

Keteleer Gallery is pleased to present a new solo exhibition by German artist Stephan Balkenhol, featuring an entirely new series of sculptures alongside a selection of drawings.

Stephan Balkenhol (b. 1957, Fritzlar/Hessen, DE) is internationally renowned for his distinctive approach to figurative sculpture. Since his studies at the Hochschule für bildende Künste in Hamburg (1976–1982), he has consciously distanced himself from the conceptual and minimalist trends of his time, choosing instead to return to the figure. His sculptures—mostly anonymous human, and occasionally animal figures—are carved from single blocks of wawa or poplar wood and painted in matte colours. Their rough, seemingly unfinished surfaces give them a sketch-like immediacy that reflects how we perceive people in everyday life.

Balkenhol also works in bronze and creates two-dimensional relief panels that blend sculptural form with painterly qualities. In combining sculpture and painting, he expands the expressive potential of both media. Many of his monumental bronzes are permanently installed in public spaces around the world.

His work does not aim to convey fixed messages, but rather to present figures and forms that invite individual interpretation. As he puts it:

"In my vision my sculptures become a question, a mirror."

Occasional surreal or absurd elements—such as figures with animal heads or elongated limbs—introduce a subtle humour that undercuts the apparent seriousness of his forms. Yet his characters never slip into caricature; instead, their ordinariness underscores the intrinsic value of the human being.

Opening 5 September, 2025. 6 – 8 pm.

The exhibition will be on view 5 September – 11 October, 2025.