

**From:** Intelligence Squared <[REDACTED]>

**To:** j <jeevacation@gmail.com>

**Subject:** Karl Ove Knausgaard: The alchemist of the ordinary

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[Karl Ove Knausgaard: The alchemist of the ordinary](#)

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## Thursday 29th Oct, 7pm, RIBA

Critics are calling it 'the most significant literary enterprise of our times'. Using the canvas of his own life, **Karl Ove Knausgaard** has taken the seemingly ordinary events of his existence — the bullying alcoholic father, the marriages, the raising of his children — and has transformed the stuff of everyday life into a worldwide literary phenomenon. His bestselling series of autobiographical novels, *My Struggle*, has been described as 'a work of genius'. Critics trip over themselves to explain his brilliance. Fellow novelists can't get enough of him. 'I just read 200 pages and I need the next volume like crack. It's completely blown my mind,' Zadie Smith tweeted.

How did Knausgaard fashion the ordinary events of his life into something so utterly compelling and of such universal significance? What does it say about our voyeuristic times that the intimate details of his life have proven so addictively gripping?

[On October 29](#), Karl Ove Knausgaard comes to the Intelligence Squared stage for an exclusive UK appearance. Joining him on stage will be Intelligence Squared's very own **Robert Collins**, former deputy literary editor of The Sunday Times, who will ask how — by a remarkable process of literary alchemy — Knausgaard has turned the material of his own life into a global sensation.

## Praise for Karl Ove Knausgaard

*'It has strong claim to be the great literary event of the 21st century.'* — The Observer

*'Fires every nerve ending while summoning in the reader the sheer sense of how amazing it is to be alive.'* — Jeffrey Eugenides

*'A living hero who landed on greatness by abandoning every typical literary feint, an emperor whose nakedness surpasses royal finery.'* — Jonathan Lethem

## Speaker

### **Karl Ove Knausgaard**

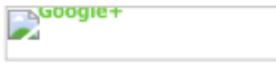
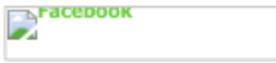
One of the most widely acclaimed novelists working today. His autobiographical novel series *My Struggle* is an international phenomenon that has been published in over 30 languages, selling in excess of 600,000 copies in his native Norway alone. His first novel, *Out of This World* (1998), was the first debut novel ever to win The Norwegian Critics' Prize. His second novel, *A Time for Everything* (2004), was published in English in 2009 and longlisted for the 2010 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. In 2015, he was awarded Germany's prestigious Welt-Literaturpreis.

## Chair

### **Robert Collins**

Former deputy literary editor of The Sunday Times, where he founded and hosted the Sunday Times Literary Salon. He has chaired discussions with countless authors, including Jonathan Franzen, Edward St Aubyn, David Nicholls and Ian McEwan. As a critic and interviewer, he has written on books and the arts for the Guardian, the Daily Telegraph, the FT, the Observer and the Spectator. He was named PPC Journalist of the Year in 2014.





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