

Press Release

Thomas Scheibitz

Bright Shadows

April 10–May 16, 2026

Public Reception: April 9, 6–8pm

Sprüth Magers, London

Sprüth Magers

Thomas Scheibitz draws equally from everyday life and from art history, distilling both into dense, vividly coloured paintings and elusive sculptures: repositories of accumulated imagery, layered and compressed until the familiar becomes something stranger and harder to place. The organising principle is tectonic, a structural system of forms and visual codes through which he constructs his own pictorial language. Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers are pleased to present *Bright Shadows*, a solo exhibition of new and recent works by Scheibitz at the London gallery, spanning from 2017 to the present. The show's title serves not as a contradiction but as an artistic proposition that places at its centre an easily overlooked means of representation: the shadow. In painterly tradition, it is composed of all other colours rather than black, a play between absence and presence; for Scheibitz, "the shadow is a realm, like a landscape." In his paintings, this is carried by the contour that emerges as a narrow silhouette, defining the boundary between one colour field and the next. The silhouette is among the oldest images known, cited as the very first act of picture-making, and in a world saturated with pictures, the unilluminated portion of things may be the more instructive starting point – not for reading images directly, but for analysing the logic by which they come to mean anything at all.

The large-scale *OSO* (2017), visible through the gallery's Georgian shop window, weaves together disparate elements and visual planes, layered like stage sets, some in harmony, others in deliberate tension. The title stands for Ost-Süd-Ost (east-south-east), an intermediate point on a traditional compass largely superseded by modern navigation. It names a direction that is still precise but no longer in common use, suggesting that the frameworks by which we locate ourselves are never fixed but always historically contingent. The work gestures toward a broader uncertainty about stable meaning.

Helle Schatten (2026), which translates as bright shadows and gives the exhibition its title, embodies its premise directly. The large white teardrop at the painting's centre reads simultaneously as a light source and a void, held by the same black contour line that defines and binds every other colour field. *Gebiet* (2026) unfolds as a wide, frieze-like arrangement of borrowed forms across a bright blue ground: architectural fragments, a hand with scored lines that could double as a sculpture, a leaf, a house reduced to its barest outline. Each element arrives from a different register of visual

experience – symbol, sign, body, building – without narrating or explaining the others.

In *Pionier* (2026), the face is present as a genre signal rather than a record of any individual: yellow, green and pink zones divided by bold black contours give just enough information needed for the mind to construct a head, with the red circle for an eye, yet the same configuration reads just as plausibly as a fish-like form, the profile nose becoming a snout, the yellow scalloped shape below a fin. Scheibitz aims for exactly this threshold where portrait and pictogram, human and animal, blur into one another.

Alongside the paintings, several sculptures carry the same concerns into three dimensions. *Kirche* (2023) takes as its starting point the Heddal Stave Church in Norway, which dates to the thirteenth century and is the largest surviving of its kind, characteristically distilling it into spare geometric form. The work is organised around tectonic relations – the way surfaces, spaces and formats negotiate with one another. The angular, roof-like forms of the base push outward in multiple directions. Above this, the volumes shear and lean against each other at oblique angles, making the logic of bearing and support the actual subject of the work. Brushily painted in acid yellow, it presents itself less as object than as a model of structural thinking made physical. Other sculptures on view share this quality: spectral in character, they hover between object and sign, resisting easy reading as insistently as the works on canvas.

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Thomas Scheibitz (*1968, Radeberg, Germany) lives and works in Berlin. Selected solo exhibitions include Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2025), Museum Berggruen, Nationalgalerie - Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (2019), KINDL - Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Berlin (2018), Kunstmuseum Bonn (2018), Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle (2013), Sprüth Magers, Berlin (2014), Museum für Moderne Kunst MMK, Frankfurt (2012), Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia (2011), Museo de Arte de São Paulo (2010), Camden Arts Centre, London (2008), MUDAM, Luxembourg (2008), Sprüth Magers, Berlin (2008), IMMA, Dublin (2007), Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2004), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2001) and Kunstmuseum Winterthur (2001). Significant group exhibitions include those at Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2022), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2019), Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou (2018), Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio (2018), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2015), Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis (2013) and Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga (2016). Thomas Scheibitz represented Germany at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005.

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