

Debi Cornwall CV

I am a conceptual documentary artist who returned to visual expression in 2014 after a 12-year career as a civil-rights lawyer. My work examines American state-created realities through photographs, sound, film/video, testimony, and archives.

Education

2000 Harvard Law School, J.D.

1995 Brown University, B.A., magna cum laude, Honors in Modern Culture & Media (photography)

1992-95 Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), photography classes

Monographs

Necessary Fictions (Radius Books, 2020)

Welcome to Camp America: Inside Guantánamo Bay (Radius Books, 2017)

Selected Solo Exhibitions (*Welcome to Camp America*)

- 2021 Stadthaus Ulm (Germany) (forthcoming 21 December 2021 to 3 March, 2022)
- Musée de la Photographie Charleroi (Belgium) (forthcoming 23 January to 16 May)
- 2018 les Rencontres de la Photographie en Gaspésie (Canada)
- Cortona on the Move Festival (Italy)
- Philadelphia Photographic Arts Center (PA)
- Head On Photo Festival (Sydney, Australia)
- 2017 Steven Kasher Gallery (New York, NY)
- Carriage House Gallery, Brown University (Providence, RI)
- BMW Photo Space of GoEun Museum of Photography (Busan, S. Korea)
- Centre de la Photographie Genève (Switzerland)
- Punctum Award Special Exhibition, Lianzhou Foto Touring Exhibition, Chongqing (China)
- 2016 Lianzhou International Foto Festival (China) (catalogue)
- 2015 Photoville (Brooklyn, NY)
- Fovea Exhibitions (Beacon, NY)

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2022 *Photographie(s) en guerre (Photography at War)*, Musée de l'Armée (Paris, France) (forthcoming 23 March to 17 July)
- 2021 *Photography is Dead. Long Live Photography!*, Candela Gallery (Richmond, VA) (Juried exhibition) (forthcoming 8 January to 20 February).
- 2020 *Leica Women Foto Award Exhibition*, Photoville (Brooklyn, NY) (September) (17 September to 29 November)
- False Memory*, Rugby Gallery and Museum (England) (6 August to 4 November)
- Entrouvert (Half Open)*, Analix Forever Gallery (Geneva, Switzerland)
- Leica Women Foto Project Award Exhibition*, Leica Gallery (Boston, MA)
- 2018 *Kraszna-Krausz Book Award Exhibition*, Photo London (U.K.)
- Discoveries of the Meeting Place*, Fotofest Biennial (Houston, TX) (catalogue)
- En Suspens (In Between)*, Le BAL (Paris, France) (9 February to 13 May) (catalogue)
- 2017 *Paris Photo-Aperture Foundation PhotoBook Awards Exhibition*, Grand Palais (France); touring through 2018
- Hope*, Beirut Art Fair (Lebanon), Annalix Forever Genève Contemporary Art Gallery
- Bending the Frame*, Gulf + Western Gallery, NYU Tisch School of the Arts (NY, NY)
- Something Fierce*, Lannan Foundation Gallery (Santa Fe, NM)
- Aperture Summer Open: On Freedom*, Aperture Gallery, juried and curated by For Freedoms (NY, NY)
- La Nuit de l'Année*, les Rencontres de la Photographie d'Arles (France)
- 2016 *STUMP*, Candela Books + Gallery (Richmond, VA)
- 2015 *21st Annual Juried Show, Peter Urban Legacy Edition*, Griffin Museum of Photography (Winchester, MA)
- EXPOSURE*, Photographic Resource Center (Boston, MA) (Juried exhibition)
- CAPTURED*, Newspace Center for Photography (Portland, OR) (Juried exhibition)
- Conceal & Reveal*, Belfast Photo Festival (Northern Ireland)
- 2014 *NEXT.*, Castell Gallery (Asheville, NC) (Juried exhibition)
- Photoville: 20 Emerging American Photographers*, Leiden International Photo Festival (Netherlands)

Selected Collections

Harvard Art Museums
Lannan Foundation
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University
Yossi Milo Collection
Joaquim Paiva Collection
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library
SF MoMA Research Library
Getty Research Institute
Cleveland Museum of Art (WCA book)

Selected Honors

- 2020 Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2021, Nominee (*Necessary Fictions*)
les Rencontres d'Arles Photo-Text Book Award, Shortlist (*Necessary Fictions*)
Tim Hetherington Trust Visionary Award, Shortlist (*Necessary Fictions: Pineland films*)
- 2019 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship (Photography)
Leica Women Foto Project Award
W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund Grant, Finalist
Tim Hetherington Trust Visionary Award, Shortlist (*Necessary Fictions: Pineland films*)
- 2018 PDN Annual Publisher's Choice Award
Alice Award, Shortlist
Lucie First Photo Book Prize, Finalist
Kraszna-Krausz Foundation Book Award, Longlist
Fotofest Charles Jing Fellowship (Inaugural juried exhibition prize)
International Center of Photography (ICP) Infinity Award (artist's book category), Nominee
Outpost Artist Resources Cuts & Burns Residency
- 2017-19 Center for Emerging Visual Artists Fellowship
- 2017 Harpo Foundation Visual Artist Grant
Paris Photo-Aperture First PhotoBook Award, Shortlist
Les Rencontres de la Photographie d'Arles Photo-Text Book Award, Shortlist
Brown University Fitt Artist-in-Residence
Arte Laguna Prize, Shortlist
- 2016 Punctum Award, Lianzhou Foto Festival (Juried prize)
Baum Award for an Emerging American Photographer, Nominee
Duke University Archive of Documentary Arts Collection Award for Women Documentarians
Critical Mass Top 50
Project and publication grants from the Vital Projects Fund at Proteus, Violet Jabara Charitable Trust,
David Rockefeller Fund, Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation, Puffin Foundation, and Pollination Project
- 2015 Speranza Foundation Lincoln City Fellowship
Grand Prix International de Photographie de Vevey (Switzerland), Shortlist

Bibliography

Selected Academic Publications:

- Alexandra Moore, Ph.D., "Ghost Detainees and State Power Across the Thresholds of Detectability," *ASAP/Journal* (Johns Hopkins University Press, forthcoming January, 2021).
- Esther Whitfield, Ph.D., "Guantánamo, Cuba: Poetry and Prison on Divided Ground," *Comparative Literature* Vol. 72, Issue 3 (Duke University Press, Sept. 1, 2020) at pp. 299–315.
- Daniel Grinberg, "Some Restrictions Apply: The Exhibition Spaces of Guantánamo Bay," *Cinema Journal* (July, 2018).
- Esther Whitfield, Ph.D. "Guantánamo and Community: Visual Approaches to the Base," in *GUANTÁNAMO AND AMERICAN EMPIRE: THE HUMANITIES RESPOND*, Don Walicek and Jessica Adams, eds. (Palgrave MacMillan, 2017).
- Jean-Philippe Dedieu, "Guantánamo's Frames of War: A Dialogue with Debi Cornwall and Larry Siems," *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, Vol. 8/1 (U. Penn. Press) (Spring 2017).

Selected Additional Publications:

In Print:

- "Picture Power: Necessary Fictions," Photo essay, *Newsweek Japan* (27 October 2020), at pp. 62-67.
- Siddhartha Mitter, "Photoville Adds New Venues, Vistas, and Vision," Exhibition review, *New York Times* (22 Sept. 2020), at C2.
- Michael McCanne, "Black Sights," Book review, *Art in America* (June/July 2018), at pp. 51-53.
- John McDonald, "Shifting the Focus" Exhibition review, *Sydney Morning Herald* (18 May 2018).
- Erin Thompson, "Welcome to Camp America: Inside Guantánamo Bay," Book review, *Zeke Magazine* (Spring 2018).
- Diane Dufour, Bartolomé Stanson & Julie Héroult, eds., *In Between* (Exhibition catalogue) (Le BAL & Shelter Press, 2018).
- Conner Gordon, "Confronting Incarceration's Destructive Invisibility: Debi Cornwall & Amy Elkins" Interview & Photo Essay, *Epistem Magazine* at pp. 20-33 (The Prindle Institute for Ethics, DePauw University, February 2018).
- Moritz Neumüller, "Extreme Exposures," Book review, *European Photography Magazine*, No. 102 at pp. 64-70 (2018).
- Aperture Foundation, "The 2017 Paris Photo-Aperture Foundation PhotoBook Awards Shortlist: First PhotoBook," *The Photobook Review* at p. 11 (Issue 013/Fall 2017).
- Drew Zeiba, "Interview with Artist Debi Cornwall About Her Work in Guantánamo Bay and the Concept of Comfort in Captivity," *PIN-UP Magazine* (Issue 23, Fall/Winter 2017/2018).
- Izabela Radwanska Zhang, "Out of Sight, Out of Mind," Book review, *British Journal of Photography* at pp. 18-19 (Nov. 2017).
- David O'Neill, "Artful Volumes: The Season's Outstanding Art Books," Book review, *Bookforum*, Vol. 4, Issue 3 (Fall 2017).
- Seock Hyunhye, Interview & Exhibition Review, *Sajinyesul Photographic Art Magazine* (Korea) (August 2017).
- Clémentine Mercier, "Coquillages et Cuirassés," Exhibition review, *Libération* (France) (12 May 2017).
- Samuel Schellenberg, "Bienvenu à Guantánamo," Exhibition review, *Le Courier* (Switzerland) (21 April 2017).
- Monika Dommann, "Welche Farben hat Orange?" Exhibition review, *WOZ Die Wochenzeitung* (Switzerland) (20 April 2017).
- Caroline Stevan, "J'ai voulu montrer le fun de Guantánamo, selon les Gls," Interview, *Le Temps* (Switzerland) (31 Mar. 2017).
- Anna Aznaour, "J'ai photographié d'ex-détenus de Guantánamo," Exhibition review, *Tribune de Genève* (22 March 2017).
- Nata Zhu, Interview, *Photoworld Magazine* (China) (January 2017).
- David Drake, "Fotofest 2016 Reviewer's Choice," *Fotomagazin* (Germany) (20 July 2016).
- Elodie Cabrera, "Hors la Loi Américaine," *Polka Magazine* (France) (October 2015).
- Mark Feeny, "At the PRC, 13 Ways of Looking at the World," Exhibition review, *Boston Globe* (25 June 2015).
- "Picture Power: Gitmo at Home, Gitmo at Play," Photo essay, *Newsweek Japan* (3 December 2014).
- "Contrast heerst op Guantánamo," Photo essay, *de Morgen* (Belgium) (16 October 2014).
- "Guantánamo, Reframed," Photo essay, *International New York Times* (14 October 2014).

Online & Radio:

- Wayne Swanson, "Debi Cornwall: Necessary Fictions," Book review, *Photobook Journal* (6 November 2020).
- Miss Rosen, "Playing War Games on American Soil, in Photos," Interview and book review, *Feature Shoot* (20 October 2020).
- Michael Delgado, "A.G. Geiger Presents: Bookseller's Holiday: National Photographer Appreciation Month," Review, *L.A. Weekly* (13 October 2020).
- Matt Alagiah, "Debi Cornwall explores American power and identity in the post-9/11 era," *It's Nice That* (8 October 2020).
- Michael Delgado, "A.G. Geiger Presents: Tales from the L.A. Art Underworld," Podcast (7 October 2020).
- Lou Tsatsas, "Devais-je faire plus d'effort pour que cela ne m'affecte pas? Après tout, rien de tout cela n'est réel," Interview, *Fisheye Magazine* (30 September 2020).
- Izabela Radwanska Zhang, "Debi Cornwall investigates the performance of US state control," Interview, *British Journal of Photography* (30 August 2020).
- Gregory McNamee, "Village of the Damned," Book review, *Los Angeles Review of Books* (28 August 2020).
- Francesco Scalici, "Debi Cornwall: Necessary Fictions," Book review, *Float Magazine* (28 July 2020).
- Katherine Oktober Matthews, "The Power of State-Created Reality: An Interview with Debi Cornwall," *Riding the Dragon* (20 July 2020).
- Elin Spring, "Leica Women Foto Project Winners," Exhibition review, *What Will You Remember* (12 March 2020).
- Lev Feigin, "Inside Guantanamo Bay," Book review, *Hyperallergic* (23 August 2018).
- Edith Newhall, "The Creepiness of the Photos Takes a Moment to Sink In," Exhibition review, *Philadelphia Inquirer* (10 August 2018).
- Deborah Krieger, "Photography Exhibition Captures the Incongruous Crush of Guantánamo Bay Prisons," *Humble Arts Foundation* (9 August 2018).
- Siddhartha Mitter, "Outside the Wire: Camp America Comes Home," *The Intercept* (10 June 2018).
- Ninah Kopel, Fourth Estate Podcast, Interview, 2SER Radio (Australia) (18 May 2018).

Garry Maddox, "Mugs, shirts and stuffed toys: the gift shop view of Guantánamo," Interview, *Sydney Morning Herald* (13 May 2018).

Zack Hatfield, "Debi Cornwall's Welcome to Camp America," Exhibition review, *The Guardian* (25 February 2018).

Wilco Versteeg, "Roaming Without End: A group exhibition in Paris navigates documentary strategies in a directionless world." (Exhibition review), Aperture Foundation Blog (21 February 2018).

Miss Rosen, "A Surreal Portrait of Life Inside Guantánamo Bay: Camp America," *Huck Magazine* (17 January 2018).

Mark Murrmann, "Here are 10 of the Most Captivating Photo Books of the Year. Just Look." *Mother Jones* (31 Dec. 2017).

Teju Cole, "The Best Photo Books of 2017," *New York Times Magazine* (30 December 2017).

Tim Clark, "Top 10 Photobooks of 2017," *1000 Words Magazine* (UK) (18 December 2017).

Stefan Wagner, "So oder so ist Guantanamo," Interview & book review, *Der Spiegel* (Germany) (15 December 2017).

Loring Knaubloch, "Debi Cornwall: Welcome to Camp America, Inside Guantánamo Bay @Steven Kasher," Exhibition review, *Collector Daily* (30 November 2017).

Ryan P. Smith, "The Ten Best Photography Books of 2017," Book review, *Smithsonian Magazine* (28 November 2017).

Nina Strohlic, "Eerie Photos Reveal Life Inside Guantanamo Bay Prison," *National Geographic Magazine* (8 Nov. 2017).

Donny Bajohr, "These Photographs Capture the Complexities of Life at Guantánamo," *Smithsonian Magazine* (6 Nov. 2017).

Mark Murrmann, "These Photos Plunge You into the Inner Madness of Guantánamo," Review, *Mother Jones* (7 Oct. 2017).

Katherine Oktober Mathews, "Welcome to Camp America," Book review, *GUP* (12 September 2017).

Jim Casper, "Welcome to Camp America," Book review, *Lensculture* (12 September 2017).

Jordan G. Teicher, "In Guantánamo, Ensared in the War on Terror," Book review, *New York Times Lens* (11 Sept. 2017).

Michael Abatemarco, "Empowerment through Art: Something Fierce," Exhibition review, *Santa Fe New Mexican* (4 Aug 2017).

"The best of 2015's Photoville – New York City's largest photo exhibition," *The Guardian* (U.K.) (9 September 2015).

Jenna Garrett, "Inside Gitmo's Surreal Recreation Spots, Tiki Bar and All," *Wired Magazine* (24 June 2015).

Lewis Bush, "Gitmo on Sale," *British Journal of Photography* (12 May 2015).

Romke Hoogwaerts, "Look: Souvenirs from the Guantánamo Bay Gift Shops," *New York Times Magazine* (1 May 2015).

Marco Werman, The World, Interview, *Public Radio International* (14 October 2014).

David Gonzalez, "Guantánamo's Surreal Prison Landscape," *New York Times Lens* (14 October 2014).

Selected Artist's Talks, Lectures, Panels & Teaching

Panelist, "Visual Journalism in the Post-Truth Era," Fotodemic (31 July 2020).

Artist's Lecture, Philadelphia Photo Arts Center (21 May 2020).

ICP New Media Narratives Weekend Workshop, Necessary Fictions (March, 2020).

Artist's Lecture, 2020 National Geographic Storytellers Summit (16 January 2020).

Invited speaker, The New School (Documentary Strategies), ICP (Images and Ideas; Image Strategies for Human Rights), SUNY Binghamton (Human Rights Research), NYU (Methodologies graduate course), Pace Univ. (Art as Vehicle for Social Change), SVA (Book Design) (2018-20).

Artist's Lecture, Yale Law School Visual Law Project (11 October 2018).

Panelist, "ICP Lab: Blue Skies and Bad Dreams," ICP Museum, New York, NY (22 April 2018).

Artist's Lecture, Columbia School of Journalism, New York, NY (27 March 2018).

Creative Conversation with James Estrin, *New York Times Lens* Editor, Fotofest Biennial, Houston, Texas (16 March 2018).

"A conversation between Debi Cornwall, Aglaia Konrad, Paola Yacoub & Diane Dufour," Le BAL, Paris, France (10 February 2018).

Artist's Lecture, "Photography in the Age of Global Surveillance & Perpetual Wars," Columbia Paris, France (13 Nov. 2017).

Symposium Panelist, "What Does It Mean to Make Art at Guantánamo?" John Jay College, CUNY, NYC (16 October 2017).

Panelist, "Bending the Frame: Where Do We Go From Here?" NYU Tisch School of the Arts, NYC (5 October 2017).

Panelist, "Photobooks: Protest and Resistance," Contemporary Artists' Book Conference, New York Art Book Fair, MoMA PSI, Queens, NY (22 September 2017).

Symposium Panelist, "Guantánamo Going Forward: What's Next for Current and Former Detainees?" Brown University, Providence, RI (15 September 2017).

Artist's Lecture, School for Visual Arts (SVA), NYC (25 April 2017).

Presenter, Open Engagement (socially engaged artists' conference), Chicago, IL (22 April 2017).

Panelist, "Saying War, Building Peace," Palais des Nations, United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland (14 March 2017).

Artist's Lecture, "Welcome to Camp America," Reiss-Engelhorn Museums/ZEPHYR Mannheim, Germany (24 May 2016).

Panelist, "Securing Support for Your Long-Term Projects," Fotofest, Houston, TX (16 March 2016).

Panelist, "Influencing Policy and Social Change through Photography," Photoville, Brooklyn, NY (12 Sept. 2015).

Artist's Lecture, Doomed Gallery London, UK /Alternative Processes Collective (7 April 2015).

Panelist, "Art, Film and Guantánamo: a Special Freedom Flicks Event," Brooklyn Public Library (14 January 2015).

Community

2018-present Advisory Board, CASE Art Fund

Experience

2001-13 Neufeld Scheck & Brustin, LLP, Civil rights attorney (Partner 2006-13)

2000-01 Honorable Robert W. Sweet, U.S. District Court Judge (S.D.N.Y.), Law Clerk

1995-97 Federal Defender Division/Legal Aid Society (NYC), Investigator/Trial Assistant

1994-95 Associated Press, Providence, RI, Photographer (Stringer)

Contact

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