

# Johnen Galerie

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## Stephan Balkenhol

28 June - 7 September 2013

Opening: 28 June 2013, 6 - 9 pm

Stephan Balkenhol's work connects aspects of Minimal Art with the long standing tradition of figurative sculpture. At the beginning of the 1980s as student of Ulrich Rückriem, Balkenhol experimented with minimalist form language. The first wooden heads and figurines emerged in 1982. At this time, many artists began returning to figuration. Sculptors like Katharina Fritsch, Thomas Schütte, Martin Honert and Jeff Koons developed strategies for a figuration, that reflected the new parameters of Minimal and Conceptual Art. The material unity of plinth and figurine, the open expressions and the indifferent postures are crucial aspects of Balkenhol's works. They demonstrate a reflection of Minimal Art: by abstaining from any expressivity, Balkenhol's works advance from being representations of inner spaces and images to having presence in material and form in real space. In this regard Balkenhol's archetypal sculptures are to a certain extent still tied to the „specific objects“ (Donald Judd).

In 2012, the installation of one of Balkenhol's sculptures in the tower of St. Elisabeth in Kassel caused great public interest. This year his monument for Richard Wagner in Leipzig was cause for a passionate debate. Balkenhol's work that is prominently displayed in public spaces in many countries, has been subject of discussions for over 30 years.

This show with new works is another opportunity to reflect or simply get enchanted by his concise as well as essential portrayals of people between everyday life, tradition and modernity.

Born in Fritzlar, Germany, Balkenhol lives and works in Berlin, Kassel and Meisental, France.

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