



Detail | Michael Raedecker, 2026

GRIMM is pleased to present *placebo drive*, an exhibition of new paintings by Michael Raedecker, his second exhibition with the gallery in London, and largest show in the city in over ten years.

Michael Raedecker's work seeks to make sense of the symbiotic and often parasitic relationship between nature and humanity. Staged at the nexus between the natural world and the urban environment, Raedecker sustains and interrogates this unresolved relationship, using the medium of painting as the means of understanding how this aspect of the human experience can be communicated and questioned.

The title of the exhibition *placebo drive* sits at the intersection of expectation, belief and desire. In medicine, a placebo works not because of its material properties but because of the trust in a system and the desire for an effect. In the context of painting, the *placebo drive* could therefore be taken as the drive to experience meaning or affect, a performed belief that something is happening. The painting functions as a placebo as it withholds certainty, offering a surface which generates a drive to look, see and understand. *Placebo Drive* thus names both a psychological mechanism and a spatial fiction — a road,

a threshold, a passage that may exist only through the act of moving toward it. The destination remains perpetually deferred, yet the compulsion to proceed persists.

In *all over*, a cluster of cars gathers around a seemingly abandoned structure in a wooded clearing, a building increasingly absorbed by the surrounding foliage. Each of the cars has a distinct personality, as if a character in a play, hastily parked up and some with doors left swinging open, the vehicles suggest recent presence and sudden absence. The saturated red ground heightens a sense of hyperreality, while peripheral blurring introduces a sense of distance, and a form of entropy that takes place both thematically and upon the picture plane.

In *stand in* and *phantom lack*, the billboard appears as a central motif — an image within an image. Designed for speed and impact, these structures typically promise clarity and exchange. Raedecker's billboards reveal only fragments: "MEGA SALE", "BUY YOUR NEXT C...". It is unclear what the goods on offer actually are; the transaction is withheld, desire left unresolved. What remains is erosion — surfaces fading, messages continuing to speak after their function has collapsed.

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Evinced across the exhibition, Raedecker's paintings draw attention to the process of their own production. An original painting is photographed, and subsequently destroyed, and altered digitally before being laser printed onto individual sheets of paper. These individual prints are then applied to the surface of a canvas with a painting medium brushed onto them, causing the pigment on the printed paper to transfer onto the canvas, and the now-degraded paper scrubbed away. The surface is then subject to further alterations, more paint applied in places over the transfer, stitching that takes the form of very fine threads or thick wool. Incisions and punctures are also sometimes made into the canvas, gently frayed open and exposing further sections that are collaged from behind. The resultant effect is one of tension, devices that are at once compositional and intricately tied to the process of their own making, drawing attention to the painting as object.

Indeed, Raedecker's practice is driven as much by the craft and process of making as it is by the image. His paintings operate on registers in which one can examine them both inches away, closely decoding where thread behaves as pigment and transfer resembles paint, and as a compositional whole, understanding the complex layering and treatments that are enacted upon the surface. He depicts the familiar with the alien, the banal with the profound, locating an awareness of how and where we exist and thereby the complexities of human existence in the natural world, for today and tomorrow.

His work is currently part of the group exhibition *THE LONG NOW – Saatchi Gallery at 40* at the Saatchi Gallery, London (UK), November 5, 2025 – April 26, 2026.

### About the artist

Michael Raedecker (b. 1963 in Amsterdam, NL) lives and works in London (UK). He received his BA in Fashion Design from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam (NL), and continued his studies at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (NL) as well as Goldsmiths College, London (UK). In 2000, Raedecker was shortlisted for the Turner Prize.

His work can be found in the collections of Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (NL); ABN AMRO Art Collection (NL); AkzoNobel Art Collection, Amsterdam (NL); Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL (US); Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo (NO); British Council, London (UK); THE EKARD COLLECTION; He Art Museum, Foshan (CN); ENECO Art Collection, Utrecht (NL); Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY (US); ING Art Collection, Amsterdam (NL); Istanbul Modern Collection, Istanbul (TR); Kunstmuseum, The Hague (NL); MAXXI National Museum of XXI Century Arts, Rome (IT); Museum van Bommel van Dam, Venlo (NL); De Nederlandsche Bank (NL); Rabo Art Collection (NL); Tate, London (UK); Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar (NL); Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (UK) as well as in many private collections.

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