

GAVLAK

Andrew Brischler  
*Self Portraits*

November 22 – December 17, 2023

GAVLAK Palm Beach is proud to announce *Self Portraits*, an exhibition of ten new works by Andrew Brischler, on view November 22 – December 17, 2023. An opening reception will take place on December 2, from 5–7pm.

Andrew Brischler's *Self Portraits* mark a figurative shift for the New York-based artist. With this exhibition, Brischler, a reliable author of orderly geometries and typographic motifs, turns to the human form. His approach, though, will be comfortingly familiar to those who have been following his work, one that relishes in the outsize influence media and pop culture have on our visual landscape and psyche.

The suite of works that comprise the *Self Portraits* wear Brischler's cinematic influences on their sleeve. Rather than just nod to or obscure their sources, they reproduce them wholesale. They are in essence film stills though rendered through a highly graphic sensibility: halftone dots to give them the patina of printed matter or the mechanical feel of silkscreen printmaking. The apparent slickness of these surfaces is a ruse; the pictures are painstakingly labored over by hand, a pulsating field of colored pencil strokes over a gouache ground. Here is Sigourney Weaver in *Alien* awash in green, a violet Michelle Pfeiffer in *Scarface*, Milla Jovovich in *The Fifth Element* behind a cadmium yellow scrim. "Of course, these images could appear within a single swipe of a silkscreen squeegee; what I would lose in that speediness is a level of intimacy with both the subject and also the surface," Brischler explains.

This is an exercise in extreme, willed identification with a character. Brischler consumes films almost compulsively. He speaks of having rewatched certain films over and over again as a way of trying to get closer to the character. Now, bringing them from the screen and into the studio, Brischler has slowed the film to a halt, freezing the frame and laboring lovingly over an eyelash or the sheen of a lip catching the light. He uses the word 'devotion' to describe this process of slowing it all down. Brischler's queerness is key in understanding the attraction to these heroines, whether tragic or triumphant. Their magnetism of such figures for gay men harkens back to a long history of identification with feminine strength, to a time before representation or "all those years we couldn't see ourselves," as Brischler poignantly puts it.

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The *Self-Portraits*, as their titles would indicate—*Self Portrait (as Ripley)*, *Self Portrait (as Elvira)*, *Self Portrait (as Leeloo)*—project Brischler onto these characters, as refractions of his own self, his own queer identity. One would be remiss not to cite Cindy Sherman’s *Film Stills* series of the late 70s. That body of work by Sherman, one in which she inhabited various female archetypes with chameleonic ease to point to the slipperiness of identity, the non-fixity of the self, is the sister strategy to what Brischler has undertaken here.

In each of these stills, he aims to capture “the decisive moment,” to borrow Henri Cartier-Bresson’s term for seizing on the perfect millisecond with the camera shutter. The *Self Portraits* freeze the instant in which Brischler detects in these women some kind of psychic shift, a new resolve, a galvanizing click. As such, the pictures buzz with a kind of anticipatory energy and propulsiveness, in part because they capture such moments of frisson but also because they represent a new body of work and an exciting new direction for Brischler.

## **Andrew Brischler**

B. 1987 Long Island, NY

Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

Andrew Brischler (b. 1987, Long Island, NY; lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) makes paintings and drawings that examine his own queer identity through the history of American popular culture. He holds an MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY and a BFA from the State University of New York, New Paltz, New Paltz, NY. He was the recipient of the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Painting Fellowship in 2015 and the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Visual Arts Grant in 2013. He has had solo exhibitions with GAVLAK Palm Beach (2019; 2013; 2012) and GAVLAK Los Angeles (2021; 2017; 2015); at The Fireplace Project, East Hampton, NY; at The Arts Club, London; and at 39 Great Jones, New York, NY. His work has been included in group exhibitions at The Bunker Artspace: The Beth Rudin DeWoody Collection, West Palm Beach, FL; the FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY; Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX; Nathalie Karg Gallery, New York, NY; Feuer/Mesler, New York, NY; and Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich. Andrew Brischler is represented by GAVLAK in Los Angeles, CA, and Palm Beach, FL.