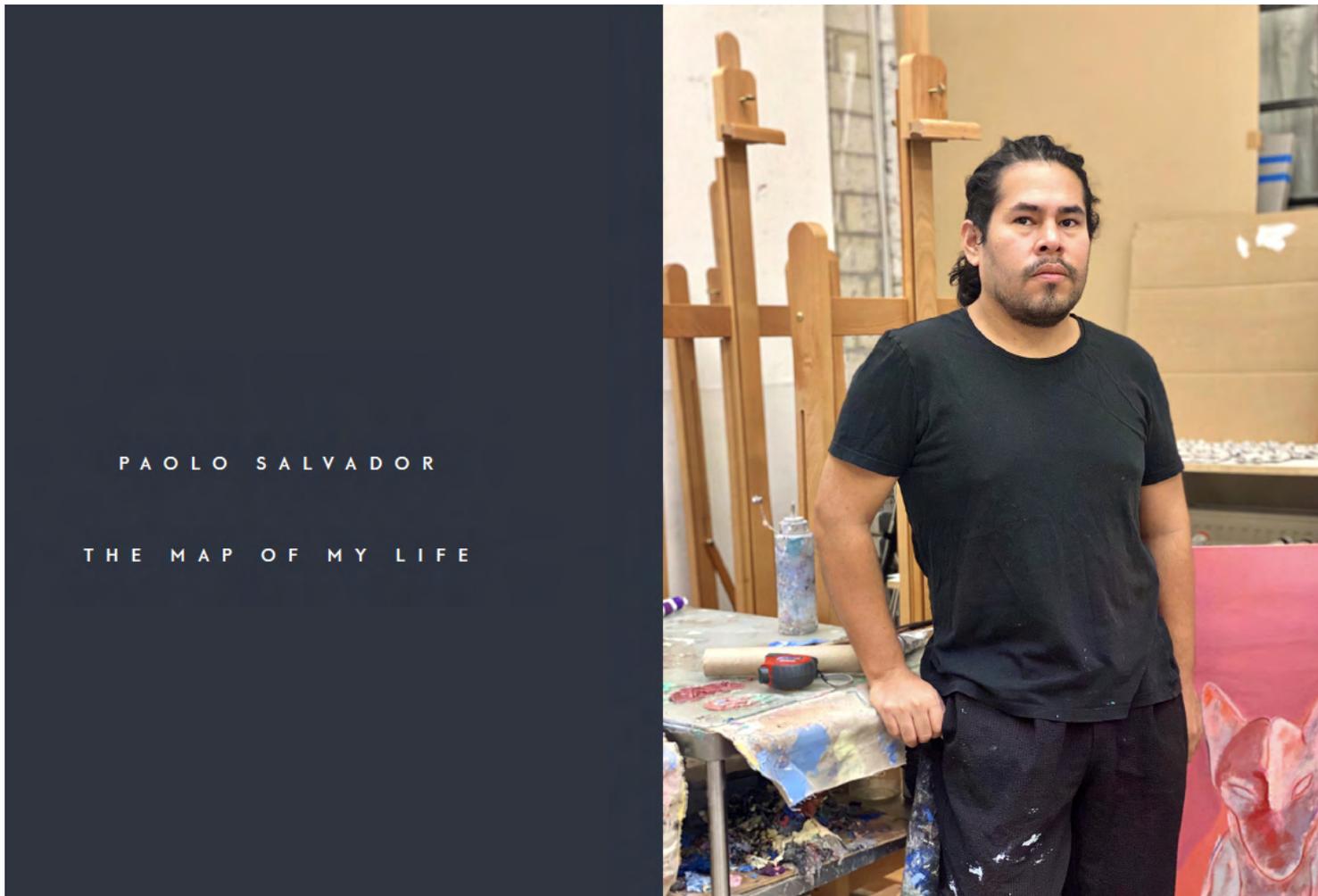


# METAL



Since he was invited by Nick Koeningsknecht to do a residency at Open Forum after graduating, Peruvian artist Paolo Salvador has steadily gained confidence by presenting his work in different countries around the world. Today he inaugurates his third solo exhibition with Peres Projects and his first in their Milan space, *Los últimos días del gato de fuego*. It's the first solo show opening he's attended since the start of the pandemic and he admits to being very excited by the respect he has for Italian art. And also a little nervous. We speak with him a few hours before the gallery opens its doors. You can visit the exhibition until October 7.

Described by the artist himself as “a figurative style without the intention to represent yet evoke,” his pictorial style has much to do with the author's personal tastes and interests. Inspired by his hometown, Lima, from which he highlights the spectacular landscapes, he now invites the viewer to feel his artistic work, get closer and get carried away by the feelings that it arouses. And he already tells us he's working on a large solo show for the beginning of the next year. We sat down to chat with him to find out all the details.

**Paolo, you now live and work in Berlin but you were born in Lima (Peru), right? Where do you answer us from?**

Yes, I grew up in Lima where I did my Bachelor of Arts before moving to Europe. Currently, I am in Milan for my exhibition at Peres Projects.

# PERES PROJECTS

**I would like to start by asking you about how and when your first professional approach to the world of art took place. Do you remember your first exhibition and what did you learn from this experience?**

Once I graduated from the Slade, Nick Koeningsknecht invited me to do a residency at Open Forum. It was an incredible opportunity to be able to put into practice what I have been working on at the Slade. I learnt so much, from keeping an intense pace while painting and being more confident, to presenting my work to the general public.

**You graduated from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in 2014 and earned your Master of Fine Arts from The Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2019. What has your academic training meant to you? Do you think it helps creatives develop their work freely or does it restrict them in a certain way by directing them towards certain artistic styles?**

I am very grateful for studying at PUCP and The Slade, both very different programs. Studying abroad was significant in terms of being exposed to different cultures and environments. I was encouraged to explore and question my practice a lot more and had the chance to share the studio with an amazing group of people. Methods of teaching art may vary, but I wouldn't say any program channels a particular artistic style.



**And what painters or artists did you admire while you were studying?**

Lima has a distinct lack of museums and galleries. It might have changed over the years, but as students, we basically learnt from books. London's art scene on the other hand is outstanding, and being able to see the art in the flesh is an incredible experience. The list is enormous. During the Slade, we had the chance to meet guest artists like Allison Katz, Dexter Dalwood, Ansuya Blom and Michael Armitage, and my admiration for them grew even more once I met them in person and we shared our thoughts. I'd also like to mention the fabulous Lisa Brice show I had the chance to visit hours before moving to Berlin. The mixed media panels and the cobalt blue drawings are still in my head.

**Now you are presenting your third solo exhibition at Peres Projects, Los últimos días del gato de fuego. And we can see it from today to October 7 in Milan. How do you feel?**

I am very excited about exhibiting in Italy, and also a little nervous as I have a profound admiration for Italian art

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history. On top of that, it will be the first solo show opening I am attending since the start of the pandemic.

**What can you tell us about this new exhibition? Would you say it is the most important of your career to date?**

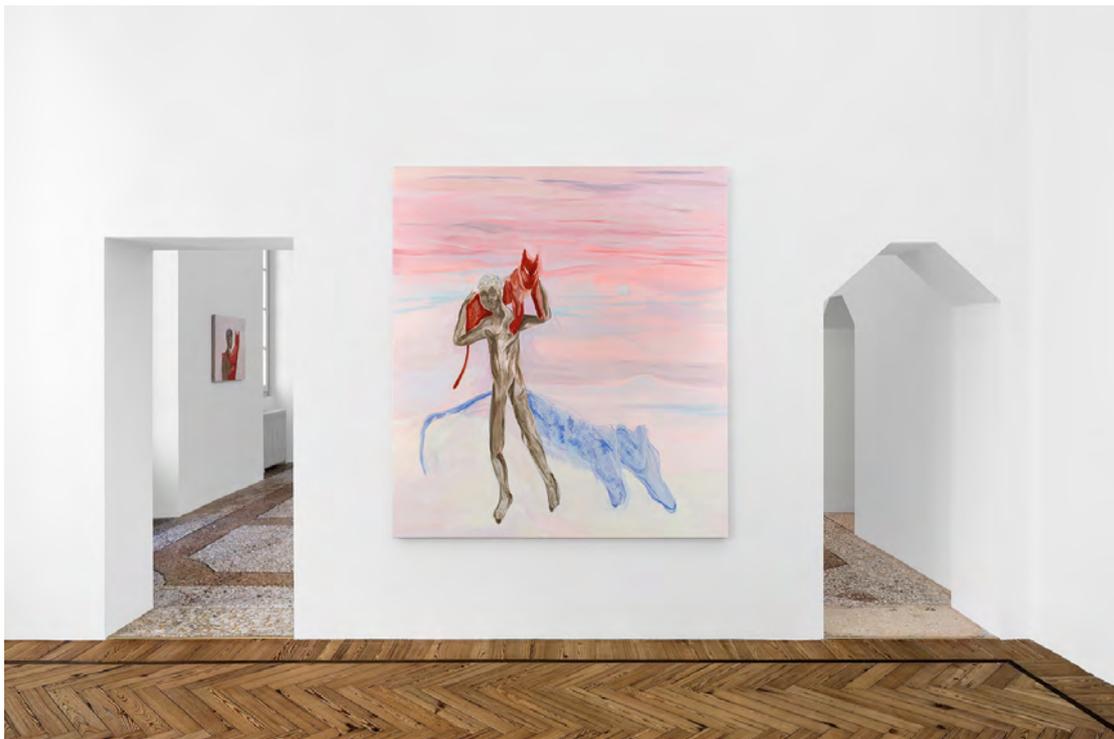
Coming back to the previous question, during the preparations for the show there are high levels of stress and anxiety. This is normal because every exhibition means and represents a particular time for me, and these memories will remain forever. I guess every show will take its place on the map of my life.

**Intimacy and companionship meet in the figures depicted on your canvases. How would you define your pictorial style and what are the characteristics that remain intact in all your works?**

I feel unable to define my style as it is a construction I am constantly working on. If I have to categorise it I would land in the area of non-figurative painting style. I interpret it as a figurative style without the intention to represent yet evoke. Most of the time the characteristics deal with my personal interests at that moment, and how I look at my practice as a cohesive body of work.

**Also, Lima, the city where you were born, seems to be an important source of inspiration in your work, isn't it?**

Absolutely. Lima is a very magical place for me. I love the landscape, that grey sky and the humidity, it evokes so many memories. I believe growing up next to the sea instils a different mindset. Also in terms of history, the traditions and the heavy cultural overlap can be easily felt in the atmosphere.



**I am interested in the composition of the materials you've used in this latest work, can you tell us more about it?**

I have been exploring different gesso formulas and I work a lot on the surface itself. I'm constantly thinking about the material and the possible weight in its application, and images can build a strong feeling over different layers. I invite the viewer to gaze up close and really feel the tactility of every work.

**And what about your creative process? Do you follow any routine or is every day completely different?**

I try to follow a routine when possible, and I usually work until very late at night. Therefore mornings are not my

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favourite time, but usually have a long walk with my puppy and it helps me to reflect on my day before going to the studio. I usually arrive after lunchtime and had a small ritual of preparing some coffee. Then a moment of observation and plan for the day, where I usually prepare or make the paint I will use later. Then I get deep into the painting.

**Finally, what can you tell us about your next projects? Would you like to collaborate with any other artists soon?**

At the moment I am working on a large solo show for the beginning of the next year. I certainly appreciate the importance of collaborative practices. Hopefully in the future!

– David Alarcón

