

ANDREW SALGADO

SELF-PORTRAIT AS A STACK OF BOOKS

PREVIEW: THURSDAY 22 MAY (6-8PM)
EXHIBITION: 23 MAY - 28 JUNE 2025

There's something about a book you find by accident, a book no one else seems to have heard of, a book that thrills and then becomes a part of you, when it's one you so easily might never have read at all – it seems like it found you.

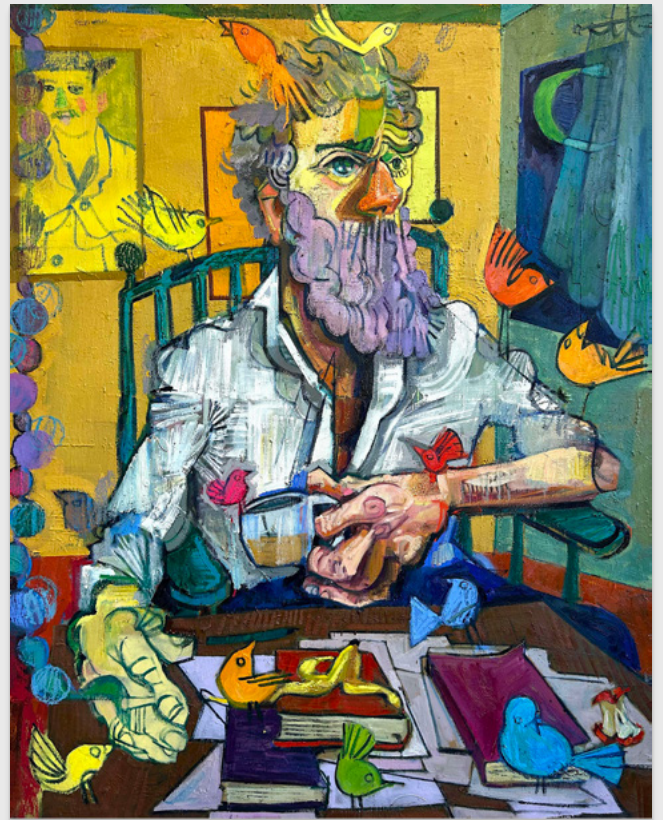
Lisa Tuttle: *My Death*

Do we believe this sentiment? It's a bit mystic, isn't it? The book that *finds you* at the right moment. The poem that holds secrets to the universe? Or the song that speaks directly into your soul when you need it most. Andrew Salgado will tell you, Yes. He'd say: "Everybody has a book. Everybody has a painting. Sometimes it's just a matter of looking harder." Sometimes it's just a matter of finding it.

Salgado is BEERS London's longest-represented artist, and we are both thrilled and long overdue in presenting his second show in our current space, *Self-Portrait As A Stack of Books*. Like most of his titles; it's a bit *wink-wink nudge-nudge*. It is colloquial but also hints toward something deeper, lurking under the surface. So too are his paintings built up from memory, composite images, and visual collages. His technique, too, shows the ghost of his decision-making: where a painted ridge, now obscured, now sublimated, shows a plane of colour where there once may have existed a doorway, window, or portal. This show might have just as indicatively been titled *Self-Portrait As An Open Window* or *As A Smear of Paint*. But for Salgado, the written word has proven increasingly important in his creative process. An avid reader, he credits various authors (Atwood, Borges, Daumal, Mantel, Nabokov, Schulz, Woolf, and Zweig) as major influences. "These authors are influenced by art. By music and painting. They write about it all the time. The word is *ekphrasis*. Like, Nabokov lists over 150 paintings in his collected works. So why shouldn't the inverse also be true?"

Asking Salgado about the intentions, symbolism, or directive in this collection of paintings – because it's obviously ripe with his (now) trademark imagery – he becomes deferential, ambiguous, and almost evasive about everything from idea to technique, to presentation, and even the compelling title piece: a rare venture into sculpture which seems – whether through its books or its chair, or its uncanny, discombobulated human parts – to reference the paintings and even the act of painting itself. But also books. Words. Memory. Fallability. That head at the apex is glass. It's his.

"That colour is celadon. Nice word. Beautiful colour. Blue-green. Light manganese. Like Listerine. Those Penguin Modern Classics. And my Nabokovs. I love Nabokov." He adds: "I was working my way through the lot of them.



Meditations (Sayings, Speeches, Notes) (2025),
oil and oil pastel on linen, 150 x 120 cm

Slowly. Books are like time. An author you love is like a memory you cherish. It's like time, right? How much time is enough time? There's never enough time. That clock is always ticking. So, I had only a few Nabokovs left. And I always read blind. I never read a blurb. Avoid a summary; it's the worst. And I was selecting at random. I chose *Glory*. But I was apprehensive to start. Because every next book meant there was one book less. So I chose *Glory* and I remember thinking, that's a strange title. *Glory*. *Glory* could be about anything. Until I opened it up, until I *actually started* reading. *Glory* could be about everything."

If paintings are chapters, viewers are invited to explore them in whatever order they like. As members of a larger audience, we supplant meaning into the books we read, we interpret meaning from the sentences we hear. "But it's all there. It's ready for the taking. And whatever you take from it – from the books, or the paintings, or the ideas within – it's all right. It's all correct. There are no wrong answers."

Self-Portrait As A Stack of Books opens on 22 May 2025 at BEERS London, 51 Little Britain, London, EC1A 7BH. All are welcome from 6-8pm.

Salgado's next exhibition will open on 20 November in Sydney, Australia, at Piermarq Art.

ANDREW SALGADO (b. 1982, Regina, Canada) graduated with an MA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art in 2009, and is regarded as one of the United Kingdom's leading figurative painters. He has exhibited worldwide, with solo exhibitions including London, New York, Tokyo, Miami, Toronto, Cape Town, Sydney, and throughout Europe.

Solo exhibitions include: *Tomorrow I'll Be Perfect*, presented by BEERS London, Saatchi Gallery, London (2023); *CAN Art Fair*, Ibiza, Spain (July 2023); *Good Things*, Piermarq*, Sydney, Australia (2023); *The Lotus Eaters*, Maki, Tokyo, Japan (2022); *A Never-Setting Sun*, BEERS London (2022); *Strange Weather*, BEERS London (2020); *Paperbag Prince*, Untitled Art Fair, Miami (2019); *Blue Rainbow*, Angell Gallery, Toronto, Canada (2018); *Dirty Linen/The Nihilist's Alphabet*, Christopher Moller Gallery, Cape Town, SA (2018); *A Room with a View of the Ocean*, Lauba, Zagreb, Croatia (2017), *TEN*, Canadian High Commission, London (2016) and *The Snake*, BEERS London (2016).

Group exhibitions include: *Flowers: Flora in Contemporary Art & Culture*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2025); *Fierce Form*, Art Megastar, Los Angeles (2024); *13-A-Dozen*, Galleri Sanberg, Odense, Denmark (2023); *Showstopper*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2022); *Come Out & Play*, BEERS London (2022); *PINK*, Piermarq*, Sydney, Australia (2022); *paper.*, BEERS London (2022); *Paperworks Vol. II*, NBB Gallery, Berlin, Germany (2021); *John Wolf presents... Interconnected*, Los Angeles (2021); BEERS London at Zona Maco Art Fair, Mexico City (2019); *Berlin Calling*, Galerie Kornfeld, Berlin, Germany (2018); *Summer Salon*, BEERS London (2018) and *The Therapist's Office*, 1969 Gallery, New York (2018).



When We Cease To Understand The World (Grothendieck's Ghost) (2025),
oil and oil pastel on linen, 216 x 164 cm



In 2017, Salgado was the youngest artist ever to receive a survey exhibition at The Canadian High Commission in London. He has received extensive press both online and in print, and he frequently donates to charities and is a frequent advocate for LGBT causes. His works have successfully entered the secondary market with prices frequently doubling their estimates, including a piece at Phillips New York selling for five times its estimate in June 2021.

His works have been collected extensively, including The Oketa Collection, The Royal Bank of Canada Collection, The Masahiro Maki Collection, Government of Canada, The Jordanian Royal Family, Simmons & Simmons, the Esquinazi Collection, Edwin Oostmeier Collection, and more.

He lives and works between London, England, and New Brunswick, Canada.