

## HAUSER & WIRTH

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Press Release

### Philippe Vandenberg Selected Works

Hauser & Wirth London, Piccadilly

30 January – 13 April 2013

Opening: Tuesday 29 January, 6 – 8 pm

'I am an artist of emotion and reflections. I don't mean sentimentalism, the emotional, but the shock of the emotion that triggers, as it were, the reflection. Only the reflection creates space'.

Philippe Vandenberg (1952 – 2009)



Hauser & Wirth is proud to present 'Philippe Vandenberg. Selected Works', the gallery's first exhibition of Vandenberg's paintings and the artist's first solo show in the UK. The exhibition will feature a selection of oil paintings on canvas and wood produced during the late nineties.

At the beginning of the 1980s, painters in Europe began to revolt against the hegemony of American conceptual art. From the Transavanguardia in Italy to the Neue Wilde in Germany, a Neo-Expressionist style rose to the surface, vehement and uncompromising. Among these young artists was the Belgian painter, Philippe Vandenberg. Vandenberg continued to work with this Neo-Expressionist style until the mid-1990s when his work, whether figurative or abstract, became more visceral and tormented, evincing not only the artist's battle with his medium, but also with his own demons.

Vandenberg drew motifs, figures and icons from an immense literature of art history, myths and sagas. He employed these loaded themes in his paintings: beheadings in which not only the body but also the painting itself was mutilated; the vainglorious king torn apart by dogs; the lion as symbol of power, the bear as symbol of cruelty, and the hare as a sign of haste and angst; rings of fire and scenes of torture and rape. Vandenberg opened

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Pandora's Box in an attempt to grasp all that was irrational and desperate in his world.

Painting was also an 'exercise in dying' for Vandenberg in which he exhausted every means at his disposal: not only painting but also over-painting, not only image but also the written word. At the end of his life he painted / wrote: 'Il me faut tout oublier', or 'Everything must be forgotten'.



Philippe Vandenberg was born in 1952 and lived and worked in Belgium until his death in 2009. His works are held in numerous international collections, including the Guggenheim Museum, New York NY. Major recent exhibitions include the travelling exhibition, 'Philippe Vandenberg & Berlinda De Bruyckere. Innocence is precisely: never to avoid the worst', De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, Netherlands (2012), which opens at La maison rouge, Paris, France in Spring 2014; 'Homage to Philippe Vandenberg', Museum of Modern Art, Ostend, Belgium (2009), which travelled to Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent, Belgium (2009); 'Artist in Residence – Philippe Vandenberg. Visite', Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent, Belgium (2008); and 'L'important c'est le Kamikaze. Oeuvre 2000 – 2006', Musée Rimbaud, Charleville-Mézières, France (2006).

Text written by Marc Ruyters

### Forthcoming exhibitions:

'Eva Hesse 1965'  
30 January – 9 March 2013  
Hauser & Wirth London, Savile Row, South Gallery

'Bruce Nauman / mindfuck'  
30 January – 9 March 2013  
Hauser & Wirth London, Savile Row, North Gallery

Sterling Ruby  
21 March – 4 May 2013  
Hauser & Wirth London, Savile Row

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Now patience is flowering into death 2  
1980 – 1990 – 1999  
Oil on canvas  
101 x 191 cm / 39.8 x 75.2 in

No title  
2001  
Oil on canvas  
96 x 126 cm / 37.8 x 49.6 in