

PRESS RELEASE

Nabeeha Mohamed

*Same Sky, Different Fruit*

31st March – 19h May, 2022 Accra, Ghana, Gallery I



*At cloud tops,  
over distant mountains,  
beneath very strong thermal inversions at high latitudes: little star.  
I can feel it getting away from me.  
A sense of ripe conditions, but not for anything.  
A sense of oceans and old trees.  
— Ben Lerner*

*Blue the sky blossoms, and sun is white,  
And earth is brown and green and bright  
And here with joy and vast surprise  
I live the landscape with my eyes.*

*- excerpt from George Allen's "Sky"*

# 1957

Gallery 1957, I, II and III Accra  
Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast  
& Galleria Mall  
PMB 66 – Ministries  
Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue  
Ridge – Accra  
Ghana  
info@gallery1957.com

Gallery 1957, London  
1 Hyde Park Gate  
London, SW7 5EW  
UK  
london@gallery1957.com  
Instagram: @gallery1957  
gallery1957.com

In her latest exhibition, “Same sky, different fruit”, Nabeeha Mohamed coalesces paintings threaded together by feelings of home and belonging. Home is conceptualised not only as a place but also as a feeling, as people and things, including fruit...especially fruit! Through this exhibition, Mohamed is reaching towards the sky and bringing us along with her. The sky, of course, speaks of the extraterrestrial — that which is positioned in relation to outer space and to the heavens, but it also speaks of the celestial — the place from which the universe can be observed.

Reflected in Mohamed’s work is a sense of rootedness that travels alongside meandering objects — flowers, vases and household monuments that refuse to reveal their purpose. An anchoring and a fleetingness are allowed to take hold simultaneously. It is fitting then that Mohamed brings together both sky and fruit in the same plane, she’s pointing to the gravitational tilt that complicates the clear boundaries between ground and sky, here and there.

To push the metaphor of the sky a little further, Mohamed’s new body of work can be thought of in relation to its segments - constellations, if you like. These constellations are in the form of intimate portraits, verdant landscapes and fantastical interiors. Just as we are drawn to think of dense layers of the atmosphere when we invoke the sky, Mohamed, too, presents us with dense layers of paint whose interaction with the canvas results in sensual arrangements and beautiful compositions. Colour and rhythm shape feeling. Perhaps subconsciously, different variations of the colour blue are littered throughout this body of work — *Marie Hallowi (After Barnor)*, *Carrol Boyes and Sparkling Water, Split (Self Portrait)*, *Ferocious Love* and *Love Everywhere You Look*. In the work, *Landing II*, scores of green crops are layered against the backdrop of a blue sky or perhaps the blue ocean. The blue of this and the blue of that - *such blue can hope to hold together* (Allen<sup>[1]</sup>).

Through this body of work Mohamed expands the language of home. She reminds us that at the end of it all, it’s about telling stories - sometimes those stories are coherent but most times, they are broken, fragmented, incomplete, sometimes irrational but always beautiful. She reminds us that painting has the potential to speak a powerful universal language that connects us all.

## Extract from text by Nkgopoleng Moloi

### About the Artist

Nabeeha Mohamed was born in Cape Town in 1988. She studied at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town. Her very personal work grapples with the contradictions of identity and class privilege in post-Apartheid South Africa. Her position 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, is now celebrated in her paintings where colour and strangeness take centre stage. These celebrations of identity are intersected with a playful critique of the capitalist economy and class privilege from which she benefits.

Nabeeha has participated in group exhibitions locally and internationally, notably *Speculative Inquiry #1 (on Abstraction)* (Michaelis Galleries, Cape Town), *Liminality in Infinite Space* (African Artists’ Foundation, Lagos), *Self-Identity in the Face of the Global Pandemic* (Gallery 1957, London), *Melancholympics*, The Wunderwall, (PLUS- ONE Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium), *Don’t Give A Damns* (Marian Cramer Projects, Amsterdam), *Map of the New Art* (Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice), *Outside the Lines: An Exploration of Abstract Materiality* (WHATIFTHEWORLD, Cape Town), *HB (A Humble Little Show)* and *Fugly* (Chandler House, Cape Town) and *Close Encounters* (SMITH Studio, Cape Town). She has participated in residencies at *Casa de Ilhabela*, Brazil and at *the gallery*, Johannesburg.

*Same Sky, Different Fruit* her first solo presentation with Gallery 1957.

### About Gallery 1957

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Based in Accra, with a London outpost opened in 2020, Gallery 1957 has a curatorial focus on West Africa. Presenting a programme of exhibitions, installations and performances by the region's most significant artists, the gallery serves as a vital platform, promoting West Africa's presence within the art scene by hosting ambitious exhibitions, providing resources for residencies and participating in international art fairs. Founded by Marwan Zakhem in 2016, Gallery 1957 has evolved from over 15 years of private collecting. The gallery now hosts three spaces in Accra – one in the Kempinski Hotel and two in the Galleria Mall – and a London outpost in Hyde Park Gate.

Artist: Nabeeha Mohamed

Title: *Same Sky, Different Fruit*

Dates: 31st March – 19th May 2022

Opening Reception: 31st March, 2022 - 6pm-9pm

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