The Familial Portrait - Extended Abstract
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Introduction
This paper explores the complex interplay between the familial viewer and the sitter in photographic portraiture. It is part of my artistic research into the situation of making a photographic portrait. The objective of this paper is to uncover the influence and role of the familial spectator in shaping the making of photographic portraits. The paper combines theoretical analysis with my artistic practice in the form of a series of portrait experiments. The research for this text led to the formulation of the concept of the 'Familial Portrait' as an alternative to traditional family portraiture, which integrates American comparative literature scholar Marianne Hirsch's 'familial gaze' into the practice of photographic portraiture and promotes a deeper, relational understanding of photographic portraiture. It offers a new perspective on family portraiture.

Family spectators
Familial spectators are spectators who look at photographs of people they know well. In the context of photography, this means spectators looking at photographs of people they are related to, such as friends, acquaintances, lovers and family. Familial is therefore more than just the traditional family. Even though this research and the experiments in this text are situated within the traditional family portrait, the scoop of the results is much wider as it is relevant to all familial spectators and addresses everyone who looks at photographic images of people they know well or feel related to.

Familial gaze
Prompted by a previously made photographic portrait I embarked on two artistic experiments that brought a familial spectator into the situation of making photographic portraits. These photographic experiments (see figs.1,2) led to a reflection on the expectations of familial spectators. Such as the notion that familial spectators not only seek resemblance to a person they know but also expect the photographic portrait to act towards them. As philosopher Cynthia Freeland explains, people looking at photographic portraits of people they love and can (no longer) be in contact with, seek something that resembles traditional art-historical icons. [1] Rather than a passive encounter, familial spectators expect an active encounter with the photographic portrait, which philosopher Patrick Maynard calls the 'manifestation function of photography, which is less about the portrait being a realistic likeness but rather about giving the spectator a sense of contact.[2] In addition, familial spectators not only seek contact with the depicted person, they also look at themselves via the portrait when they 'place themselves in the picture', as American literary scholar Nancy K. Miller explains.[3] By looking at others, (familial) spectors form their own subjectivity in relation to this portrait. Marianne Hirsch coined the 'familial gaze' for this relational understanding of the familial spectator's gaze and relationship to photographic portraits.

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[1] Cynthia Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) p 74
[2] Patrick Maynard, *The Engine of Visualization: Thinking through Photography* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997) p 120
[3] Nancy K. Miller - *Putting Ourselves in the Picture: Memoirs and Mourning.* Hirsch, the Familial Gaze p 54

Familial Portrait
With the concept of the 'familial portrait', based on Hirsch's concept of the 'familial gaze', I propose a new type of family portrait by bringing the relational dynamics of sitter and familial spectator into the making of the family portrait. Traditional family portraits depict a group of people posing for the camera as a family. As the German photographer Thomas Struth points out when reflecting on his series of Family Portraits, sitters who are part of such a group are mostly occupied with projecting their individual identity, 'their own image' or their 'mirror-image' onto the photographer or camera.[4] They appear to be less interested in relating to the people who they are posing which. Which are the same people who are most likely to be looking at the family portrait when it is finished.

With the family portrait I propose a different kind of family portrait. One that incorporates the familial gaze into the making of the photograph by asking people to influence each other as the photograph is made. I have explored this strategy in two experiments. In the first experiment, a family influences each other during the photographic session, resulting in a family portrait consisting of six photographic images (Figure 3). The second experiment, entitled 'Mijn mensen', shows my own daughter Winnie in relation to members of her extended family.

Mijn mensen
'Mijn mensen' consists of six portraits in which my daughter Winnie poses for the camera under the influence of her extended family. The work, which consists of these photographs together with the names of the family members, presents a relational understanding of family portraits, both conceptually and visually. The images express the relationality that Jean-Luc Nancy puts forward in his understanding of portraiture, which is not the identity of the model (nor of the painter), but rather "the structure of the subject: its subjectivity, its being inside - and thus its being outside, behind or before itself, towards itself, which Nancy calls its ex-position".[5] And this "ex-position" is the result of an event involving the artist, the model and the spectator.

Conclusion
This paper's concept of the 'familial portrait' proposes a relational understanding of the family portrait by bringing the familial gaze into the actual making of the photographic family portrait. In doing so, it proposes a new model for thinking about the sitter/spectator relationship within the making of the photographic portrait by acknowledging the influence of the spectator and considering it as part of the portrait.

Keywords: familial portrait, photographic portraiture, relational, familial gaze, artistic research

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[4] Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, and Thomas Struth, in, *Thomas Struth: Portraits exhibit.cat.* (New York, 1990) p 29

[5] Jean-Luc Nancy, *Portraits,* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018) p 20

Figures

SARAH

Figure 1. Sarah

EVA

Figure 2. Eva

SARAH   THEO   ROEL   SARAH

Figure 3. Experiment 3.

NIELS

OTIS

FEMKE

MARCEL

JEANNE

JUDITH

Figure 4. Mijn mensen