

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Jiri Svestka Gallery presents the exhibition Hans Rath: Recent Paintings**

**/Prague, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2008/ For the first time in the Czech Republic, the paintings by the German painter Hans Rath (1952) will be presented by Prague's Jiri Svestka Gallery on 22<sup>nd</sup> October – 29<sup>th</sup> November. The majority of the works exhibited was created in the past two years.**

Landscapes, still lifes, as well as industrial architecture and human body - these are the essential themes of paintings by Hans Rath. His works radiate a tint of impressionism, even though Rath avoids being pigeon-holed and associated with any “-isms”. *“There are periods when I work with a single theme. For example, in the past three months, I have been dealing with male models in my studio. This is the way that the series Torsos and Sitting – which you can also see at my exhibition – came to life.”*

Rath perceives the organic human body as the opposite of constructed objects – and this is the essential fact that he confronts in his exhibition at Jiri Svestka Gallery. Steel works on one side – and trees and plants on the other. And juxtaposed against it – a naked male body.

Yet the leitmotif featured within the entire work of Rath is still the tree, whether depicted independently or in confrontation or consonance with the surrounding nature. *“From the day I could see, trees for me have been powerful, stately and, at the same time, bizarre creatures I admire. However, the tree is not a symbol in my work – but my fascinating counterpart I perceive in its complexity. And I now turn this perception into my painting.”*

The paintings of Hans Rath are all created on the spot that he is depicting: in the case of his landscapes, he paints them outdoors; in the case of human models, he paints them in a studio. They are usually complete within a single session. The way he applies the paint is very straightforward and emotional; the works originate as though from a single pouring, with impasto way of applying the paint by the “wet-in-wet” method (that means that the painter does not let the paint dry, but paints the individual layers on top of each other while they are still wet.)

This process usually takes from 2 to 6 hours.

Presently, Hans Rath lives and works simultaneously in the German town of Freiburg and the French town Villeveille. He has had a couple of independent and significant collective exhibitions, especially in Germany and France.

And what does he think about his mission of an artist? Here is his answer:  
*“I reckon an artist today should be a bit of a medicine-man – or at least an anarchist. Unfortunately, in reality, he is often more of an entertainer or someone who did his homework just too thoroughly... artistic freedom is one of the highest privileges our society enjoys. We have to keep it and nourish it upon any terms. In today’s system, art is reduced to luxury articles. Thus, the freedom is slowly dying through the massive commerce.”*

**Hans Rath**

**Recent Paintings**

22. 10. – 29. 11. 2008

**JIRI SVESTKA GALLERY**

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**Opening hours:**

Tue - Fri 12 - 18 p.m.

Sat 11 a.m. – 18 p.m.

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