

THK GALLERY

ABDUS SALAAM | BIO & CV

Abdus Salaam is a self-taught multi-disciplinary artist from Cape Town, South Africa. With works rooted in poetry, Salaam reveals a sensitivity to three-dimensional spatial expression and the metaphysical connotations inherent in materials.

Contemporary in his mystic abstraction, his non-representational work calls from a familiar place to a state of peaceful and intensive longing, seeking to inspire a growth of human consciousness. Moving freely between mediums – from sculpture to painting, video, photographic 'light paintings', poetry, augmented reality, and music – he creates poetic worlds, from the intimate to large-scale installation. While rooted in personal meditation and reflection, his work speaks to the universal human experience.

Salaam's oriented strand board paintings are a journey of discovery for both the artist and the viewer. Painting with mineral earth pigments which he carefully forages and crushes, these works are meticulously painted, revealing the order inherent in this humble, seemingly disorderly material. They are moments of visual unity, with each element dependent on every other element for both the narrative of the work, and the fundamental cohesion and structural integrity of the work. For the artist, each painting is a deeply transformative actuation of sacred monotony, with a single square metre taking up to 350 hours to paint. Inspiring contemplation, they are a poetic reflection of oneness, our interconnectedness, and our dependence on each other.

Salaam's sculptural works are inspired by the natural changes of stone over time, imagining how water and wind would shape it over the Millennia. This dance of the real and metaphorical is constant throughout his practice.

Drawing on action painting and gestural abstraction, Salaam's thickly layered paintings reveal a spontaneity and a surrender to chance. After days of preparation, Salaam pours up to 15 litres of acrylic paint onto a large scale canvas, and in a focused gesture, creates these works in a single movement as the paint starts to dry. His paintings actively employ the bare canvas as an untouched void, speaking to the limitless possibilities at every earthly-celestial meeting place. Similarly, Salaam creates 'light paintings', working in the darkroom with chemicals and instinctual gestures in a homage to the origins of photography and intuitive creativity.

Salaam's wood ring and natural pigment paintings are a meditation on time and place. Using sections of a foraged old growth tree, sliced to reveal the growth rings – most over one hundred years old – he suspends the foraged earth pigments in resin, pouring additional layers into the growth rings as though to elaborate on the millennia of life and death beyond the tree's relatively short existence. By using natural pigments – unearthing the colours of the soil that nourish life – he brings the story full circle, as if those outer rings represent our lived experiences, biases, and beliefs.

Salaam's work looks beyond tropes of identity and outer struggle, instead focusing on unity and on the expansive spiritual inner realities of beauty, peace and striving, as they relate to nature and our shared human experience: sharing the ecstatic love of being alive and being together.

Salaam is represented by THK Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa.

THK GALLERY

ABDUS SALAAM | BIO & CV

EXHIBITIONS

UPCOMING

2022

- *Soft As Stone* (Solo) THK Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2021

- *Winter Group Show* (Group) THK Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

PAST

2021

- *Falls Of Abundance* Online Exhibition (Solo) THK Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- *Tell Me Three Things About Yourself* (Group) Jaffer Modern, Cape Town, South Africa

2019

- *Unresolved Category* (Group) Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa
- *The Ocean of Limitlessness* (Solo) AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- *From Behind a Clear Mirror* (Group) Robert Sherwood, Cape Town, South Africa

2018

- *The Ocean of Limitlessness* (Art Fair) Addis Foto Festival, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- *An Experience - Namibia* (Solo) V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa
- *Throwing Shapes* (Group) SMITH Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- *The Ocean of Limitlessness* (Solo) The Castle, Cape Town, South Africa

2017

- *An Experience - Namibia* (Solo) V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa
- *The Ocean of Limitlessness* (Group) Amplify Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- *Mercy* (Group) Amplify Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2016

- *An Experience - Namibia* (Solo) V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa