

GALLERIACONTINUA

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SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS DUBAI

798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Rd. Chaoyang Dst, Beijing. Tuesday – Sunday 10am–6pm
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HANS OP DE BEECK

VANISHING

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Galleria Continua / Beijing is pleased to present a new solo show by Hans Op de Beeck, his third exhibition in the gallery's space in the heart of the 798 Art District. In the gallery's monumental downstairs space, multi-disciplinary Belgian artist Hans Op de Beeck has created a room dedicated to drawing. The presentation inside includes an ensemble of 13 large watercolours, as well as a projection room in which his new animated film *Vanishing Point* will be premiered. In addition, the artist will also be displaying a suite of 20 recent sculptures in the gallery's remaining spaces.

The exhibition develops through watercolours that include enchanting winter and night landscapes, seascapes, enigmatic figures, wondrous animals and still lifes. Whereas the sculptures include adult and child figures, often depicted in a meditative moment or a moment of high concentration. They mostly depict small everyday actions or portray the relationship between two characters — a relationship that speaks, for example, of early, awkward love in adolescence or being fully one with one's partner in old age.

In addition, Op de Beeck will display sculptural Wunderkammer cabinets, fictional scaled landscapes, bas-reliefs, eclectic still lifes and enlargements of natural elements.

Vanishing, according to the dictionary, means 'disappearing suddenly and completely', or, in mathematical terms, 'becoming zero'. Op de Beeck is intrigued by the moment when we, as human beings, briefly become nothing or nobody, when we let go of our linguistic, logical and rational understanding of the world, and slip into a moment of self-loss and timelessness. These are moments when we forget our identity and we are momentarily nobody and nowhere, while our alert sense of time and any sense of urgency seem to disappear. This mental no man's land, this emptiness and silence, can serve as an oasis for an overly busy, preoccupied mind. In a broader, philosophical sense, 'vanishing', for the artist, is also about

abandoning our ego, accepting our relativity, our insignificance as humans and individuals in relation to the unfathomable idea of eternity and the dizzying infinity of the universe.

As we age, we are increasingly faced with the sobering 'vanishing' of family and friends around us: in the blink of an eye, a grandparent, parent, sister, brother, or friend disappears from your life. To suffer this kind of loss is confrontational, brutal and absurd. Much of Op de Beeck's work touches on the theme of the *memento mori*; a reminder of the temporality of our lives. It bestows, in a positive sense, brilliance and value upon the small and essential moments in our lives.

The sublime quality of nature, the enigmatic darkness of the night, slipping into sleep and dream, being absorbed in the illusion of a game or the parallel world of a novel can transport one into the experience of an unexpected and sudden fading of one's sense of identity, into a moment of self-loss.

In this exhibition, the artist brings together watercolours, sculptures and a film around this theme in a playful and freely associative manner. The works are not illustrative of a particular theory or point of view, but rather introduce the onset of an unfamiliar mood, a minor action or the seed for a possible story.

The title of the new animated film *Vanishing Point* refers to a point in the picture plane of a perspective view where mutually parallel lines seem to converge. At the level of a vanishing point in the distance, we can no longer perceive three-dimensional depth. Op de Beeck uses the term metaphorically, as a tipping point from which we shift from measurability and legibility into the unknown, indecipherable and incomprehensible, or from the concrete to the abstract, mental or spiritual. The film starts with the image of a little boy resting peacefully on his back with his eyes closed. Next, we are transported to fictional landscapes, still lifes and figures, musically accompanied by a specially created composition by composer-mu-

sician Sam Vloemans, performed by the Hermes Ensemble. Together with the music, the watercolours that are brought to life create a sweeping, tranquil mood that invites one to briefly disappear into a moment of letting go.

Hans Op de Beeck was born in Turnhout (B) in 1969. He lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. Op de Beeck has shown his work extensively in solo and group exhibitions around the world.

He had institutional solo shows at the GEM Museum of Contemporary Art of The Hague, The Hague, NL (2004); MUHKA Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp, BE (2006); Centraal Museum, Utrecht, NL (2007); Galleria Borghese, Rome, IT (2009); the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, US (2010); Kunstmuseum Thun, Thun, CH (2010); Centro de Arte Caja de Burgos, Burgos, ES (2010); Butler Gallery, Kilkenny, IRL (2012); Kunstverein Hannover, Hannover, DE (2012); Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, FL, US (2013); the Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL, US (2013); FRAC Paca, Marseille, FR (2013); MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Boston, MA, US (2014); MOCA Cleveland, Cleveland, OH, US (2014); Sammlung Goetz, Munich, DE (2014); Screen Space, Melbourne, AU (2015); Château de Chimay, Chimay, BE (2015); Le 104, Paris, FR (2016); Museum Arnhem, Arnhem, NL (2016); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, DE (2017); Fondazione Pino Pascali, Polignano a Mare, IT (2017); Kunstraum Dornbirn, Dornbirn, DE (2017); Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen, DE (2017); Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam, Amsterdam, NL (2018); Kunsthalle Krems, Krems an der Donau, AT (2019), The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, RU (2021); Amos Rex Museum, Helsinki, FI (2022) Le Musée de Flandre, Cassel, FR (2023) amongst other.

Op de Beeck has participated in numerous group shows at institutions such as The Reina Sofia, Madrid, ES; the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale, AZ, US; the Towada Art Center, Towada, JP; ZKM, Karlsruhe, DE; MACRO, Rome, IT; the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, GB; PS1, New York City, NY, US; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR; Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Köln, DE; Hangar Bicocca, Milano, IT; the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, JP; 21C Museum, Louisville, Kentucky, USA; The Drawing Center, New York City, NY, US; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, AT; Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, CN; MAMBA, Buenos Aires, AR; Haus der Kunst, Munich, DE; Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna, IT; Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, DE; Musée des Beaux Arts de Caen, Caen, FR; Het Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, NL; Den Frie Center of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen, DK; Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Brussels, BE; Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar, NL; Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, NL; Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, DE; Museum Kunstpalast Düsseldorf, DE; MAXXI, Rome, IT; Marta Herford Museum for Art, Herford, DE; Hakodate Museum of Art, Hokkaido, JP; Musée de l'Armée, Paris, FR (2021-22); Museum of Contemporary Art Krakow, Krakow, PL; Tate Modern, London, GB amongst other.

Op de Beeck has been invited to show and create immersive installations at the Venice Biennale, Venice, IT; the Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai, CN; the Aichi Triennale, Aichi, JP; the Singapore Biennale, Singapore, SG; the Holland Festival, Amsterdam, NL; the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, IN; the Setouchi Triennale, Shodoshima, JP; the Lyon Biennale, Lyon, FR and many other main art events.