



SMITH

- All prices exclude VAT -

# SMITH

SMITH is excited to present Nabeeha Mohamed's first solo exhibition with the gallery titled *Sunshine on my skin is my favourite colour*. This follows inclusions in numerous group shows and at art fairs with SMITH since 2018. This exhibition presents oil paintings, monotypes and cement sculptures.

To take a complex tapestry and reduce it to markers of what is 'known' is to do an injustice to the design and beauty that shapes its entirety. Taking a face at face-value is to assume its façade is final, and that an opinion outweighs the actuality of someone's personhood. Nabeeha Mohamed's first solo show at SMITH, *Sunshine on my skin is my favourite colour*, is an autobiographical reclamation of the self. A patient pondering on the building blocks of one's reflection becomes a discussion of how each shape and colour has played host to a lifetime of experiences, and how these experiences then reformed the whole in order for the person to acclimate, and then most importantly - how that human being can stake their claim over it all.

In a world where divisiveness reigns supreme, it is no small task to seek to marry every part of the self into a state of sameness. The distinct markings of introspection and collation of memories and their meanings follow alongside Mohamed's emboldened brush strokes, revealing a journey that has no fear of depth or desire. Mohamed's desires are in fact in her command, as she takes charge of how she is seen, as well as how her world holds colour and time. By creating symbols for her identity and arranging them just so, Mohamed directs the eye across a creation of space she's claimed for her own, by her own hand.

Critiquing the aesthetic of painting itself, and its pursuit of superficial beauty, Mohamed lets her oils bleed and breathe their way across belgian linen. She lets them harden, scratches away at them and then builds them up into textured impasto surfaces. "There are immediate associations with painting being that which is beautiful and aesthetically

pleasing. My style and technique seek to disrupt these preconceptions of beauty in painting,” she explains.

Offering her truest self in tandem with the ever-present, presumptuous societal gaze, Mohamed challenges the notions that are birthed from the friction here. How does one draw the line between projection and perspective? How does one decide who they are, volleying between their inner and outer selves? Why not the mirror? Why not the moments that mean mother, and father, and lover? Why not the objects that mean home? In order to build the mosaic of who she is, Mohamed tasked herself to dutifully interrogate the elements of her life; her privilege, her upbringing, her body, her mind and heart. Having decided that it would be disingenuous to speak about her experiences as a woman of colour without also discussing the life of luxury she was afforded, Mohamed expresses this topic of tension in her contemporary still life works that play on the genre of 17th century Dutch Vanitas paintings.

In keeping with the theme of her self-examination, wherever Mohamed found a crack between the ideas of herself, and opened it, she made room for expression. Facing each facet of her life, she also presents her experiences with wealth. Here, the titles of her work, such as *The Smell of Rot that Ripe Fruit Makes* speak to the excess that shadows indulgence. “My vanitas paintings are made up of high heeled shoes, luxury watches, jewelry, juicy fruits, sunglasses, ashtrays and cigarettes, among other things. The materialist value of these objects is offset by either text written directly on the paintings or by the titles of the work,” Mohamed details.

Gathering emblems to depict these aspects of her existence progressed into making something more of these metaphors. It wasn't enough to have these symbolic gestures live outside of context and prey to supposition, so Mohamed framed them genuinely and with style, and mind. There is a sincere simplicity in celebrating every fraction of who you are; in not denying yourself when being. There is bravery in presenting this endeavour on canvas, since this body of work takes the overall form of a self portrait.

There lays an undoubtable power within her works that creates with it a feeling of freedom beyond fantasy, a palpable something you can carry home with you, in a locket. “Maybe I stopped painting, to deal with what it all means,” are the final lines of a complementary poem, titled *Parrot*, written by Misha Krynauw that speaks directly to

Mohamed's undertaking of perceiving herself beyond prejudice, and taking that new knowledge and creating for herself, and you, a new world.

*Sunshine on my skin is my favourite colour* will run from 20 February until 20 March 2020.  
For press enquiries and to request further material please contact Jana Terblanche at [jana@smithstudio.co.za](mailto:jana@smithstudio.co.za).

# SMITH

## Nabeeha Mohamed

Nabeeha Mohamed (b. 1988, Cape Town, South Africa) studied at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town and graduated, specializing in painting, in 2011. Mohamed's very personal work grapples with the complexities and contradictions of identity and class privilege in post-Apartheid South Africa. Her identity as a woman of colour, hushed during her childhood years in an attempt to assimilate to the white society and culture she grew up in going to an all-girls private school, is now celebrated in her paintings where colour, boldness and strangeness take centre stage. Her paintings offer a tension when these celebrations of identity are intersected with a playful critique of the capitalist economy and class privilege from which she benefits.

### Solo exhibitions

2020 *Sunshine on my is skin my favourite colour*, SMITH, Cape Town.

### Group exhibition

2019 *Rendezvous II*, SMITH, Cape Town

2019 *Bad Taste: Image in Crisis*, SMITH, Cape Town

2019 *Outside*, RK Contemporary Cape Town

2019 *Know this place?*, KZNSA Durban

2019 *Rocks*, gallery, gallery, Johannesburg

2019 *Speculative inquiry (on abstraction)*, Michaelis galleries, Cape Town

2018 *Close Encounters*, SMITH, Cape Town

2018 *Rendezvous*, SMITH, Cape Town

2017 *Summertide*, The Gallery, Riebeeck Kasteel

2016 *HB*, A Humble Little Show, Chandler House, Cape Town

2016 *Fugly*, Chandler House, Cape Town

2015 *Map of the New Art*, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

2012 *Outside the Lines: An Exploration of Abstract Materiality*, Whatiftheworld, Cape Town

## Residencies

2020 Open 24 Hrs (Cape Town)

2019 Gallery Gallery (Johannesburg)

2017 Casa de Ilhabela (Ilhabela, Brazil)

## Media

<https://10and5.com/2017/03/09/fine-artist-nabeeha-mohamed-layers-colour-and-texture-to-elevate-the-everyday>

<https://elledecoration.co.za/afternoon-artist-nabeeha-mohamed/>

## Art Fairs

2020 Art Rotterdam, Nuweland, Rotterdam

2020 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town

2019 FNB Art Joburg, SMITH, Johannesburg

2019 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, SMITH, Cape Town



Nabeeha Mohamed

**The Smell of Rot that Ripe Fruit Makes, 2019**

Oil on canvas

48 x 53 cm

20,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**What a Waste of Belgian Linen, 2020**

Oil on canvas

111 x 91 cm

34,000.00 ZAR





Nabeeha Mohamed  
**Ethnic Enough**, 2020  
Oil on canvas  
82 x 71 cm  
28,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Love Scene**, 2020

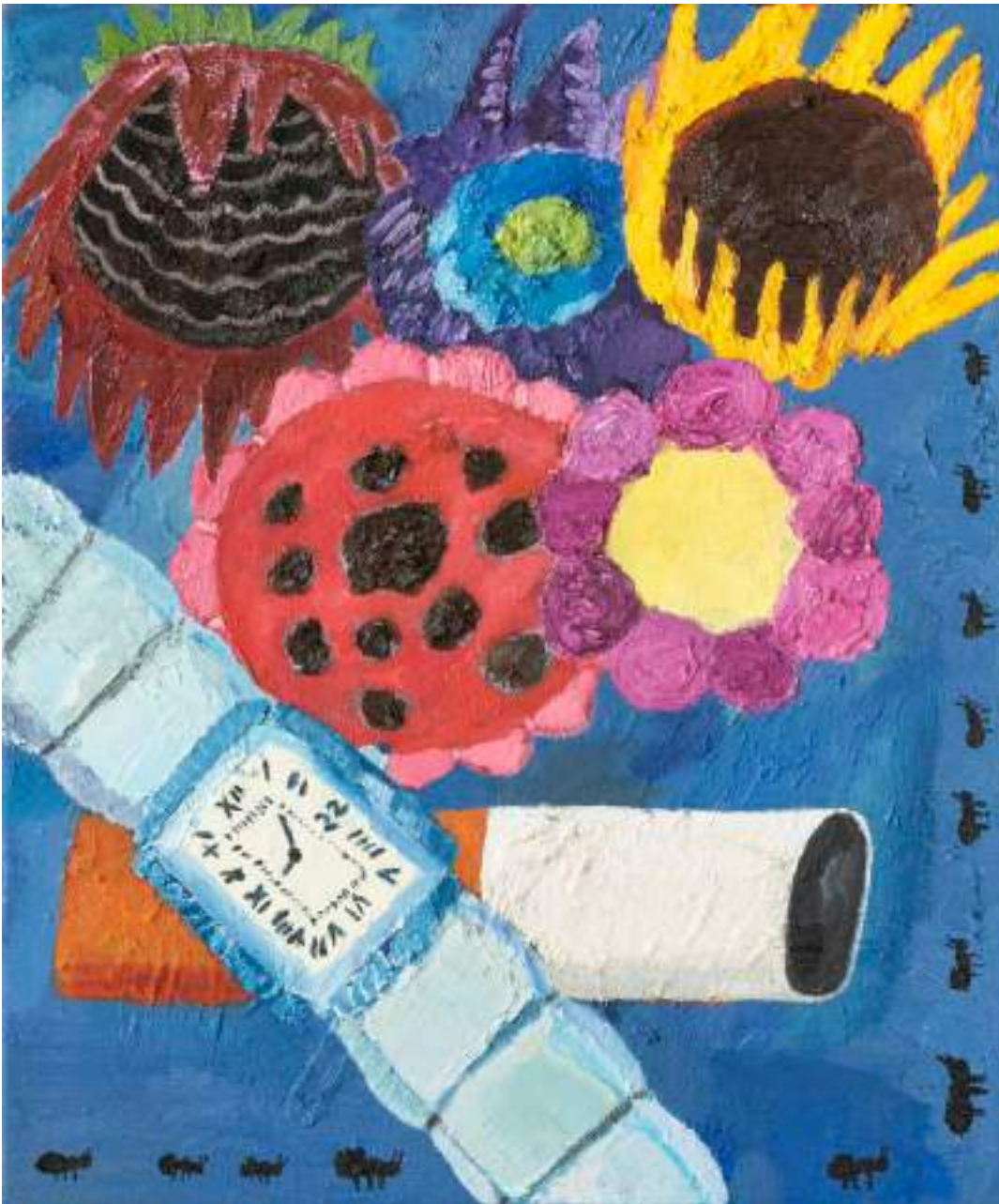
Oil on canvas

92 x 149 cm

38,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed  
**Art Fair Marni, 2020**  
Cement and enamel  
9 x 25 x 25 cm  
6,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Time Flies and Dies**, 2019

Oil on canvas

60 x 50 cm

21,000.00 ZAR

All prices exclude VAT





Nabeeha Mohamed

**Shade**, 2019

Oil on canvas

45 x 35 cm

14,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Fetish (The Most Exotic Flower), 2020**

Oil on canvas

92 x 112 cm

34,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Past My Prime (Banana), 2020**

Cement and enamel

43 x 15 x 8 cm

6,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**A Serious Discussion on the Subject of Rest, 2020**

Oil on canvas

52 x 62 cm

23,000.00 ZAR





Nabeeha Mohamed

**Greener Grass**, 2020

Oil on canvas

92 x 112 cm

30,000.00 ZAR

All prices exclude VAT



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Rainbow**, 2019

Oil on canvas

40 x 50 cm

16,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Beauty Queen Matriarch, 2020**

Oil on canvas

103 x 78 cm

29,000.00 ZAR

All prices exclude VAT



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Father's Nose, Mother's Eyes, 2019**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm

18,000.00 ZAR





Nabeeha Mohamed

**Painting is an Expensive Habit, 2019**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm

17,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Everyday Louboutin**, 2020

Cement and enamel

18 x 31 x 9 cm

6,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Heat**, 2019

Oil on canvas

63 x 48 cm

24,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Big Birthday Boss Man**, 2020

Oil on canvas

139 x 116 cm

38,000.00 ZAR

All prices exclude VAT





Nabeeha Mohamed

**On Mondays We Wear Gucci**, 2020

Cement and enamel

11 x 25 x 25 cm

6,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**My Rolex**, 2020

Oil on canvas

82 x 71 cm

28,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Rich Greens**, 2020

Oil on canvas

61 x 46 cm

20,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Trophy (The Most Exotic Flower), 2020**

Watercolour on paper

68 x 69 cm

20,000.00 ZAR

All prices exclude VAT



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Tom Ford, Darling!**, 2020

Cement and enamel

9 x 21 x 24 cm

6,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Royal**, 2019

Oil on canvas

31 x 25 cm

8,000.00 ZAR





Nabeeha Mohamed

**Carnations, Dyed Roses, Sprays of Palm, 2019**

Oil on canvas

33 x 26 cm

8,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Kleurling Kind**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

36 x 27 cm

6,000.00 ZAR





Nabeeha Mohamed

**Graduation Cartier**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

29 x 19 cm

2,500.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Dashboard Heels I**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

16 x 26 cm

3,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Dashboard Heels II**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

16 x 27 cm

3,000.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Softie**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

36 x 27 cm

4,500.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Thank You Bouquet**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

36 x 27 cm

4,500.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Three Arums**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

36 x 27 cm

4,500.00 ZAR



Nabeeha Mohamed

**Entangled**, 2019

Monotype on Hahnemühle

36 x 27 cm

4,500.00 ZAR



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