

## Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle

**Jānis Avotiņš**

**Apr 22 – Jun 25, 2016**

**Exhibition opening: Thursday, Apr 21, 2016, 7 – 9 pm**

**The artist is present.**



Jānis Avotiņš, Particular, oil on canvas, 64 x 74 cm.

Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle is once again pleased to present works by the Latvian artist Jānis Avotiņš. His new works show sublime sceneries of single passersby against architectural backdrops as well as groups of people which are reminiscent of historical newspaper coverage of political and social events. This work cycle is combined with paintings of figures in dancing poses.

Avotiņš is known for his diffuse and mysterious paintings of human figures in indistinguishable spaces. The delicate apparitions of his figures adumbrate an ephemeral reality. Opaquely nebulous coloration immerses the subjects in an inaccessible calm, but at the same time the figures exhibit a striking presence. In peeling figures from their context and by way of metaphors of omission and void, Avotiņš reflects the mechanisms of cultural symbolic systems, collective symbolisms, and ideologies: The figures without their environmental context, and therefore without assignable milieus or functions, are thrown back on their own resources. Avotiņš's artistic practice thus constantly reflects on subjective and objective constructions of reality as well as the disintegration and transformation of social structures and truths.

The Riga-based artist frequently applies paint in so fragile a manner and in such thinly glazed layers that the canvas structure is integrated into the image and thus amplifies the atmospheric effect of the paintings. Dark paint pigments that stick to the structure and therefore create a fine granulation on the surface are evocative of old photographs or newspaper images.

Like his whole oeuvre also Avotiņš new works reveal his constant interest in phenomenological questions about human consciousness. Moreover, several works display rebellious moods and motives. His representations of dance and movement stand for airiness and transcendence and embody precisely in connection with the more quiet and static motifs terms of dynamics, resistance and liberation.

Jānis Avotiņš describes his examination of historical images as follows:

*"In my cultural location, where I grew up and where my imagination and intelligences where formed, there was no 'art', because all so called art was more or less the decorative addition to the ideology of communism. Art that was meant as art was never strong enough to me to be influential to my imagination. Much more stronger influence I got from the mass-media images, the characters, the banalities that were never meant to be poetic but 'informative'. However, it was not disgust in my childhood, it was just there. I do look at these images in a naive mode. I see the power of these images, the other possible potential of them. Most of these images were printed and the print quality itself used to be mostly bad and thus poetic, unclear and somehow mythological for an innocent mind."*

Jānis Avotiņš was born in Latvia and studied at the Art Academy of Latvia. Domestically and internationally, he has been represented in many solo and group exhibitions. At the moment, works by Jānis Avotiņš are shown at the Parisian Palais de Tokyo within the framework of his nomination for the Prix Jean-François Prat.

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