborator of Art/Law Network, a member of the Pastiche and Copyright Network, a visitor of the Hub of Law and the Humanities, and he works closely with Artists' Union England on copyright-related matters. Email: ogulcan.ekiz@swansea.ac.uk

shows, and that I don't know when I took it. That's the first photograph I have ever taken. As it exists on a shelf, likely among other images, not been looked at in years, it is still bound by copyright law, possibly for another hundred years. Perhaps this says more about *registration* rather than *duration*, but that's to be decided in another discussion.





## GUIDELINE FOR THE OWNER OF THE PHYSICAL COPY

1. The golden figure should not be scratched until 70 years has passed after the death of Oğulcan Ekiz, the artist.
2. The card should be kept in the protective cover until 70 years has passed after the death of Oğulcan Ekiz, the artist.
3. If the copyright duration is longer in the country of residence of the physical owner, the date stated in the first two clauses should be extended accordingly.

A PHOTOGRAPH FOR THE NEXT CENTURY  
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A memory lasts for as long as there is someone who remembers. The underlying image in this work is not the first photograph I have taken. It is a found photograph taken by someone whose identity I don't know, portraying someone equally stranger to me. I don't know if there remains a memory about the person it depicts. Now that it has been two years since I made this work, I do not exactly remember what the person looked like either. This photograph may have ceased its quality of being a means of remembrance. But it remains to be a property. An *orphan work*, to be accurate, but nonetheless integral to the copyright system even if there is no one left that remembers it.