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The Face As An Organ Of Identity

By Nathan Makarewicz



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“The face plays a fundamental role in many of our most human qualities, like communication, expression and self-identity. Consequently, deformities that threaten facial function or appearance can be devastating to those who suffer them. Though there are now adequate reconstructive options for most facial deformities, this wasn’t always true. Based on a case from WWI, these portraits explore how the concepts of self-identity and completeness are challenged by facial disfigurement. Here, the same subject is depicted with his injury visible and with his injury obscured by a metal prosthetic that would have been standard-of-care at the time. Though these rudimentary prostheses could do little more than mask a defect, for many, they returned a sense of identity that would otherwise be lost.”

Citation: Wood FD. Masks for Facial Wounds. *The Lancet*. 1917;189(4895):949-951. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(01)48894-5

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