untitled / Annateresa Fabris

The identity portrait is underpinned by a set of a precise rules which by now go without saying: the neutral background, measured lighting, the conventional pose, the personal expression all the more revealed by the hint of a smile. If there is such a thing as precise rules it is because the identity portrait is, in a certain sense, the specular opposite of the bourgeois portrait, even if it does share the same ideology of underlying reflexion as the photographic operation of the latter. Both, to varying degrees of objectivity, construct an image of the subject as a individual and personality at the same time, both singular and faithfull to the conventions of the group he belongs to. Such considerations on the portrait as an artifice that confer a social self-awareness upon the individual provide the motivation behind Rosângela Rennó's most recent output. A few years ago, she succeeded in organizing a vast archive of identity photographs made up of two-bit photos serving as a spring board for a host of different artistic operations all aimed at the deconstruction of photographic codes and the presentation of identity as non-identity, or rather, the revelation of identity as mere appearance, a feeble insight into a subjectivity that is no easily captured.

The subtle play of deconstruction and reconstruction to which Rennó subjects her images trouve'es enables her to penetrate the very ideology that forms the backdrop of photography: objectivity and the reflexion are revealed as products inherent to a social practice that quite clearly go beyond the homology intrinsic to the apparatus. The circumstantial paradigm transformed into a deliberate artifice, a critical operation, makes Rosângela Rennó's process of appropriation into a continuous comparison between industry and art, truth and fiction.

The result is the negation of reality and the affirmation of the codes of representation as the construction of an identity and the symbolic process of vision, the logical conclusion to a survey which , from the very outset, has been addressing the concept of identification.