

Galerie Forsblom

Press Release

Matthias van Arkel: Relations

Galerie Forsblom Stockholm, February 16–March 18, 2018
Opening in presence of the artist, Thursday February 15, 5–7PM

Since the 1990s, with a painting technique that involves experimentation with materials, artist Matthias van Arkel has conducted a dialogue between chance and control. In the exhibition *Relations*, dyed silicone rubber can be read as a surrogate brush stroke that has been liberated from the canvas, inviting a sense of associative play. Via memory and experience, the eye chooses its own path through the picture.

A geological sensibility emerges in the movements of the material, where the silicone is transformed into seismic activity that heaves and rolls across the tectonic plates of the painting. Some color fields are reminiscent of jade or jasper. One of van Arkel's cubes, the first item visitors encounter in the atrium of the exhibition, resembles vanilla ice cream and scallop-hued marble. The moist skinlessness of mollusks is a theme throughout the paintings in the *Center* series, with silicone tubes pressing against an invisible barrier like tentacles. An erotic charge permeates the undulating shimmer of the material; one painting has a color palette resembling the raw crimson of the inner cheek or a sex organ.

In the artwork *Explosion*, the relationship between chance and control is especially palpable: tons of individual strips have been shaped into an exploding roar or a frozen movement, a silent shout. If you follow the volcanic association, the shape of a paused, intense gaze may be reminiscent of finds from Pompeii, with its eternally still day-to-day life. Elements of ordinary life are also hinted at in the title of the exhibition, *Relations*. Several pieces are based on relationships and encounters between people, and can be considered portraits to some extent.