

Ötzi

NICOLE WILSON'S EXHIBITION CONCLUDES ITS FOUR-CITY TOUR IN LONDON



Photo by TJ Proechel. Image courtesy of Nicole Wilson.

June 11 - July 10, 2022

Exhibition Venue

Three Kings Tattoo

182 Deptford High St, London SE8 3PR, United Kingdom

Opening Day

Friday, June 11 from 11 am to 10 pm

Exhibition Website

www.otziproject.com

(May 10, 2022 -- London) After exhibitions in three U.S. cities, Nicole Wilson's *Ötzi*, the highly praised and groundbreaking body of work, will travel to its final stop on June 11: London. Co-presented by Praise Shadows and Three Kings Tattoo, with technical partner Fairchain, the project is based on more than a decade of research and time-based documentation. The premiere of *Ötzi* at Praise Shadows in Boston in May 2021 was praised by *The Boston Globe* as a "heartening exhibition [that] sweeps from 3300 BCE to 2021, hitting on touchstones along the

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way: mummies, tattoos, and the worth of a digital file.” Artnet News, in its November 2021 feature on the New York exhibition asked rhetorically, “When is a tattoo parlor the perfect venue for a contemporary art show? When the art on view is Nicole Wilson’s nearly decade-long project *Ötzi*.”

Ötzi is a Copper Age male natural mummy (scientists date him to 3300 BCE) whose body is preserved, cared for, and researched at the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology in Italy. According to the museum, “61 tattoos were found on *Ötzi*’s body, all in the form of lines or crosses. Unlike modern tattoos, they were not made with a needle; they were fine incisions into which pulverised charcoal was rubbed. The tattoos are located near his ribcage and lumbar spine, on his wrist, knee, calves and ankles.” *Ötzi* is considered the oldest tattooed human mummy yet discovered (in 2018, nearly contemporaneous tattooed mummies were discovered in Egypt).

Nicole Wilson learned about *Ötzi*, Europe’s oldest known natural human mummy. An artist who has focused on sculpture and durational, process-driven works, Wilson created this work because “*Ötzi* stands in for an archetype, his marks are the signifiers without the signified. In that way, I saw an opportunity to use that lack of meaning (or our inability to find meaning) as a way to go further of what this mummy means to us contemporaneously and access him as an archetypal figure of ‘man’.”

In 2012, using the most current research available on *Ötzi*, Wilson tattooed images of the mummy’s 59 known tattoos on her body using her own blood. Her body reabsorbed almost all of the blood back into itself immediately following the tattooing, but left behind dark scars where heme, the pigment within blood, slowly disappeared from the skin’s surface.

In 2016, Wilson decided to re-execute this project following a new study that discovered more tattoos on *Ötzi*. The research confirmed that the corpse contains 61 total tattoos divided into 19 groups. In December of that year, Wilson brought two vials of her own blood to Three Kings Tattoo in Brooklyn. From the existing research, she had already rendered *Ötzi*’s tattoos concisely into digital design files that were then used to make stencils on site. The tattoo artist Mat Moreno tattooed the designs on her skin, using her blood as the pigment. Once again, her tattoos and placement matched *Ötzi*’s.

Over the next four years, Wilson documented the tattoos as they faded. Photographs of this process are on view in the exhibition, and are included in the artist book.

Visitors to the exhibition will experience *Ötzi* via Wilson’s photographs, documentation of the tattoos as they faded over time. On the reverse of each framed picture, the artist includes source material on the tattoo design. Also available in the exhibition is a special collection phase folder (editioned at 30) in the style of the Fluxus box, containing items such as the artist book, a screenprint of a drawing made in Wilson’s blood, print of the Score (set of instructions for

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collecting digital files of the tattoos), and an index of a selection of images from the process of tattooing at Three Kings.

Tattoos on the Blockchain

Over the years, tattoo aficionados around the world have asked Wilson for her tattoo design files. Until now, these have never been available for purchase. The South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology has granted permission for the artist to move forward with sharing digital files of the tattoo.

Praise Shadows has partnered with Fairchain, a new framework for equity and trust between artists, galleries and collectors. This is the gallery and Fairchain's third exhibition partnership. The digital tattoo files featured in the exhibition *Ötzi* will be authenticated and registered on the blockchain. Digital files of the tattoos will be editioned for collectors, who are then provided with the artist's instruction on printing the artwork on paper for their tattoo artist. If a collector has purchased the work and tattooed the design on their body, the collector can put the digital file up for sale in the secondary market, where the artist receives a royalty for each sale.

More information on the editioned tattoos, including edition and sale information, is available on www.praiseshadows.com

Artist Book

Printed with Small Editions, the 96 page artist book *Ötzi* is available for purchase (\$60) from Three Kings in Los Angeles, or [online at the Praise Shadows Art Shop](#).

About the artist

Nicole Wilson is a visual artist with an MFA in Art Theory and Practice from Northwestern University and a BFA in Sculpture from Tyler School of Art, Temple University. Through mold-making, conceptual conceits, and long process-driven projects, she makes objects that articulate and own absences and empty spaces. Wilson has sent the President of the United States a letter every day for the past 13 years and had her father design her coffin. She is a current recipient of the Artist 360 Grant through Mid-America Art Alliance and is currently an Assistant Professor of Sculpture at the University of Arkansas (Fayetteville, AR).

About Praise Shadows LLC

We believe that the art ecosystem is filled with untapped potential, and our work is rooted in partnering closely with artists to develop opportunities in emerging models of creativity and entrepreneurship — exhibitions, commissions, brand partnerships, new technologies, original concepts that no one has ever tried before. Praise Shadows Art Gallery is a commercial gallery space in the Boston area showing the work of emerging and mid-career artists. It opened in December 2020. Praise Shadows Art Partners advises artists and companies in the creative industries on strategic partnerships and marketing. Our work is local, global, and virtual.

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About Three Kings Tattoo

Three Kings Tattoo is a Brooklyn-born tattoo studio driven by the ideals of individuality, creative excellence, and technical innovation. We take pride in our ability to create world-class art that combines the traditional and avant-garde with a level of craftsmanship and professionalism unrivaled in the tattoo world. Every tattoo we create is conceived as a collaborative endeavor between artist-designer and client, ensuring that each customer receives a one-of-a-kind work of art.

It's because of this dual devotion to creative brilliance and high-end service that, since its founding in 2008, Three Kings has become one of the nation's most sought-after tattoo studios. Today, our network also includes New York City, Long Island, Los Angeles, North Carolina, and London. Like the original Brooklyn studio, the newer locations exemplify the values of technical mastery, client satisfaction, and artistic progress that define Three Kings Tattoo.

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Access the Media Kit [here](#)