

R .

Rubeen Salem (b. 1997, San Francisco) is a New York–based multimedia artist working primarily in figurative surrealist painting.

Salem creates visual prayers.

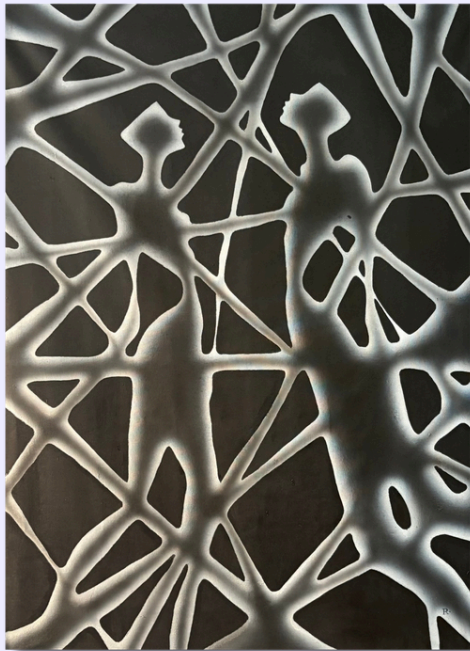
Rooted in poetry and devotional symbolism, his work explores surrender, longing, divine timing, and emotional awareness. Central to his visual language is the recurring “tea-cup head” figure — an emblem of receptivity, discipline, and faith. The cup represents an openness to what is poured: love, loss, revelation, and transformation.

Raised between literature and image-making, Salem developed an early practice of pairing written word with visual narrative — a dialogue that continues to shape his paintings today. Each

work operates as both confession and offering: intimate yet archetypal.

His compositions balance tenderness with scale, humor with reverence, and contemporary vernacular with spiritual symbolism. Through repetition of motif and emotional intensity, Salem builds a cohesive mythology, one in which devotion is not passive, but powerful.

He lives and works in New York City.



*Yours*, 2025  
Acrylic on canvas  
33"x48"



*Devoted*, 2025  
Acrylic on canvas  
33"x48"



*We're All In This Shit Together, 2024*  
Acrylic on canvas  
90"x48"

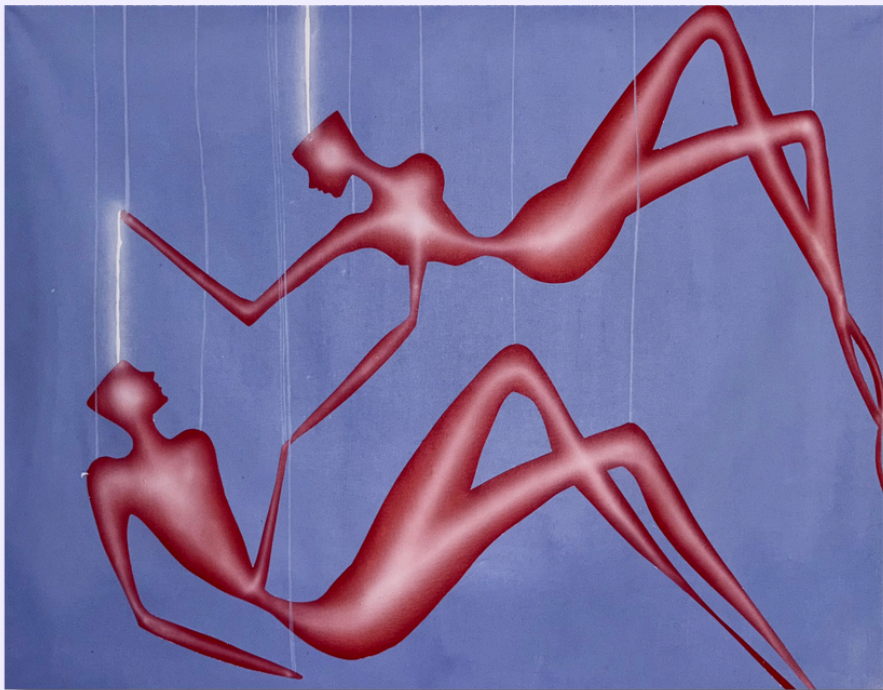


*It Was Always You,*  
2025  
Acrylic on canvas  
36"x48"



*We Got A Little  
Thing Goin',* 2025  
Acrylic on canvas  
36"x48"





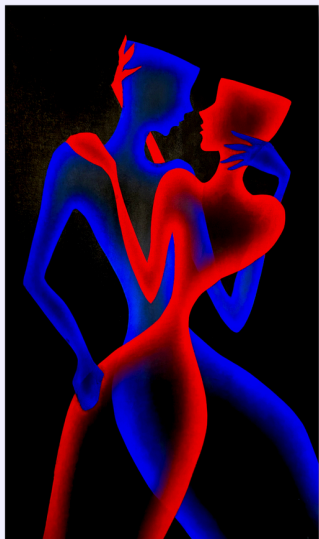
*Have You*, 2025  
Acrylic on canvas  
40"x48"

*It's just a little more exciting than I'm used to  
Im a little more alive when im with You  
A little more a bite when's it's us two  
And you're very much exactly where I want you*

*The paintings on my walls said they missed you  
The painting on my easel thinks I have you  
The words in my head say I got you  
But babe you're in my eyes and I want you*



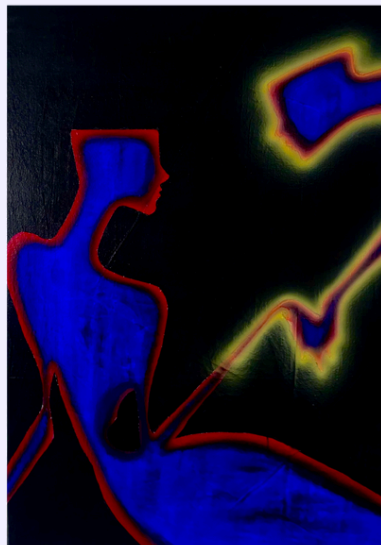
*Type Shit, 2026*  
Acrylic on canvas  
33"x27"



*See You In A New Light, 2025*  
Acrylic on canvas  
32"x48"



*Dissociative, 2025*  
Acrylic on canvas  
32"x48"



*Missed You, 2025*  
Acrylic on canvas  
32"x48"

*I saw you again.*

*This time was different. Your hairs longer now and I don't remember you like this. There's a glow I didn't notice before.*

*I saw you in the yellow street lights. We talked for a little bit. The past felt irrelevant. The red traffic lights shined on you while you were talking about what's new. They switched to green before I got a chance to put you into words. You showed me something blue in your phone and I realized I didn't see you how you were, but how I was.*

*You don't do things the same reasons I do. I don't know why that was important before. I don't remember and I don't want to. This is the you you've always been and it took me just now to see you.*

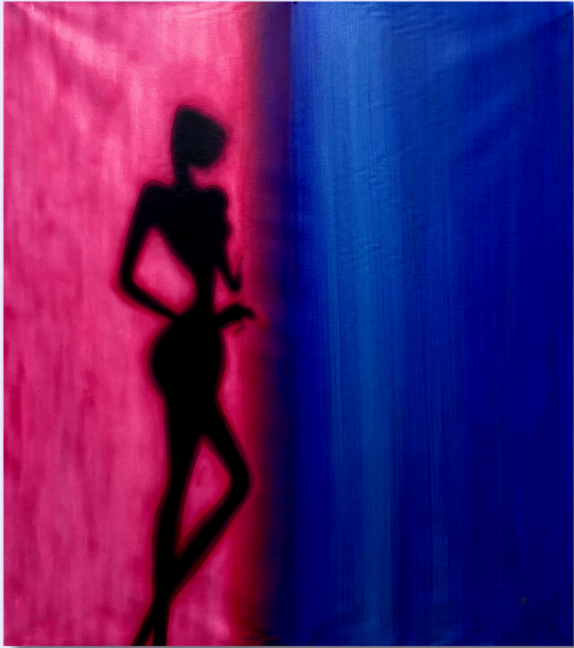
*You're not a new person. You don't fit in the box I made you. You're bigger than I knew. And suddenly you're brighter than before. And I know the next time I see you, you're gonna be like lightning.*

*It just took me seeing you in a new light.*

*So Long*, 2025  
Acrylic on canvas  
42"x28"







*Enough, 2025*  
Acrylic on canvas  
33"x48"



*Touch*, 2026  
Acrylic on canvas  
33"x48"



*I'll Find A Way*, 2026  
Acrylic on canvas  
33"x48"



*We Did It!*, 2026  
Acrylic on canvas  
33"x48"

## **Rubeen Salem**

(b.1997, San Francisco)

Lives and works in NYC

## **Education**

**2019** Cleveland State University, Bachelor of Arts

## **2025**

- Art Book Release

March 27, 2025 — Lower East Side, NY

- Open Studio: “Give U All I Got” March 1, 2025 — Lower East Side, NY

A New Light (Solo Show)

September 18, 2025 --- Skylight Studios, Chinatown, NY

- c/Bodies: Interval Arithmetic

December 12, 2025 --- Sitting Room Gallery, Lower East Side, NY

## **2024**

- Good Love (Solo Exhibition)

December 19, 2024 — Bushwick, NY

- Age of Aquarius (Group Show)

October 10, 2024 — Industry City, Brooklyn, NY

- Static Collective (Group Show)

August 31, 2024 — Lower East Side, NY

- As Good As It Gets (Solo Exhibition)

June 2, 2024 — All Street Gallery, Lower East Side, NY

- Aptos Grand Opening Night (Featured Artist) May 13, 2024 — Aptos, SoHo, NY