

# SALMAN TOOR

## How Will I Know

Joining sketchlike immediacy with disarming detail, Salman Toor (b. 1983) expands the tradition of figurative painting to create intimate views of young, queer Brown men in New York and South Asia. Toor—who grew up in Lahore, Pakistan, and primarily lives and works in New York—considers the figures he paints to be fictional versions of himself and his friends. He portrays them with empathy to counter the judgments he feels are often imposed on them by society. Art-historical allusions—notably to post-Renaissance European and modern Pakistani and Indian painting—feature throughout the artist’s work, endowing his experiential narratives with elements of fantasy. Toor’s nuanced color palette adds emotion and drama to dreamy vignettes in which characters dance in cramped apartments, take selfies, play with puppies, and style their friends’ hair. Several somber works also highlight moments that convey nostalgia and alienation. One such painting depicts a morose family gathering; in others, forlorn men stand with their belongings on display for the scrutiny of immigration officers. Situated within a queer, diasporic community, Toor’s paintings evocatively consider how vulnerability manifests itself in public and private life.

Hear from the artist at [whitney.org/Guide](https://whitney.org/Guide). An essay on Toor’s work can be found at [whitney.org/Toor](https://whitney.org/Toor).



*Salman Toor: How Will I Know* is part of the Whitney’s emerging artists program, sponsored by

**NORDSTROM**

Generous support is provided by Further Forward Foundation, the John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation, and the Manitou Fund.

Additional support is provided by the Artists Council, Luhring Augustine, and Graham Steele and Ulysses de Santi.