

35 Days



Strangers answer the call to locate a lost pet.

Film by Heidi Kumao

35 Days

A Film by Heidi Kumao

6:49 minutes / Digital file / 16x9 / color / stereo / USA / 2025 / English

Contact: Heidi Kumao

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<https://heidikumao.net/portfolio-items/35-days/?fb-edit=l>

Synopsis:

“35 Days” is an experimental, stop motion animation about what happens when a coalition of strangers answers the call to locate a missing cat during the pandemic lockdown of 2020. Voicemail messages from neighbors reveal the empathy and core connection we have for, and with, our pets and each other, demonstrating how a virtual community can transcend the isolation of the pandemic.

The audio narrative is pieced together like clues to a crime using anonymous voicemail messages left by neighbors in Ann Arbor, Michigan. It was animated frame-by-frame using hand-made elements: fabric and paper cutouts, thread, embroidery floss, and wool.

Credits

Directed, edited, animated and produced by:

Heidi Kumao

Music

Frank Pahl from "Music for Architecture"

Sound design, edit and mix:

Heidi Kumao

Animation assistant:

Sophie Hullinger

Graphics assistant:

Valerie Matula

With support from:

The University of Michigan Office of the Vice President Research and the Arts Initiative
Vashon Island Artist's Residency

About the filmmaker

Heidi Kumao is a media artist who creates animations, fabric works, video installations, and kinetic sculpture. She has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally in the USA, Brazil, Argentina, Singapore, Korea, Australia, China, Spain, and Canada including: Fundació Joan Miró (Barcelona), ArtScience Museum (Singapore), San Jose Museum of Art (California), Museo de Arte Moderno (Buenos Aires), Museu da Imagem e do Som (MIS) (São Paulo). She has received grants/fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, Creative Capital, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. Her work has been reviewed in *Artforum*, *Art Papers*, *Sculpture Magazine*, and *After Image*. Her sculptural and photographic work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Arizona State University Art Museum, and Light Work. She is a professor at the University of Michigan Stamps School of Art & Design.

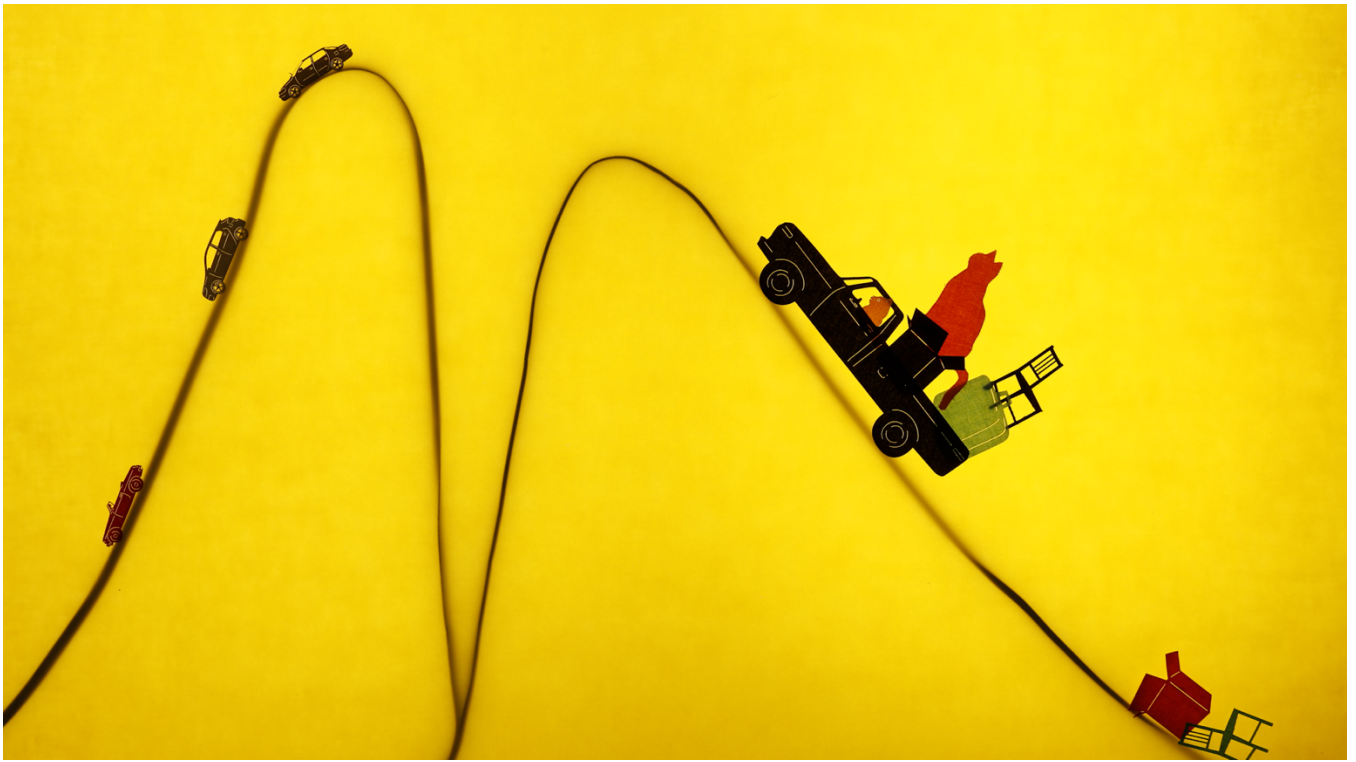
Her film, "Swallowed Whole," about breaking her back, screened in over 25 film international film festivals and was awarded "Best Experimental Film" at the Seoul International Extremely Short Film Festival, and Humboldt International Film Festival. The publication, "Heidi Kumao: Real and Imagined" (2022), documents her solo exhibition of narrative fabric works and animations and received a Gold Award from the Midwest Book Awards.

More information: <http://www.heidikumao.net>

Heidi Kumao

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USA



I learn where all
the orange cats live.





Film Director Bio – Heidi Kumao, Director of “35 Days”



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Heidi Kumao is an award-winning visual artist and filmmaker who creates animations, stitched fabric works, video installations, photographs, and machine art to explore the psychological and emotional underside of everyday relationships. She has exhibited her artwork in solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally and has been awarded fellowships and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, Creative Capital Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts.

Her film, “Swallowed Whole,” about breaking her back, screened in over 25 film international film festivals and was awarded “Best Experimental Film” at the Seoul International Extremely Short Film Festival, Female Eye and Big Muddy Film Festivals, and Humboldt International Film Festival. The publication, “Heidi Kumao: Real and Imagined” (2022), documents her solo exhibition of narrative fabric works and animations and received a Gold Award from the Midwest Book Awards.



Working on “35 Days” (2025) on a light table.

PAST AWARDS for “Swallowed Whole” (experimental short)
Run time: 4:08 min., 1.78:1, HD, Stereo, 2014.

- Best Experimental Short, 38th Big Muddy Film Festival, 2016
- Special Jury Mention, Experimental category, Oxford Film Festival, 2016
- Royal Reel Award, Experimental Shorts, Canada International Film Festival, 2016
- Best Experimental Film, Female Eye Film Festival, Toronto, 2015
- Jury’s Choice Award – 1st Prize, 34th Annual Black Maria Film Festival Tour 2015, New Jersey
- Special Jury Award for Outstanding Montage, Blow-Up: Chicago Int’l Arthouse Film Festival, 2015
- Best Experimental Film, Humboldt International Film Festival, 2015
- Remi Award, 48th World-Fest Houston International Film and Video Festival, April 2015
- Best Experimental/Documentary Award, Seoul International Extreme-Short Image & Film Festival, 2014
- Bronze Videoholica Award, Videoholica International Video Art Festival, Varna, Bulgaria, 2014