



ROSALIND HOOKS NASHASHIBI

11 February — 7 May 2023

Nottingham
Contemporary

This exhibition is the largest UK presentation to date of paintings by London-based artist Rosalind Nashashibi. For the past two decades, Nashashibi has shown her films internationally, though in recent years has increasingly returned to painting, which she initially studied while at art school in Sheffield. She has said that:

‘Filmmaking is the social side of my practice, where I have to collaborate with other people; whereas painting is me alone, me and my inner life, along with references to other artists, other paintings or images, or films that come into the paintings. They are two very different ways in which I express myself, although they are both absolutely linked to me.’

Hooks brings together a selection of new and recent works, most of which Nashashibi made during the past year. The exhibition title refers to the mechanism for closing a window shutter, as well as to the hook in a song, a refrain that niggles or soothes. Nashashibi says:

‘The process of making the paintings is a journey from an initial “hook” of a motif into the real business of making a charged field of activity within the painting, where on-the-spot decisions can surprise me. What interests me is when something works that really should be a failure — whether because it's a cliché, say, or aesthetically jarring. This is then immediately incorporated into a new “hook” to begin another painting.’

The works in this exhibition are punctuated by an associative chain of symbols and animals — a cross becomes a bowtie that becomes a moth or a pair of cat's ears — and are crisscrossed by fences and walls. Figures peer through shuttered windows; gazes are filtered or partially obscured. Luminous and fragmented, these paintings are concerned less with clear narratives than with seeping atmospheres, by turns erotic and frustrated. Nashashibi notes that, “whenever you start to make a painting or decide on shots in a film, there are lots of other paintings and films running through your head”. The motifs and gestures in these new paintings spring from myriad sources. They include the 15th-century Florentine artist Paolo Uccello; an Édouard Manet portrait of painter Berthe Morisot with a fan; an Edgar Degas depicting a young woman holding field glasses; a boat scene by Otto Muehler, who was part of the expressionist movement Die Brücke.

Other sources of inspiration for Nashashibi come from film (a shot from John Cassavetes's *The Killing of a Chinese Bookie*, 1976), theatre (Malvolio, from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, is another refrain), as well as from Nashashibi's own family and friends. Specific references matter less than the ways in which these paintings emanate from images and ideas lighted upon in Nashashibi's studio. These are works bound up with the matter of thinking and talking, with a certain way of looking at the world.

In 2022, Nashashibi completed a new film, titled *Denim Sky*, which will be screened as part of the programme of events accompanying this exhibition. Four years in the making, it was shot in locations including Lithuania and the Orkney Islands and was inspired by a short story by Ursula K. Le Guin. Made in close dialogue with Nashashibi's children and a group of friends, the film explores questions of time travel, chance and community.

In 2020, Nashashibi was the National Gallery's inaugural artist-in-residence. During her residency, she developed a new body of work responding to the National Gallery's display of 17th-century Spanish painting, by Velázquez, Ribera and Zurbarán. In recent years, Nashashibi has presented works at Carré d'Art, Nîmes (2022–23); the Radvila Palace Museum of Art, Vilnius (2022); fka Witte de With, Rotterdam (2018–19); Secession, Vienna (2019); and Documenta 14 (2017).

RELATED EVENTS

Exhibition Walkthroughs

Wednesday 15 February, 12pm
Welcome walkthrough
Explore the exhibition with our team and join us for refreshments and conversation in the café afterwards.

12.30pm every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, starting 21 February
Join one of our friendly Gallery Assistants for a short exploration of one of our exhibitions. For more details visit our website.

Free Family Activities

During school holidays:
14 – 16 February, 4 – 6 and 11 – 13 April
Explore the exhibition's themes through making and play.

Rosalind Nashashibi, *Hooks* is curated by Sam Thorne, Director General & CEO of Japan House London (former Director Nottingham Contemporary). The exhibition is generously supported by GRIMM gallery.

Exhibition graphics by Åbäke.

For more information about the exhibition, related events and learning programmes, visit nottinghamcontemporary.org or scan here:



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