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A Brand New End: Survival and Its Pictures

Carmen Winant

April 15 – July 16, 2022

The Print Center



Violence is one of the ways that men have learned to cope with stress, 2022, sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints, 23 ½" x 18"

The Print Center is pleased to present *A Brand New End: Survival and Its Pictures*, a photography-based project of new work by Carmen Winant, which comprises an exhibition, public intervention, film, artist book and series of public programs. It is organized by Ksenia Nouril, PhD, The Print Center's Jensen Bryan Curator.

Carmen Winant is one of the most incisive artists of her generation. Her work is nothing short of radical — a bold provocation that pushes boundaries and reexamines feminist tropes. A natural extension of her photography-based practice, A Brand New End: Survival and Its Pictures is an exploration of the ways in which survivors of domestic violence have pushed through societal and personal burdens to realize self-actualization. We are honored to present this multipart project in partnership with WIT, NCADV, filmmaker Daniel Traub of Itinerant Pictures and the graphic design studio Common Name.

— Elizabeth Spungen, Executive Director

A Brand New End: Survival and Its Pictures has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

This project – which is collaborative and genre-bending – is a decidedly feminist undertaking. I always have understood my practice to be a continuation of and a channel for my feminist politics and my interest in second wave feminist history. My work is more of a reckoning than a report; it allows me to reach backwards and attempt to make sense of the space between lives and movements. I'm interested in how photographs serve us as we confront domestic violence (tellingly called 'wife abuse' or 'battered women syndrome' in previous decades). What and who is pictured in telling this story, and how? This project utilizes many different forms of pictures in service of making domestic violence survivors and their advocates visible, as well as contending with how we see (in the most literal way possible) and value them and their experiences in our culture at large. Domestic violence is an outgrowth and a symptom of the patriarchy that hurts all people inside of it.

— Carmen Winant

The Print Center was honored to work with Carmen Winant and our partners WIT and NCADV in producing this project, which calls attention to many urgent social issues through photography. As an artist, Winant constantly challenges herself, examining representation and image-making through the lenses of feminism and personal agency. The archives of WIT and NCADV contain invaluable materials, documenting aspects of feminist history and the representation of female empowerment. Centering on photographic works, mixed-media collage, public interventions and installations, Winant's practice is uniquely suited for this project. Visitors to A Brand New End will view a compendium of Carmen's research – the artistic manifestation of her investigations. The project is particularly timely, as Covid-19 has brought the impacts of intimate partner abuse to the fore.

— Dr. Ksenia Nouril, Jensen Bryan Curator



Carmen Winant examines slides from the WIT archive. Film still: Itinerant Pictures

About the Project

A Brand New End: Survival and Its Pictures explores historical and contemporary representations of oppression, liberation and self-expression through materials drawn from and inspired by the archives of Women In Transition (WIT) and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV). This multipart project aims to illuminate the often invisible experiences of women, as well as feminist strategies for survival, revolt and self-determination. It highlights the power of print (photography and printmaking) to depict how women view themselves, and how photography can serve as a tool in the struggle for individual autonomy and self-representation. Through its expansive consideration of image making, domestic violence and the larger feminist movement deploying the archives of WIT and NCADV, *A Brand New End* critically examines the problems and possibilities of visualizing domestic violence and subsequent survival.

WIT was founded in Philadelphia in 1971 to help newly divorced women learn strategies for navigating and thriving in a new world. It continues to provide services to empower people with the knowledge, support and ability to thrive beyond domestic abuse/ intimate partner violence and substance abuse. NCADV is a



Winant with "job cards" from WIT's archive in her Columbus, OH studio. Film still: Itinerant Pictures

Denver-based, national organization dedicated to supporting survivors and advocates, holding offenders accountable and demanding a change in the conditions that lead to domestic violence since 1978.

For over two years, the artist Carmen Winant conducted intensive research in the archives of these two social service organizations. Each archive includes publications, how-to guides, manuals, newsletters, pamphlets, staged photographs for instruction/presentation, newspaper clippings, legal paperwork, newsletters, board games, 16mm films, VHS tapes and other ephemera. They are extraordinary windows into feminism and the women's liberation movement that began in the 1970s. Over the intervening decades, both organizations have evolved as new issues commanded attention, such as abuse by partners and drug addiction. Surfacing themes of intergenerational exchange, *A Brand New End* considers what has changed within discourses around feminism, domestic violence and survival, as well as how the ongoing deconstruction of patriarchal systems of oppression can influence feminist ideals and actionable strategies, from policy to informal coalition building today.

Winant, who was raised in Philadelphia, was first drawn to WIT's archive because it clearly documented the organization's growth from a local, multiracial feminist collective to a nationally recognized

provider of critical social services to people of any gender identity and sexual orientation, ages 14 and older. WIT's philosophy of empowerment counseling puts the control of one's life back into one's own hands. To this day, WIT remains guided by the core principles of feminism that aim to create equal access to power – political, economic, cultural, spiritual and institutional – for women and other marginalized populations.

Women In Transition (WIT) is thrilled to have collaborated with Carmen Winant and The Print Center on this project. WIT has been giving voice to survivors of domestic abuse/intimate partner violence and substance abuse for 50 years. Our archives reflect the role WIT has played in the larger feminist and domestic violence prevention movements and we are excited to see them brought to life through Carmen's creative lens.

— Corinne Lagermasini, Executive Director, WIT

While Winant works frequently with archives, this project represents a significant advancement in her practice. Her recent monograph *Notes on Fundamental Joy*, for example, featured photographs from discrete institutional (scholarly, university and/or library-based) and personal archives, while *My Birth*, her installation for the exhibition *New Photography 2018* at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, explored the more nebulous archive that is Winant's own encyclopedic trove of cut-and-pasted printed matter. For *A Brand New End*, Winant turned to a different kind of archive – one that falls between these two categories. WIT and NCADV are grassroots social service organizations, which have collected materials that not only reflect their own histories, but also the larger field of domestic violence awareness and prevention as it has developed over the last 50 years. Winant is conscious that the latter is rarely addressed in artwork, thus making this project ever more timely and urgent.

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is honored to be part of this important project brought to life by the creative talent of Carmen Winant and The Print Center. NCADV has been at the forefront of the domestic violence movement since 1978, and we are both humbled and inspired

to see the inclusion of so many pieces from our archives in this exhibition. We have been telling the stories of victims and survivors for decades, but the narratives related to the many individuals who dedicated their lives and careers to carving paths to safety and creating critical programs structured to empower victims and survivors over the last five decades has garnered less attention. Without these contributions, far fewer people would be able to escape abuse; because of them, we are now able to offer victims and survivors a multitude of options that didn't exist several decades ago. Their work literally saved – and still saves – lives. NCADV is grateful to be among these giants, to share their impact, and to Carmen Winant and The Print Center for making this project happen.

— Ruth M. Glenn, President & CEO, NCADV

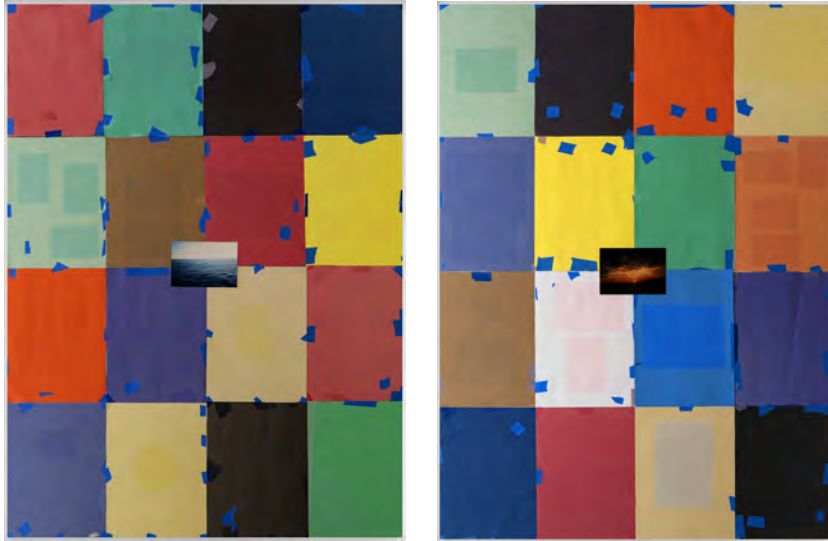
Winant considers herself to be a “lapsed photographer,” as she no longer uses a camera to make photographs. However, her work is still grounded in image, as she appropriates found image-objects and translates, reproduces and re-contextualizes photographs from archives into artworks. As described in her recent book *Instructional Photography: Learning How to Live Now*, Winant has theorized that photographs hold the potential “to teach us *how to live*.” Coined by the artist, “instructional photography” – a category distinct from documentary photography – is intrinsic to the WIT and NCADV archives as they “demonstrate possibilities, from social organization to self-actualization” and “function as guides, particularly in moments of personal and collective awakening” *without* the support of text. Language is secondary to instructional photographs. With their ability to be “demonstrative,” such photographs are essential to the act of survival, as they can aid in learning new skills and envisioning oneself in new situations. While those are two practical ways that photographs can function, they also have great theoretical potential as vehicles for exploring self-discovery and self-empowerment. Instructional photographs are often abstract – in the sense that the persons they depict are not immediately identifiable by name, and thereby can be stand-ins for anyone. “Each instruction [instructional photograph] is a little mirror,” a way for us to understand our own minds and bodies, Winant writes. Of all the



Winant with newspaper clippings in her Columbus, OH studio. Film still: Itinerant Pictures

artistic mediums, photography is most suited to this call because of its power to reproduce.

The Print Center and Winant are grateful to everyone who has participated in bringing *A Brand New End: Survival and Its Pictures* to fruition, especially The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, our partners at Women In Transition (WIT) and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) as well as Ella Comberg, Project Assistant, and the Print Department faculty and graduate students at the University of Texas at Austin, specifically Professor Annie May Johnston and student Kerry Maguire.



(left to right) *Women's blueprint for survival (1)* and *(2)*, 2022, sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints, 47 ½" x 36"



(left to right) *Women at Work (Job Cards)*, 2022, sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints, 60 ¼" x 46"; Winant with "job cards" in WIT's archive. Film still: *Itinerant Pictures*

About the Artworks

Women's blueprint for survival (1), 2022, and *Women's blueprint for survival (2)*, 2022, are two of five new large-scale collages that incorporate photographs from both archives. Presented in facsimile, the photographs are mounted on construction paper that Winant bleached in certain areas through exposure to the sun. Snippets of blue painter's tape, a signature material for the artist, punctuate these fields, which are pieced together as a grid. The imagery and materials of the collages reflect the kind of low-fit, do-it-yourself aesthetic Winant observed in WIT's and NCADV's offices on posters and bulletin boards to promote healing and available services. In those spaces, it is the message – not the medium – that is important. That said, these messages of survival are eye-catching and colorful.

Prominent in the largest collage *Women at Work (Job Cards)*, 2022, are thirty handmade cards created by WIT that feature images clipped from the 1975 book *Women at Work: A Photographic Documentary* by award-winning journalist Betty Medsger. They showcase various professions that women could consider when

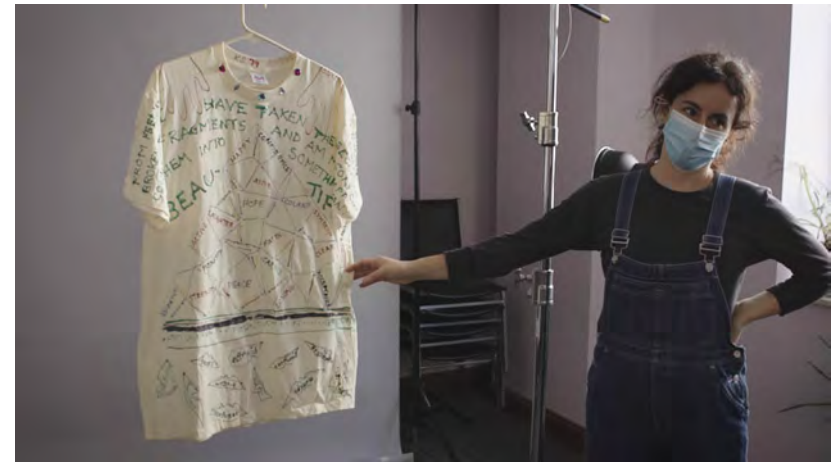
transitioning into the job market in the 1970s after a divorce or separation. The cards comprise cut-out images mounted on multicolored construction paper. Complementing them are additional cards describing the responsibilities of the jobs and their salaries. Together, they form a puzzle – a counseling tool – that was once used by WIT clients as they charted their futures.

On the second floor is the *Survival guide resource library*, 2022. Simultaneously a bibliography and an artwork, it presents multiple copies of key manuals related to the work of both WIT and NCADV, including *Women In Transition: A Feminist Handbook on Separation and Divorce*, *New Woman's Survival Catalog: A Woman-Made Book*, *Women's Survival Manual* and *For Better, For Worse: A Feminist Handbook on Marriage and Other Options* on a shelf. As a whole, it tethers Winant's source material – the archives of WIT and NCADV – to her research and subsequently to the development of her own alternative, proportionally smaller archive of books, magazines, pins and other ephemera collected from eBay and other resale websites.



Healing from trauma is a process that involves joy and coalition (details), seven 35mm slide projectors and 560 slides, dimensions variable. Photos: Jaime Alvarez

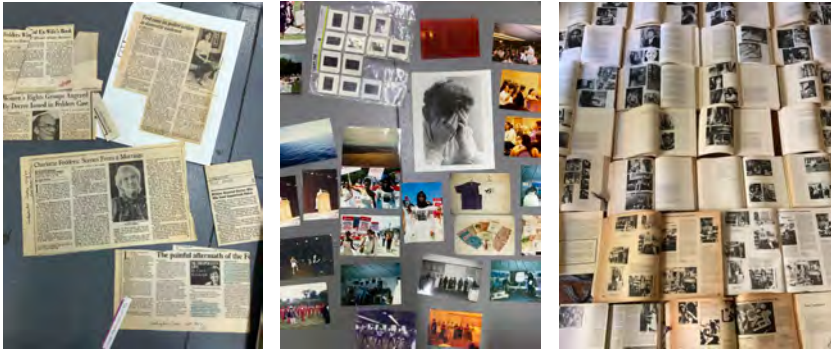
The room-sized installation *Healing from trauma is a process that involves joy and coalition*, 2022, includes 35mm slides of almost 200 t-shirts from WIT's Clothesline Project, photographed for the project. The Clothesline Project is a world-wide initiative started in the 1990s as a direct way to address violence against women. Individuals affected by violence decorate t-shirts with words and drawings that express their feelings, then hang the shirts on a clothesline in a public place, acting as a testimony to their experiences. The title of this exhibition, *A Brand New End: Survival and Its Pictures*, is inspired by one of these shirts, whose handwritten text reads: "Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new end." These t-shirts make up a significant portion of WIT's archive and are, arguably, the only "artworks" within it. They are an example of art being used practically as therapy. While they had previously been photographed against a nondescript backdrop for cataloguing purposes, Winant chose to rephotograph them, staging them in situ in WIT's offices. Propped up by cardboard inserts and sometimes hangers, the t-shirts appear as if they are sitting on desk chairs and at tables. Winant literally re-embodies the t-shirts, reviving their voices and stories of perseverance in the face of abuse.



Winant working in the WIT archive. Film still: Itinerant Pictures

This gesture toward embodiment is also seen in *Untitled (pin boxes)*, 2022, two deep-set Plexiglas frames containing over two dozen lapel pins and pin-backed buttons, decorated with slogans promoting both organizations, awareness and support for women's rights and feminism. These pins, which would usually be worn on shirts and jackets, are mounted on cork board – yet another reference to the visual aesthetic of the office, specifically those of WIT and NCADV. In the Zemel Family Gallery is *Healing from trauma is a process that involves joy and coalition*, 2022, an installation that projects slides made of Winant's t-shirt photographs alongside historical slides from both archives. The slides drawn from the archives depict staff and clients taking part in empowerment self-defense training exercises, group meetings, conferences and celebrations. Some images are staged as pedagogical exercises by WIT and NCADV staff, featuring self-defense methods, what to pack when leaving an abusive relationship, obtaining legal services, conducting job searches and accessing counseling.

Across the two walls of the North Gallery is the installation *Newspaper clippings, 1972-2004, from the collections of Women in Transition, NCADV, and the artist*, 2022. It comprises hundreds of newspaper clippings chronicling local and national stories of domestic violence, which were collected by WIT and NCADV. Winant has composed them in a "constellation" whose sheer magnitude



(left to right) Two groups of materials from the NCADV archive and assorted publications sourced by Winant for *Survival guide resource library*. Photos: Carmen Winant

imparts the urgency of its subject matter and investigates how the media contends with and portrays domestic violence. At the center of this installation is a table, where visitors can pick up an artist-designed risograph print created at an artist residency Winant had at the University of Texas at Austin. It takes the form of a “Power Control Wheel,” a popular tool utilized in domestic violence counseling that aims to understand the tactics abusers use to exert power over their victims. This work of art reveals how art can also be practical, performing a function within our everyday lives. Atop the table also sit numerous houseplants, which are a tribute and reference to the plants – living, growing things – in the offices of WIT and NCADV.

Public Intervention

A public intervention in bus shelters around the City of Philadelphia, concurrent with the exhibition in our galleries, brings the space between Winant’s art and the information shared by organization like WIT and NCADV even closer together. Modeled after public service announcements, the artist-designed posters feature Winant’s restaged photographs of t-shirts from WIT’s participation in the Clothesline Project. These posters are intended to raise awareness of issues around domestic violence, relay information to people about services and support, and according to Winant, “give voice to the archive from survivors.”



Winant with slides from WIT’s archive in her Columbus, OH studio. Film still: Itinerant Pictures

Film

A Brand New End is documented in a short film by Daniel Traub’s Philadelphia-based production company Itinerant Pictures. Recorded in Philadelphia, at WIT, The Print Center and at the artist’s studio in Columbus, OH, the short film captures Winant’s process and the execution of the project.

Artist Book

An artist book, being prepared for release in fall 2022, is a collaboration between Winant and the New York-based graphic design studio Common Name. It will include materials from the exhibition, new images and research, as well as contributions from Winant, Nouril and others, including activists and scholars. The artist book builds on the legacy of feminist publications and printed materials as vehicles for expeditious and accessible dissemination of information.

Checklist

All works 2022, Courtesy of the Artist
Commissioned by The Print Center

<i>Healing from trauma is a process that involves joy and coalition</i> Seven 35mm slide projectors and 560 slides Dimensions variable	<i>Untitled (pin boxes)</i> Lapel and pin-back buttons on corkboard 18" x 21"
<i>Moon faces demons</i> Sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints 47 ½" x 36"	<i>Violence is one of the ways that men have learned to cope with stress</i> Sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints 23 ½" x 18"
<i>Newspaper clippings, 1972-2004, from the collections of Women in Transition, NCADV, and the artist</i> Newspaper clippings, construction paper Dimensions variable	<i>Women at Work (Job Cards)</i> Sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints 60 ¼" x 46"
<i>Power control wheel (assorted risographs)</i> Risograph prints 17" x 11" Edition of 1000 Printed by Professor Annie May Johnston and graduate student Kerry Maguire at Riso Room, University of Texas at Austin	<i>Women's blueprint for survival (1)</i> Sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints 47 ½" x 36"
<i>Survival guide resource library</i> Assorted publications 14 ½" x 78" x 11 ¾"	<i>Women's blueprint for survival (2)</i> Sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints 47 ½" x 36"

About the Artist

Carmen Winant (born 1983, San Francisco, CA; lives Columbus, OH) is an internationally recognized photography-based artist raised in Philadelphia. She has a BA from the University of California, Los Angeles and an MA and MFA from the California College of the Arts, San Francisco.

Winant's recent projects have been shown at ICA Boston, MA; Patron Gallery, Chicago, IL; Cleveland Museum of Art, OH; Wexner Center of the Arts, Columbus; Sculpture Center, Long Island City, NY; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; as well as Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark; and Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden, Norway. In 2019, Winant mounted 26 of her billboards across Canada as part of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival.

Winant's work is part of the collections of Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; as well as Henie Onstad Kunstsenter. She is a 2019 Guggenheim Fellow in photography, a 2020 Foundation for Contemporary Art Grant recipient and a 2021 American Academy of Arts and Letters Honoree. Winant's recent artist books include *My Birth* (SPBH Editions and Image Text Ithaca Press, 2018) and *Notes on Fundamental Joy* (Printed Matter Inc., 2019).

She has been a Resident and Dean at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Madison, ME and is the Roy Lichtenstein Endowed Chair of Studio Art at Ohio State University, Columbus.

Programs

Artist Talk with Carmen Winant Wednesday, April 13, 6pm

At the Elaine C. Levitt Auditorium
University of the Arts
401 South Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
and on Zoom

Gallery Talk, 5:30pm with Carmen Winant and Ksenia Nouril

Opening Reception, 6 – 7:30pm Thursday, April 14

In-person

Guided Exhibition Tours

Tuesday, April 26, 5pm

Thursday, May 12, 12pm

Wednesday, May 25, 5pm

Friday, June 10, 12pm

In-person guided tours of *A Brand New End* with exhibition curator Ksenia Nouril.

Panel Discussion: Picturing Domestic Violence

Thursday, April 28, 6pm

At The Print Center and on Zoom
Ruth M. Glenn, President & CEO, NCADV; Roberta Hacker, former Executive Director of WIT (1986-2006); and Dr. Ethan Levine, scholar and advocate, who will discuss the visualization of domestic violence through photographs, specifically those used in service of empowerment and self-actualization.

Conversation with Carmen Winant and Donna Ferrato

Thursday, May 19, 6pm

On Zoom

Ferrato is an internationally acclaimed photojournalist who works to document, expose and prevent domestic and sexual violence against women and children. Winant and Ferrato address how photography can bring critical awareness to pressing social issues.

WAVE Empowerment Self-Defense Class with WIT

Thursday, June 9, 6pm

On Zoom

Led by WIT staff, this class will feature discussion and activities around the five components of self- defense: Think, Yell, Run, Fight, and Tell. Participants will be taught a few easy-to-learn physical techniques.

Registrations required for all events: printcenter.org

The Print Center's exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public. Visit printcenter.org for up-to-date health safety protocols.

About The Print Center

For more than a century, The Print Center has encouraged the growth and understanding of photography and printmaking as vital contemporary arts through exhibitions, publications, and educational programs. The Print Center has an international voice and a strong sense of local purpose. Free and open to the public, it presents changing exhibitions, which highlight established and emerging, local, national and international contemporary artists. It mounts one of the oldest annual art competitions in the country, now in its 97th year, provides the Artists-in-Schools Program to Philadelphia public high school students and our Gallery Store offers a carefully selected array of contemporary prints and photographs onsite and online.

About Women In Transition (WIT)

Founded in 1971, Philadelphia-based WIT's mission is to empower people to move forward in their lives free of domestic violence and substance abuse.

helpwomen.org

About the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)

Founded in 1978, Denver-based NCADV's mission is to lead, mobilize and raise their voices to support efforts that demand a change of conditions that lead to domestic violence such as patriarchy, privilege, racism, sexism, and classism. They are dedicated to supporting survivors and holding offenders accountable and supporting advocates.

ncadv.org

Funders

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The views expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage or The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Cover: Carmen Winant, *Women's blueprint for survival (2)* (detail), 2022, sun-bleached construction paper, painter's tape, inkjet prints. Courtesy of the Artist. Commissioned by The Print Center.



1614 Latimer Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215.735.6090
info@printcenter.org
www.printcenter.org

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