

BEMIS X CENTER

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(Left): Carmen Winant. Detail of *The last safe abortion*, 2024. Courtesy of the artist and Whitney Museum of American Art. Photography by Jake Holler.

(Right): Laura Hart Newlon. Still from *Heavy Focus*, 2021. Single channel 4k video, 11'48" duration. Courtesy of the artist.

Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts Unveils Two Compelling Exhibitions for Early 2025

OMAHA, Neb. (November 19, 2024) — Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts is excited to announce the opening of two thought-provoking exhibitions, *Carmen Winant: The last safe abortion* and *Synchronicities: Intersecting Figuration with Abstraction*, both set to debut on January 18, 2025. The exhibitions will run concurrently through May 4, 2025, showcasing a diverse range of artistic practices that inspire and engage audiences on multiple levels.

[Carmen Winant: The last safe abortion](#)

Curated by Rachel Adams, Chief Curator and Director of Programs at Bemis Center, and organized by the Minneapolis Institute of Art, *The last safe abortion* at Bemis is the latest iteration of artist Carmen Winant's acclaimed exhibition and identically titled photo book. Previous iterations were featured at the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2023 and 2024 respectively, yielding coverage in outlets such as [The New York Times](#), [Vanity Fair](#), and [Hyperallergic](#). This exhibition continues Winant's exploration of women's health clinics and abortion providers, with a particular focus on the Midwest.

Drawing on thousands of historical photographs from various archives and recent images captured by Winant, the exhibition focuses on the everyday, behind-the-scenes work of abortion providers and healthcare staff. From answering phones and sterilizing equipment to conducting training sessions and scheduling appointments, Winant's assemblages of photographs — displayed in archival cases, bulletin board-style installations, and vast wall grids — offer a tender yet powerful narrative that celebrates the compassion and commitment of healthcare workers.

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The last safe abortion was originated by the Minneapolis Institute of Art and curated by Casey Riley, Chair, Global Contemporary Art and Curator of Photography & New Media.

Synchronicities: Intersecting Figuration with Abstraction

Synchronicities: Intersecting Figuration with Abstraction is a dynamic group exhibition featuring artists Leia Genis, Sheree Hovsepian, Liz McCarthy, Laura Hart Newlon, Sondra Perry, Amy Pleasant, Christina Quarles, Heather Rasmussen, and Carolyn Salas. Through diverse media — ranging from sculpture and photography to painting and digital works — *Synchronicities* underlines how abstraction and figuration are not oppositional concepts, but instead serve as complementary modes of expression. While figuration can ground abstract concepts in the familiar, abstraction can serve as a powerful tool for reinterpreting the body. Presented together, this visual journey enriches and expands our understanding of the vast human experience.

Synchronicities is also curated by Rachel Adams, Chief Curator and Director of Programs at Bemis Center, who invites viewers to explore the layers of meaning within the featured works. “Both exhibitions are intended to spark a dialogue about identity, representation, and the body,” said Adams. “While Winant’s work highlights the labor behind healthcare and bodily autonomy, the artists in *Synchronicities* highlight how the body can be abstracted in unexpected ways. These exhibitions — along with our public programs — are a testament to Bemis Center’s dedication to providing a platform for bold and innovative artistic expression, and a space where artists and audiences can come together to explore new ideas and diverse perspectives.”

Carmen Winant: The last safe abortion is generously supported, in part, by The Lozier Foundation and The Sherwood Foundation.

Public Programs

Bemis Center invites the community to participate in a series of exhibition-focused special engagements, including an Opening Reception on January 17 with several artists in attendance and a performance by exhibiting artist Liz McCarthy titled *Imperfect Players*.

Friday, January 17, 6–8 p.m.*	Exhibition Opening Reception
Saturday, January 18, 3 p.m.*	Panel Discussion: The Art of Access: Archives as a Creative Catalyst
Thursday, January 23, 7 p.m.	Curator-Led Tour
Thursday, February 27, 7 p.m.	MY BODY, MY VOICE: Personal Stories Shared
Saturday, March 1, 3 p.m.	OMA ARTalks
Thursday, March 6, 6 p.m.	Lecture: Lisa Sutcliffe, Curator of Photographs at The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Thursday, May 1, 7 p.m.	Curator-Led Tour

Admission is free; ticket reservations are encouraged. Visit bemiscenter.org/events for details.

*This event was rescheduled from its original date/time.

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Carmen Winant: *The last safe abortion* Advisory Committee

Several of the public programs above were developed in collaboration with an advisory committee of community members:

Sophie Clark, Clark Creative Agency

Andi Curry Grubb, Planned Parenthood North Central States

Senator Jen Day

Bekah Jerde

Catherine Medici-Thiemann, PhD, historian

Jen Pavkov, Creative Director, Women's Fund of Omaha

Ashlei Spivey-Arthur, Executive Director, I Be Black Girl

Exhibition Details and Visitor Information

Exhibition Dates: January 18–May 4, 2025

Location: Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, 724 South 12th Street, Omaha, NE 68102

Gallery Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and until 9 p.m. on Thursday

Admission: Free

For press inquiries or to schedule an interview, please contact Rachel Grace at (531) 466-5256 or press@bemiscenter.org.

Media kits, including high-resolution images of select works, are available at bemiscenter.org/press.

About Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts

Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts facilitates the creation, presentation, and understanding of contemporary art through an international residency program, exhibitions, and educational programs to inspire an open and diverse dialogue on the critical issues that give shape and meaning to the human condition. Learn more at bemiscenter.org.

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(Left): Heather Rasmussen. *Untitled (Holding leg over chair with mirror)*, 2017. Courtesy of the artist.

(Right): Carmen Winant. *The Future (What Kinds of Times Are These?)*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist and Minneapolis Institute of Art. Photography by Charles Capistrant.