

Press release

Marina Abramović
Landscapes

Exhibition from 17 October 2013 to 17 January 2014
Opening 17 October 2013 at 6 p.m. in the presence of the artist



Marina Abramović, *Artist with a Rose*, 2013, 70 x 70 cm

Galerie Guy Bärtschi is delighted to present a personal exhibition of works by Marina Abramović titled *Landscapes*, which will include a selection of the artist's recent pieces. This will be an opportunity to discover the iconic aspects of the artist's work including, on public display for the first time, works from the performance *The Artist Is Present* 2010 which featured at the retrospective exhibition of the artist at the MoMA in New York. This very personal journey was the subject of a documentary film directed by Matthew Akers and Jeff Dupre in 2012.

In this performance, during three months, every day, seven hours a day, sitting immobile on a simple wood plank chair, Marina Abramović welcomed visitors to sit opposite her in silence. Concentrating on fixing the visitor with an intense, impassive gaze, the artist makes herself

present in the moment which arouses an array of emotions in her audience ranging from tears to joy.

Apart from the actual feat and the artist's huge physical and mental commitment to this intense challenge in which the viewer is an active participant, the "direct energy dialogue" between the individuals is palpable. With an attendance of more than 750,000 visitors, this performance which has required the greatest commitment on behalf of the artist and is the most important to date.



Marina Abramović, *The Artist Is Present*, 2013

Marina Abramović, *The Artist Is Present*, 2013 *Landscapes* offers an intimate insight into Marina Abramović. Glimpses of the artist's inner landscape unfold through a protean variety of media and techniques which the artist has developed tirelessly over the last forty years.

This exhibition also includes photographic works of different formats dating from the early 2000s to today; all in the same theme of the traditional bust portrait, featuring Marina Abramović in different performance situations.

In the series *Back to Simplicity*, through her intimate relationship with nature, the artist takes the visitor into her experience of soul-searching to which there is no answer but a real transportation into a spiritual world.

With the sculpture *Chair for Human use with Chair for Spirit use (2)*, Marina Abramović continues to forge a bridge between the states of mental and spiritual presence she explores. With these participatory sculptures, part of a body of work called *Transitory Objects*, Abramović invites the viewer to join her in this experience. The sculpture consists of a pair of chairs each of a different size, one designated for the body and the other for the spirit (which stands on stilts of crystal quartz); if the participant chooses to sit in the *Chair for Human Use*, the artist's intention is that he or she experiences an opening of awareness. With crystals built into the wooden frame the chair brings the energy from the earth into contact with the human body as the participant sits quietly with his spirit.

Finally, there are three rarely viewed but equally important video works to wrap up the exhibition. In *Self-Portrait (based on Nude with Skeleton)*, showing the artist in a macabre lying-down dance with a skeleton; *Vanitas* from the series *The Kitchen, Homage to Saint Theresa*, through still life canons as developed by the Flemish painters of the sixteenth century, Marina Abramović develops yet again, a dialectic of rare intensity with an invisible world.

Invariably skulls and other such artifacts remind us of our own finiteness; of how our days are numbered and could come to an end at any moment. Confronting us with the inevitable fate from which nobody escapes, Marina Abramović forces us to come back to the present moment; the future is a known quantity. In her silent dialogue with a donkey, she shares with us through subtitles, in a seemingly fanciful but ultimately real dialogue to which the animal is attentive, various significant events of her life and her youth. Again, this improbable if not impossible dialogue, creates a link between two worlds; the human and the animal; which seemed impossible at the outset. Marina Abramović constantly pushes the limits and invites us to do as much.



Marina Abramović, *Vanitas*, from the series *The Kitchen, Homage to Saint Theresa*, screen shot, 2010