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Stephanie Wilde: Windows

Exhibition Date: September 10, 2020 – October 15, 2020

Artist: Stephanie Wilde

Crossing Art is delighted to present our opening show of the season: **Stephanie Wilde: Windows**. Over the course of four decades, **Stephanie Wilde** has made a name for herself with works of ornate and detailed imagery that make pointed statements about the world around us. Wilde is a seeker of the rarefied moments in which the visual arts transfigure facts, figures, and political rhetoric to make of them universal statements that appeal to the senses, emotion, and logic. Dealing with such themes as our shared humanity, individual dignity, and the imperiled environment, Wilde produces intricate, quilt-like illustrations that are as conscientious as they are socially conscious. Her paintings are more than just visually engrossing: they demand our attention because they make biting social commentary on our collective failures and shortcomings. Reminiscent of vibrantly ornamental illuminated manuscripts and awe-inspiring stained glass windows of lofty chapels, Wilde's elaborately painted tapestries feel at once novel and familiar, enticing the audience to consider how history both informs and shapes our present. Each of Wilde's compositions is a window through which to make observations about ourselves and the world.

The artist begins her work with exhaustive research supported by scientific and literary sources, while rich symbolism and historical context inform the narrative. Drawing inspiration from the things she "sees" in the world, and working with ink, acrylic, and gold leaf while combining techniques of painting and drawing, Wilde embarks on a remarkably meticulous and involved artistic process in the hopes to illuminate her observations. Indeed, woven into the intricate "fabric" of her work are overarching narratives of prejudice and injustice, humanity and society, life and the environment – reflected back to us as wildly beautiful and deeply insightful compositions that reveal difficult but important truths about ourselves and the social and political spaces that we occupy.

As a visual artist with humanity in mind, Wilde seeks to give aesthetic form to the language of scholars, scientists, and environmentalists, communicating knowledge and politics through art. Her recent bodies of



work are sure to strike a chord with anyone who is aware of our current global sociopolitical situation. *Murder of Crows* (2015-present) speaks to the polarization of race, religion, and political views with a visual subtext of the historical pattern of prejudice. *The Golden Bees* (2008-2015), on the other hand, elegantly visualizes the tragic and mysterious endangerment of the Western Honeybee, an unfortunate consequence of human disregard for the environment. Wilde brilliantly extends the symbol of the bee by alluding to in *Off Course* (2019) and *Bifurcating the Colony* (2020) – two new works from the *Bees* series that will be shown for the first time at Crossing Art Gallery this fall – the consequences of a dangerously divisive and self-serving political leadership, especially during these crisis-ridden and uncertain times. Together, the *Crows* and *Bees* paintings address our collective failure to regard all life as sacred and part of the same system. Wilde uses her platform as an artist to bring clarity to issues of urgency – and to the stories that weave us all together – in a time when we seem to be drifting apart. She invites us not only to look *at* her work, but *through* it: in the hopes that on the other side, we will come together as more reflective, pensive, and perceptive beings.

Artist Bio

Stephanie Wilde, a self-taught artist whose career has spanned forty years, is known for her elaborate and exquisitely detailed artwork that addresses global contemporary issues and societal concerns. Wilde maximizes the traditional style of gothic illuminated manuscripts to shed light on contemporary issues. Her aesthetic, ideals, and work ethic are descended from earlier artistic traditions, particularly ones which addressed social, spiritual, or philosophical issues.

She received the Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant (New York) for painting in 2015 and was awarded an Artist in Residency at Djerassi Resident Artist program (Woodside, California) in 2017. She has also been the recipient of the Governor's Award for Artistic Excellence in the Arts (Idaho) and a Mayor's Award for Artistic Excellence (Idaho). Among her achievements are three Regional Fellowships from the National Endowment of the Arts and a Work Site grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Museum Shows

2019 Introspective, Boise Art Museum, Boise Idaho



- 2013 We Could Be Heroes: Brigham Young University Museum of Art, Provo, Utah
- 2010 Inaugural Exhibition, Whatcom Museum, Bellingham, Washington
- 2008 Half a Life, Fresno Art Museum, Fresno, California
- 1998 Possessed by the Furies, Boise Art Museum, Boise, Idaho
- 1993 Art in the Age of the Plague, Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California
- 1989 AIDS in Relationship to the Black Plague, Missoula Museum of Fine Art, Missoula, Montana
- 1987 Recent Works, Springville Museum of Art, Springville, Utah
- 1986 Stephanie Wilde, Harris Fine Art Museum, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
- 1986 Stephanie Wilde, Herrett Museum, Twin Falls, Idaho