

Aesthetics and Photography

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Academy

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SCHOOL**

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UNIVERSITÀ
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About Photography



To what extent is a photograph the product of the lens, shutter and mount?

What are the characteristics of the photographic medium that affect the way an image appears?

How is reality in front of the camera transformed into a photograph?

Can photography change our perception and our way of experiencing the world?

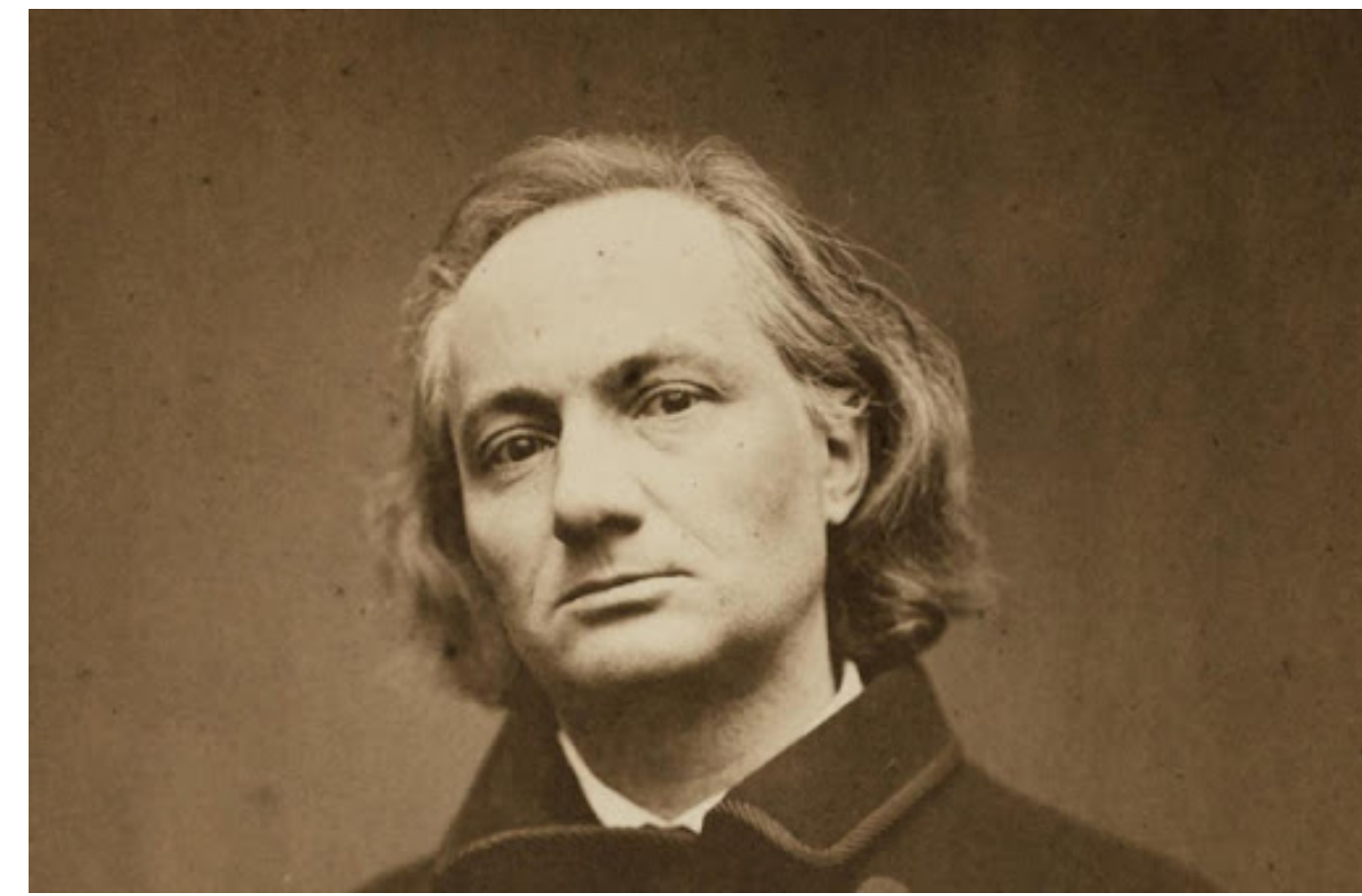
About Aesthetics



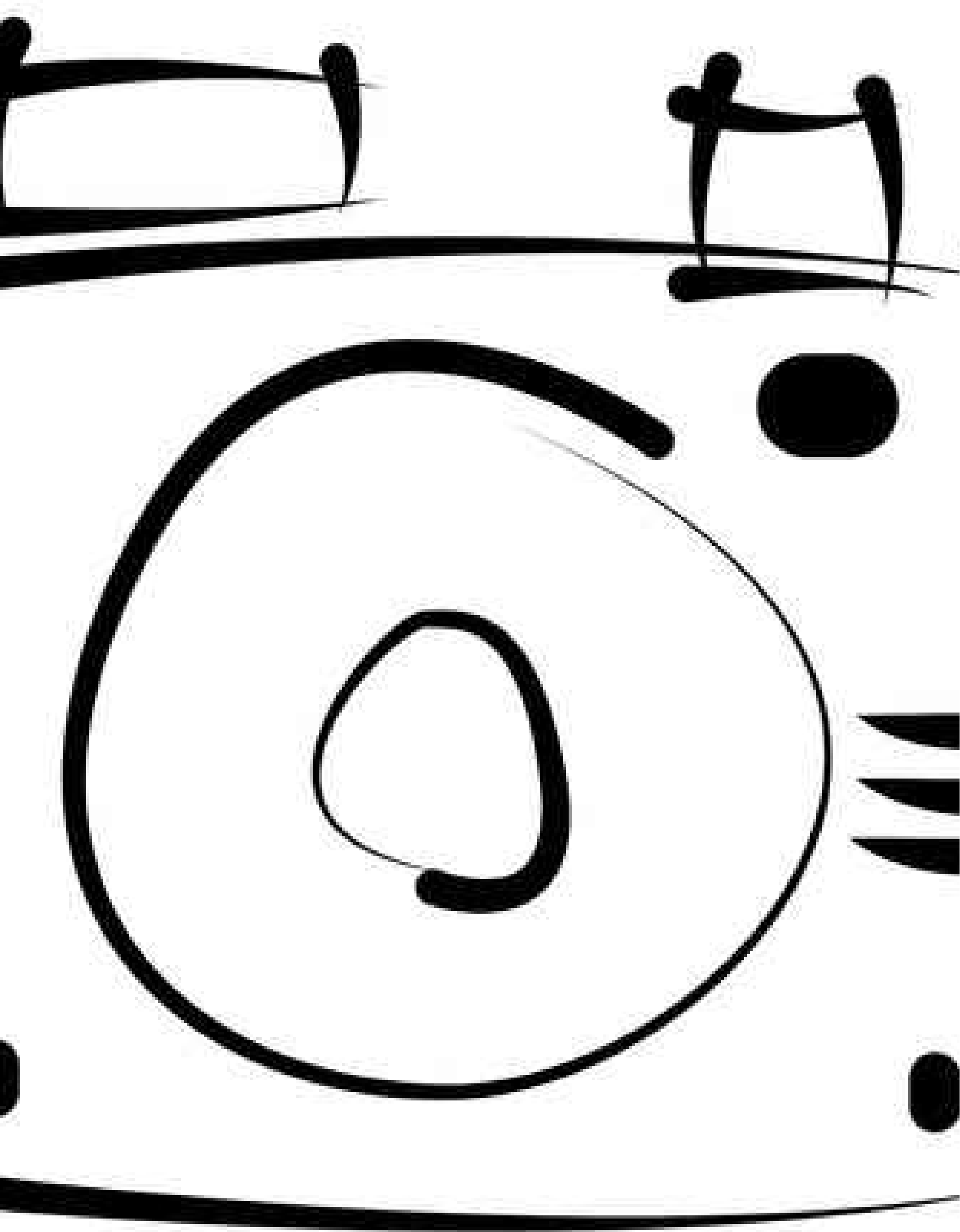
Aesthetics of photography is
not a question regarding the
poetics of artistic production
nor the style

↪ but

the «‘splendor’ that lies in
the distance between the
image and the thing»
(Jorge Molder)



There is no unified «aesthetic of photography», but photography, as Baudelaire demonstrates, is the «modern» way to reflect on the status of the image and, in particular, on its modern and contemporary genesis.

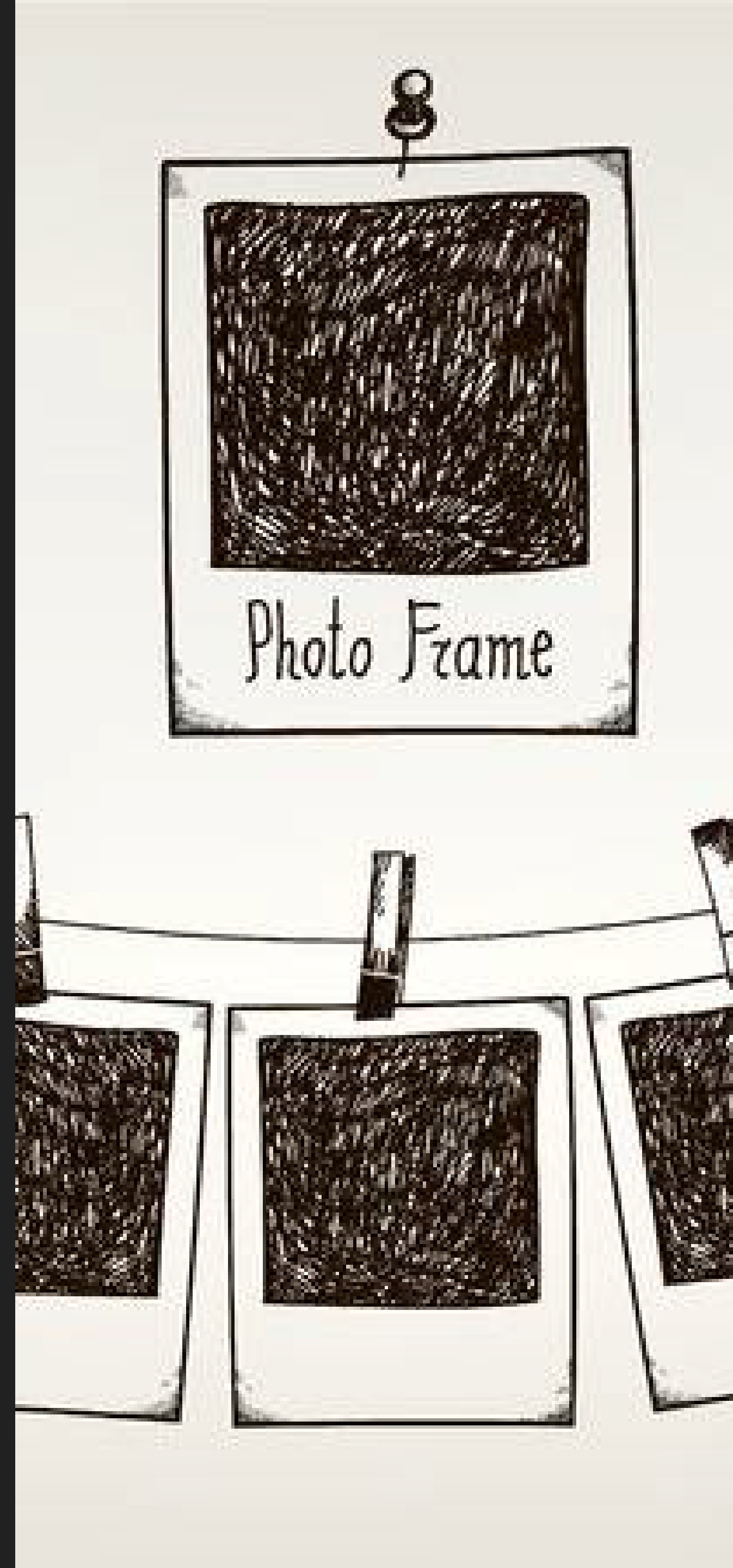


What is a photographic picture?

A mere result of a technique applied to the apparatus?

Is it the evidence found by the camera in the world?

What does take a picture mean?



✓ To extract from the exterior world preexisting and autonomous images

✓ To transform the exterior world into images

The photographic pictures
synthesize our *perception* and
memory of the world



They come from the interplay between
MEDIUM (technical finding/invention)
and **IMAGE** (symbolic meaning)



VIVIAN MAIER,
AUTOPORTAIT
1954

A
photograph is an
«image of
concepts»
(Victor
Flusser)



Photographs are:

- «programmed concepts»
- complexes of symbols which signify abstract concepts
- discourses which have been transcoded into symbolic situations.

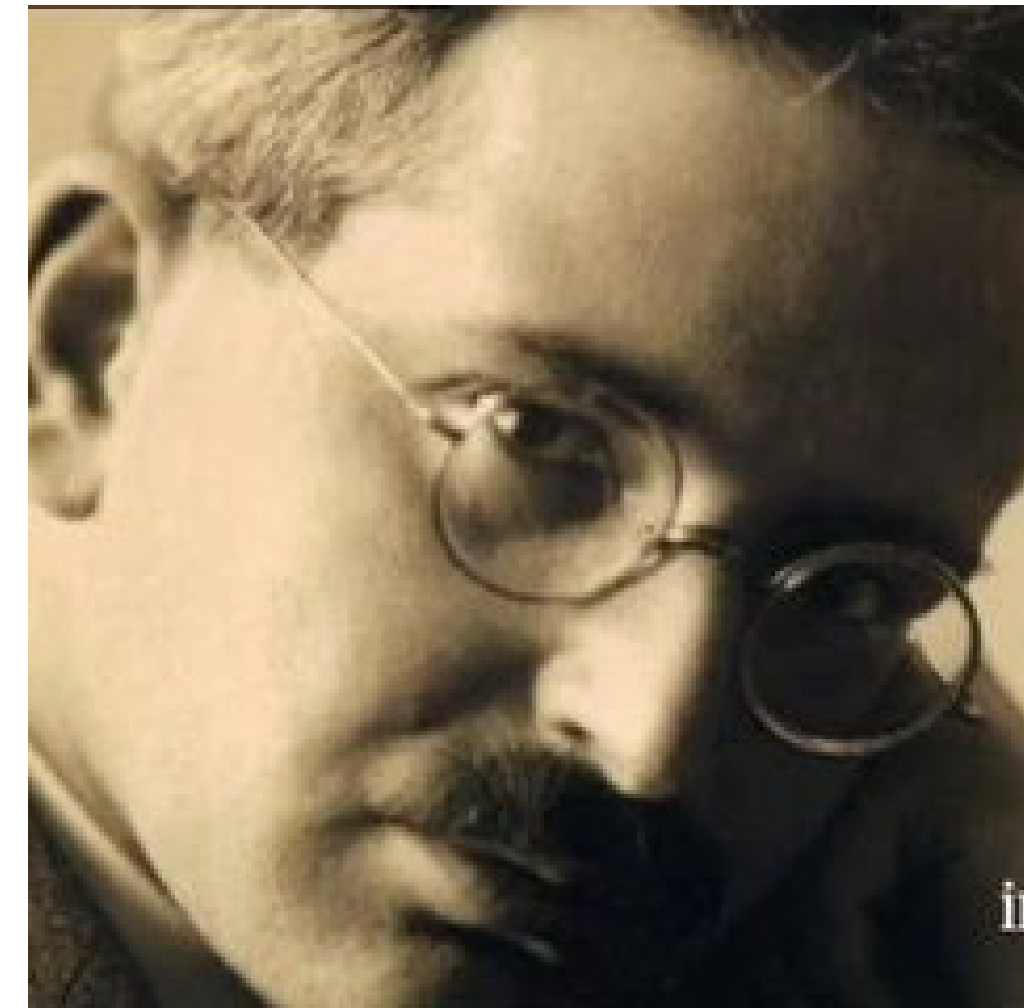
The camera has been programmed to produce photographs, and every photograph is the realization of **one** of the virtualities contained in that program, but...



The photographic picture
shows an

OPTICAL UNCONSCIOUS

a term coined by W. Benjamin in
1931 «to capture the realm of the
unseen that photography introduced
as well as the medium's unsung role
in allowing us to glimpse the
expansive terrain of the human
imaginary».



WALTER
BENJAMIN

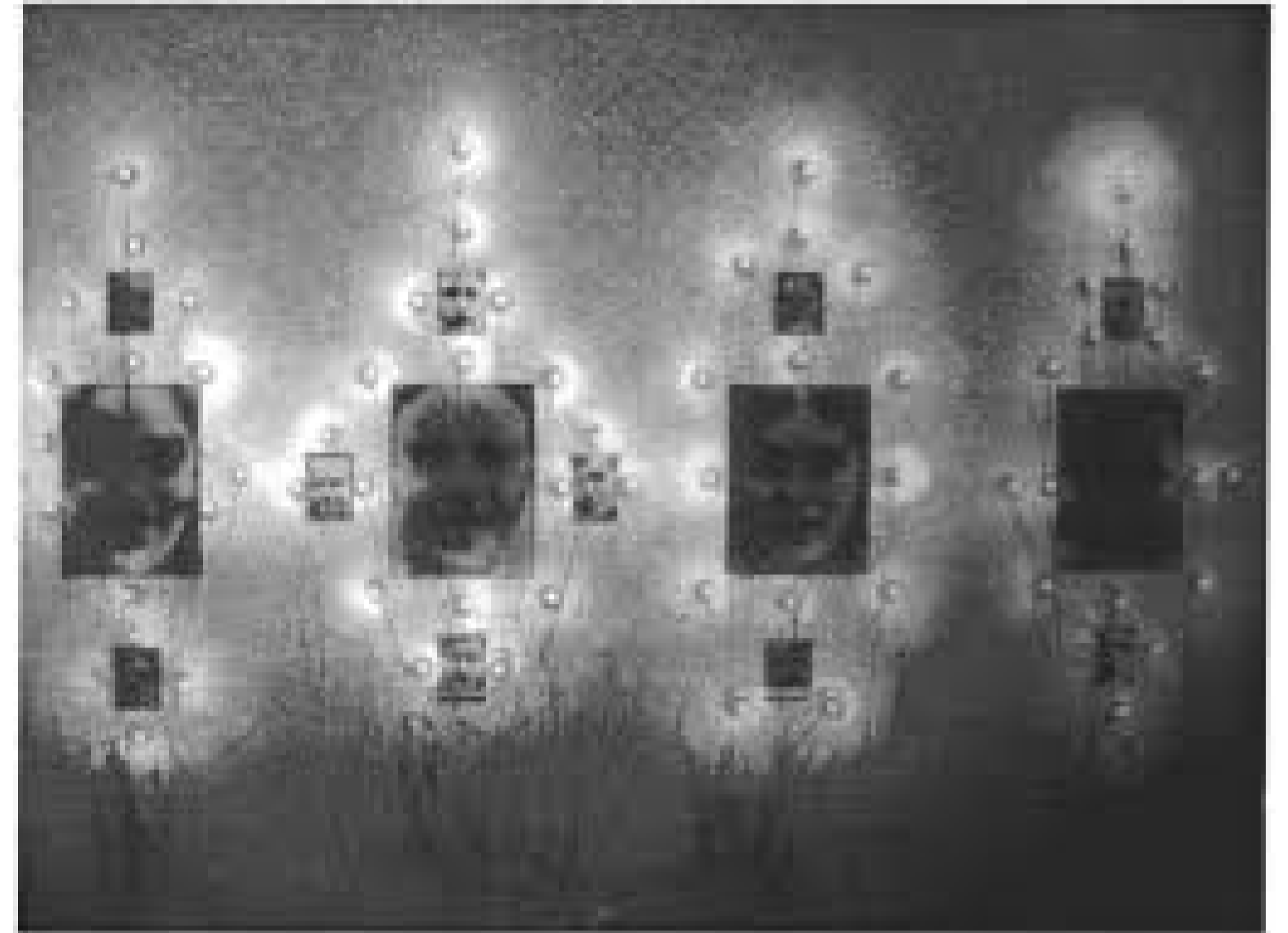
Between picture and
reality, photography
puts into effect the
mystery of an
absence/invisibility
made visible



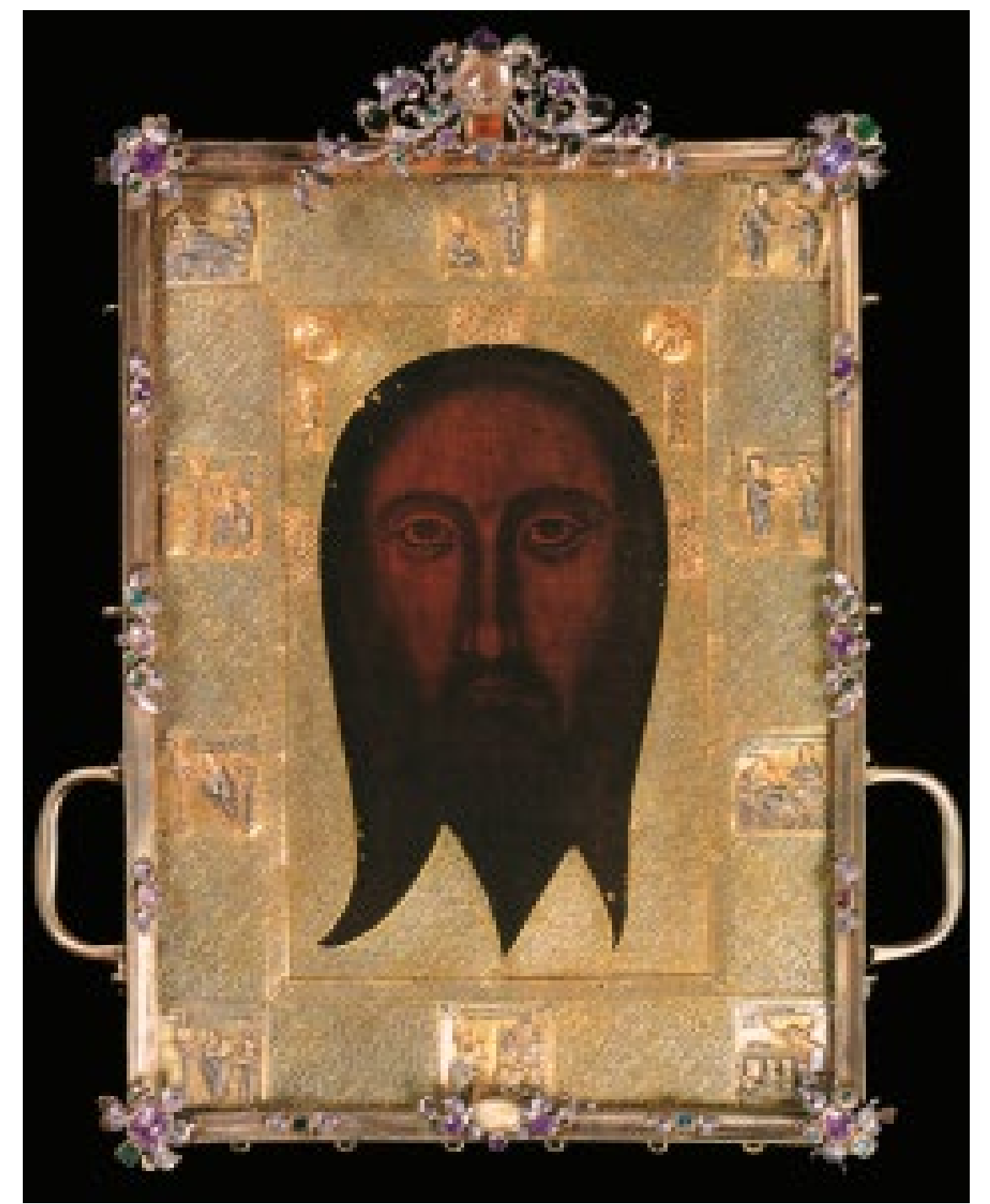
Photography is
a question of

SPECTRALITY

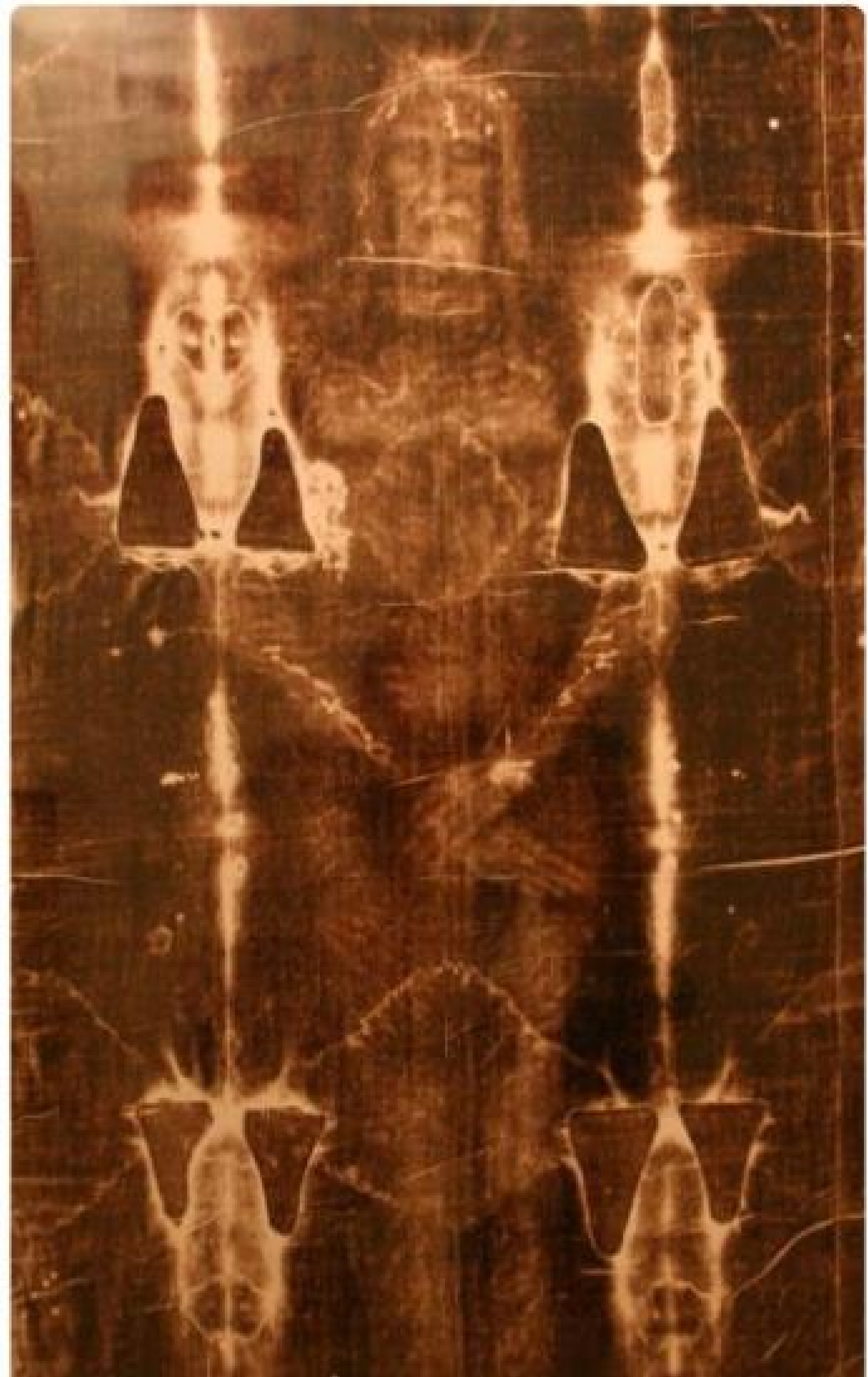
R. Barthes,
*The Camera
Lucida*



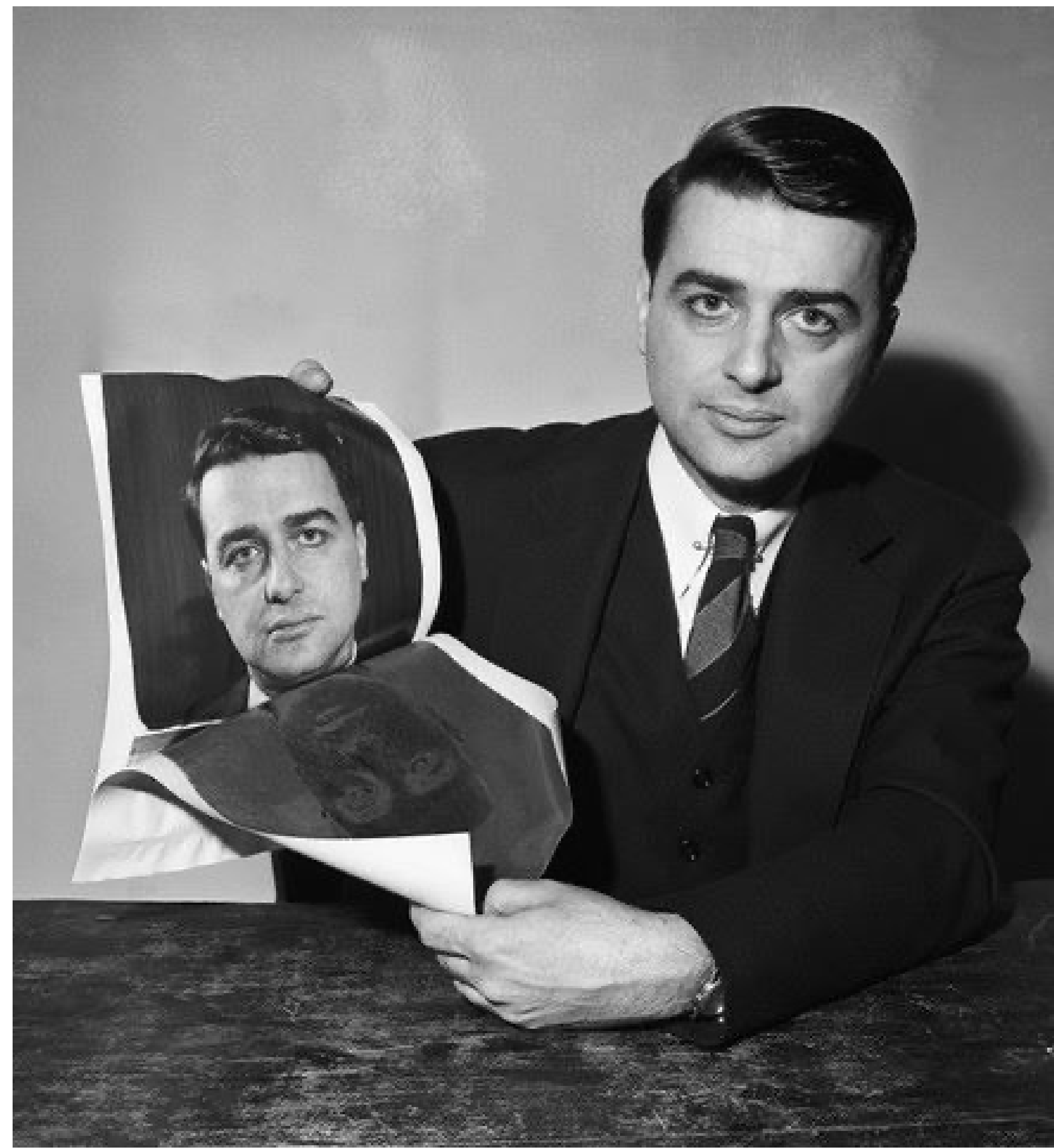
The original model is the **VERA ICON** or the Veil of Veronica or Sudarium



The Shroud of Turin

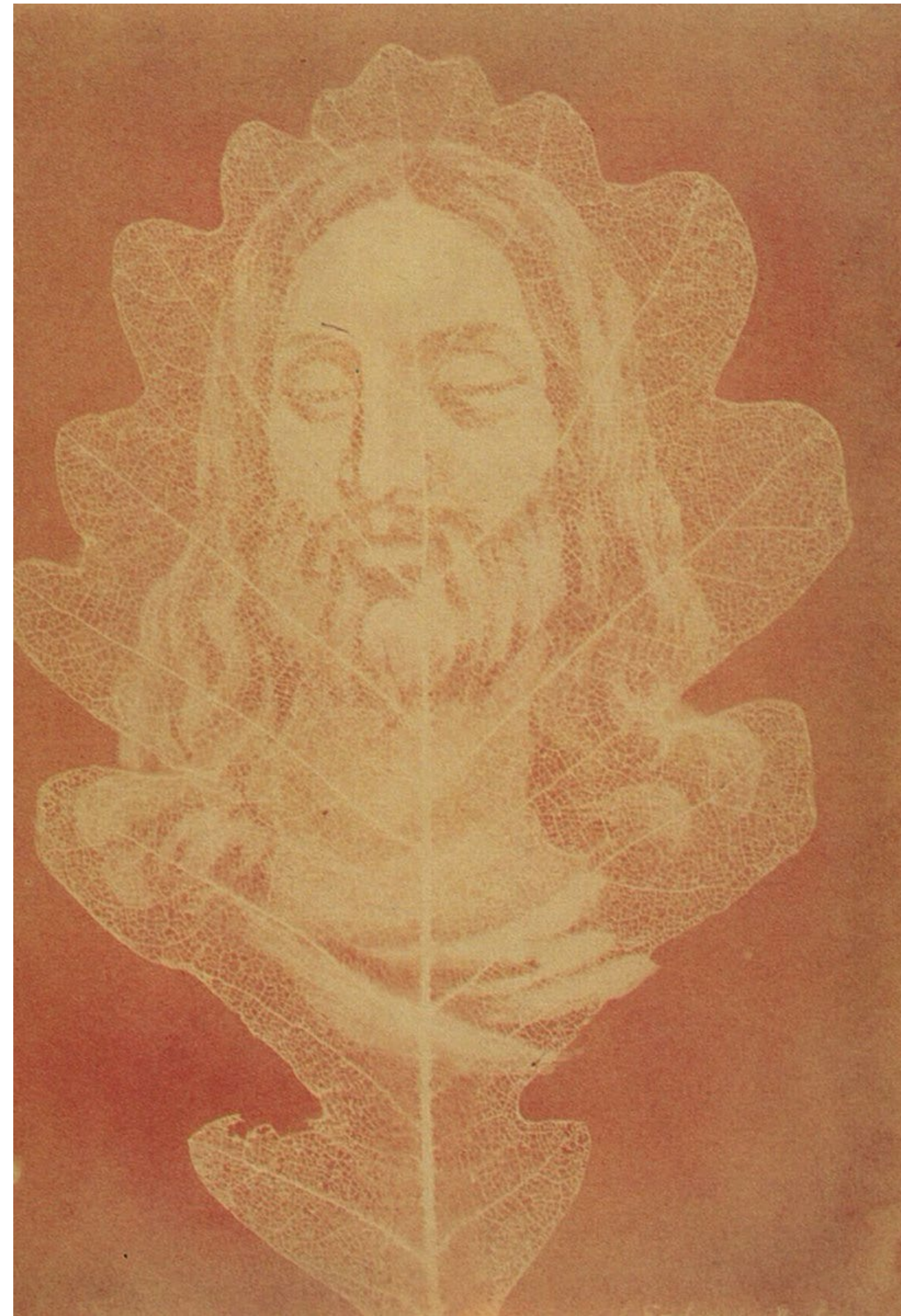


In February 1947 Edwin
Lands presents a
Polaroid Self-Portrait



Johann Carl Enslen

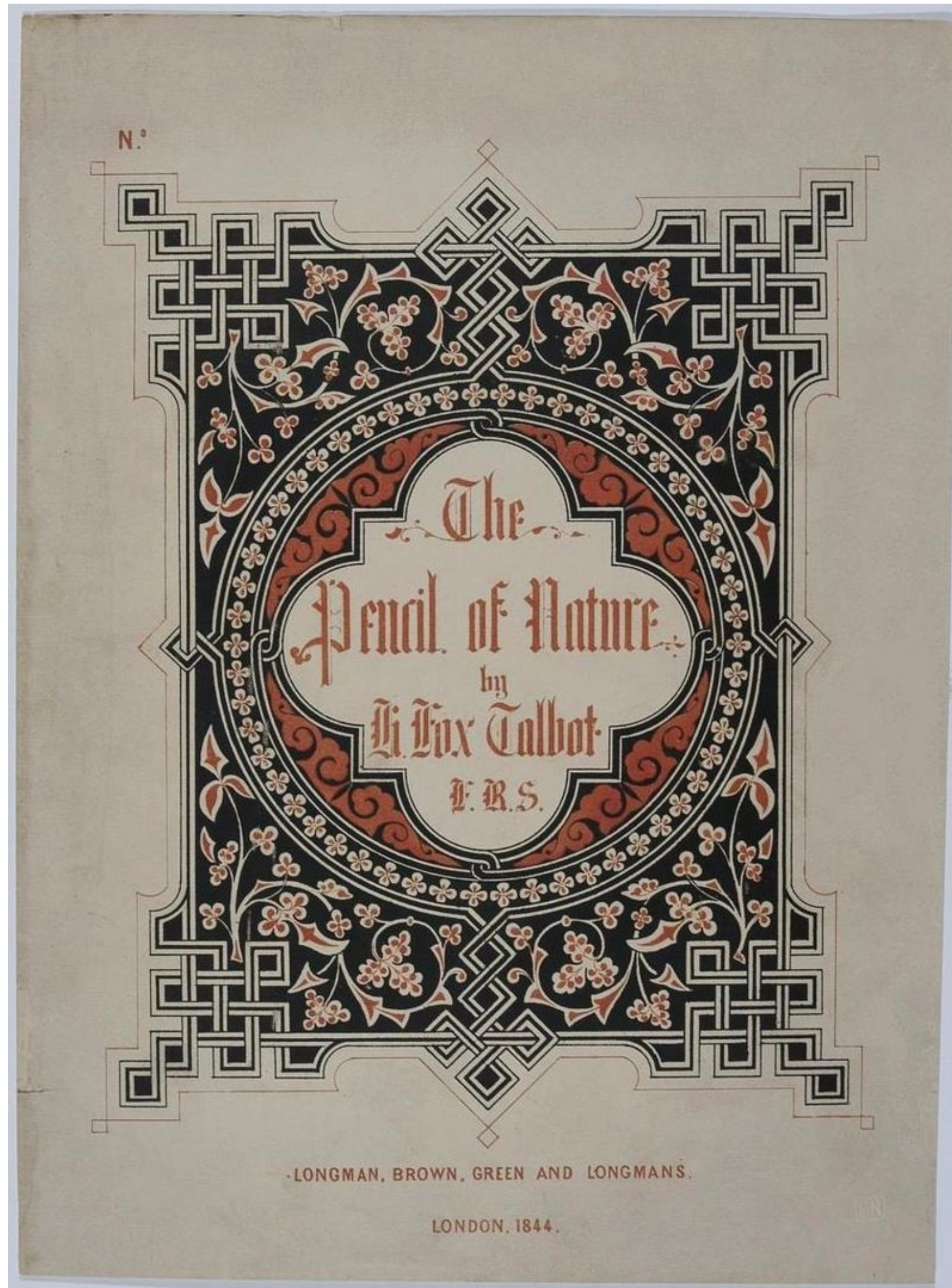
Head of Christ in oak
foil 1839





WILLIAM H. FOX TALBOT: THE CALOTIPIA

The Pencil of Nature 1844



A photograph is produced by Nature's hand, by exerting pressure on a support: it is imprinted by the action of light

«Through this natural magic you can overcome the ephemeral aspect of all things, fixing it forever»



Theological
foundation of the
iconic act

THE END

