

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOCAL: ART + IDEAS presents

MELISSA WILGIS: SHE TELLS A STORY PHOTOGRAMS

OCT 1 – NOV 19, 2021

ONLINE EXHIBIT + SALE: LOCAL-ART-IDEAS.COM

BY APPOINTMENT: 1409 AUDUBON BLVD, SUITE B2, WILMINGTON, NC

CLOSING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 4-8 PM

A PORTION OF SALES WILL BE DONATED TO WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN.

LOCAL: ART + IDEAS is pleased to present **MELISSA WILGIS: SHE TELLS A STORY**, an exhibition of Wilgis' photograms using vintage and antique women's undergarments.

MELISSA WILGIS has been creating photograms for over ten years, with objects ranging from flowers to sea creatures. For this series, Wilgis relies on this seminal analogue process to explore the complex narratives embedded in women's undergarments. Indicators of cultural norms and gendered expectations, these undergarments elicit a challenged nostalgia for and a wonderment of their bodily transformations, in tandem with the sheer lusciousness of the resulting photogram. The photograms act like a palimpsest, transforming the physicality of the original garments into a 1:1 scale trace. The title of the series, "She Tells A Story," captures the multiple narratives that unfold, from that of the original owner of the garment and the circumstances under which it was worn, to the artist's chronicling of her own artistic practice within a historical trajectory of the medium of photography. Eschewing all methods of visual trickery, the photograms explore the physical logic (or lack thereof) of bras and girdles, and of photography – light on paper and chemical transformations.

SHE TELLS A STORY will showcase approximately 30 photograms, ranging in size from 16x20" to 30x40," along with a separate display of the original garments used by the artist.

WILGIS was born in Pittsburgh, PA, and received a BA in English from NC State University, with an interest in photojournalism. She worked for Eastman Kodak's Qualex, providing tech support for one-hour photo labs. Following years of employment in corporate America, Wilgis embarked on photography courses at Cape Fear Community College (Wilmington), during which she also served as the darkroom assistant. With the birth of her daughter, she converted her home garage into a darkroom, with an adjacent small building on the property serving as her studio.

LOCAL: ART + IDEAS is a think tank based in Wilmington, NC, that champions nonhierarchical approaches to artistic production and reception. We promote regional artists and introduce their work to new audiences nearby and nationally through a variety of programming, including private art viewings, site-specific installations, and temporary and online exhibitions. We seek to showcase art and ideas that flourish beyond dominant cultural networks and geocentric metropolis.

BETH HANDLER RIEBE founded **LOCAL** in 2013. Riebe worked in the NYC art world for twenty years, with curatorial stints at The Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, and Yale University Art Gallery. She served as an art consultant to Donald B. Marron (one of ARTnews' top 200 collectors). She is a former Trustee at the Cameron Art Museum and occasionally teaches art history at UNCW. Riebe received a BA from Oberlin College, and an MA and a PhD from Yale University, with all degrees in art history.