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The 1976 Face on Mars (A second image)

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DIPETRO & MOLENAAR

The viability of the Face on Mars as an artificial construct was resurrected by a pair of NASA's own employees working at the Goddard Space Flight Center, two engineers by the name of Vincent DiPietro and Greg Molenaar. They received permission to review the entire Viking archives including all the data tapes and printed photographs of the Viking mission. Everything was at their disposal. One of the first things the pair of researchers found was the second "lost image" that NASA supposedly acquired only a few hours after the first shot (Figure 1). According to the official image log this elusive second image was actually acquired almost a month after the first image, exposing the Face under slightly different lighting conditions and illuminating the eastern edge of the formation. This second Viking image 70A13 was acquired in August, during the morning with a resolution of 44 meters per pixel.¹

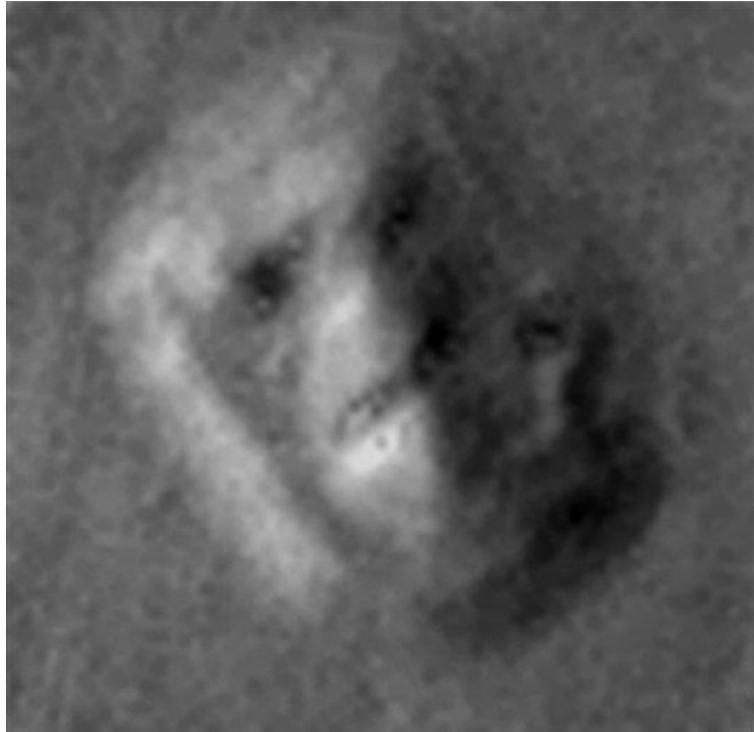


Figure 1 Face on Mars. Detail Viking frame 70A13, 1976.

Utilizing a new enhancement method that DiPietro and Molenaar had developed called Starburst Pixel Interleaving Technique (SPIT)² they were able to access more data from the original Viking tapes. This new technique allowed them to reveal more detail and as a result exposed additional facial features suggestive of an eye, nose, mouth and teeth (Figure 2).

The results of their studies were published in 1980 in a monograph entitled "Unusual Martian Surface Features." Although their extensive report suggested an artificial explanation for the Face and some of its surrounding structures, both NASA and the mainstream scientific community silently ignored their groundbreaking work.³

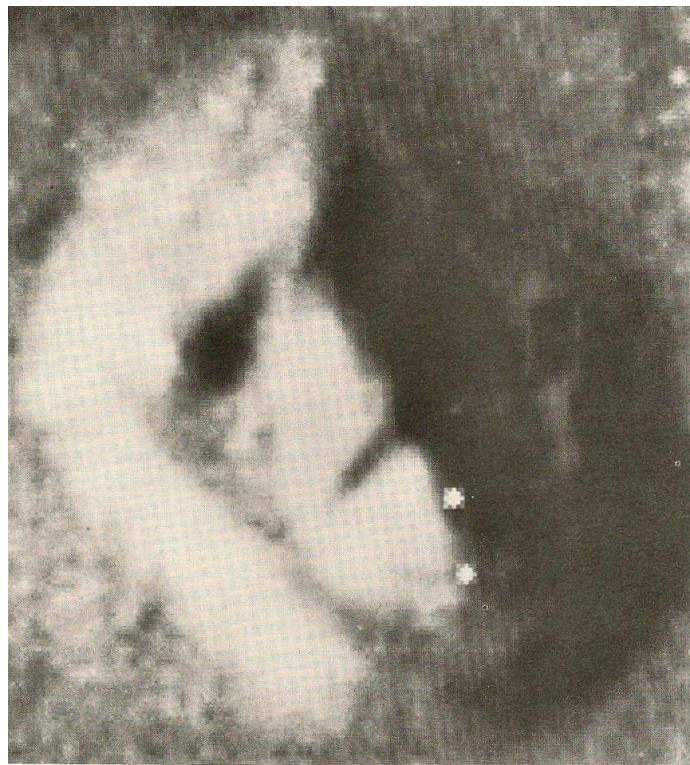


Figure 2 The Face on Mars, SPIT version. Detail Viking 70A13, 1980.

CARLOTTO & HOAGLAND

Sometime during the mid-1980s a young image analyst at The Analytical Sciences Corporation, by the name of Dr. Mark Carlotto produced a computer-adjusted "local-contrast-stretch" of NASA's Viking frame 70A13 (Figure 3). Despite the seemingly poor quality of these early Viking images, Carlotto's computer enhancements were able to reveal additional structural dimensions within the formation, included such bisymmetric features as a set of eyes, mouth and hair.⁴



Figure 3 Dr. Carlotto's computer-adjustment of the second image of Face on Mars Viking 70A13, 1985.

While working independently with the new computer enhancements of the Viking images that were provided by Dr. Mark Carlotto, science journalist and independent researcher Richard C. Hoagland produced a mirror split of both sides of the Face. He was astonished with the results, which revealed an interesting two-faced, humanoid/feline aspect to the overall facial formation (Figure 4). The image shows a flanged headdress, an eye, nose and mouth on the left side and the feline aspects on the right side including an eye, muzzle and mane.



Figure 4 Hoagland's mirroring of the second image of the Face on Mars. Detail Viking 70A13 1985.

Left: Carlotto's enhanced image. Center: Humanoid side. Right: Feline side.

Inspired by his findings in 1984, Hoagland proclaimed the "Face on Mars" to be the embodiment of a Martian Sphinx⁵ because, just like the Sphinx in Egypt, the Face on Mars is half humanoid and half feline. The profound implication of Hoagland's claims was that an identical fusion of two specific combinations of humanoid and feline features exists on massive structures produced on two different worlds: Earth and Mars.

In response to Hoagland's "mirroring" technique scientists quickly dismissed it as creating false images. They equated his two-faced experiments with nothing more than the result of Rorschach ink blots.⁶ When it comes to finding a geoglyphic structures on another planet, the academic community and the mainstream public, envision pictorial art through the eyes of Classical, Greco-Roman aesthetics. This western ideal expects figurative sculpture to be highly realistic and fully symmetrical. Any variation of this standard is deemed primitive or degenerate. They would only accept a face that looked something like Elvis Presley or Frank Sinatra (Figure 5).



Figure 5 Symmetrical human face
Left: Elvis Presley. Right: Frank Sinatra

In the late 90's, while the world was quickly losing interest in the so-called "Face on Mars", Dr. Carlotto decided to take another crack at enhancing the two Viking images of the Face on Mars.⁷ Again, his results were stunning (Figure 6). Not only did his new images bring out more detail of the eye and mouth on the western Humanoid side, it exposed the facial features on the eastern Feline side, providing additional support for Hoagland's proposed two-faced, human/feline model.

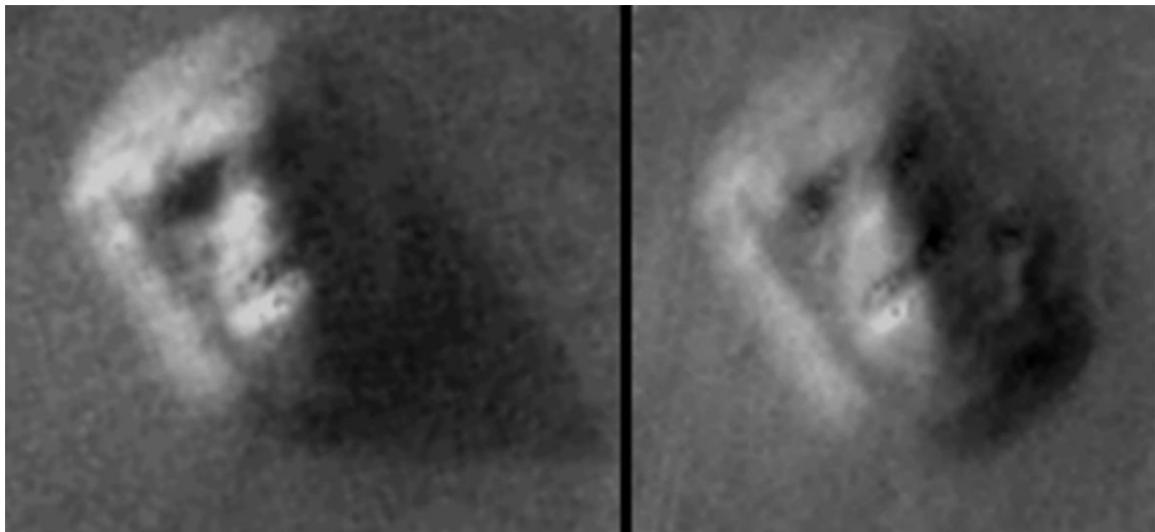


Figure 6 The two Viking image of the Face on Mars, enhancements by Dr. Mark Carlotto
Left: Viking frame 35A72. Right: Viking frame 70A13

After seeing Carlotto's new enhancements I mirrored the Viking 70A13 image for myself and I got some interesting results (Figure 7).

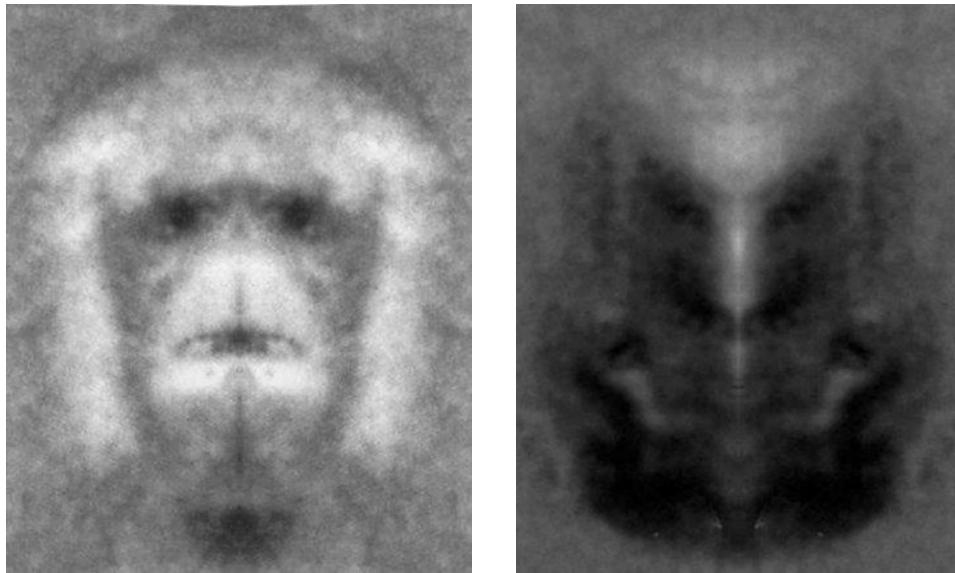


Figure 7 The Face on Mars. Detail Viking, 70A13

Left: Humanoid side (duplicated). Right: Feline side (duplicated).

The clearer, enhanced image provides more detail to the facial features of Hoagland's Martian Sphinx within the Humanoid and Felines sides. The Humanoid side shows the head is framed by a flanged headdress that goes all the way down to the chin area. It has a human-shaped eye that sits in a socket and a broad nose bridge, a mouth and tapered chin. The Feline side reveals dark, squinting eyes, a broad muzzle and a mouth and a zig-zag shaped mane.

Traditionally the Egyptian Sphinx has been seen as the embodiment of man and nature. It projects man as an extension of the animal world by forming a hybrid creature that symbolizes power and the duality of the universe. This connection to nature speaks to the heart of humanity. If the "Face on Mars" were truly a portrait of a Sphinx, then this simple idea of duality might hold the key to decoding the message of Cydonia. However, the answers to these questions could only be found with new, higher resolution pictures.

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Notes

1. Mars Viewer, Viking 070A13, dated, August 30, 1976.
2. Vincent Dipietro and Greg Molenarr, *Unusual Martian Surface Features*, Third Edition, Mars Research, (Maryland: Glen Dale, 1982), 38.
3. Randolfo Rafael Pozos, *The Face on Mars Evidence for a Lost Civilization?*, (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1980), ix.
4. Richard C. Hoagland, *The Monuments of Mars: A City on the Edge of Forever*, (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1996), Fig. 34.
5. Ibid, 195. Dr. Vladimir Avinsky, a Soviet geologist, was actually the first to refer to the "Face on Mars" as a "Martian Sphinx," in the August 1984 issue of Soviet Life magazine.
6. Sally Stephens, *The Face on Mars*, Astronomical Society, No. 25 - Fall 1993.
7. Mark J. Carlotto, *The Martian Enigmas, A closer look*, (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1997), 25-29.