



# ARABESQUE

Zafirah Ahmed

MFA Thesis Exhibition

March 29 - April 2

**Virtual Reception & Artist Talk**

April 1st, 2021

4-5 pm PST

**Zoom Meeting ID**

835 6395 1205

Zafirah Ahmed  
Artist Statement Spring 2021  
Arabesque

An Arabesque is a form of decoration made up of rhythmic linear patterns, combined with scrolling lines along with other elements. It is a form that is repeated and it is a key part of Islamic art. This exhibition is an embodiment of the Arabesque—combining linear patterning, with organic scrolling forms, merging with various mediums, and ultimately inhabiting multiple spaces.

Arabesque explores the various spaces we exist in through pattern. I see pattern in its form as a decorative device but also in a way to navigate the repeating patterns of society, trends, and norms. These patterns are layered and woven compositions that embody my identity but also allow the viewer to be reflected both literally and figuratively, and ultimately encapsulating the fluidity of society.

Each work is a combination of the social trends and cultural patterns I observe in various spaces of the world. They are created with a digital space in mind, but the physicality of the piece represents the effect of our digital actions and how through repetition, they evolve through time. The works were created through digital illustration, collage, and stencils, incorporating a variety of bright colors. The connection to creating the works digitally relates to the digital space of social media and how our culture engages, communicates, and is represented. The use of paint brings the digital space to a physical reality, allowing all the variations and irregularities to be seen.

The work is based on these linear templates, but it is organic. The forms break up and are inconsistent. Society itself is ever changing; it happens faster online in the immediacy of it all. There is a precedence in how the events of digital space happen and affect the world of our physical space. We may be following a trend, but trends evolve. The semiotics of this show may be made up of layered moments I have viewed, but the glow of our devices and these works reflect us all.



















