

GALERIE RÜDIGER SCHÖTTLE

Exhibition

Stephan Balkenhol

Jan Merta

30th June – 5th August 2006

Opening on Thursday, 29th June, 7 – 9 p.m.



Although **Stephan Balkenhol's** roughly carved and partially painted wooden figures have long since become unmistakable, they have lost nothing of their fascination. His new works have acquired a spatiality that unites relief and sculpture in one single work: an abstract, coloured relief is brought into a rapport with the sculpture in front of it, the latter always taking the form of a figure on a pedestal. The motifs revolve around a universally valid imagery of man and beast. The material is always coarsely hewn wood, the traces of the artist's hand always being an integral part of the work. Balkenhol: "My sculptures do not tell a story. They have a kind of secret. But it is not my task to disclose it, but rather the viewer himself must discover it." Born in Fritzlar, Hessen, in 1957, Stephan Balkenhol today lives in Meisenthal, France, and in Karlsruhe, where he teaches at the Art Academy. He has been exhibiting

at the Rüdiger Schöttle Gallery regularly since 1988.



Jan Merta, born in 1952, today counts among the most significant contemporary artists of the Czech Republic. Living and working in Prague, the painter Jan Merta operates with motifs taken from everyday life and abstracts and alienates them in such a way that they take on altogether complex and obscure meanings. "I produce variations on a theme in order to get closer to it," says Merta, whose paintings of the famous film character "ET the Extra-Terrestrial" and the associations they awakened with Hans Holbein's "The Body of Christ in the Tomb" recently caused a sensation (exhibited at the Rüdiger Schöttle Gallery in 2004). His

new paintings have such titles as "The Chopped-off Iris" and "Portrait of my Wife Lenka" – seemingly classical motifs, yet tinged with irony and enigmatic overtones. Merta will be showing several medium-sized and a number of large-format paintings in the exhibition.

GALERIE RÜDIGER SCHÖTTLE

Amalienstr. 41, D-80799 München

Tel. +49-(0)89-33 36 86

Fax +49-(0)89-34 22 96

Email: info@galerie-schoettle.de

www.galerie-ruediger-schoettle.de