

## Maysha Mohamedi: *Gamebreaker*

May 12 – July 1, 2023  
540 West 25th Street  
New York



Maysha Mohamedi, *Mrs. Law*, 2023 © Maysha Mohamedi, courtesy Pace Gallery

New York – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by Maysha Mohamedi at its 540 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street gallery in New York. On view from May 12 to July 1, this show, titled *Gamebreaker*, will mark the artist's debut exhibition with Pace and her first-ever solo presentation in New York. *Gamebreaker* will coincide with the 2023 editions of Frieze New York and TEFAF New York.

Mohamedi, who joined the gallery's program in 2022, is known for her singular approach to Color Field painting. A self-taught artist raised in San Luis Obispo, California and now based in Los Angeles, Mohamedi has developed a new mode of atmospheric abstraction that reflects the patchwork of scenes, objects, and environments that comprise her life, creating paintings that function as maps of sensation, cognition, and experience. Through a distinct visual lexicon of forms, symbols, and marks, the artist infuses her canvases with a rhythmic energy that suggests unfolding poetry. The calligraphic lines that proliferate across her compositions possess an oneiric quality, as if the complex layers of form and color are part of an arcane choreography. Replete with personal resonances and liberated from the constraints of the three-dimensional world, Mohamedi's immersive, illimitable works invite viewers into a spirited exchange and communion.

Investigations into the expressive possibilities of color are central to the artist's practice. Each of her works begins with two fixed variables: a color palette that she has culled from printed ephemera or found objects, along with an encounter, experience, feeling, or idea. As part of her process, Mohamedi records the formulas for her paintings in notebooks, documenting the colors and conceptual underpinnings of every artwork she produces. From that point, she takes an intuitive approach, eschewing preliminary sketching to forge lyrical choreographies of color and form directly onto her canvases. Line is a central component of the artist's work—early in her process, she uses a mechanical pencil to draw standalone linear forms, as well as the individual marks that comprise various shapes, on her paintings. Employing subtractive and additive techniques, Mohamedi foregrounds enactments of fragmentation and cohesion in her networks of shape and line. Her paintings are spaces for exploring qualities of contact and touch, and the surfaces of her works become tactile expressions of immediate encounters in the present moment.

Mohamedi's upcoming exhibition with Pace in New York will spotlight a selection of new paintings varying in scale. While some of these works chronicle the artist's experience or interpretation of specific situations, others can be understood as portraits of people in her life. *Cheers to My Children* (2022), the largest work Mohamedi has ever produced, will figure prominently in her show. As its title suggests, the artist created this work as a monumental and deeply personal expression of love for her two young sons.

With a color palette derived from a children's poetry book dating to the 1960s, *Cheers to My Children* centers on formal pairings. Each abstraction bears subtle but unmistakable differences from its counterpart, and no two forms in a pairing are rendered in the same color. Delicate lines cut around and across these constellations, giving the composition a buoyant, energetic quality. This emotionally resonant work brims with visual idiosyncrasies that reveal themselves to viewers through thoughtful looking.

In *Gifted and Moody on Torrey Pines Beach* (2022), another work in the exhibition, the artist brings her abstract forms into close conversation, capturing the intimacy that comes with the discovery of a shared experience between acquaintances. The largest form in the painting is also the work's most vibrant element, executed in a luscious red tone, while other abstractions are presented in muted green, yellow, grey, and the artist's signature black pigment. At once lively and harmonious, *Gifted and Moody on Torrey Pines Beach* evokes the attendant gratitude and joy of an unexpected interpersonal connection.

Mohamedi's layered paintings, which she constructs through a series of ritual gestures, can be understood in conversation with those of Abstract Expressionist forebears like Willem de Kooning, Helen Frankenthaler, and Joan Mitchell, as well as Color Field painters like Mark Rothko, and a range of other pioneering abstractionists that have blurred the line between the graphic and painterly mark, in particular Cy Twombly. Her vibrant and innovative works register certain conditions specific to Los Angeles—and to American life as a whole—in the early 21st century.

**Maysa Mohamedi** (b. 1980, Los Angeles) received a BS in 2002 from the University of California, San Diego, where she studied cognitive science, specializing in neuroscience. After graduating, she went on to earn an MFA in painting from the California College of the Arts in San Francisco in 2011. In her abstract paintings, the artist meditates on selfhood and consciousness through a singular lexicon of color, composition, and mark-making. Reflecting her personal history, everyday experiences, and key constellations in her own cultural matrix as a woman of Iranian descent, her palette is both purely abstract and directly connected to the patchwork of landscapes, objects, and environments that comprise her life. These range from an Ojai, California playground the artist visited with her children, clippings from cookbooks and magazines, to sea glass found on the shore.

Mohamedi's works are reflections of her own thinking, crystallized as moments of haptic communion. The artist's academic background in neuroscience is found in the liveliness and expansiveness of her paintings. Liberated from the constraints and dictates of the three-dimensional world, her immersive works exude a sense of freedom and illimitability. For Mohamedi, the viewer is an equal creator in this shared universe of boundless possibilities. Mohamedi's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions with The Lodge, Los Angeles (2018); Parrasch Heijnen Gallery, Los Angeles (2021); and Massimo De Carlo, Paris (2022). Her work has been presented in group exhibitions at Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, Oregon (2019); and Blum & Poe, Los Angeles (2021), among others.

**Pace** is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.




Today, Pace has eight locations worldwide, including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace’s long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which was open from 2016 to 2022. Pace’s engagement with Silicon Valley’s technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level, accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing.

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