

Tanya Leighton

Press Release

Maximilian Rödel
'Verdichtung'

4 July – 22 August 2026
Preview: 3 July, 6-9pm

"I try to resolve paintings for myself; I never know what will emerge in the end. If, while painting, I recognize something in the image that triggers a memory I was not previously aware of, then it is finished. This uncovered point transforms the painting into something objectively perceptible. My aim is to render this inspiration as precisely as possible."

— Maximilian Rödel

Tanya Leighton is pleased to present 'Verdichtung', Maximilian Rödel's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

The exhibition brings together new paintings from Rödel's ongoing series 'Bridges' and 'Rift', which were recently shown at the Indigo Museum in Ahmedabad, India. In these works, Rödel continues his long-standing investigation into the material and perceptual conditions of painting. At the centre of his practice lies not the image as a vehicle for representation, but colour itself—its density, spatial presence, and capacity to hold and register time.

Rödel liberates colour from its traditional function as a means of depiction, making it the primary subject of the work. Situated at the intersection of abstraction and perception, his large-scale paintings open up pictorial spaces that resist fixed interpretation. What initially appears as a monochromatic field gradually unfolds into a complex constellation of subtly modulated layers of colour, shifting light effects, and atmospheric transitions. The canvas becomes an open field of perception whose boundaries extend beyond the picture plane.

The works emerge through a slow process of layering and revision. Pigments are applied, condensed, reopened, and brought into new relationships with one another. The surface does not present itself as a finished state, but rather as the visible result of countless gestures, corrections, and accumulations. Each layer retains the memory of the one before it without ever fully revealing it.

This complexity extends beyond the painted surface itself. The sides of the canvases form an integral part of the viewing experience, exposing the accumulated strata of colour and making the construction of the paintings visible as a spatial process. As the viewer moves around the work, chromatic effects and perceptions of depth continually shift. The paintings resist any singular vantage point, unfolding instead through an ongoing interplay of movement, light, and perception.

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The titles 'Bridges' and 'Rift' refer less to specific motifs than to different states of transition—moments in which connection and separation, continuity and interruption, become simultaneously active. Areas of colour approach one another, drift apart, or permeate each other without ever settling into a stable order.

'Verdichtung' does not describe reduction, but a process of intensification. Different temporalities and material layers overlap; colour ceases to function as a means of describing the world and emerges instead as a form of thinking in its own right. As a form of sedimentation, painting intertwines duration, gesture, and perception, producing images that seek less to represent than to be experienced.

Rödel's work belongs to a painterly lineage that places particular emphasis on the autonomy of colour and the physical presence of the image without repeating the historical positions associated with it. Intuitive process and precise composition remain inseparably linked throughout his practice. From this tension emerges a visual language that feels at once contemporary and timeless, continually re-examining the fundamental conditions of painting—pigment, light, surface, and perception.

Maximilian Rödel (b. 1984, Braunschweig, Germany) lives and works in Berlin.

Recent solo exhibitions include *An Ocean in a Drop*, Indigo Art Museum, Ahmedabad, India (2026); *Bridges*, Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich (2025); *Arcane Dust*, Carvalho Park, New York (2024); *Radiations*, Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich (2023); *Story Of The Forgotten Lights*, Kunstverein Arnsberg, and *Phantom Skies*, Carvalho Park, New York (both 2022); and *Celestial Artefacts*, NAK Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen (2021).

Selected group exhibitions include Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong; Kunstverein Arnsberg; Zeller van Almsick, Vienna; NAK Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen; Kunstverein Hannover; and the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art (IMOCA), Indianapolis.

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