



SYNTHETIC SINCERITY

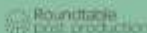
A FILM BY MARC ISAACS
WRITTEN BY ADAM GANZ

'WARM, FUNNY AND GENEROUS...
A TRUE ORIGINAL FROM ONE OF
BRITAIN'S MOST INQUISITIVE AND
ADVENTUROUS DIRECTORS'
RYAN GILBEY, THE GUARDIAN

You know Auguste,
sincerity is the key to
documentary cinema.

Yes Louis
and if we can
fake that, we've
got it made.

SINCERITY FILMS PRESENTS "SYNTHETIC SINCERITY"
WITH LYNN EL SAFAR ABLIKIM RAHMAN ILINCA MANOLACHE MARC ISAACS
PINAKI CHOWDURY DAWN RAISON YUANCHEN WANG GUY MARTIN ADAM GANZ
ORIGINAL SCORE BY YAHLI LEV EDITED BY MARC ISAACS EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DAVID CHARAP ASSOCIATE PRODUCER DAVE BRIGGS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MARC ISAACS
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER ELENA SANCHEZ BELLOT PRODUCTION DESIGNER ROUND TABLE FILMS WRITTEN BY ADAM GANZ PRODUCED BY MARC ISAACS DIRECTED BY MARC ISAACS



poster design: Dave Bell



SYNTHETIC SINCERITY

71 min | Colour | United Kingdom | 2025 | English

Released in cinemas 17 July 2026

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

The Synthetic Sincerity Lab based at the University of Southern England are trying to create authentic AI characters as part of a new research project. The head of the lab, Professor Song, licences the films of Marc Isaacs' to better understand what his AI characters are lacking and, in turn, agrees the Filmmaker can document their working process.

Blending documentary with fiction, Synthetic Sincerity uses humor and innovative narrative techniques to form a reflection on what is happening to the human face in the era of AI and what this might mean for the future of cinema.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/1122200690>



SYNOPSIS

In his entertaining film, Marc Isaacs (*The Filmmaker's House*) makes a deal with The Synthetic Sincerity Lab, an AI research project affiliated with the University of Southern England. There, researchers are investigating the possibility of teaching AI characters authenticity, using characters from Isaacs' documentaries to do so. In return, they allow Isaacs to film the process.

An AI avatar, created in collaboration with Romanian actress Illinca Manolache (seen in *Do Not Expect Too Much from the End of the World* by Radu Jude) guides him through this complex research world and sternly instructs him how to behave there. Isaacs films the work of the rebellious AI researcher Lynn, and follows an Uyghur chef who puts himself forward as a subject of study. Can this chef, in AI form, put into words what he is unable to express as a human being?

Isaacs' innovative narrative gradually blurs the line between fact and fiction. *Synthetic Sincerity* explores the relationship between humans and machines through a blend of documentary, fictional scenes, and gently absurd humor. How does the development of AI influence the way we look at human faces?

And how might this technology affect cinema in the future?



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Filmmaker's House, (2021) looked at notions of documentary truth and how documentaries are constructed as well as the nature of the exchange between the filmmaker and the subject. It was on this film that I began to work with screenwriter Adam Ganz. In *This Blessed Plot* (2023) the two of us looked at the relationship between film: place; memory; and mythology; as well as the connection between the living and the dead.

How do we remember people? What is film but the traces of ghosts? In *Synthetic Sincerity*, this third documentary-fiction hybrid film of the trilogy, we look at film as data – and what is happening to documentary film and the world it depicts - as AI cinema becomes a reality.

Synthetic Sincerity begins with my reflections on the history of the human face and what will it mean for cinema as we start to stare into the eyes of people who never existed.

An AI avatar -created with the collaboration of Romanian star Ilinca Manolache (*Do Not Expect Too Much from the End of the World*) invites me to come and meet the people who made her - and thus begins our narrative.

Synthetic Sincerity asks fundamental questions about the nature of the recorded image, about truth and fiction and what do we consider an authentic image in the age of AI.

In the past, to film something was to witness it. What will happen to documentary when film loses the power to document? And what will happen to a society that cannot be documented.

As the mobile phone put the power to make a film in every pocket the tech moguls have awarded themselves the right to use all those images to make composites.

If as Bergman said that 'the essence of cinema is the human face' - at the heart of the film is how we seek to know other people, through the visible, the face and the psychological – which we call character.

Synthetic Sincerity shows how our notions human authenticity and selfhood are shifting at a pace beyond our understanding. It does so in a form that merges documentary and fiction to encourage the viewer to ask crucial questions about the status of images.

If we look to cinema to find something profoundly human, will we discover that the humans have left whilst our attention was elsewhere and even our memories have been colonized?



With Synthetic Sincerity, Marc Isaacs completes a groundbreaking trilogy - after The Filmmaker's House and This Blessed Plot - which drags the documentary form into uncharted waters. That he does so while addressing the advance of AI in his own quizzical way is fitting: few other filmmakers could have fashioned such a warm, funny and generous work out of such a potentially alarming subject. A true original from one of Britain's most inquisitive and adventurous directors.

Ryan Gilbey, The Guardian.





MARC ISAACS

Since 2001, Marc Isaacs has directed more than 10 creative documentaries for the BBC and Channel 4. His films have won Grierson, Royal Television Society and BAFTA awards, as well as numerous prizes at international festivals.

In 2008, Marc Isaacs received an honorary doctorate from the University of East London for his documentary work. He is a visiting professor at the London Film School, the National Film and Television School and the Royal Holloway University. He is Associate Professor UCL.

In 2022, he had a retrospective at the Centre Pompidou (Beaubourg) Paris and in 2024 at One World Romania (Bucharest), and his work has been included in numerous documentary books and academic studies.

“Isaacs has an astounding gift for getting people to open up to him and he uses film the way a skilled artist uses paint. The result is beautiful, heartbreaking and profoundly humane” Times Online

“[Isaacs] has quietly built a body of work that puts him amongst the most empathetic documentary observers we have of lives often overlooked” Time Out

FILMOGRAPHY

2001 Lift

2003 Travellers

2003 Calais: The Last Border

2005 Someday My Prince Will Come

2005 Philip and His Seven Wives

2007 All White in Barking

2009 Men of the City

2011 Outside The Court

2011 The Old Man & His Bed

2012 The Road: A Story of Life & Death

2014 Outsiders

2016 The Men Who Sleep in Trucks

2016 Touched By Murder

2017 Notes on Bangladesh

2017 Sisters

2017 Moments of Silence

2020 The Filmmaker's House

2023 This Blessed



SYNTHETIC SINCERITY

A film by Marc Isaacs

Director
Marc Isaacs

Screenplay
Adam Ganz

Production
Marc Isaacs for Sincerity Films

Cinematography
Marc Isaacs

Editing
Marc Isaacs, David Charap

Sound
Sarah González Centeno

Sound Design
Dan Weinberg

Music
Yahli Lev