

SPERONE WESTWATER
415 West 13 Street New York 10014
212/999-7337 (fax) 999-7338
www.speronewestwater.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Martin Wilner

A Life in Days

Terrazzo Gallery

8 January – 20 March 2010

Sperone Westwater is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent pen, ink, and graphite drawings by Martin Wilner. This is Wilner's first exhibition with the gallery. The artist creates highly detailed diaristic drawings that comprise his two ongoing bodies of work, *Making History* and *Journal of Evidence Weekly*. Wilner uses elements of cartoon, calligraphy, cartography, and Surrealism to reconstrue stories of personal interest in the local and international news. On the verso of each drawing is descriptive text, which is integral to the work. As a practicing psychiatrist, Wilner also focuses on observation and process in his clinical work. The title of the exhibition is a play upon the Beatles song title, "A Day in the Life", in which Lennon chose lyrics derived from news events, while McCartney countered with lyrics drawn from personal reminiscences.

In the six-part drawing *Making History: July–December 2007*, Wilner reconfigures the map of the world, replacing the conventional axes of latitude and longitude with events over time. For example, in his landscape, one may find oneself crossing Turkey when traveling from Queens to Manhattan. Each month's calendric drawing is also uniquely composed to form part of the larger six-month composition.

In the twelve works, *Making History: January–December 2008*, Wilner creates drawings with a focus upon various forms of text, alone or in combination with images and maps in the compositional structure of the Roman calendar. In *September 2008*, Wilner illustrates letters accompanied by portraits of people and animals that are related to the story of interest for each day. The letters also form encrypted messages. In these works, themes develop, shift, and disappear as subjects morph from contract killing in Queens to Guantanamo to the trial of Khalid Shaik Mohammed to Warren Buffett.

Wilner describes his process in creating *Making History*:

My work is about observation. By day much of my observing is acoustic. Listening analytically to my patients. For the hidden themes. Melodies. That preoccupy their lives. That cause suffering. By night, my observations are primarily visual. I look. I read. I draw. Taking technical pen to paper. Condensing. Synthesizing. Choosing. Executing. Hoping to tap into my own less conscious themes. Whispered melodies. Connecting the present to the past and inviting linkages to the future. A surrealistic stew restirred daily. (Wilner, "A Life in Days," 2009)

Wilner says he started the *Journal of Evidence Weekly* after imagining a missed deadline for a publication of that name in a dream. He realized that the acronym of the journal title was *J-E-W*, and interpreted it as a reference to his heritage. In these works, the artist observes and meticulously illustrates the people on the subway in New York City. Faces flow into one another and weld into each other. Bodies are intertwined. Wilner documents each tear and speck of facial hair. As the artist states, his work is about the process and the journey. He leaves the viewer to draw his or her own conclusions from the history or evidence shown in his work.

Martin Wilner was born in 1959, and he resides in New York City. His works have been shown most recently in solo gallery exhibitions in New York and Boston. Recent museum group exhibitions include "Off the Shelf" at the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College in 2006, "Mr. President" at the University Art Museum at Albany in 2007, "Drawn to Detail" at the De Cordoba Museum in 2008 and "Reinventing Ritual" currently at the Jewish Museum. His work is included in many important public and private collections including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Jewish Museum, the Vassar Art Library, the Cartin Collection and Warner Bros.

There will be an opening reception for the artist on Friday January 8 from 6-8 pm. For more information as well as photographic images, please contact Maryse Brand at Sperone Westwater at maryse@speronewestwater.com or (212) 999-7337. Please find further documentation on our website: www.speronewestwater.com.