

PAN

AMSTERDAM

NQ GALLERY



Lamb of God / Self-portrait 50, after Van Eyck

2024

Epoxy, metal, felt (various types), yarn
100 x 70 x 170 cm

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Caspar Berger

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In the famous Ghent Altarpiece, the Adoration of the Mystic Lamb, by the Van Eyck brothers, the frontal of the altar on which the Lamb of God stands is inscribed with the words *Ecce Agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi* (Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world). Forgiving someone's sins gives you the opportunity to start afresh, a chance to change. But are there also things that are not renewable in this way, and which require a truly personal sacrifice?

This question crossed my mind when I recently went to view this altarpiece. A long process of restoration revealed that the Lamb of God itself had largely been painted over. Underneath was an entirely different lamb, with an almost human face, looking directly at you with a piercing, questioning gaze that seems to be saying it can only take away your sins if you really mean it. Perhaps this confrontational look was the reason it was repainted.

I decided to make my own version of the Lamb of God, of a lamb that is visibly exhausted from this repetitive process. I used the two elements of the lamb that we can't consume: the skeleton and the wool. I covered the reproduced skeleton with the wool, sewing it around the bones. For the questioning eyes, I used a photo of my own eyes, following the example of the Lamb of God by the Van Eyck brothers. I printed the photo on felt and pinned it like pancakes to the head of my Lamb of God, as a self-portrait. This means I firstly have to face this question myself. And perhaps then pass it on to the visitor.