

ELIAS WESSEL

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ABOUT

Elias Wessel is a German-born artist whose conceptual work moves between photography and painting, extending into site-specific installation, moving image, and sound. His research-based practice investigates how contemporary systems—digital, political, economic—and their societal effects can be translated into images, visual structures, and material traces, while extending the historical dialogue between photography and painting. He has been based in New York City since 2008, with an additional studio presence at Stiftung Insel Hombroich / Raketenstation in Germany.

Wessel has exhibited work at 1014, New York; Palais Beauharnais, Paris; the Art Collection of the Willy-Brandt-Haus, Berlin; NRW-Forum, Düsseldorf; Art Basel, Basel; Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei, among others. His works are included in public and private collections, including the Spallart Collection, Salzburg; the AXA Art Collection, Cologne; and the Art Collection of the German Bundestag, Berlin. Recent publications and contributions include *Textfetzen* (Kulturverlag Kadmos, 2022), *Aesthetics of Conflict* (Verlag Kettler, 2023), and *Naming and Being: Knowledges, Identities and Cultural Politics* (Routledge, 2026).

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

Born in Bonn, Germany, lives and works in New York City

1999–2000 Studies in art history at the University of Heidelberg

2000–2003 Studies in visual communications and photography at the University of Mannheim – Faculty for Art and Design

2003–2007 Studies in photography, theory of perception and theory of visual communication at the University of Art and Design, Offenbach am Main; diploma thesis: *Die Amoralität des Ästheten [The Amoralität of the Aesthete]*

2008 Moves to New York City

2026– Additional studio presence at Stiftung Insel Hombroich / Raketenstation, Germany

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (selected)

- *On the Threshold*. CS Art Partners, Old Greenwich, CT, June 15–July 15, 2026.
- *NFM (News Finds Me)*. Digital Art Space, Munich, February 26–April 8, 2026.
- *It's Complicated*. Picture Theory, New York, August 2–September 7, 2024.
- *Elias Wessel: Delirious Images – Photographs for the Next Society*. Kunstsammlung im Willy-Brandt-Haus, Berlin, March 4–May 7, 2023.
- *Elias Wessel—It's Complicated, Is Possibly Art*. 1014, New York, September 7–23, 2022.
- *Elias Wessel—I Don't Care. I Love my Phone*. Kunstsammlung SAP, Walldorf, January 28, 2021–April 30, 2022.

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- *Elias Wessel : La somme de mes données*. Palais Beaulieu, Paris, January 28–December 28, 2020.
- *Die Summe meiner Daten – Digitalisierung, Überwachung, Identität*. Kunstverein Speyer, December 2, 2018–January 13, 2019.
- Werke aus »Die Summe meiner Daten.« Ruttkowski;68, International Photoszene-Festival, Cologne, September 1–30, 2018.
- *In The End, Though, Nothing Is Lost*. Deutsches Haus at New York University, NYU Arts & Science, New York, April 6–May 26, 2018.
- *History of Touches*. Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, New York, November 10–December 15, 2017.
- *Die Geschichte vom Vergessenen*. Heinrich-Hoffmann Museum, Frankfurt am Main, February 24–July 19, 2017.
- *Elias Wessel: Stuck Together Pieces!* 1014, New York, November 2, 2016–May 31, 2017.
- *Spuren der Wirklichkeit*. Goethe-Institut, Frankfurt am Main, August 5–October 5, 2016.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (selected)

- *Liminal Spaces*. International House, New York, May 1–31, 2025
- *Transformationen*. Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern, June 5–August 11, 2024
- *Would You Share Your Gold Medal?* School of Visual Arts, New York, November 1–8, 2023
- *Pulsar*. Photoszene Festival, Beiste_Satellite, Cologne, May 12–21, 2023
- *zu mir und zu dir*. Franz Jyrch, Maria Sainz Rueda, Elias Wessel; Former Synagogue Walldorf, June 25–July 24, 2022.
- *Das Objekt im Fokus*. Karl Blossfeldt, Alfred Ehrhardt, Walker Evans, Candida Höfer, Günther Selichar, Josef Sudek, Michael Wesely, Edward Weston, Erwin Wurm and others; SpallArt Collection, Salzburg, August 1, 2020–May 7, 2022.
- *Objects. Stories. Experiences: Extraordinary Things*. Assembly Required, Brooklyn, NY, October 2–30, 2021.
- *Ich bin ganz von Glas – Marianne Brandt und die gläserne Kunst von heute*. Sächsisches Industriemuseum, Chemnitz, September 28–December 1, 2019.
- *Werke aus der AXA Sammlung – Adolf Luther, Günther Uecker, Elias Wessel*. Art Basel, Basel, March 29–31, 2018.
- *Grieger Relaunch*. Thomas Demand, Andreas Gursky, Axel Hütte, Thomas Ruff, Thomas Struth, Damien Hirst and others; NRW Forum Düsseldorf, November 28–December 4, 2017.
- *Doll Parts*. Leslie Lohman Museum, New York, May 18, 2017.
- *Wiesinger, Stinkel, Wessel: Sichtbarkeiten*. Museum Heylshof and Museum Andreasstift, Worms, August 2–September 27, 2015.
- *Landscapes, IV International Artists in Residence*. Exhibition Hall of the Art Fund, Kursk, September 24–November 24, 2014.
- *Being Changed – A Group Exhibition of International Contemporary Art*. MoCA – Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei, March 8–April 14, 2013.

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PUBLICATIONS (selected)

- Gwyneira Isaac, Stanisław Kordasiewicz, Sylvia Ngo, Tomasz Wicherkiewicz, Kyunney Takasaeva (2026): *Naming and Being: Knowledges, Identities and Cultural Politics* London: Routledge.
- Wessel, Elias et al. (2023): *Aesthetics of Conflict*. Dortmund: Verlag Kettler.
- Robinson, Carl et al. (2022): *Painting, Photography, and the Digital: Crossing the Borders of the Mediums*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Wessel, Elias et al. (2022): *Textfetzen. It's Complicated: Texte aus einem a/sozialen Netzwerk 2019–2021. Ist möglicherweise Kunst*. Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos. [English translation: *Textfetzen. It's Complicated: Texts From an Anti/Social Network 2019–2021. Is Possibly Art.*]
- Wessel, Elias / Berg, Stephan / Graser, Jenny (2020): *Elias Wessel : La somme de mes données*. Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany Paris (ed.), Berlin-Paris: Phoebe Verlag. [Deutsche Übersetzung: *Elias Wessel: Die Summe meiner Daten.*]
- Wessel, Elias / Graser, Jenny (2018): *EliasWessel. Die Summe meiner Daten – Digitalisierung, Überwachung, Identität*. Kunstverein Speyer e. V. (ed.), New York-Speyer: Phoebe Verlag.
- Wessel, Elias et al. (2018): *Landscapes – In the end, though, nothing is lost*. Deutsches Haus at New York University, NYU Arts & Science (ed.), New York: Phoebe Verlag. [Deutsche Übersetzung: *Landscapes – In the end, though, nothing is lost.*]
- Wessel, Elias / Gisbourne, Mark (2017): *Elias Wessel. Photographische Arbeiten aus den Jahren 2014–2017*. 1014 and Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany New York (ed.), New York: PhoebeVerlag. [English translation: *Elias Wessel. Photographic Works Between the Years 2014–2017.*]

TALKS, LECTURES (selected)

- Patton, Fitz / Wessel, Elias (2026, April 6): »Sound and Time.« Guest lecture at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Savannah, Georgia.
- Wessel, Elias / Wimmer, Karin (2026, March 3): »Poetry in Business.« Guest lecture moderated by Christina Merl, Gottfried Koppensteiner (Head of Department) and media ethicist Michael Graf. TGM (Technologisches Gewerbemuseum), Exnersaal, Vienna.
- Wessel, Elias (2024, November 17): »Aesthetics of Conflict.« Open artist talk by invitation of Stiftung Insel Hombroich, Raketenstation, Hombroich.
- Pittas, Antonis / Wessel, Elias (2024, September 7): »It's Complicated.« Artist conversation on the occasion of the exhibition *Elias Wessel: It's Complicated*, Picture Theory, New York.
- Carey, Brainard / Wessel, Elias (2024, August 23): »Yale Radio: Elias Wessel.« Yale University, Museum of Non-Visible Art, New Haven / New York.
- Wessel, Elias (2024, February 1): »Ästhetik des Konflikts.« Artist talk at the event-series: *Kunst.Pause*, Kunstsammlung AXA, Cologne.
- Saunders, Matt / Wessel, Elias (2023, December 11): »Artists at Work: Aesthetics of Conflict–Elias Wessel with Matt Saunders.« Artist talk, International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), Brooklyn, New York.

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- Brosda, Carsten / Wessel, Elias (2023, May 4): »Kulturgespräch: Die nächste Gesellschaft« [Culture Conversation: The Next Society.] Panel discussion moderated by Arne Schröder organized by Kulturforum at Willy-Brandt-Haus, Berlin.
- Kiës, Natalia / Wessel, Elias (2023, March 15): »Stimmbezirke.« Hosted by Dr. Layla Zami for: *Sonic Interventions*, a podcast by the Collaborative Research Center on Intervening Arts and the Performance Studies Department at Freie Universität Berlin.
- Wessel, Elias / Wolff, Frank (2023, March 4): »Fotografien für die nächste Gesellschaft.« Artist talk on the occasion of the exhibition *Elias Wessel: Delirious Images – Fotografien für die nächste Gesellschaft*, Kunstsammlung im Willy-Brandt-Haus, Berlin.
- Huang, Sue / Suzuki, Wendy / Wessel, Elias (2022, September 20): »Reality, Technology and Art.« Panel discussion on the occasion of the exhibition *Elias Wessel – It's Complicated, Is Possibly Art*, 1014, New York. [Moderated by Alina Girshovich.]
- Wessel, Elias (2021, October 22): »Aesthetics of Conflict.« Online lecture at the event: *DigitalPaintingPhotography*, University of Derby. [Among others with Rahma Khazam, Matt Saunders, Theresia Stipp, Clare Strand.]
- Wessel, Elias (2021, July 2): »The Sum of My Data and the Body.« Online lecture at the event: *The Body: To Be – Named. How We Colonize or Decolonize Through the Process of Naming*, CoLing. [Among others CoLing partners with Yale University and Smithsonian Institution.]
- Wessel, Elias (2020, December 8): »Photography, Truth and Painting.« Online lecture, Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York.
- Wessel, Elias (2020, January 28): »The Sum of My Data.« Lecture following the invitation of the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in France, Palais Beauharnais, Paris.
- Wessel, Elias (2019, July 5): »Die Summe meiner Daten.« Lecture at the event: *Psychoanalytische Reflexionen digitaler Virtualität*, International Psychoanalytic University (IPU), Berlin.
- Wessel, Elias (2018, December 5): »Die Summe meiner Daten – Digitalisierung, Überwachung, Identität.« Lecture for the Johann Joachim Becher Gesellschaft, Kunstverein Speyer.
- Duhon, Peter / Wessel, Elias (2017, April 6): »In The End, Though, Nothing Is Lost.« Artist talk on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name: Deutsches Haus at New York University, New York.
- Duhon, Peter / Wessel, Elias (2017, November 9): »Digitization, Surveillance, Identity.« Artist talk on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name: Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, New York.
- Wessel, Elias (2017, November 1): »Visions of Synthesis.« Lecture, Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York.
- Schoen, Christian / Wessel, Elias (2016, December 19): »Zum Wesen der Bilder, Elias Wessel in Conversation With Christian Schoen.« Artist talk on the occasion of the exhibition: *Sprung in die Zeit*, Raum für Kunst und Gegenwart, Ansbach.
- Tabassomi, Nina / Wessel, Elias (2016, November 2): »Stuck Together Pieces!« Artist talk on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name: 1014 (Goethe House), New York.
- Vessel, Ed / Wessel, Elias (2015, Dezember 2): »Elias Wessel and Ed Vessel in Conversation.« Moderated by Wendy Suzuki at the lecture series: *Art Meets Brain*, New York University, New York.

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COLLECTIONS (selected)

- Kunstsammlung im Willy-Brandt-Haus, Berlin (2023)
- Kunstsammlung Spallart, Salzburg (2019, 2021)
- Kunstsammlung AXA, Cologne (2015, 2021)
- Kunstsammlung des Deutschen Bundestages, Berlin (2020)

ARTIST RESIDENCIES (selected)

- *Stiftung Insel Hombroich*, Raketenstation Hombroich, November 1–December 30, 2024.
- *International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP)*. Brooklyn, NY, July 1–December 31, 2023.

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