

Debi Cornwall CV

I am a conceptual documentary artist who returned to visual expression after a 12-year career as a civil-rights lawyer. My work illuminates invisible systems using still and moving images, testimony, and archival material.

Film/Video

Jade Helm (14'30", 2022)

Pineland/Hollywood (10'36", 2021)

Books

Prix Elysée Nominee's Book 2022-2024 (Photo Élysée, 2023)

Necessary Fictions (Radius Books, 2020)

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

Selected Honors, Awards, Fellowships, Residencies & Grants

- 2023 Prix Elysée, Winner
Aesthetica Art Prize, Shortlisted Finalist
Big Sky Documentary Film Festival Best Mini-Doc Competition, Finalist
- 2022 Prix Elysée, 5th Edition (2022-2024), Nominee
San Francisco Documentary Film Festival, Jury Prize, Best Short Film
Boston Short Film Festival, Jury Prize, Best Experimental Film
- 2021 American Academy of Arts Rome Prize, Nominee
Speranza Foundation Lincoln City Fellowship
Lucie Photo Book Prize, Shortlist
- 2020 les Rencontres d'Arles Photo-Text Book Award, Shortlist
Tim Hetherington Trust Visionary Award, Shortlist
- 2019 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship (Photography)
Leica Women Foto Project Award
W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund Grant, Finalist
Tim Hetherington Trust Visionary Award, Shortlist
- 2018 Fotofest Charles Jing Fellowship (Juried exhibition prize)
PDN Annual Publisher's Choice Award
Alice Award, Shortlist
Lucie First Photo Book Prize, Finalist
Kraszna-Krausz Foundation Book Award, Longlist
International Center of Photography (ICP) Infinity Award (Artist's book category), Nominee
Outpost Artist Resources Cuts & Burns Residency (*Jade Helm*)
- 2017 Harpo Foundation Visual Artist Grant
Center for Emerging Visual Artists Fellowship
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, Carriage House Gallery exhibition
- 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
- 2015 Speranza Foundation Lincoln City Fellowship

Foundation Support

David Rockefeller Fund

Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation

Foundation for Contemporary Arts FCA Emergency Grant COVID-19 Fund

Furthermore, a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund

Lannan Foundation

Pollination Project

Puffin Foundation

Violet Jabara Charitable Trust

Vital Projects Fund

Screenings & Film Festivals

- 2023 Official selection, 10th Freep Film Festival (Detroit, Michigan)
Medium Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (*Pineland/Hollywood*)
Official selection, 16th Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival (California)
Official selection, 20th Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (Missoula, Montana)
- 2022 Official selection, 25th Antimatter [Media Art] Festival (Victoria, Canada)
Official selection, 37th Videoex, Experimental Film & Video Festival (Zurich, Switzerland)
Official selection, 29th Chicago Underground Film Festival (Chicago, IL)
Official selection, 7th Boston Short Film Festival (Boston, MA)
Official selection, 21st SF DocFest (San Francisco, CA)
Official selection, 22nd D.C. Independent Film Festival (Washington, D.C.)
Official selection, 13th Ghent Viewpoint Documentary Film Festival (Belgium)
- 2021 Official selection, 37th interfilm, International Short Film Festival Berlin (Germany)

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 *Model Citizens*, Photo Élysée (Lausanne, Switzerland) (forthcoming 29 June to 1 October)
- 2022 *Welcome to Camp America: Inside Guantánamo Bay* ("WCA"), Xposure Festival (Sharjah, U.A.E.)
- 2021 WCA, Stadthaus Ulm (Germany)
WCA, Musée de la Photographie à Charleroi (Belgium)
- 2018 WCA, les Rencontres de la Photographie en Gaspésie (Canada)
WCA, Cortona on the Move Festival (Italy)
WCA, Philadelphia Photographic Arts Center (PA)
WCA, Head On Photo Festival (Sydney, Australia)
- 2017 WCA, Steven Kasher Gallery (New York, NY)
WCA, BMW Photo Space of GoEun Museum of Photography (Busan, S. Korea)
WCA, Centre de la Photographie Genève (Switzerland)
- 2016 WCA, Lianzhou International Foto Festival (China) (catalogue) (Punctum award, juried prize)
- 2015 WCA, Photoville (Brooklyn, NY)

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2023 *Aesthetica Art Prize Exhibition*, York Art Gallery (U.K.) (24 March to 4 June)
Prix Élysée Nominees, Photo Élysée booth, ArtGenève (Switzerland)
- 2022 *Guerra a distancia (War at a Distance)*, Museu d'Art Modern de Tarragona, SCAN Tarragona Festival internacional de fotografia (curated by Natasha Christia) (Spain)
Remaking the Exceptional: Tea, Torture, & Reparations | Chicago to Guantánamo, DePaul Art Museum (Chicago, IL)
- 2021 *Photography is Dead. Long Live Photography!*, Candela Gallery (Richmond, VA) (Juried exhibition, catalogue)
- 2020 *Leica Women Foto Project Award Exhibition*, Photoville (NYC)
False Memory, Rugby Gallery and Museum (England)
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) (Charles Jing Fellowship, juried prize)
En Suspens (In Between), Le BAL (Paris, France) (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 (NYC)
Something Fierce, Lannan Foundation Gallery (Santa Fe, NM)
Aperture Summer Open: On Freedom, Aperture Gallery, juried and curated by For Freedoms (NYC)
La Nuit de l'Année, les Rencontres de la Photographie d'Arles (France) (projection)
- 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)
- 2015 *CAPTURED*, Newspace Center for Photography (Portland, OR) (Juried exhibition)

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2014 *NEXT*; Castell Gallery (Asheville, NC) (Juried exhibition)
Photoville: 20 Emerging American Photographers, Leiden International Photo Festival (Netherlands)

Bibliography

Selected Academic Publications & Presentations:

Esther Whitfield, *A NEW NO MAN'S LAND: WRITING AND ART FROM GUANTÁNAMO, CUBA* (Univ. of Pittsburgh Press: forthcoming 2024).

Amber Ginsburg, Aaron Hughes, Aliya Hussain, and Audrey Petty, eds., *REMAKING THE EXCEPTIONAL: TEA, TORTURE, AND REPARATIONS | CHICAGO TO GUANTÁNAMO* (DePaul Art Museum, 2022), at 30-31, 120, 122-27, 146-47, 290.

Moritz Neumüller, ed., *THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO PHOTOGRAPHY, REPRESENTATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE* (Taylor & Francis, 2022), at 301, 336, 343-46, 350-51.

Rebecca Boguska, Ph.D., *GUANTÁNAMO FRAMES* (Meson Press, 2022), at Chapter 2.

Michelle Bogre, *PHOTOGRAPHY AS ACTIVISM: IMAGES FOR SOCIAL CHANGE*, 2d Ed. (Routledge, 2022).

European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, *RUPTURE AND RECKONING: GUANTÁNAMO TURNS 20*, ECCHR (11 January 2022), at pp. 137-42.

Alexandra Moore, Ph.D., "Necessary Fictions': On the Sustaining Fantasies of the Forever War," in *Just in Time: Afterlives of Guantánamo and the War on Terror: The Forever War 20 Years After 9/11*, 2021 MLA Convention (7 January, 2021).

Alexandra Moore, Ph.D., "Across the Thresholds of Detectability: Guantánamo in the Work of Debi Cornwall," *ASAP Journal* (Johns Hopkins University Press, January, 2021), at pp. 211-234.

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.

Michelle Bogre, *DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY RECONSIDERED: HISTORY, THEORY, AND PRACTICE* (Routledge, 2019), Online Companion Interviews.

Daniel Grinberg, "Some Restrictions Apply: The Exhibition Spaces of Guantánamo Bay," *Cinema Journal* (July, 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).

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:

Aesthetica Magazine (U.K.) (April/May 2023), at p. 123.

FUTURE NOW 2023 AESTHETICA ART PRIZE ANTHOLOGY, *Aesthetica Magazine* (U.K.) (March 2023).

Bastian Tebarth, "Debi Cornwall zeigt Guantánamo als Sinnbild der USA und des »freien Westens«," Interview, *Melodie & Rhythmus* (Germany) (1/2022), at p. 67.

Lou Tatsas, "Debi Cornwall," *Fisheye Photo Review 2021.22* at pp. 226-31 (October 2021).

Dana Melaver, "Necessary Fictions," Book review, *Zeke Magazine* (Fall 2021), at p. 73.

Jean Dykstra, "Debi Cornwall's Necessary Fictions," Book review, *The Brooklyn Rail* (July/August 2021), at p. 99.

Finley Cutts, "À la guerre, comme à la guerre," *Fisheye Magazine #48* (July 2021), at pp. 36-47.

Jean-Marie Wynants, "Quand l'Image Révèle Ce Qu'elle Ne Montre Pas," Exhibition Review, *le Mad* (Belgium), at pp. 22-23.

Tom Seymour, "Krieg und Fiktion," Interview, *Fotomagazin* (Germany) (March 2021), at pp. 24-25.

Jean-Marc Bodson, "Bienvenue à Guantánamo," Exhibition review, *La Libre Belgique* (Belgium) (17 February 2021), at p. 19.

Yang Zhou, "Debi Cornwall: Necessary Fictions," Photo essay and interview, *Cityzine* (China) (January 2021), at pp. 88-98.

"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, *N.Y. Times* (22 Sept. 2020), at p. 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).

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).

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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* (S. 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).

Elodie Cabrera, "Hors la Loi Américaine," *Polka Magazine* (France) (October 2015).

Mark Feeney, "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).

Television, Radio, Online, & Podcasts:

Erin L. Thompson and Maliha Tasnim, "Guantánamo's Artists Fight for Beauty," *Hyperallergic* (28 February 2023).

"Top 50 Exhibitions of 2022," *Hyperallergic* (listing DPAM's *Tea, Torture & Reparations* at #3 worldwide) (28 Dec., 2022).

Inès Boittiaux, "Debi Cornwall et le théâtre du monde," *Beaux Arts Magazine* (11 July 2022).

Lori Waxman, "Art Behind Bars: 'Tea, Torture & Reparations' at DePaul makes connections between police violence in Chicago and torture in Guantanamo," Exhibition review, *Chicago Tribune* (27 April 2022).

"Necessary Fictions," Photo Essay and Interview, *Truth in Photography* (Spring 2022).

Alexandra Chaves, "Xposure: how photographer Debi Cornwall captured the humanity inside Guantanamo Bay," Exhibition review, *The National* (U.A.E.), 15 February 2022.

Lewis Bush, "'I felt a responsibility to look'," *The Art Newspaper*, 19 January 2022.

Richard B. Woodward, "How 9/11 Changed Art," *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 September 2021.

Alexandra S. Moore, "Debi Cornwall's Necessary Fictions: On the Sustaining Fantasies of the Forever War," Book review, *The Polis Project*, 8 September 2021.

Miriam Pensack, "The Genre Guantánamo Made," Book review, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 9 June 2021.

John Devos, "Musée de la Photographie Charleroi: Debi Cornwall: *Welcome to Camp America*," Exhibition review, *L'Oeil de la Photographie* (29 March 2021).

Catherine Businaro, "Immersion au sein de Guantanamo et ambiance feutrée au musée de la photo," Exhibition review & interview, *TéléSambre* (Belgium) (12 February 2021).

Loring Knabloch, "Debi Cornwall: *Necessary Fictions*," Book review, *Collector Daily* (18 January 2021).

Brad Feuerhelm, *Nearest Truth* #137 (Podcast interview) (18 January 2021).

Mark Murrmann, "At Least One Thing Was Great About 2020: These Photobooks," *Mother Jones* (28 December 2020).

Donny Bajohr and Jeff Campagna, "Top Ten Photography Books of 2020," *Smithsonian Magazine* (12 December 2020).

Matthew Flowers, Catherine Edelman, and Jim Casper, "Favorite Photobooks of 2020," *Lensculture* (8 December 2020).

Kenneth Dickerman, "'Our lives take place in the realm of fantasy, triviality, and materialism, and our senses and mental capacity become numbed as a result,'" Book review, *The Washington Post* (2 December 2020).

Sunil Shah, "Fantasy-Industrial Complex: Debi Cornwall's *Necessary Fictions*," Book review & interview, *American Suburb X* (27 November 2020).

Matt Alagiah, "Debi Cornwall explores American power and identity in the post-9/11 era," *It's Nice That* (8 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).

Lev Feigin, "Inside Guantanamo Bay," Book review, *Hyperallergic* (23 August 2018).

Edith Newhall, "The Creepiness of the Photos Takes a Moment to Sink In," Exh. review, *Philadelphia Inquirer* (10 Aug. 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).

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

Wilco Versteeg, "Roaming Without End," Exhibition review, *Aperture Foundation Blog* (21 February 2018).

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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 Stochlic, "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," *Mother Jones* (7 October 2017).
Katherine Oktober Mathews, "Welcome to Camp America," Book review, *GUP* (12 September 2017).
Jordan G. Teicher, "In Guantánamo, Ensared in the War on Terror," Book review, *New York Times Lens* (11 Sept. 2017).
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).

Artist Lectures

American University of Kuwait
Amherst College
Arizona State University
le Bal (France)
Beyond Magnum
Brooklyn Public Library
Brown University
Colorado College
Columbia School of Journalism
Columbia Global Centers (Paris, France)
Contemporary Artists' Book Conference, New York Art Book Fair (MoMA PS1)
CUNY John Jay College
Fotodemic
Fotofest
Griffin Museum
ICP Museum
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz (Germany)
National Geographic Storytellers Summit
NYU
The New School
Open Engagement
Pace University
SUNY Binghamton
Philadelphia Photo Arts Center
Photoville
SVA
United Nations Headquarters (Geneva, Switzerland)
Xposure Festival (Sharjah, U.A.E.)
Yale Law School
ZEPHYR Mannheim (Germany)

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Selected Collections

Bibliothèque National de France
Duke University Archive of Documentary Arts
Harvard Art Museums
Joaquim Paiva Collection/MAM-Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)
Lannan Foundation
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library
Musée de la Photographie à Charleroi (Belgium)
Museum of Fine Arts Houston
Yossi Milo Collection

Service

Women Photograph, Board member (2021-present)
CASE Art Fund, Advisory Board member (2018-present)

Experience

2020-present International Center of Photography (ICP), Adjunct Faculty
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)

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

Contact

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