JOHN KULVICKI
Dartmouth College, Hanover
john.v.kulvicki@dartmouth.edu

BENCE NANAY
University of Antwerp, University of Cambridge
bence.nanay@uantwerpen.be

ART MADE FOR PICTURES

abstract

Over the last fifteen years, communication has become pictorial in a manner that it never was before. Billions of people have smart phones that enable them to take, edit, and share pictures easily whenever they choose to do so. This has created expressive niches within which new activities, with their own norms, continue to develop. Ready availability of these pictorial modes of communication, we claim, not only constitutes a change in the range of our communicative practices, but also changes the world about which we communicate. Increasingly, we are making a world that's worth depicting, using the tools we now possess.
This paper will unpack one example of this phenomenon, trompe l'oeil street art. More and more of this seems to be produced with the intention that it is seen primarily in pictures. It makes sense that anything someone makes, and wants to be seen, would be made with decent photography potential in mind. You want photos to be able to, as they say, do justice to your work no matter what kind of visual work you make. In these cases, however, the pictures of the work are reliably more interesting than the pieces seen in the flesh.

I. Introduction

Over the last fifteen years, communication has become pictorial in a manner that it never was before. Billions of people have smart phones that enable them to take, edit, and share pictures easily whenever they choose to do so.[1] This has created expressive niches within which new activities, with their own norms, continue to develop. Ready availability of these pictorial modes of communication, we claim, not only constitutes a change in the range of our communicative practices, but also changes the world about which we communicate. Increasingly, we are making a world that's worth depicting, using the tools we now possess. This paper will unpack one example of this phenomenon, trompe l'oeil street art. More and more of this seems to be produced with the intention that it is seen primarily in pictures. It makes sense that anything someone makes, and wants to be seen, would be made with decent photography potential in mind. You want photos to be able to, as they say, do justice to your work no matter what kind of visual work you make. In these cases, however, the pictures of the work are reliably more interesting than the pieces seen in the flesh.

Given the grand claims about changing the world in order to be pictured, this focus on clever street art might strike readers as unreasonably narrow. Street art of this sort is important for two reasons. First, one thing smartphones will continue to do is bring impressively complex expressive and communicative possibilities into the streets, and, perhaps, out of museums. Augmented reality, for example, is bound to lead to even more changes in the world, as it is made more and more augmentable. Second, this case sheds some light on depiction, which has occupied philosophers of art for quite some time. In fact, we claim that developments in street art practice lean on features of depiction that have been around as long as we have been making pictures. It's just that these aspects of depiction were not salient or important to us until picture making took its current form.

Section II describes the phenomenon we have in mind. Section III tries to establish how such art is meant to be experienced and show why this is a philosophically compelling phenomenon. Section IV then tries to explain this phenomenon and suggests that it reveals something very interesting about depiction. The final section situates these practices with respect to related ones.

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1 https://www.statista.com/statistics/330695/number-of-smartphone-users-worldwide/ [Accessed Nov 21, 2017.]

Though talk of the imitation of nature animates many discussions of picture making, particularly in the West, trompe l'oeil per se has never been a focus for artists. It was a popular thing in ancient Rome, if the frescoes at Pompeii are any indication, and in ancient Greece, if we can take Pliny at his word (Lehmann, 1953; Ling 1991). It was somewhat popular in Italy, France, and the Low Countries in and around the eighteenth century, and there are some notable outliers here and there. Andrea Pozzo's ceiling (1685-1694) at St Ignazio in Rome is one impressive example. As we will discuss, a decent amount of contemporary street art is aimed at fooling the eyes too.

Trompe l'oeil pictures are meant to elicit at least two experiences, typically in a specific order. First, you mistakenly believe a twodimensional picture to be the threedimensional scene it depicts. Second, you notice that it is not in fact the threedimensional scene, but a twodimensional depiction thereof. Seeing the picture as a picture might include being aware of the scene it depicts. So, it's not as though we can only see trompe l'oeil pictures as the scenes they depict or as meaningless patterns of pigment. The trompe here is in the state where one fails to notice that it's a picture. Often, one is able to flip back and forth between these two states, knowingly entertaining a kind of visual illusion that's not characteristic of encounters with ordinary pictures. (See Wollheim, 1980, 1998; Levinson, 2002; Feagin, 2002; Kulvicki, 2009; Boldt-Irons, 2009; Nanay, 2011, 2015, 2016; Voltolini, 2015; Levine, 1998; Ferretti, 2016, forthcoming on experiences of pictures.) We needn't worry about giving anything like a definition of trompe l'oeil here. Some pictures might be made with the intention that they are enduring illusions, and so never seen as ordinary patterns of pigment. Some might be made so that they fool you once, impressively, but never do so again. Typically, however, the fun in trompe l'oeil is found in the fact that we are fooled, and then confronted with that fact. This, in turn, can lead one to appreciate the artist's skill in bringing about such an effect.

Contemporary street art takes advantage of the back and forth typical of trompe l'oeil art. A chalk drawing, seen from a very specific vantage point, makes it look as though the pavement has collapsed, revealing a compelling scene beneath the street. A building's façade is patterned to give the impression that it has collapsed, or that it bends around in a way the architecture does not support. Good examples of this are very popular, even if they don't catch the eyes of critics. They are more akin to busking than concert hall performances, though Pliny describes exactly these kinds of reactions to the greats of Greek painting.[2]

Street art differs from typical 18th Century trompe l'oeil painting in that it is almost impossible to be genuinely deceived. And even if it is, it is quite rare that this is the first experience one has. You see the chalk marks long before you are in the one very specific vantage point from which it would deceive your eye. Paintings, by contrast, can be positioned so that naïve viewers first see them from the preferred standpoint, in the preferred lighting, and so on. Circumstances stack the deck against realizing it's a picture and not a shelf packed with books. Discovering the ruse is delightful.

What it lacks in the ability to deceive, street art makes up in its surprising appearance from other angles. Street art is not meant to be viewed head-on, as a painting in a museum is, and you can readily occupy radically divergent angles on the work as you walk around it. As a result, what looks like a waterfall into the center of Manhattan from one perspective looks like an abstract tangle from another. In that sense, these pieces have much in common with

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2 See Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* XXXV 79-83 for his retelling of the story of Apelles and Protognes and XXXVI, where he describes two trompe l'oeil paintings by Zeuxis: one of grapes that deceive hungry birds and another one of a curtain that deceives Zeuxis's rival Parrhasius, who reaches out to pull back the curtain in order to see the painting behind.

anamorphic pictures, in which things make sense only from a rather distinctive, and usually uncommon, perspective on the picture one sees. Death lurks in Holbein's *Ambassadors* (1533), but it only rears its head from the high right or low left. These street scenes are thus an interesting blend of trompe l'oeil and anamorphosis.

The diminished potential for misperception, combined with the anamorphic element, have serious aesthetic consequences. Because of where and how these pieces are made, achieving an initial deception plus the surprise accompanying its discovery is off the table. When we first see, say, an 18th Century trompe l'oeil, we have no expectations about what we will see. That's why it is so easy to fall for these illusions. But in the case of the trompe l'oeil street art, by the time we are in the position to undergo this illusion, we know very well that this is a trompe l'oeil picture that we are looking at. So, the street art cases we have been considering reverse the typical order of experiences around which earlier practices had been built. Part of the interest of such paintings is their anamorphic aspects, of course, and this is no part of ordinary trompe l'oeil. But there is another feature of these street art pictures that can make them good. This could not have been what motivated earlier efforts at trompe l'oeil, but it helps make sense of the increasing popularity of its younger relative.

When photographed from the proper perspective, these works look like much better examples of trompe l'oeil than they really are. As we mentioned, you're rarely deceived by these pieces, and even if you are it's not the first impression you have. But photograph the piece and the result is surprisingly compelling. Part of the explanation for this should be clear. The photographer fixes an angle from which the work can be viewed, undoing one of the clearest contrasts between these cases and traditional trompe l'oeil. But that cannot be the whole story. Seen face-to-face, even if one views them initially from the preferred angle (we have tried this!), these works are not as good examples of trompe l'oeil as they look to be in pictures of them.

We haven't yet introduced a photo of such work because it would have undermined our claims about them being poor examples of trompe l'oeil. Consider two examples that were part of the Tizarte Street Art Festival in Antwerp, September 2017 (Figures 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

There is no magic in ordinary encounters with street art comparable to what one finds with trompe l'oeil painting. There is magic, by contrast, in photographs of street art, even though the photos themselves are not trompe l'oeil. They seem to reveal an impressive example of trompe l'oeil, even there is no such thing to be photographed. In that sense we might call these pieces examples of *trompe la caméra*. It's as though the camera thought it saw a great piece, and sent it along to us, while in reality it was not very impressive.

This phenomenon is not limited to chalk drawings on the street. Some examples that lack the anamorphic element also present themselves as much more compelling examples of illusion when looked at through photographs (Figure 2.5).

So, the anamorphic element is not prerequisite to eliciting this effect.

If the work is any good at all, and well placed, there is likely to be a crowd around the ideal vantage point. It is very unlikely that you will only be able to see it from somewhere close to that spot, and even if you do, it won't be as good an example of trompe l'oeil as you can find in your local museum. Those lucky enough to be at the best viewing spot, will, as we are all likely to do these days, take pictures of it. This isn't the place to complain about the recent museumgoer habit of snapping photos rather than taking a long hard look. It's increasingly unlikely that anyone will ever get a moment of peace with famous works like the Mona Lisa anyway. One way art can adjust to otherwise awful viewing habits is for it to be normed to being viewed in pictures. The spectators snapping photos of the chalk drawing are doing exactly the right thing. In fact, absent the ability to make or at least view pictures of the piece, it's fair to say they are not even in a position to appreciate it.

Figures 2.1 and 2.2: Two views of a drawing on the ground by Remko van Schaik (2017) in Antwerp, Belgium.
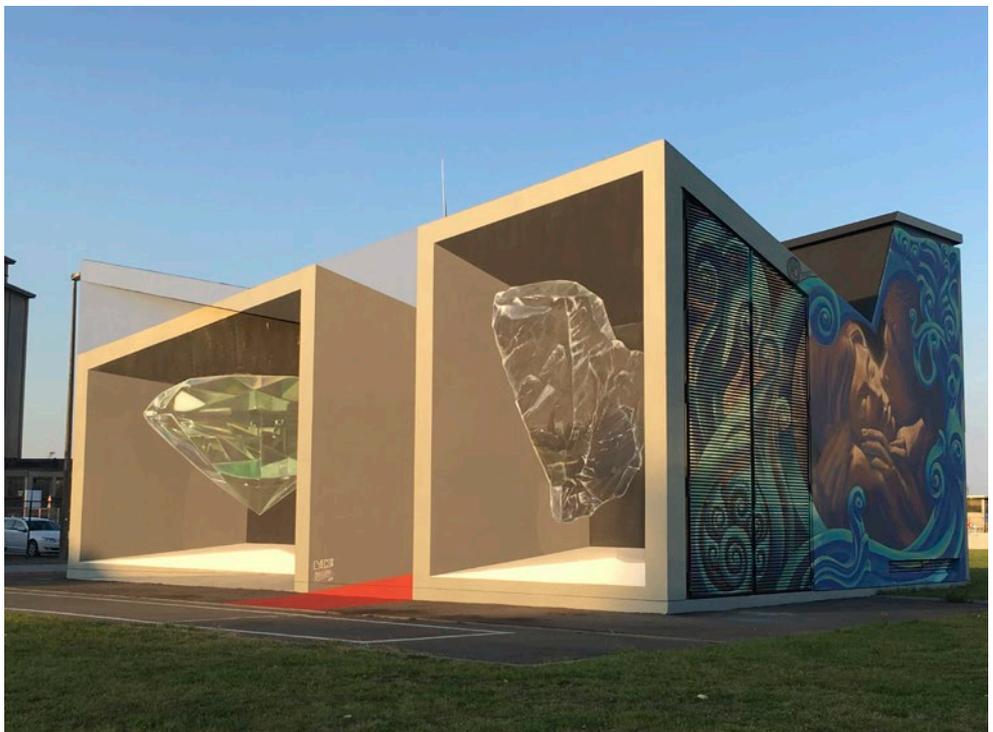
Figures 2.3 and 2.4: Two views of the Aquafin Pumpstation's front by Leon Keer (2017), Antwerp, Belgium.

Figure 2.5: Painting on an angled surface, which lacks a pronounced anamorphic element, but looks like a trompe l'oeil only in the photograph. Sweo & Nikita 5.7 Crew, 2017. Antwerp, Belgium.

The next section tries to make sense of the kinds of experience we have when engaging with such pictures, before the final sections explain and contextualize these cases. That discussion will reveal a sense in which this phenomenon has been endemic to pictures for as long as there have been pictures, even though it took a cultural context like ours to enfranchise it as significant.

The last section leaves us with a number of interesting questions. There is a substantial literature focused on what makes experiences of pictures distinctive, but the cases considered here are special. The original work is a picture, which has a highly specific point from which it ought to be viewed if it is to be interpreted. From that viewpoint, the work has aspects of trompe l'oeil. Artists often make use of patterns in the concrete, or paving stones as parts of the picture, making is difficult to distinguish features in the depicted scene from those on the street. But their pictures don't fool us, not really. They are at best approximations to true trompe l'oeil.

III. Trompe l'oeil and trompe la caméra

What about the pictures of these works? They are pictures of pictures, which are complicated for many reasons (Lopes, 1996; Kulvicki, 2006; Newall, 2003). But they are also pictures that in some sense seem to misrepresent the scenes they ostensibly depict. They are not obvious examples of trompe l'oeil, since few photographs are, at least when viewed under ordinary circumstances. Nevertheless, there is magic in our experiences of such photos, and it is the

task of this section to explain that. Because that magic might be precisely what such works aim at, we cannot understand the aesthetics of such encounters without a clearer sense of what is going on.

Trompe l'oeil aims to trigger the experience of taking a twodimensional surface to be the threedimensional depicted scene. But this is not what happens when we look at a picture of a trompe l'oeil picture. Pictorial experience is, as we noted above, a complicated and contested topic. So, without trying to settle exactly what kinds of experiences we have when seeing pictures, let's see if we can contrast the present case with more ordinary ones. This might allow us to make progress without deciding between competing accounts of pictorial experience.

One thought is that when viewing pictures we have visual experiences that are in some rich sense *as of* the objects depicted. Some might think that these experiences are partly illusory, since the depicted scene is not present, while some might think that we are in no way deceived, even though a depicted object somehow figures in experience. In at least many cases, then, the thought is that we somehow experience two objects: a picture and the scene it depicts. These are related to one another, and they might be experienced as being related to one another. In successful trompe l'oeil, the picture surface does not figure in your experience, at least not right away, while in cases of failed depiction no depicted scene appears, and we are left with nothing but a colored plane. Ordinary depiction happens, as it were, between these two extremes (see Wollheim, 1980, 1987, 1998 for the classic exposition of this).

How does this ordinary case, of an admittedly extraordinary phenomenon, differ from the case we are considering? The obvious thing to say is that there are three things that show up in this perceptual state: the twodimensional photograph, the 3d street scene, including the chalk on pavement, and the threedimensional scene depicted by the chalk. That, at least, seems like the obvious thing to say because we know that the experience of a picture typically involves two things, and it thus makes sense that the experience of a picture of a picture would involve three. Moreover, this description is plausible, at least in many cases where a picture has been depicted. Van Gogh, for example, made three paintings of his bedroom in Arles (1888 – 1889). They all depict a number of his own canvases hanging on the walls. The sense one gets is that we experience the painting and van Gogh's heavy brushwork, the bedroom, and the scenes depicted by his canvases.

So far, however, breaking the experience of a picture in three, instead of two, does not tell us why a photograph might elevate a poor trompe l'oeil to something impressive. Van Gogh, for example, did not aim at trompe l'oeil, and his paintings of his paintings don't make it seem as though he did.

To review, when a trompe l'oeil picture manages to deceive your eye, what happens is that you experience the threedimensional depicted scene as if you perceived it face to face. In this case, however, it seems more plausible to say that you confuse something threedimensional (the scene depicted on the pavement, as depicted in the photo) with something else threedimensional (the pavement, as depicted in the photo). We need to be careful here, but let's stick to this way of describing the experience, because it seems to capture the thing happening in these cases that might be absent when looking at the van Gogh. So, we can experience both the chalk drawing and the scene that it depicts, but somehow those two scenes are not clearly distinguished from one another. In fact, it seems accurate to say that when seen in the photo it's harder to distinguish the street scene from the depicted scene than it is to distinguish them when seen face to face. But if the experience of a photo of a trompe l'oeil is such that it's hard to distinguish the chalk from the scene it depicts, then it makes sense to say that the experience of the photo is the experience of an excellent trompe l'oeil. In fact, that's the goal of a trompe l'oeil in the first place.

Remember, the photo we see is not a trompe l'oeil. It doesn't aspire to be one, either. So, one is not, in viewing the photo, shuttling attention back and forth between features of the photo surface and features of the depicted scene. But one is shuttling attention back and forth between two depicted scenes. The depicted chalk drawing looks like a good trompe l'oeil, so one vacillates between the scene the chalk depicts, and the chalk. And we note that it's hard to keep them apart. In one sense, this is more like experiencing Jastrow's duck-rabbit than it is like experiencing the back and forth Wollheim emphasized between features of the picture surface and features of the depicted scene (Wollheim, 1963). In another sense, however, the experience is quite unlike the duck-rabbit. In this case, it's clear that the chalk pattern relates in an important, indeed depictive manner, to the scene it depicts, and it's precisely sorting out where the depicted scene starts and the pattern of chalk ends that makes the experience confusing.

The special experiences afforded by these street art scenes thus seem built around making it hard to distinguish the depicted chalk from the scene the chalk depicts. They are both available to viewers, as is the fact that they are looking at a photo. But it is the fact that we are apt to have a hard time sorting out these two that seems at the core of this interesting phenomenon. Because this happens, and because practically everyone these days has a camera at the ready, there is a niche for artists to exploit. These chalk drawings are made to be looked at in pictures, because doing so makes them seem like much better trompe l'oeils than they seem to be in person. That's a bit of magic, indeed. And because we are unable to reorient ourselves with respect to the scenes we photograph, there is no room for this enhanced trompe l'oeil phenomenon to be broken. Not only do they seem better from the preferred viewpoint, but the absence of other viewpoints leaves us unable to assess how they look from them.

This seems like a helpful description of the experience of seeing such photos, but so far we have not tried to explain why such photos work the magic that they do. We attempt to do that in the next section, and as we will see, it will force a reconsideration of the van Gogh case.

IV. Explaining the phenomenon

Trompe l'oeil pictures always work in a context. Sometimes, the picture takes up most or all of the visual field, and it is rendered in such a manner that the viewer doesn't notice that she's really seeing a plane surface. One classic way to make this happen is to choose a pictorial subject that is not very deep. Papers and other things affixed to a board, for example, as in Johann Heinrich Füssli's (1749) painting shown in Figure 4.1, are standard subjects of trompe l'oeil paintings and drawings.

Sometimes, the illusion succeeds because the painting is seamlessly worked into its environment. Pozzo's ceiling is so far away that you can't see its surface features, and so even though the depicted scene is deep, and continuous with the walls of the cathedral, you can convince yourself that you are looking into a deep space. The street art examples we have been considering are of the latter sort. They are on the street, they can clearly be seen to be part of the street, and they are meant to suggest that we are seeing into or below the street.

A photograph of such a scene will include parts of the surrounding environment, like the street, and perhaps even spectators. Given that, we can break the picture into two parts. One part represents the chalk drawing, and another represents the rest of the scene. It can, as we mentioned earlier, be hard to see exactly where one part ends and the other begins, but leave that to one side for now. Let's say that the photograph accurately represents both the drawing and the scene around it.

Now let's focus on the part of the photo that represents the chalk. It's accurate, by hypothesis, so the photo represents a pattern of chalk as being the way that it is. That's not to say it represents the pattern in all of its detail, of course. The only claim is that it accurately

Figure 4.1: Johann Heinrich Füssli, Hermitage Museum, St. Petersberg.
Source: The Yorck Project: *10.000 Meisterwerke der Malerei.* DVD-ROM, 2002. <u>ISBN 3936122202</u>.
Distributed by DIRECTMEDIA Publishing GmbH.

represents the pattern. (We'll have occasion to come back and reconsider whether the photo is completely accurate in a moment.) It's doubtful, for example, that the photo represents the pattern as being made of chalk, as opposed to some other superficially similar substance. Now note that the photo is also a pattern of pigment. It's not a pattern made of chalk, of course, but it's a pattern of color. In addition, the scene the chalk drawing represents is, inter alia, a pattern of color.[3]

To call these things patterns is to suggest that they are organized in space – we aren't focused on things organized in time here – so we can also ask what kind of spatial pattern it is. Just as the color pattern that matters is one undecided between colors of objects and colors of illuminants, etc., the spatial pattern that matters is one specified in two, not three, spatial dimensions. The photo, the chalk, and the scene the chalk depicts occupy 3d space, and things in 3d space instantiate many 2d patterns. The only point being made here is that the pattern that matters for the photo being the photo it is, the chalk drawing being the drawing it is, and so on, is a 2d pattern. Being flat is a way of occupying 3d space, and while the photo might be, the drawing on the street probably is not flat, or it need not be. And ditto for the scenes depicted by the chalk.

What makes the viewpoint from which the photo is taken ideal? In part, it is because from that viewpoint, the chalk instantiates a 2d pattern that is readily interpreted as a representation of a recognizable 3d scene. You can certainly interpret an anamorphic picture at some distance from its ideal viewpoint, but the scene you interpret it as representing will not be filled with recognizable objects. The picture will strike one as abstract, or perhaps surreal. Contrast the two viewpoints from which the first example in Figure 1 above was photographed. The photo of the chalk, taken from the ideal viewpoint, will accurately represent a pattern of color that is readily interpreted as a representation of a recognizable 3d scene. But the photo is itself a pattern of color, and from the ideal viewpoint it will pretty much instantiate the same 2d pattern as the chalk does, from that viewpoint. So, the photo, too, will manifest a pattern that is readily interpreted as a representation of a recognizable 3d scene. But in this case the scene is the one the chalk depicts. It's also true that the pattern on the photo represents the somewhat less readily recognizable 3d layout of chalk, on a street at an oblique angle. Remember also that we have been talking about just one part of the photo. There is another part, corresponding to the elements of the scene that are not part of the chalk drawing. They are readily understood in only one way: as representations of parts of a street, perhaps with spectators, and so on.

The foregoing constitutes not a description of the kinds of experiences one might have when engaging with photos of street trompe l'oeil. Instead, it's the start of an explanation for how a photo of a mediocre trompe l'oeil might seem to be a photo of a very impressive one. The photo is accurately interpretable in two ways: as a street scene with a chalk drawing in it, or as a street scene with a hole in the pavement and something going on down below. The part of the picture representing the drawing is accurately interpretable in both ways. The interpretation that includes a complex scene is actually the more compelling of the two, because the alternative is a street with oddly shaped color patches on it. In fact, if you only were able to see the part of the picture corresponding to the chalk drawing, the street interpretation would be impressively implausible. The only thing that makes the street interpretation plausible is the part of the picture that clearly depicts a street scene.

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3 The photo, the chalk, and the scene the chalk depicts are also patterns of colored things, but for present purposes what matters is that they are patterns of color. So the notion of color being used here is one that does not distinguish between the colors of objects, the colors of illuminants, and abstractions over them.

What is the most plausible interpretation of the whole? Well, a street scene with a chalk drawing on it. But because the part of the photo corresponding to the chalk is more readily interpreted as a picture of the scene represented by the chalk, the most plausible overall interpretation is that we have an impressive trompe l'oeil on our hands. Or, at least, the chalk is apt to seem like an impressive trompe l'oeil for someone trying to interpret the photo of it. When seen face-to-face, the chalk drawing is quite visually compelling as just that, a chalk drawing. It's not terrible as trompe l'oeil, but it's not fooling anyone.

It's important that the artist tries to make the trompe l'oeil work in situ, because without the connection to the rest of the picture the photo might not seem like a picture of an impressive trompe l'oeil. For example, try drawing a border the picture in Figure 1, the result is something that looks like two photos, one on top of the other, rather than a photo of a single scene.

There is doubtless more one could say about this phenomenon, but we hope that this sketch of an explanation is compelling enough to shed some light on the way in which artistic practice can find a niche that makes it more compelling in a world increasingly built around pictorial communication.

V. Generalizing the phenomenon

The fact that pictures of pictures can be much more aesthetically interesting than the pictures themselves has been rendered interesting and compelling by the contemporary situation with picture making technology. But the thing about pictures that makes this way of seeing them available is quite old. Nothing in the previous section appealed to special features of smartphone cameras, for example. These works made to be photographed bring this fact about pictures into high relief. They suggest places to look for relatives of this phenomenon, with the end result being a richer understanding of pictorial representation. The following looks at some straightforward and some less obvious extensions of the thoughts from the previous section.

Barbara Savedoff, for example, suggested that there is something aesthetically important about the ways in which photographs of other photographs enliven their subjects. Walker Evans's *Torn Movie Poster* (1930), for example, is a photo of a poster depicting a man and a woman, but the poster has been torn revealing a wall behind it, through the part that depicts the woman's face. For Savedoff (1992, p. 94), "We read the photographed picture of a woman as a photographed woman; we read the torn picture as a torn woman." In person, "we would probably not find it arresting or disturbing" because the torn poster does not strike us as in any way depicting a grotesque scene. Her idea, in general, is that pictures usually depict 3d scenes. When they do so, the scene is reduced in some way to a 2d pattern of pigment. But no such reduction accompanies photographed photos, which are already 2d patterns (Savedoff, 1992, p. 94). This seems to have been a thing for Evans. His *Billboard Painters, Florida* (1934) makes a picture in the process of being painted look like a better trompe l'oeil than it is, for example, and so it's closely related to the phenomena we have been discussing.

Savedoff's examples depart from ours in one important respect. The objects of these photos are not art made for picturing. They are impressive photographs, but the main thing that makes them impressive is Evans's hand in choosing the scenes. The scenes are not works of art, and were not made to be photographed. If would be odd for them to have been made for that in the 1930s because photography was expensive and relatively rare back then. Evans is the artist here. The explanation offered for this phenomenon in the previous section appeals to features of pictures that they have always had, or so we suggest. Savedoff's examples are helpful in that they illustrate a different way to capitalize on features of pictures that long predate smartphones.

But is photography, per se, the real driver of this phenomenon? Savedoff goes on to suggest that paintings like Magritte's famous *La condition humaine* (1934) do not lead to the same

magical transformations of their objects. She connects this to the sense we have that photographs "are perceived to possess an objectivity unavailable to painting" (1992, p. 103 and see 2000, Ch 2). While that might be true of photography, we are inclined to disagree with her. This phenomenon is not limited to photographic pictures of other pictures, though it might be at its most compelling in such cases.

In imaginative paintings we will never be in a position to compare the depicted scene with the scene in the flesh. So it will make no sense to say that the painting of an imagined scene depicts its object as being a better trompe l'oeil than it actually is. That said, the painting depicted in *La condition humaine* looks like a fairly solid trompe l'oeil. It is integrated with the depicted scene surrounding it to make its borders unclear in a manner reminiscent of much street art. Of course, this imagined scene, too, cannot itself be a bit of art made for picturing, but the picture disappears in much the same way as the earlier examples do. Now imagine a related case. Imagine a carefully rendered chalk drawing of the scene photographed in Figure 1. In that case, if anything, the original chalk drawing will fade even more convincingly into the scene as a whole.

In fact, depending on how the drawing is executed, the depicted drawing might disappear altogether. When you match media – photos of photos, chalk drawings of chalk drawings, etc. – you make it evident how readily one picture can fade into the scene of another. Indeed, as one of us has suggested (Kulvicki, 2006, Ch3), if all you depict is another picture, using the same kind of representation, the result is just like the original. The foregoing gives another way of thinking about that phenomenon. The photo of a photo of X, without remainder, makes its object seem like such a convincing trompe l'oeil that it looks just like you've got a photo of X on your hands.

The Chinese artist, Liu Bolin, has developed a body of work based on pictures dissolving into scenes when they are photographed. Bolin installs himself in front of various different backgrounds and has himself painted in such a way that he matches the background from a specific point of view. In effect, he is painted with a picture of the scene behind him. These installations are made for photography. Neither of us has seen him in situ, but it's plausible that he hides better in the photographs than he does in the flesh. So, this is very much art for picturing, even though it's not trompe l'oeil traditionally conceived. The ideal effect is that you fail to see Bolin himself at first. But on close inspection, you notice that what you took to be, say, a vegetable stand, is in fact Bolin standing in front of the vegetable stand.

This experience is somewhat similar to the experience of trompe l'oeil street art in the way it unfolds temporally. The ideal experience would be the temporal sequence of first being fooled into experiencing the vegetable stand (without experiencing anyone in front of it) and second, noticing that there is a person, painted cleverly in such a way as to conceal him in front of this specific background, standing in front of the vegetable stand. This is very similar, in terms of its temporal unfolding, to first being fooled into experiencing the threedimensional depicted scene as if seen face to face and then noticing that it is merely a twodimensional depiction of this three-dimensional scene.

Crucially, the considerations about the visibility of trompe l'oeil street art apply in the case of Bolin's installations as well, almost word by word. The Bolin installation manages to deceive you only when seen from a very specific and restricted point of view. If seen from a point of view a little bit off, then you are no longer deceived into having a Bolin-free experience (of experiencing the vegetable stand only). Bolin seems to regard his artwork as being the photos, rather than the staged scenes he photographs, however. As he says:

> some people already asked me if I considered myself as a performer or as a
> photographer. In general, I answer that I create 'staged photographs' for my artworks

differ from 'landscape photography' and its pursuit of peculiar form, light, and color. Contrarily mine can be regarded as documents, as realist descriptions, as if they were a sequence from a film in which the camera only focuses on the actors' oral performance.[4]

Given that, Bolin fits as a nice contrast to both Evans and the trompe l'oeil street art on which we have focused. Evans found improbably good scenes to photograph, and so the photos were the work. The street art is made to be photographed, but the work is still the street art. It's just made to be engaged with through the photos. Bolin constructs analogs of the highly improbable scenes that Evans tried to find, but, like Evans, the work is the photos that result. He builds the world so he can photograph it, but that's not the same as making artwork to be photographed. While Bolin is a special case for the reasons enumerated here, it could be argued that many examples of performance art are created in such a way that they photograph well. This is a major departure from the origins of performance art and happening when considerations about whether the performance would be preserved at all, and if so how were supposed to be irrelevant. This change is very salient if we look at the work of performance artists whose work encompasses several decades, like Marina Abramovic or Jan Fabre. While in their early work the fact that the performances may or may not be photographed does not seem to make a significant difference, the work they produced in the last decade or so is very explicitly made to be photographed.[5]

And this point could be generalized even further. Classic art forms such as theatre, architecture or sculpture may also not be completely free from the pressure to photograph well. If a sculptor creates works that do not look good when photographed (only when the spectator can move around it freely), this puts limits on this artist's Instagram exposure, but also on coverage of her work in various art magazines. We learn about most things, including art, primarily by means of pictures. This can change how art is made.[6]

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4 http://photographyofchina.com/blog/interview-liu-bolin [Accessed 12/3/17]

5 It is also important to point out some artists who buck this trend and even work against it. One salient example is Olafur Eliasson's *Room for One Color* (1997): a white room lit entirely by monofrequency lighting making you experience everything (yourself, your partner, the other visitors) in black and white (or, rather, in black and yellow). This is a very strong visual experience, but any kind of photographic documentation of it is completely trivial as they just look as if they were monochrome photographs. Eliasson actively encourages visitors to take photos – one wonders whether that is a tongue in cheek remark as any such photo would fail to document the experience of being there and then. Eliasson's other works as well as some of James Turrell's installations work in a similar way.

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