OD
PHOTO
PRIZE

ROSIE WADEY
2023 JUDGES PICK
SANDER COERS
POST

POST 2023 explores the intersection of constructed memories and perceptions of masculinity in visual culture through the use of AI-generated imagery. I aim to investigate the role of photography in shaping our perceptions of the past and question its authenticity in a digital age where memories can be constructed and manipulated.

As a child, I spent hours immersed in my grandparents' photo albums, fascinated by the details in each picture. I longed to connect with the people captured in those images and to have a glimpse into the past of my grandfather. In those albums, I discovered a part of my heritage tied to my grandfather's birth in war-torn Indonesia during World War II. But there was a silence surrounding the past, making it difficult to grasp the full story.
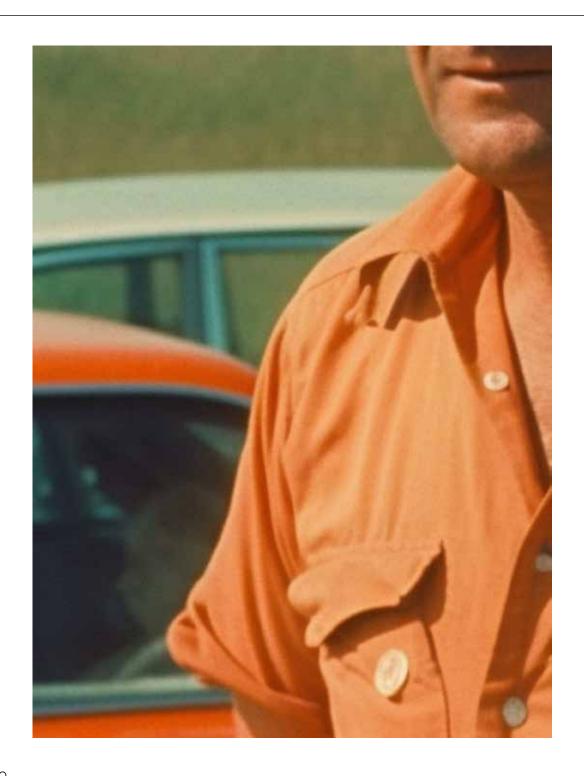
To bridge that gap, I decided to train an AI bot to expand my family history based on my grandparents' photo albums. These AI-generated images evoke the same feelings and elements found in my grandparents' albums—landscapes, clothing, and colors from that time.

The link between the concept of memory and masculinity in this project is multifaceted. On the one hand, memory plays a significant role in shaping our perceptions of masculinity over time. By looking at the recurring symbols in the AI-generated images, such as suits, belts, and hats, we can see how these have been used as visual markers of masculinity in different eras.

On the other hand, the project also explores the idea that memory itself is a construct something that can be manipulated and fabricated. This raises questions about the authenticity of our memories, and how our perceptions of masculinity might be shaped by constructed memories rather than actual experiences.

The photos are UV-printed on plywood, often used in construction - a stereotypical masculine environment. By printing the images on this material, I create a physical representation of the constructed memories that we hold onto. The images become tangible objects that reflect the fragility of our memories and the impact they have on our present.

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Artist Bio

Sander Coers is a Rotterdam-based artist working with photography. Through a tender gaze, he seeks to establish new perceptions of masculinity by visualizing, revisiting and (de)constructing memories in melancholic and highly romanticized worlds, often filled with symbolism referring to male visual culture. His work balances between documentary and fiction, portraying real people, places and their stories within fantastical realities. With the coming-of-age theme being recurrent throughout his work, he reflects on stories of love, friendship and self-acceptance, collected from his friends and peers.

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