

Zoe Koke

*tide*

September 13 - October 25, 2025

Franz Kaka is pleased to present *tide*, the first solo exhibition at the gallery by Los Angeles-based Canadian artist Zoe Koke. This new body of work centres on the gradation of light as day gives way to night. Eight blue paintings, seven measuring 40 × 40 inches and one 65 × 65 inches, are installed in a measured sequence from pale illumination to deep twilight, inviting extended looking and a consideration of time.

Koke's early years were spent in Calgary, with close proximity to the oil industry and a family background in geology. This now informs a practised attention to how violent, extractive histories settle in a place and how perception is shaped by power; the paintings answer those pressures not by picturing them, but by offering a countervailing space, translating impact into shifts of tone, pace, and density. In *tide*, that attention turns toward the sky: blue as a cooling register, a space of breath, and a field in which light narrows, diffuses, and recedes.

Her paintings consider light alongside its ordinary interruptions, air, branches, fog, and smoke, elements that veil, refract, and recalibrate what is seen. "I think like the impressionists, I am painting light, and obstructions to light." The canvases sustain an intensity of colour while allowing edges to soften and regroup, mirroring the eye's adjustments at dusk.

A historical touchstone for the artist is Anne-Louis Girodet's *The Sleep of Endymion* (1791) at the Louvre, where moonlight articulates a suspended interval between waking and sleep. The works in *tide* inhabit a related threshold: not depictions of the night sky, but conditions of seeing in which light thins, gathers, and passes on. Though abstract, the surfaces carry traces of lived atmospheres (coastal air, urban haze) registered as shifts in tone rather than depicted scenes.

Rather than fix a landscape, Koke stages perception as it unfolds. The exhibition's progression from light to dark clarifies the terms of looking, proposing the paintings as capacious pools in which attention can settle, and in which the viewer may follow light as it changes.

Zoe Koke (b. 1989, Calgary; lives and works in Los Angeles) received an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles (2019), and a BFA from Concordia University, Montréal (2013). Solo exhibitions have been held at Smart Objects, Los Angeles (2024); April April, New York (2024); and Mai 36 Galerie, Zurich (2023). Selected group exhibitions have been held at 12.26, Dallas (2025); Roberts Projects, Los Angeles (2024); Sarah Brook Gallery, Los Angeles (2024); Mai 36 Galerie, Zurich (2024); Franz Kaka, Toronto (2024); Room 3557, Los Angeles (2023); Alice Amati, London (2023); Lindon & Co, London (2023); Smart Objects, Los Angeles (2023); Patel Brown, Toronto (2020); Ochi Projects, Los Angeles (2020); and Washer and Dryer Projects, Salt Lake City (2019).