



Stephanie Rhode /porcelain /16cm /2014

**Municipality of Amstelveen bought two art pieces from artist Stephanie Rhode as a gift for Queen Mathilde of Belgium and Queen Maxima of the Netherlands.**

His Majesty King Philippe of Belgium and Her Majesty Queen Mathilde were on a State visit to The Netherlands in November. As part of this visit Queen Mathilde and Queen Máxima visited the Cobra Museum in Amstelveen.

In honour of this visit to Amstelveen and the Cobra Museum a gift was offered by the municipality to both queens. For this, the municipality of Amstelveen, commissioned by Mayor van 't Veld, purchased two art works by visual artist Stephanie Rhode, who is known both national and international for her art projects.

The gift consists of two porcelain houses (h: 16 cm) which Rhode created during her stay in China in 2014. She did this in Jingdezhen, the oldest porcelain city of China. In this particular town Rhode worked for a short period of time during which she converted a recurring theme in her work: 'houses', to Chinese porcelain. This led to a limited series of porcelain houses of varying textures, ranging from Chinese celadon-glaze and blue-and-white patterns, to houses which have spikes and studs.

The work of Stephanie Rhode concerns philosophical questions, being a human being and the course of life. Rhode depicts this in a monumental way. She shows us these philosophical thoughts through

the means of different art installations. These installations often also revolve around certain themes such as remembering, letting go, stillness, movement and transience. In order to achieve these things she works with different symbols, in particular with "house". About "house" as a theme the artist says: "The House is a recurring theme in my work. The meaning of this symbol is ambivalent and allows many interpretations. I have chosen an architectural form for many of my sculptures and installations. Form and theme come together." She describes that the a house might have a different meaning for individuals, for example depending on the situation. A spectator experiences this symbol in a certain way, but this experience might change as time passes. The house can be a reflection of the current situation someone is in. Since these experiences and perceptions of the spectators are of great importance, Rhode often invites them to join in and to work with her on the emergence of a new art work.

Repetition is a second aspect which plays a central role in her work. By repetition simplicity becomes evident and it also allows for (more) recognition and understanding. This gives the installations a meditative, and at the same time transient, character. Often only the documentation of the projects remains. Rhode mostly choses to work at places far away from museums and galleries. She does this both to make art more accessible for a larger and wider audience, but also to take the artwork out of its familiar environment, offering a different perspective.

Starting point for the porcelain houses were the sand houses, or actually the wooden molds for those houses, which Stephanie Rhode used for the giant art project "Sand house project: Stillness, Movement and Transience" in Xiamen during her 'artist in residence' stay in South China. There she installed more than 3000 houses on the sand of the beach of Xiamen, along with hundred voluntary students from Xiamen University. Shortly after completion of the work the flood came and took the project away, whereby all the houses slowly broke down, until there was nothing left. The intention was to try and make transience visible.

[www.stephanierhode.nl/ses/?p=613#videos](http://www.stephanierhode.nl/ses/?p=613#videos)

Parts of the symbolism and philosophy in these art projects and installations are also hidden in the porcelain of the two houses which were given on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November by Mayor of 't Veld to Queen Maxima and Queen Mathilde.

Information about Stephanie Rhode:

[www.stephanierhode.nl](http://www.stephanierhode.nl)