

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kingston Gallery
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Ann Wessmann's Being: Vertical + Horizontal at Kingston Gallery

BOSTON, MA, July 21, 2016 - Kingston Gallery is proud to present *Being: Vertical + Horizontal*, a solo exhibition by Artist Member Ann Wessmann. Her artistic practice is founded in textiles, and this new body of work references characteristics of fibers-based creations, including a rectangular format, multiplicity, repetition, and accumulation. Wessmann honors each day of life with a simple, repeating pattern of vertical and horizontal orientations that represent the states of awake and asleep, warp and weft, day and night.

On View: August 31 - October 2, 2016

First Friday Opening Reception: Friday, September 2, 5:30-8:00 pm.

The artist asks us to view her labor-intensive installation as a calendar: thousands of slim, inch-long rectangles of translucent vellum pinned just above a white surface, forming a large grid with continuous rows. The vertically oriented slices of paper represent day, and the horizontal slices represent night. These monochromatic grids make this familiar rhythm of life visible, in relief. Some of the resulting friezes are scaled to the size of Wessmann's body, occupying the central part of the gallery wall.

The grids reflect specific segments of time, considering the installation a way of visually, physically marking time and contemplating personal history. This series is somewhat distinct from her previous exhibitions at Kingston which focused on the lives of important family members, including her brother, grandmother and grandfather, because the work begins by counting the days of her own life, and that simplicity and directness has the potential to universalize its impact. We all wake, rise, and then eventually lay back down, only to (hopefully) rise again. *Being: Vertical + Horizontal* also continues consistent themes in Wessmann's work. Her previous series *Words Unspoken: 37,499 days* chronicled her grandmother's life, and *Memory·Loss* considered her brother's life, in each case negotiating loss, memory, and personal history by sorting and arranging words and objects significant to each person.

Wessmann is an avid collector, the result of looking with care and acquiring small items, all the while often arranging them by category, then hue, then texture. The artist does not always know right away why she may hold onto a particular object, beyond its beauty. However, over time, she contemplates the meaning and character of things that capture her attention, and eventually devises a system for expressing particular ideas. In previous works, Wessmann has used mementos, such as hair, or journalistic writings, and objects from the natural world, such as the stamen of tulips or twigs collected from horse chestnut trees growing at her family home in Scituate. In every case, her process is labor-intensive, and the completed installations balance characteristics of fragility and

endurance. *Being: Vertical + Horizontal* meditates on habit and the passage of time. Numbers and planning are important: she counts as she works, and this precision transforms profuse accumulations into breathtaking sculptures that are both tender and precise.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Ann Wessmann is a mixed media artist living and working in Boston. She received a B.S. from Skidmore College and an M.F.A. from Cranbrook Academy of Art. Wessmann has been a professor in the 3-D Fine Arts Department at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston since 1978, and has been head of the Fibers program since 1994. Wessmann's mixed media wall reliefs, sculptural objects and site specific installations have been exhibited throughout the U.S including at the Fuller Craft Museum, the deCordova Sculpture Park & Museum, the Art Complex Museum, the Mills Gallery, Spoke Gallery @ Medicine Wheel Productions, Suffolk University Gallery, Center Gallery at Bucknell University, Shick Gallery at Skidmore College, and the ICE Box Project Space. Her work is included in numerous public and private collections. She has been a member of the Kingston Gallery since 2002.

Also at Kingston Gallery in September: Christina Pitsch, *still life*, Members' Gallery. **First Friday Opening Reception:** September 2, 5:30-8:00 pm.

Kingston Gallery is an artist-run alternative space founded in 1982. The gallery is committed to exhibiting the work of established and emerging artists. It hosts one-person and group exhibitions by gallery members and provides exhibition opportunities for guest artists in its Center Gallery. The gallery is located in Boston's historic South End between Harrison Avenue and Albany Street in the vibrant SoWA gallery district.

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