

Matthias van Arkel

High Density

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Björkholmen Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition *High Density* by Matthias van Arkel, the artist's second solo presentation with the gallery. This exhibition features new works that, at its core, explore the possibilities of high-density materiality to find new ways of expressing painterly ideas through silicone and bronze.

High voltage on the senses. Concentrated in colour. Solid in execution. *High Density* is a journey and dialogue on adaptation, resilience and pushing physical and mental boundaries. Ideas persist with the solidness of the material, giving permanence to the ephemeral. Supple in meaning and firm to touch, the works oscillate in shapes and methods but not in deliberateness, giving heft to its own mass, where thoughts gravitate towards each other for a cohesive whole. The intricate details on the paintings are built layer upon layer of paint (silicone) and intention flattened into a single tactile brush stroke. The works are set in place through high temperature and extreme compression, forming a compact piece, tight in energy.

On an incessant exploration of the essence of colours, materiality, dimensions, textures and space, the works elevate an intimate and poetic vocabulary. Matthias van Arkel speaks through intrinsic elements contained within his pieces. His works are an abstraction that recontextualizes the self into new strokes of expression, an allegory of memories, people, experiences and art history that give body – where the painterly comes to life. Framework and flesh in one, a singular and sculptural expanse of superimposed hues that simultaneously reveals and hides.

It is an exercise of control and release only to be revealed at the end of a heavy physical process, a high-density modus operandi. His new venture into bronze is a clash between new and old, driven by the curiosity of combining contemporary expression with ancient tradition. Throughout his oeuvre, van Arkel is able to tease out the sensitivity within the robust.

Matthias van Arkel, b. 1967, lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden. He holds a MFA from Konstfack University College of Arts (1986-1991) and The Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm (1991-1993). He has been exhibited extensively both in Sweden and internationally. His works are represented in several private collections in USA, GB, Germany, Holland and Scandinavia as well as public collections such as Moderna Museet in Stockholm (SE); The National Public Art Council, Stockholm (SE); Ståhl Collection, Norrköping (SE), The SOKO Art Collection Helsinki (FI) and The National Library of France, Paris (FR).

