

PRESS RELEASE

Withheld due to:

Withheld due to: is an inconvenient book. It is an unconventional look at one of the most controversial torture scandals in recent times. Built on photographic evidence and government files from the Abu Ghraib and the War on Terror, artist Christof Nüssli illuminates a story the U.S. government wants to keep in the dark.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), alongside other human rights organizations, has been fighting for years for the release of 2,000 photographs taken in torture prisons. In February 2016, the ACLU's demands were partially met, and the U.S. government published 198 of the requested photos. The remaining 1,802 are still hidden from public view.

What do the published images say about the detained? Does a censored transparency still create transparency? Can images shock, despite not showing anything shocking?

The 198 released photos, which are published in *Withheld due to:* don't show apparent cruelty. They show individual body parts, blackened fingerprints and indistinguishable bruising. Christof Nüssli highlights the lack of clarity by dissecting and reassembling the photos. He supplements the images with interviews of inmates and U.S. soldiers; handwritten notes, emails and drawings—all materials he retrieved from the corresponding thousands of files released alongside the photos. The selected files tell the stories of the withheld photos. Christof Nüssli casts a light on the acts of western powers of war and their cover-ups without addressing them directly. He also calls upon the readers to question what they see in the photos, and in themselves.

What do I feel when I look at an isolated part of the body? Would I feel differently if I saw the whole body? Do I want to see more? If so, do I feel ashamed?

Withheld due to: does not seek to please. It easily falls apart and when delving into it it's distressing. Through the combination of photos and files, Christof Nüssli creates an image, which shows more than what originally meets the eye.

HONORS

- The Most Beautiful Swiss Books, 2016.
- Best Book Design from all over the World, 2017 (Bronze Medal).
- Kassel Photobook Award 2017 – The Experts Selection

EXHIBITIONS

- SITUATION #65: FLESH, Fotomuseum, Winterthur (CH)
- Uncensored books, O3ONE Art space, Belgrade Photo Month, Belgrad (RS)

Christof Nüssli; *Withheld due to:*

404 pp; 198 colour illustrations

Softcover (loose); 15x22cm; Edition of 500

Texts by Eliza Relman, Christof Nüssli

ISBN 978-3-9524710-0-5, Published by cpress, Zurich

Christof Nüssli (*1986, Zurich) made a master degree at Werkplaats Typografie (NL) from 2011 to 2013. In 2012 he curated together with Fabienne Ruppen the exhibition *Armin Hofmann – Farbe* in the Gallery Susanna Kulli, Zurich. In 2013 he co-founded the independent publisher *cpress* based in Zurich. In February 2014 Christof Nüssli and Christoph Oeschger published the artist book *Miklós Klaus Rózsa*. The book-project was shown in several exhibitions and various public institutions including the Centre de la Photographie, Geneva; Helmhaus, Zürich, ZKM – Museum für neue Kunst, Karlsruhe; Kunstverein, Amsterdam. He has received several prizes including the *Best Books from all over the World 2014* (Bronze medall) and *One of the Best German Books 2014*. In 2015 he won the grant for the Istituto Svizzero di Roma Artist in Residence. www.christofnuessli.ch

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