



A Childhood in Waiting

R 32,800.00



Childhood in Waiting is a contemporary acrylic painting by South African artist Shana Ellappa, offering a poignant reflection on the lives of child labourers within histories of indenture and agricultural work. The work serves as an ode to the children whose early years were shaped by labour, responsibility, and survival, rather than freedom and play.

Through her practice of memory work and narrative-based painting, Ellappa restores a sense of presence and dignity to these often-overlooked lives. The title evokes a quiet suspension, childhood not fully lived, but deferred, capturing the emotional and temporal dissonance of growing up within systems of hardship. It speaks to a generation whose formative years were marked by endurance, yet still held traces of imagination, tenderness, and resilience.

Situated within broader conversations of postcolonial history, diaspora, and identity, the painting challenges dominant historical narratives by centring the lived experiences of children. It invites

viewers to consider not only what was lost, but also what persisted: the capacity for hope, connection, and inner worlds even in constrained environments.

Ellappa's work, informed by African feminisms, intersectionality, and archival inquiry, engages with the complexities of inheritance, how stories are passed down, remembered, and reimagined. Childhood in Waiting becomes both a gesture of remembrance and a quiet act of honouring, acknowledging those whose stories remain largely unrecorded yet deeply embedded within collective memory.

Frame	Framed in Oak
Medium	Acrylic on 390 gsm 100% Cotton Canvas
Location	Cape Town, South Africa
Height	94.00 cm
Width	94.00 cm
Artist	Shana Ellappa
Year	2026

