



Media Contact:  
Michelle Cragle, 202-783-7373  
mcragle@nmwa.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 5, 2009

## ***Hard Copy: Book as Sculpture* Gives Body to the Written Word**



WASHINGTON—The National Museum of Women in the Arts presents *Hard Copy: Book as Sculpture*, an exhibition of 15 artist books that transcend the boundaries of ordinary books and sculpture alike. On view through January 17, 2010, each artwork takes the subject of the book, either literally or figuratively, and transforms it into a three-dimensional piece of art.

Just as books must be read from cover to cover to be understood, sculpture invites an examination – or reading – from all points; one must walk around a sculpture to see it fully. The artists in *Hard Copy* mesh the two media together to create innovative and intimate works that call upon their wide range of personal experiences and feelings.

Many use the book as both medium and theme. For example, Wendy Fernstrom's *Literary Essences*, 2000, offers an ingenious presentation of reading as the antidote to life's ailments: tiny glass capsules filled with "essences" – holes punched from the pages of various novels. The capsules are accompanied by a written guide, which instructs users to place "drops" of them under the tongue daily. Other artists in the show include Elisabetta Gut, Lois Morrison and M.L. Van Nice.

*Hard Copy* expands the concept of the book, taking it into new territory where it becomes an unattainable "object of desire" to be admired from a distance. The tactile but untouchable book sculptures create a viewing dynamic that challenges the viewer to question the distinction between book and sculpture and their expectations of each medium.

Curated by Krystyna Wasserman, *Hard Copy: Book as Sculpture* will be on view in the Long Gallery through January 17, 2010. The presentation of this exhibition is made possible through the generous support of Margaret M. Johnston.

Hard Copy: Book as Sculpture 2

Image Credit: Wendy Fernstrum (American, b. 1961) *Literary Essences*, 2000. Mixed media (Edition of 25), National Museum of Women in the Arts, on loan from the artist.

# # #

**About National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA)**

The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA), founded in 1981 and opened in 1987, is the only museum solely dedicated to celebrating the achievements of women in the visual, performing and literary arts. The museum's permanent collection features 3,000 works from the 16th century to the present created by more than 800 artists; including Mary Cassatt, Frida Kahlo, Alma Thomas, Lee Krasner, Louise Bourgeois, Chakaia Booker along with special collections of 18th-century silver tableware and botanical prints. The museum also conducts multidisciplinary programs for diverse audiences and maintains a Library and Research Center which is accessible to the public. NMWA is located at 1250 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., in a landmark building near the White House. It is open Monday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sunday, noon–5 p.m. For information, call 202-783-5000 or visit the museum's Web site at [www.nmwa.org](http://www.nmwa.org).