

Mike Mandel and Chantal Zakari

Shelter-in-Places

Lockdown Archive

as part of the *A New Display: Visual Storytelling at a Crossroads* exhibition

Curator: Iris Sikking

During the April 19, 2013 manhunt for the Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, residents of Watertown, including the artists, were ordered to “shelter-in-place.” The previous night, Tsarnaev’s older brother, Tamerlan, had been killed in a shootout with Watertown police, but Dzhokhar had escaped, abandoning his car a few blocks away from the shootout.

A vast military-style manhunt was soon underway, one of the largest in United States history. A twenty-block area of Watertown was cordoned off by thousands of police. Numerous SWAT teams were ordered to search every home. Many residents were ordered out of their homes without the authority of a search warrant, strip-searched, and taken into police custody.

Sixteen hours later, at 6 p.m., having failed to find Tsarnaev, the police lifted the “shelter-in-place” order. An hour and a half later, a resident walked into his backyard and noticed that the cover on his boat was loose. Looking under the tarp, he discovered Tsarnaev alive but lying in a pool of blood, and notified police. The ordeal had ended.

The *Shelter-in-Places* (2013) project, which commemorates the experience of the people of Watertown living under siege, is a response to the extreme militarization of this police action. The plates were sold at cost via an online store, Shopify, from December 1, 2013 to January 15, 2014. Following the announcement of the sale, the Watertown chief of police called the artists’ employer, The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in an attempt to stop the project.

The publication *Lockdown Archive* (2015) is a collection of images found on the web and reorganized chronologically, by category and by location, to provide an encyclopedic overview of the manhunt.

Mike Mandel (1950, USA) is a photographer. His work *Evidence* (1977), a collaborative project with Larry Sultan, is recognized as a seminal photographic book that questions the premise of documentary photography.

Chantal Zakari (1968, Turkey) is an interdisciplinary artist, designer, and art educator. In her work she draws upon contemporary social issues by making connections among personal narratives, history, and popular culture.