

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## HELMUT LANG

8 January – 21 February 2015

New York, NY – 24 November 2014: Sperone Westwater is pleased to present an exhibition of sculptures by Helmut Lang, the artist's first New York gallery solo show. Lang's artistic practice is characterized by his use of materials and textures, assembled from diverse sources and repurposed. Lang has stated he prefers materials "with a certain history, elements with irreplaceable presence and with scars and memories of a former purpose."

Shredded fragments from his "Séance de travail" archive serve as raw material for the largest series of works and are transmuted with resin and pigment into a series of pillar-like sculptures, each measuring between 10 and 12 feet high. As Lang has observed, "the substance of artists' lives has always been the subject of their art." The resulting columnar forms exude an organic quality, a starting point for a larger meditation on acts of creative destruction and gestures of renewal. The sculptures appear both hard and fragile. Their geometric shape and structure are juxtaposed with the random accumulation of archival fragments contained within. In this group of nearly 200, each assumes a distinct individualized character.

A series of wall sculptures, composed of resin and pigment pressed together in plankton-like sheets, offers a delicate, almost ephemeral contrast to the taut tall pillars.

Another group of densely layered reliefs builds upon Lang's use of common manufactured materials, this time incorporating cardboard, string, and tape. He paints each surface with a monochrome finish to emphasize the texture and dimensionality. While the artist's process is readily apparent and his materials easily identifiable, in his hands they are enhanced and transformed into objects of contemplation.

Born in Vienna, Austria in 1956, Helmut Lang lives and works on Long Island and in New York. Lang was first exposed to contemporary art as an 18-year-old student in Vienna. During this period, he became close friends with the painter Kurt Kocherscheidt, whom Lang credits with influencing his studio practice, and his wife, Elfie Semotan-Kippenberger.

Over the next several decades, while gaining international acclaim as a leader and innovator in fashion, Lang maintained relationships with his friends in the Viennese art world including Kocherscheidt, Martin Kippenberger and Franz West, amongst others. His engagement with contemporary art expanded throughout this period to include a series of collaborations with Louise Bourgeois and Jenny Holzer, whom he met in the mid-1990s. Following his retirement from fashion in 2005, Lang has devoted the last ten years to his artistic practice. After several exhibitions since 2007 in Europe and the United States, he joined Sperone Westwater this year.

For more information and images, please contact Allyson Shea at Sperone Westwater at (212) 999-7337, or [allyson@speronewestwater.com](mailto:allyson@speronewestwater.com).