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# INTRODUCTION

When we think of the Soviet era, family photographs are perhaps not the first thing to come to mind. And yet they are among the first objects that speak directly and compellingly about the past to the post-Soviet generations who encounter them. Seemingly banal and instantly familiar, domestic photographs constitute important, though easily overlooked traces of Soviet everyday life. Present in practically every family that lived in the USSR, these collections lack formal archival organization in the institutional sense of the word. They remain decentered and bypass linear chronology in favor of idiosyncratic forms of structuring. They contain images that have made the rounds within families, some for generations, and are periodically brought to the surface at family reunions or during life transitions, surrounded by anecdotes, or accompanied by moments of quiet introspection. In the twenty-first century these vernacular images also increasingly appear in Russia outside the family home: brought to school, uploaded and circulated on countless internet portals dedicated to aspects of Soviet history, and carried through the streets during commemorative celebrations. *In Visible Presence* is dedicated to understanding how these images work, what they look like, and why they increasingly command the attention and emotions of broad audiences.

Post-Soviet domestic photo archives are remarkably heterogeneous internally. Portraits dating back to prerevolutionary times may coexist with formal portraits of workers made for the Boards of Honor that acknowledged their outstanding achievements at various Soviet state enterprises; casual snapshots from family camping trips can be found next to group shots of organized excursions to sites of Soviet military glory; a portrait of a family member who perished in the Gulag can dwell on the pages of a family album that celebrates another relative's successful military career or summers spent in a sanatorium for Communist Party members. In all these ways, family photo collections invite historical judgment, whether self-consciously or not, on the experiences they reference.

The appeal of family photos is linked to their status as human documents that are viewed as conveying something of essence about the Soviet experience. Enhanced by the affective impact of the images perceived as inherently private, these

photographs' visual power draws on the affinity between seeing and causal understanding (the word *evidence* itself coming from the Latin *videre*, to see). What makes them appear as a trusted "window" onto the past is a presumed photographic ability to capture and "freeze" the moment, to serve as a record of the past times. Most scholars of photography, from André Bazin onward, note the common tendency to equate a photograph with its referent, connecting it with the medium's indexical nature.<sup>1</sup> The concept of an indexical sign as a physical trace—different in its relationship to physical reality as compared to other forms of signification such as icon (connected to its referent by resemblance) and symbol (which works through convention)—was developed by philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce.<sup>2</sup> The photosensitive film or plate, the argument goes, captures the light as it reflects off the person standing in front of the lens, thus resulting in a print—quite literally, a visible trace, an offprint of the model's presence.<sup>3</sup> The indexical nature of photography is what underlies the medium's claim of a special, privileged relationship to reality, and as such, it has been at the heart of long-standing theoretical debates about the evidentiary value of photographs. In the everyday practices around family archives, the capacity to shroud personal reminiscences with authority is rooted, in part, in photography's indexical relationship to the reality it portrays.

The ability of photography to catch more than the eye can process at the moment of shooting is another reason why images, from minute snapshots to complex compositional arrangements, offer a rich field for generations of onlookers to mine. These later viewers often see—or perceive—more than contemporaneous viewers could, exemplifying Walter Benjamin's notion of optical unconscious—the "ability of photography to reveal something to the eye which remains unnoticed in the perpetual flow of time."<sup>4</sup> The details, central or marginal, that acquire new meaning or importance in the eye of the beholder are not simply "stored" in the images as a hidden and cherished treasure, but discovered through active engagement.

In his "Little History of Photography," Benjamin identifies another attribute of early prints, namely, the notion of aura—which is treated differently here from Benjamin's milestone "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility" where he posited that "the whole sphere of authenticity eludes technological . . . reproduction."<sup>5</sup> By contrast, in "Little History of Photography," Benjamin is fascinated by early examples of the then ninety-year-old medium, particularly by images that required long exposure and reminded him of mezzotint printing with its "absolute continuum from brightest light to darkest shadow."<sup>6</sup> Benjamin thinks back to these prints as possessing a certain immaterial aura, which is not reducible

to a technical effect of the early, imperfect equipment, but is an inherent feature of the photographic medium he identifies as “a strange web of space and time: the unique appearance of a distance, no matter how close it may be.”<sup>7</sup>

Benjamin connects aura and distance, describing the former as “a form of perception that ‘invests’ or endows a phenomenon with the ‘ability to look back at us,’ to open its eyes or ‘lift its gaze.’”<sup>8</sup> The “aura” of Soviet-era photographs today can be compared to that of the early photographic prints, but it is created less by the technological difference than by a sense of the unbreachable distance between the Soviet era and lifestyle, and the current moment of looking. Over the years, working with family archives and conversing with their owners and keepers, we witnessed how analog domestic photographs were referred to as “auratic” and fueled the perception of penetrating or experiencing “another” time. Images were ascribed special qualities irrespective of the production technology, be it an amateur print, a composed studio setting, or a pinnacle of “official” photography—an ID image, many of which end up ensconced in the family album amid multiple other photos.

Their indexical nature may give photographs their status as physical traces of prephotographic reality. But photographs are also entwined with the invisible and the hidden. Located at the intersection of memory, silence, and imagination, home photo collections are uniquely suited not so much to help viewers preserve memories of the past, but to continuously create and recreate interpretations based on the life experiences of their custodians, their ideological commitments, and the models available in cultural and political memory. Untying the indexical bond of photographs, we follow Georges Didi-Huberman’s prescient warning:

We often ask too much or too little of the image. Ask too much of it—“the whole truth” for example—and we will quickly be disappointed: the images are merely stolen shreds, bits of film. They are therefore *inadequate*: what we see . . . is still little in comparison to what we know. . . . Or else we ask too little of images: by immediately relegating them to the sphere of the *simulacrum* . . . we exclude them from the historical field as such. By immediately relegating them to the sphere of the *document*—something easier and more current—we sever them from their phenomenology, from their specificity, and from their very substance.<sup>9</sup>

The unique, meaningful, and emotionally loaded home photographs are reservoirs of meanings that shape the individuals’ temporal horizons well beyond their own family biographies. For their owners as well as onlookers, these photographs exist

in what Marianne Hirsch called “liquid time,” in which “they are not fixed into static permanence; rather, they remain dynamic, unfixed, as they acquire new meanings, in new circumstances.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, as we will see in the chapters that follow, their value is not diminished but rather enhanced by medial transformations, including digitization and multiplication of images for further circulation within the family, or their creative reuse in public projects. It is because of the double-edged capacity of domestic photography—its indexical and auratic powers—that it becomes such a unique resource for interpreting and relating to the recent past.

This project started in the twenty-first century, but the exploration of Soviet-time family images was not a plunge into the unknown for us. By the time we ventured into a more analytical, research-driven engagement with photographs, both of us had a living, evolving relationship with the images from our own respective family photo archives (some of the images on the pages of this book indeed come from our domestic collections). Like many of our interlocutors, we grew up seeing our own family photographs intermittently and unsystematically, in fragments, on occasions of family anniversaries or relatives’ visits.

In Olga’s family, there were floating photographic islands: a sturdy album with an embossed cover overflowing with photographs of her father and his matrilineal family; several large folios with the images of her parents’ travels and family events; and the largely unsorted photographic archive of her maternal grandparents. In the latter, the contents jumped from faded portraits with Yiddish inscriptions no one in the family seemed able to read, to group portraits from the late 1910s and early 1920s—with one group described as “the first district council of the communist youth in Belev, December 14–16, 1919”—straight to studio family portraits and amateur snapshots from the 1950s onward. Conspicuously missing were any photographic traces of her father’s father and grandfather. Both men were absent from family life well before Olga’s birth. But references to their dramatic story (as a White Army general, her great-grandfather was forced into exile during the Civil War, leaving his family behind, never to see them again) gave these “missing” figures a special place in her imagination.

For Oksana, browsing her grandmother’s massive folios was a childhood pleasure—reserved for summer visits to Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). These folios swelled with images of people she did not see in person, and the photographs were often accompanied by stories, which with time grew increasingly familiar and predictable. Yet the photographs kept their estranged charm—amateur snapshots of her young granny as a student in Dnipropetrovsk (now Dnipro) looking like a

1930s movie star, a retouched marriage photo from 1941 Leningrad with her grandfather in military uniform (her grandparents had registered for marriage just before he was drafted to the front), or a selection of portraits of her great-uncle in exotic stage outfits from the drama theaters in Donetsk and Zhdanov (now Mariupol). After their wedding, Oksana's parents made a family album of their own—another thick folio with a Leningrad skyline on the cover, where the weight of the cardboard pages imitated the massive turn-of-the-century albums. Mapping three generations between its green covers—from grandparents to grandchildren—it featured images of people familiar and close, and triggered fewer questions. There were also colorful travel slides, neatly packed in a green cardboard box. Rather than projecting them on the wall, the practice of many families at the time, they were viewed occasionally with the help of a small black box with a magnifying glass—an endeavor for a lone image hunter which led to a rewarding glimpse of remote and fascinating places, such as Bukhara or Baku. That many photographs of paternal relatives were missing was simply taken for granted for quite some time.

Growing up, neither of us gave these omissions much thought, and our families did not have a self-appointed family genealogist in our extended networks. Our project thus did not start with the genealogical drive that enthralled many people in the years of archival openings, or with a particularly strong feeling of connection to our own family past. Yet we shared a curiosity over the shape of familial photo archives, including the silences and lacunae they contained, that made us want to start conversing with others. As we went about writing this book, we could not help but see the echoes of the many stories we had heard in our own archives. Like the men and women we interviewed, we moved and reshuffled our albums, pieced together the fragmentary stories that emerged in those moments, and marveled at the deferred work that the photographs continued doing to our sense of connection to others.

As natives of Moscow who grew up in the late 1980s and early 1990s, at a time when most historical orthodoxies around the Soviet past were being unsettled, we were fascinated by the willingness of many Russian citizens to engage with their family's past in the first decade of the twenty-first century, as well as by their relative uncertainty about the boundaries of permissible ways of relating to it. "At this point, it is probably okay to share this," our older interlocutors would often say to preempt a tale about a workplace compromise or a parent's social origin. "But you never told me this before!" their grown daughter or grandchildren would loudly protest from the other room. This seemed like a good time to express curiosity about family histories; the younger generation seemed to think that they knew very little, but they

were intrigued by the possibilities of genealogical searches and archival discoveries, and the older generation had much to tell.

As we entered people's homes, we conversed with them over their photographs, and jointly went through not only their family albums, but also shoeboxes, plastic bags, notebooks, wall displays—wherever the photographs our interlocutors were willing to share could be found. We told our hosts that we were interested in the stories they remembered and recounted when looking at their home photo collections, and in the photographic occasions on which these images were made, circulated, and viewed: What do they consider worth remembering? How do the photographs, both as images and material relics, participate in the ways people reconstruct their family past? Which stories do they consider important enough to share? Surveying narrative and visual interpretations of domestic images in a conversational format that Annette Kuhn calls “interactive performative viewing,” we thus explored the ways in which these photographs contained, for their owners and caretakers, multiple histories that reflected the fault lines and dramas of the Soviet twentieth century.<sup>11</sup>

Our conversations were guided by three related areas of interest. The first pertained to photography as a medium and visual practice. What does the Soviet era look like through the prism of the photographs that people keep in their homes? What kinds of experiences and sentiments do family photographs disclose? How do the photographs, both as images and as material relics, participate in the ways people make sense of the past? The second cluster of questions delved into the relationship and tensions between the forms of postsocialist memory available in the public arena and family discourses. In what capacities is “history writ large” present in the domestic archives and stories people tell their family members about the past? What do photographs, as visual images and as material objects, do to people and their memories, caught as they are between the irreducible idiosyncrasies of an individual family's experience of the “Soviet century” and the celebratory patriotic accounts that were proliferating in Russia at the time? The third cluster of questions explored the generational dynamics within families. How do family stories vary between different generations? What are the main points of divergence in different generations' visions of the past? When did they emerge, and how were they navigated?

Our interest in the multiplicity of experiences and related generational tensions drew upon Karl Mannheim's insight about the significance of location in historical time for the formation of one's consciousness and experience of the world.<sup>12</sup> But

unlike other students of generational memories in the post-Soviet space, we were interested in exploring communication across age groups, rather than in defining discrete generational groupings and the visions of the past that bound them together.<sup>13</sup> Thus we often use the term *generation* in this book to designate differences in family roles, that is, grandparents versus parents, and parents versus children, rather than distinctive generational cultures, as, for example, the American “baby boomers,” or the “sixties’ generation” (*shestidesiatniki*) in the Soviet context. Our interest was in the evolving nature of generational transmission, which makes attending to the circulation of stories between generations crucial to understanding how memories evolve.

The lived experience of socialism was markedly different for members of different social strata and age groups, and is now accessible to younger people only in a mediated form. Accounts of that period change substantially as family lore is passed through personal communication and is affected by the narratives circulating in the public sphere. The open nature of photographs and their excess of details contribute to ongoing reinterpretations. In sifting through the family pictures, each generation has its own stake—and its own turn—to fill the familiar images with meaning.

## MODES OF PRODUCTION

The conversations we based this book on occurred between 2006 and 2019. Most of our interviews took place from 2006 to 2008, a time when anxieties around and contestations about the meaning and uses of Soviet history were palpable and actively voiced, and the institutional structures tasked with developing the normative interpretation of the Soviet past were actively evolving. All in all, we interviewed fifty-four two-, three-, and four-generational families living in different parts of central and southern Russia (Moscow, Novocherkassk, Rostov-on-Don, Samara, St. Petersburg, and Vladimir).<sup>14</sup> We recorded 156 semistructured interviews about family photographic collections and created a database of about 12,000 digital images of these photographs. In addition to that corpus, from 2017 to 2019 we conducted twenty-nine interviews in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Tyumen with men and women who celebrated a family member’s contribution to the World War II effort by carrying enlarged reproductions of their ancestor’s portrait through the streets as part of the so-called Immortal Regiment processions. Finally, we supplemented our collection

of stories and photographs with internet ethnography and media analysis, as well as analysis of Soviet-era images we found at flea markets and in antique shops across the former USSR.

Our use of the term *domestic photographs* refers to all those photographic materials owned by, and perceived as pertaining to, the family. In practice, this means that the images we looked at included, but were not limited to, what Richard Chalfen called “photography in the home mode,” that is, snapshots produced by a family member with a point-and-shoot camera.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, the collections were not solely composed of photos of family members and extended kin or limited to the “photographic images of domestic life” that became the subject of Laura Wexler’s searching inquiry.<sup>16</sup> Rather, these were photographic images *in* domestic life, including group and individual portraits taken in photo studios, photographs made at people’s workplaces, and multiple ID photos.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the breadth of the imagined community that lived between the pages of the albums was directly pertinent to the sense of the Soviet past that these collections conveyed. Still, our resulting digital archive of stories and images was, of course, merely a sliver of the photographs and reminiscences each family member could have shared. In one paradigmatic moment, puzzling over which album to begin with, one of our hosts opened a narrow storage cabinet that went from the floor to the ceiling, and dozens of albums overflowing with photographs slid to the floor, snapshots sticking out from between their pages. “I have a lot,” he said, merely stating the obvious.

Our rule of thumb in moments like this was to ask our hosts to pick whatever assortment of photographs they considered the most significant for telling their family’s experience of the twentieth century. We then based our conversation around this corpus, making it clear that any additional photographs they wanted to show us could either be retrieved or described in words. Typically, we met with different family members individually, starting with the eldest, to observe how one image could have various interpretations, what meanings were read into them, and the emotional dynamics that unfolded between people and their photographs. But at times, this approach was subject to modification based not only on the schedules of our interlocutors, but also on spatial constraints; some of the apartments we visited were so small that anything said in one corner was inevitably heard in another.

Our approach to the interviews, structured by some prepared questions, but largely open to the associations and definitions of the people we engaged with,

was only partly a matter of expediency (since we knew that a comprehensive survey of the family archives would be impossible). To a greater extent, it reflected our commitment to the spirit of what Annette Kuhn called “memory work”—a vision of remembering as, by definition, interactive and situational. Memory work, writes Kuhn, “undercuts assumptions about the transparency or the authenticity of what is remembered, taking it not as ‘truth’ but as evidence of a particular sort: material for interpretation, to be interrogated, mined, for its meanings and its possibilities.”<sup>18</sup> This dialogical process of remembering—as opposed to the view of memory as a retrieval of fixed, stored information about the past—was situated in time and space, and rooted in an encounter that amounted to a kind of “call to performance,” issued both by the visiting researchers and by the photographs at hand. To put it another way, our interviews elicited reminiscences, or memory narratives uttered in response, and in conversation with, specific photographs and questions. As the occasional indignant or curious interjections from another room testified, they were not necessarily the same stories our hosts had traded with their children in the past, nor, we realized as we said our good-byes to the families crowded around a table heaped with old photos, were these the same stories they would be telling in the future. Our visits catalyzed the work of remembering that is always, intrinsically, incomplete and in progress. But, arguably, so is the nature of memory itself.

Given this inherent intersubjectivity of memory work, our book proceeds in the spirit of what Lila Abu-Lughod called “ethnographies of the particular.” We focus on specific moments of interaction between people and their photographs, that is, on what Martha Langford aptly termed the “oral-photographic performance.”<sup>19</sup> From here we proceed outward, “treating what can be observed in the instances at hand as evidence pointing towards broader issues and propositions about the nature and workings of cultural memory.”<sup>20</sup> That is why, while we draw on the cumulative sense of the photographic material in the following chapters, most revolve around specific family stories and images. This, of course, comes at a certain cost. Delving into the idiosyncrasies of select images and conversations offers a more fine-grained sense of the texture of grappling with the past at an individual level, but it also means foregoing the ambitious project of offering a broader, comprehensive survey of post-Soviet family photographic archives. In effect, choosing to focus on snapshots and stories abounding in names (in all cases changed to pseudonyms) and period details, we foreground the multiple possibilities of seeing, each time from a new angle, a complex entanglement of the visible and invisible family histories.

In addition to emphasizing the situational, processual character of remembering, this inductive approach is well suited to working with the peculiar medium of photography. In the opening pages of *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes voiced his frustrations with what he described as the “unclassifiable” nature of photography, connecting it to indexical properties of the medium.<sup>21</sup> The challenge that Barthes identified early on is that this “singular adherence” between a photograph and its referent necessitates analysis either at very close range, in order to “see” the photographic signifier (as is the case in much of photography theory), or at an extremely long range (as in sociological literature that surveys and classifies the objects of photographic attention, or photographic practices by their functions and distribution).

To do justice to the roles family photographs played in our interlocutors’ historical imagination, we thus offset our interest in visual patterns and trends with illuminating individual stories and moments of encounter, in part precisely because of their irreducible singularity. And because memory is not only about the things people say, but also about things they do, we paid close attention to what could be called image practices—the ways in which people acted out their relationship with the past through their photographs. This included attention to the way they interacted with their images during the interviews, and an interest in the photographs’ remediation and circulation beyond the short time frame of our conversations. In this emphasis, we were influenced by Christopher Pinney’s interest in corpothetics (“the sensory embrace of images”), and by the path-breaking work of Elizabeth Edwards and others on the multiple uses and afterlives of photographs.<sup>22</sup>

The chapters that follow not only discuss photographs, but also have something of a snapshot logic to them; they feature exchanges that are both typical and idiosyncratic. And just like in a photographic collection, the argument of this book accrues through the interplay of themes and patterns in, and between, the individual chapters.

## CHAPTER THUMBNAILS: A BRIEF OUTLINE

The first part of the book delves into the many ways in which the Soviet past comes to life in domestic archives. In chapter 1, we set the context for our discussion of the lasting appeal of Soviet-era domestic photographs in post-Soviet times by outlining the politicized landscape of public memory in Russia in the twenty-first century.

We review a string of nationwide mediatized, popular historical projects that, one after another, have sought to anchor the Soviet past in recognizable and uplifting visual formulae. Intent to inscribe individual experiences within a controlled interpretive framework, these projects positioned history as a locus of pride and positive identification, but they did not fully supplant domestic photographic archives as sites in which visual knowledge of the Soviet period is produced. It is these photo collections, and the individual and family memories entangled with them, that comprise the core of *In Visible Presence*. Although the familial discussions over these photographs may have been driven by a desire to find an affirmative foothold in the past, we show in this book how photographs contain an irreducible excess of meaning. As such, they may lead their viewers, and by extension, the readers of this book, to unexpected places.

In chapter 2 we examine the visual identity of the Soviet period through the windows of domestic photo collections. In the USSR, amateur photographic production was elevated and promoted as a form of active citizenship, and the gaze of amateur photographers was shaped accordingly to celebrate public activities and forms of collective membership. The chapter challenges the established association of domestic photography with the private sphere, taking the reader on a whirlwind tour through the universe of Soviet-era domestic photo archives.

Concentrating on the material dimension of the photographs, and their circulation within and beyond the family, we look in chapter 3 at the post-Soviet lives of these domestic archives. In discussing the practices of curating and displaying these images, we pay particular attention to the trajectories of family photographs and their changes in status, often in connection with liminal moments and important family transitions. We show how the shape of an archive follows the twists and turns of its owners' lives, giving it the capacity to metaphorically stand in for family history. In this capacity, Soviet-era domestic photos are often called upon in a range of public initiatives—from school-initiated research projects to state-funded exhibitions.

In chapter 4 we look at a patchwork of disconnected, but visually harmonized distant locations depicted in Soviet-era travel photographs and explore how these images allow today's viewers to revisit and reimagine Soviet space. More than any other genre of vernacular photography, travel photographs actualized the utopian promise of the Soviet project as they gave tangible form to the image of the Soviet Union. As such, they serve as privileged foci of longing for those seeking to relive Soviet experience, or, in the case of younger generations, to retrospectively imagine it,

inadvertently giving ground to potential revisionist and revanchist fantasies. When read against the grain, however, these images expose how power hierarchies and spatial appropriation are imbedded in benign touristic snapshots.

The second part of the book zooms in on the stories of individual families. While photographs are often assumed to be central for the transmission of memory, the notion of “memory transmission” obscures more than it reveals. Photographs often articulate and produce knowledge and affects that may sit at odds with the intentions of their makers and original owners. This is particularly evident in chapter 5, where we turn to the unsaid—the silences and erasures that are endemic to domestic photography. We foreground a peculiar form of surplus meaning that resides in home photo collections and relates to the photographs’ capacity to reference what remains beyond the frame. Silences may take on greater significance when conversations linger and when narratives of different family members play off of one another, which often happens when images change hands.

In chapter 6 we emphasize the importance of localized memories by focusing on the reverberations of the 1962 Novocherkassk massacre. Contrasting the representational strategies deployed in a local museum with the photographic traces the tragedy left in private family albums in this southern Russian town, we attend to how photography’s evidentiary potential is mined differently by different generations. In the contexts of family viewing, photographs tend to speak to the difficult past indirectly, which allows different generations to blend fragmented references to a long-silenced event with heavy doses of affect and imagination.

Chapters 7 and 8 further cast doubt on the concept of straightforward generational transmission. In these chapters we highlight the role domestic photo collections play in people’s efforts to control and shape the outlines of their life story. In chapter 7, we encounter an archive whose shape and interpretation morphs dramatically as different generations take on the role of custodians of the family history. In chapter 8, we meet a family whose matriarch strategically deployed family photographs to shape and successfully pass on her version of the family’s history to her daughter and grandson. Both chapters underscore performative engagement with photographs and reflect on the ways the photographs’ affordances support diverse biographical narratives.

In the last part of the book we turn to the practices of care and repair, and the contexts in which domestic images, and particularly portraits, become powerful public actors. One source of the affective power of Soviet-era domestic photographs is their physicality. While they often trigger elaborate commentary and storytelling,

they can also be caressed and touched, as well as modified, remediated, or hidden. As such, they allow for the expression of sentiment that, for one reason or another, resists being put into words.

We revisit the theme of silence in chapter 9, connecting it to the theme of image mobility, by tracing how people perform the acts of care and mourning intended for the loved ones these images reference. Given the complex economy of silence and disavowal that shaped the Soviet and post-Soviet experience, this is particularly significant; in handling and moving family photos, caretakers of domestic photo archives can express sentiments that go beyond narrative reckoning.

We take this line of inquiry further in chapter 10 by exploring an instance in which image mobility becomes entangled with public commemoration. We turn to the multimillion-strong movement known as the Immortal Regiment to address the newly discovered public resonance of Soviet-era imagery. This recent initiative honors those who fought against Nazism in the Great Patriotic War (as people in Russia refer to the Soviet participation in World War II). By inviting their descendants—including the younger generations among our interviewees—to carry veterans' portraits through the streets, this commemoration harnessed the energy of care that domestic photographs make possible, showcasing their lasting power and their capacity to move people to action.