

What separates the objects you see portrayed in these photographs from their status as works of art? What is the boundary between installation view, exhibition, work and installation? Do you think you can clearly distinguish what you see?

“Fake it ‘till you make it” is a well-known aphorism according to which, by simulating a behavior or action, an individual can develop or attract certain qualities or events towards themselves over a lifetime. This technique emphasizes a principle of cognitive-behavioral psychology that enables purposeful behavioral change by becoming familiar with the simulation of precisely such gestures. The statement in question, which corresponds to the title of the exhibition, is coined from an observation by Aristotle: “Men acquire a particular quality by constantly behaving in a certain way”.

In this project of photographic appropriation, Federica Francesconi uses photographs taken by a real estate agent, to promote the sale of an industrial space, in lieu of installation views produced as the ever-popular documentation of an exhibition.

The audience is led to believe that the images themselves represent - through their communication and dissemination - a space that can be visited, only to discover on the day of the opening that they are pre-washed images from a completely different context that has nothing to do with art.

This instance of photographic ready-mades bring to light, in addition to the concept of appropriation, the fundamental theme of expectation, of the unbalanced and illusory perception and of a dynamic of exaltation of works of art proposed by galleries and artists in the contemporary system of communication.

At once critiquing and partaking, we take note that documentation usurps an exhibition. Today, Global Contemporary Art is communicated before being experienced and finds its validation in PDFs and well-designed websites before (if ever) being visited in so-called “meat space.” Now, a work of art’s image has become its entire-self, which risks turning even the most considered object into a tautology.

Looking at photographs, convinced that we are in front of an exhibition composed of objects and installations loosely dispersed in space, perception itself becomes the sole arbiter of the exhibition’s boundaries. This mechanism breaks the link between image and subject, reversing the roles and revisiting a new but still unexplored transformation of the concept of ‘exhibition’ that problematizes the online communication of art at industrial levels.

As fiction is enacted and pursued, it will continue and be assumed as an indistinguishable part of our experience in the real, just like the thoughts we have about ourselves, others or the world. In *Fake it till you make it*, Francesconi contemplates the aporetic of the exhibition itself, only to unveil the process upon completion.

Apparatus Projects is an artist-directed off-space specializing in exhibition-making, publications, and free public programming in Chicago, IL.

Our exhibitions and texts look to build relationships between strangers and deepen already existing ones between familiars.

Apparatus Projects is 501(c)3 registered, and all donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed. Please consider supporting our program with a donation if you would like to see our work continue.

Federica Francesconi (b. 1994) Lives and works between Brescia and Milan, IT. In addition to her practice as an artist Francesconi also runs the gallery Spazio Orr, in Brescia.