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.

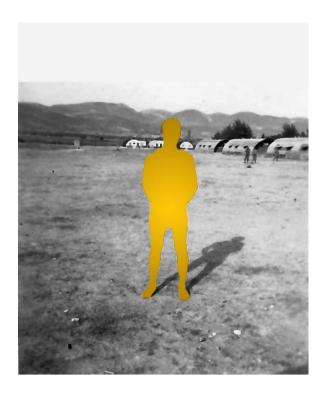


Much has been said about the copyright term by scholars, lawmakers, and artists. A Photograph for the Next Century is not an attempt to address those that have already been said. It is to point out an unintended consequence of copyright terms that I find amusing. There is a photograph somewhere I don't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

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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.
- 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
2022
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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.