

65GRAND

ERIK WENZEL

Just Like A Normal Person, Even More So

November 4 - December 3, 2016

Opening Reception: Friday, November 4 (6-9PM)

65GRAND is pleased to present Erik Wenzel in his third solo exhibition with the gallery: *Just Like A Normal Person, Even More So*.

On view are two new bodies of work: a suite of text drawings mounted to panels and a series of sculptures consisting of objects owned by the artist encased in plaster blocks.

The drawings, executed in white ink on black paper, meticulously transcribe a text that accompanies anti-depressant medications. The artist notes, "Pharmacies and drug manufactures are required by law to disclose the risks associated with using their products. It occurred to me that, like a software agreement, we never read this stuff. But in this case the text concerns chemicals that enter the body and fundamentally change the way it works as opposed to how your private data will be collected and shared."

One way to obfuscate details you want to go unnoticed is to hide them in an overabundance of information. Going through a medication guide line by line and writing it out by hand makes visible this text, makes it legible. It also brings out into the open something often kept secret, sometimes out of shame: the particulars of treating mental illness. In so doing Wenzel draws attention to moments of unintended humor and poetry:

Racing thoughts

Reckless behavior

Unusually grand ideas

Excessive happiness or irritability

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In contrast to this is the group of sculptures. Where the important facts about a prescription are made visually striking in the drawings, the sculptures are an attempt to get rid of things. Dealing with the accumulation of objects and the emotions and memories that inhabit has been a topic of Wenzel's practice for some time. By hiding it in solid plaster, clutter from the artist's life has been concretized. The objects are at once contained, encased in a solid material, but also rendered more substantial.

Erik Wenzel's work has been included in the 12th Havana Biennial and in exhibitions at Threewalls, The Storefront, VBKÖ, 65GRAND and the Werkstatt Kulturverein. In 2015 he curated the group exhibition *Documentia* at Sidecar Gallery. His writing appears in *Akademie X* (Phaidon, 2015) and *How to Write About Contemporary Art* by Gilda Williams (Thames & Hudson, 2014). Wenzel co-edited and contributed to *Internal Necessity: A Reader Tracing the Inner Logics of the Contemporary Art Field* (Sternberg Press, 2010). He has been written about in publications including *Artforum*, *Artnet*, *Chicago* magazine and *The New York Times Magazine*. Wenzel is co-host of the podcast *I Don't Hate This* (<http://idonthateth.is>).