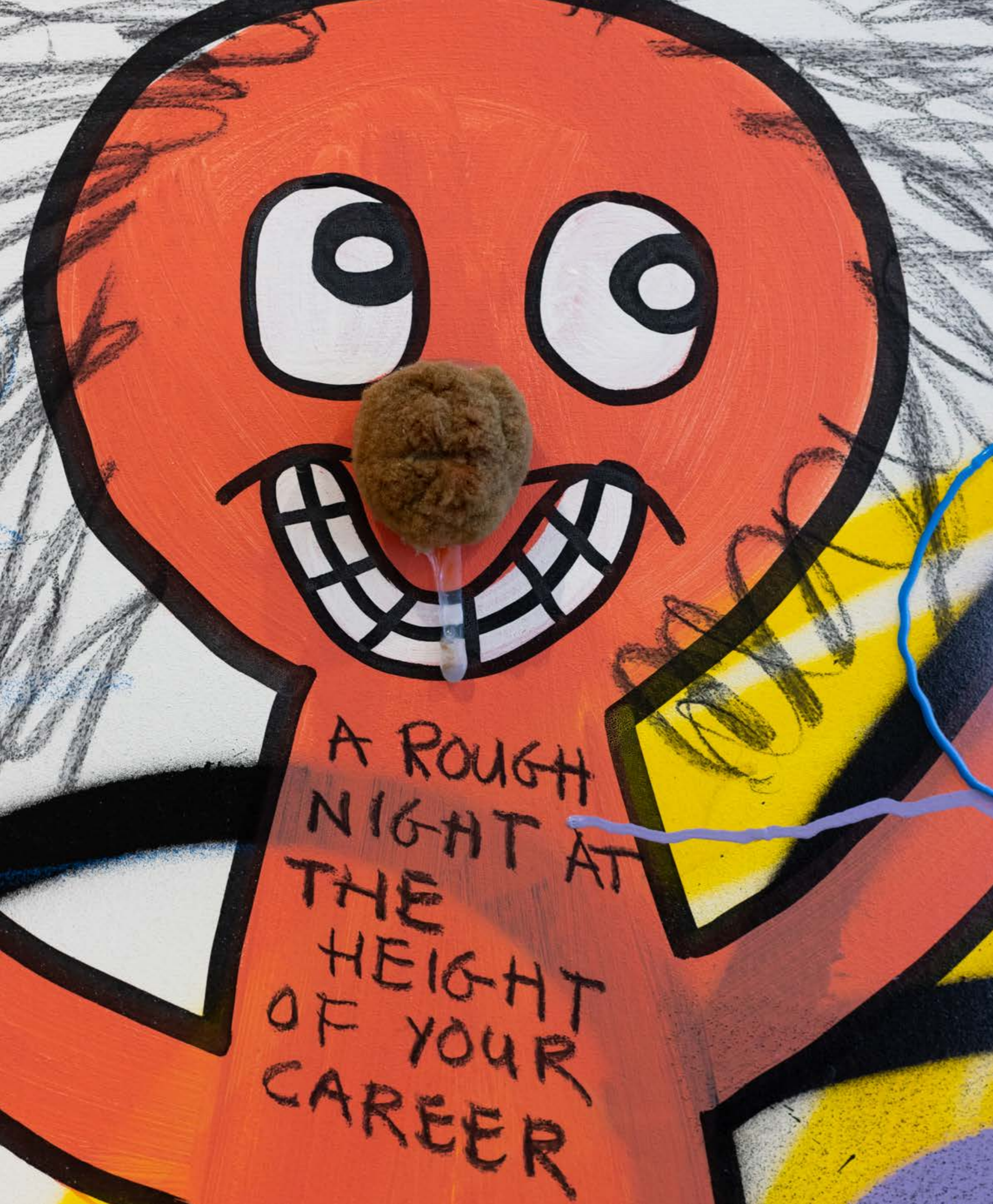


# FINDING MIKEY

A SOLO SHOW BY JOI MURUGAVELL

SARAH**BIRTLES**  
ART + ADVICE





The first thing you need to know about Joi Murugavell is that she doesn't like putting her work into words, because today's truth becomes tomorrow's lies. So just remember that what you read below is only one perspective, and probably isn't true.

The exhibition's title, ***Finding Mikey***, is a reference to Joi's relationship with Mikey, who scans and documents her paintings. Over time Joi began leaving hidden messages and clues in the paintings specifically for Mikey to find. Consistent throughout her body of work, every inch of these new paintings beg examination for a hidden message or symbol. Only Mikey knows which tidbits were left specifically for him.

However, as a viewer you will never be able to tell which parts of the painting are for Mikey, or which are nods to the network of people in her life, or coded for someone to find as in a treasure hunt. Each quote, toon, toy and shape is a potential clue, though there is no hierarchy among the colorful din.

We are allowed to love each brush stroke, pom-pom, and pun equally. The words, toys, and cartoon symbols often land like an inside joke you have been let in on, a message hidden within the painting hoping to be found and to resonate. In this we locate the voice of Joi's paintings—not their universality but their specificity. In their playfulness they speak to anyone. But as a viewer standing before it, a Joi Murugavel painting speaks to you. No one is excluded from the fun.

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**Quizas, Quizas, Quizas, 2022**

Acrylic, oil stick, wax crayon, spray paint, charcoal, collage on canvas  
183x152cm

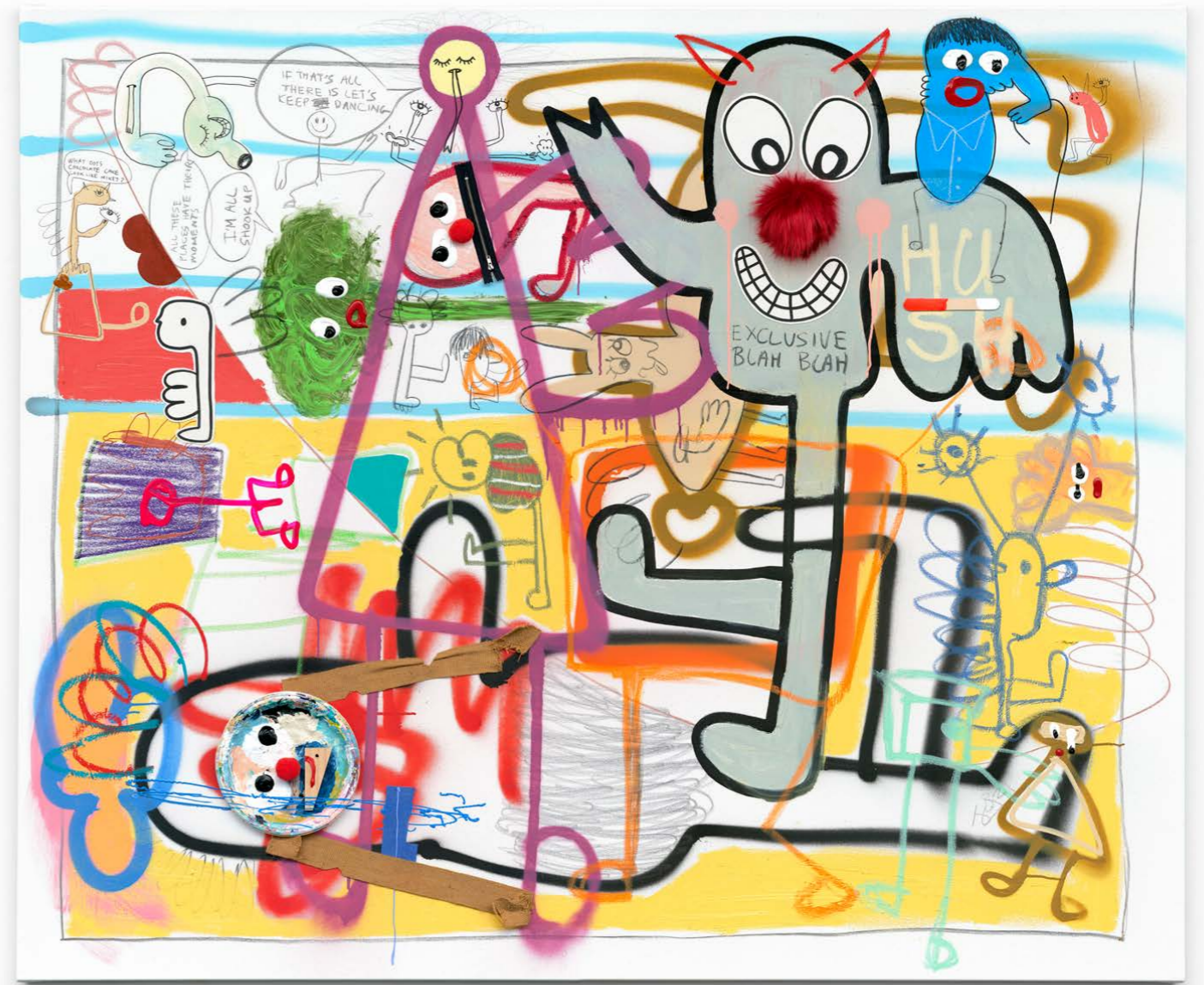


**Pharmaceutical Regiment, 2022**

Acrylic, oil stick, wax crayon, spray paint, charcoal, collage on canvas  
183x152cm







**The Carnival of The Animals (Finding Mikey), 2021**  
Acrylic, oil stick, wax crayon, spray paint, charcoal, collage on canvas  
183x152cm



accompanying piece **'Mikey Goes Offline'** to be placed below the painting **'The Carnival of The Animals (Finding Mikey),'**

Acrylic, oil stick, ink, pom-pom, customised converse shoes, wood  
104x18cm



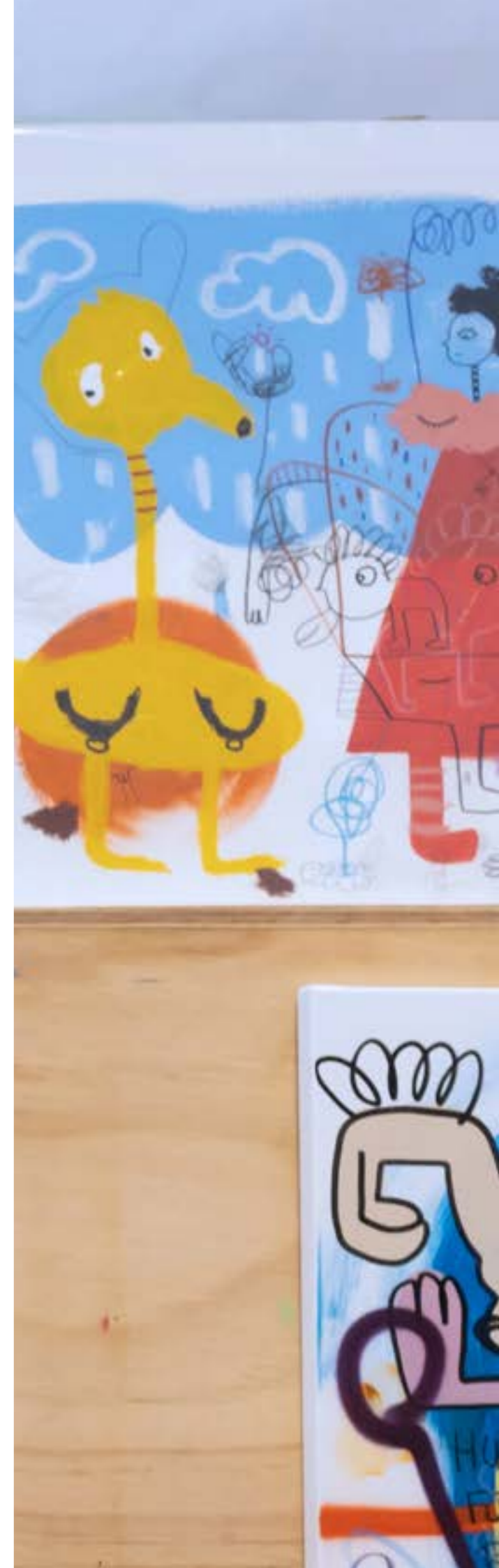


**Mikey's Fluff Parlour, 2021**

Acrylic, oil stick, wax crayon, spray paint, charcoal, collage on canvas  
120x90cm



The Toys deal with the artist's evolution as a dreamer. Joi was one of those children who would create epic worlds in her imagination. First with her toys as characters, then in vivid daydreams, which went on by her own admission 'way too long'. One night alone in her studio, Joi realised that the presence of her pictures felt comfortable, just like the characters she'd dreamed up as a kid. Her pictures were simply a new expression of the friends who inhabit her inner world.





**Eat, Ink and Die, 2022**  
Acrylic, charcoal, collage on canvas  
50x40cm



**Art Pedestal (Issues & Opportunities), 2022**

Acrylic, marker, felt, collage on canvas  
50x40cm

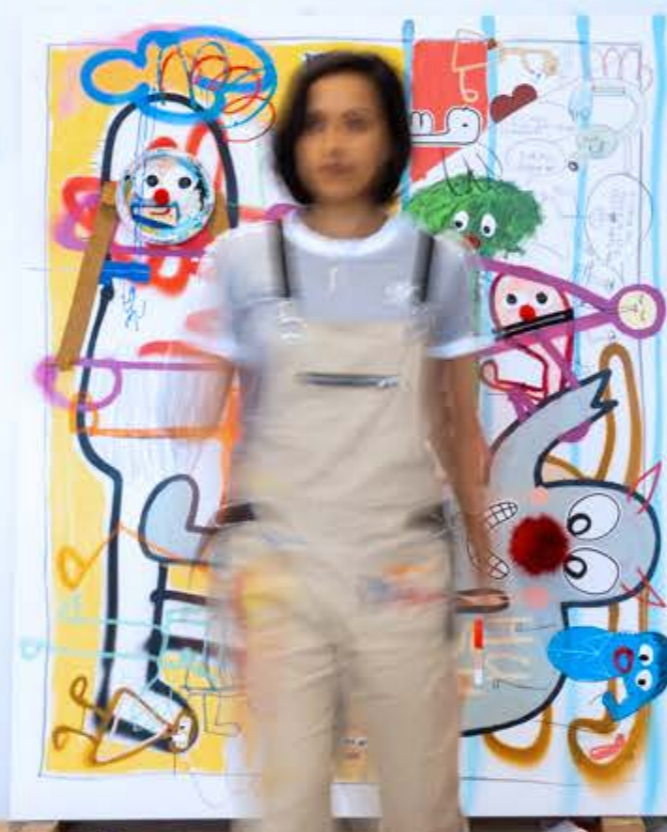


**Rehearsed Tension (siblings)** 2022  
Acrylic, graphite, collage on canvas  
50x40cm



**Donkey Is As Donkey Does, 2021**  
Acrylic, ink, collage on canvas  
50x40cm





THE EROTICS  
OF LOOKING





A Portrait of Mikey Metcalf  
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