



He Wears No Name

R 36,800.00



He Wears No Name is a contemporary acrylic painting by South African artist Shana Ellappa, engaging with the dehumanising systems of indentured labour in which individuals were stripped of identity and reduced to numbers within colonial records. The work reflects on the erasure of personal histories, where names, stories, and subjectivities were often lost or deliberately obscured.

Rooted in memory, ancestry, and postcolonial identity, the painting functions as both a collective

remembrance and a deeply personal reflection. It alludes to a story passed down through Ellappa's family, of her thatha (Tamil for grandfather), who lost both legs in a sugarcane mill accident while working under exploitative conditions. This intergenerational memory anchors the work in lived experience, bridging archival absence with familial narrative.

Rather than presenting history as distant, *He Wears No Name* restores presence and dignity to those who were anonymised by systems of labour and control. It foregrounds the tension between erasure and remembrance, asking what it means to reclaim identity in the aftermath of historical violence and silence.

Frame	Framed in Oak
Medium	Acrylic on 390 gsm 100% Cotton Canvas
Location	Cape Town, South Africa
Height	119.00 cm
Width	83.00 cm
Artist	Shana Ellappa
Year	2025

