

**NICOLA
VASSELL**

**UMAN:
I WANT
EVERYTHING
NOW**

**UMAN
OPENING**

**MAY 4 — JUNE 17
MAY 4, 6 — 8 PM**

Gallery Hours
For Press Inquiries

Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am–6 pm

138 10th Ave. New York, NY 10011

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NICOLA VASSELL

May 4 — June 17, 2023

Nicola Vassell is pleased to present *Uman: I Want Everything Now*, an exhibition steeped in Uman's life story. She is an artist who wanders probingly into her own psyche, grounds herself in a ritualistic creative practice, and venerates the time and space that metaphysical artwork demands.

Born in Somalia, followed by a childhood in Kenya, adolescence in Denmark, early-adult life in New York City, and current residence in Upstate New York, her geographic migration and personal evolution embody perpetual motion. Her travels, triumphs and traumas inform her inventory of knowledge. Uman's work—encompassing painting, drawing, sculpture and glassblowing—are documents of metamorphosis: an intricate cosmos of imagination and geometry. Channeled through every medium she explores, her self-image proliferates into myriad pictorial outcomes—an intimate dance with nature, wit, lore, and intuition.

Rather than premeditate a subject or idea, Uman creates work from an open mind. Her paintings are born from dreams, a kaleidoscope of images layered upon images, flowing from the twinned anima and animus. Upon awakening from her vivid reveries, Uman is energized to make work, employing her mood and emotional vectors to guide her hand. Receptive to the serpentine promenades of her fantasies, she transmits her visions to canvas, page, and object. She camouflages the recognizable with expressive gestures and auguring symbols, creating spirited, all-over abstractions.

Uman's self-taught practice is not miraculous, but a rare fusion of instinct and discipline. Her gut sensibilities are rooted in the ritual of painting every day, teaching herself to generate both incrementally and monumentally. She feels that, "When I am painting, I know exactly what I am doing," a declaration of confidence in a lifelong effort dedicated to developing her style and voice. Uman is committed to the limitless realms of her mind's eye, just as her artwork is a throng of paradoxes—instinctive yet formulaic, lucid yet complex, and crafted from infinity, but nevertheless complete.

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About Uman

Uman was born in Somalia and grew up in Kenya. She emigrated to Denmark in her teens and after a decade there, arrived in New York City with the new millennium. She resides and works in upstate New York. Uman's work has been exhibited at the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto; Eleni Koroneou Gallery, Athens; Fierman Gallery, NY; Karma, NY and White Columns, NY.

Uman's varied migrations and encounters with contrasting heritage power her bold gestural work. Exuberant, seemingly freestyle markings are influenced by the Arabic calligraphy she studied as a child. Similarly, her distorted self-portraits, talismanic found objects and silhouette images of camels, birds and vessels merge abstraction with figuration, while reflecting her East African desert heritage. Widely traveled and self-trained, Uman's practice explores gender and cultural fluidity through paintings, drawings and sculpture, while remaining spiritually engaged and instinctive.

About Nicola Vassell Gallery

Nicola Vassell Gallery is a contemporary art gallery committed to discourse that widens the lens of the history and future of art. Its focus is on developing an inter-generational, cross-disciplinary program of international artists and thinkers.