

# andriessse

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**Stephen Wilks**  
**Cobblestone Quilt**  
**May 12 – June 25, 2022**

**AMSTERDAM ART WEEK**  
**Opening Thursday May 12 12-9 pm**  
**Friday 13 May—Saturday 14 May 12 -6 pm**  
**Sunday 14 May 12-5 pm**

andriessse~eyck gallery is looking forward to welcoming you to *Cobblestone Quilt*, the solo exhibition with new works by artist **STEPHEN WILKS (1964, Bridgwater)**. Continuing his search for the mystical in the everyday, i.e., that ‘other’ world that lies beyond the tangible surface of mundane objects, Wilks created a series of works which evokes a sense of wonder about the world we live in.

Stephen Wilks gets his inspiration and ideas during long walks through the city or the countryside. A certain reflection of the light onto wet cobblestones, creating an ethereal blue light, brings to mind the English folktale ‘Dick Whittington and His Cat’. The story is about a poor boy who, seeking his fortune, came to the city where the streets were paved with gold. Instead, he found misadventure in a dreary, rainy and grey London. Until one day, when the sun created a golden reflection on the wet cobblestones, he realised that his fortune was within reach if he changed the way he looked at things.

The folktale is one of the references that developed into Wilks’ new installation *Cobblestone Quilt*; a floor piece resembling a cobblestone street but with stones made from different kinds of textile, each stone having its own unique shape and character. Playing with the different qualities and connotations of the materials, replacing the hard and cold stones with the soft and comforting vibe conveyed by the textile quilt, Wilks challenges our expectations of what we think we know we see, and awakens a sense of wonder. From a more esoteric perspective, the piece alludes to the teachings of Baal Shem Tov, a Jewish mystic, and his saying ‘everything above and below is one unity’, referring to the relation between our individual realities and the larger scheme of things.

# galerie



According to Wilks, elevating the mundane into something unexpected and poetic is art's great mission. However, Wilks' search for a 'higher' truth does not mean his work does not engage with our reality today: "Whether or not consciously, an artist channels the things that go on around him." *Sea Bed*, for instance, in which the spiral shapes of the mattress are paired with the spiral shapes of the shells - the spiral being a symbol for the cycle of life - references our dying oceans. Similarly, the two clay sculptures, *Boot* and *Trainer*] representing the soles of a shoe - one a military boot, the other of a trainer, - manifest their own internal logic: isolated from their everyday context, the unevenly block-shaped surface resembles the labyrinth of a city, turning the sole of our shoe into the soul of our city bearing the marks of the people moving through its streets, be it for a peaceful, leisurely stroll or a destructive raid.

## BIO

British artist Stephen Wilks (1964, Bridgwater) studied English Literature in Canterbury, UK, before pursuing his studies in Fine Art at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Art in Paris, F, and the Rijksakademie voor Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam, NL. Wilks is best known for his long-term performance projects *Animal Farm* and *Trojan Donkey*, during which he carries a life-sized stuffed donkey on his back. The donkey travelled around the world and stayed with people who in their turn gave the donkey a personal message. Wilks most recent solo exhibitions include *Trojan Donkey*, Quetzal Art Center, Quetzal, PT (2022); *Philoxénie*, IEAC Strassbourg (2017), *Flood*, andriessse~eyck galerie, Amsterdam, NL (2016); *Bottle River (Vessels)* buitenplaats Kasteen Wijlre/ Bonnefanten Hedge House, Wijlre, NL (2015). *Foules, fools*, Kunsthalle Mullhouse, France; *Impromptu*, Forum, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2010). Wilks has lived and worked in Berlin since 1998.