

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum, Botswanan (Southern Africa), b. 1980
Front Room, 2022 - oil and graphite pencil on linen

Notes

> **Mid-career visual artist** whose multidisciplinary practice encompasses painting, drawing, stop-action animation, large-scale installations, and performance. Sunstrum grew up in southern Africa & southeast Asia, and as a young adult came to the United States to pursue her college education. She now lives in Ontario, Canada.

> **Mixed racial/ethnic heritage** - Botswanan mother, Canadian father.

> Faced discrimination in her homeland because of mixed heritage.

> Motivated by her experiences in these diverse locales, Sunstrum explores how one's **identity develops within geographic and cultural contexts.**

> Work is **broadly narrative**. Mines literature, mythology, and art history for themes such as **colonialism, capitalism, and global migration**, esp. effects of social and political power.

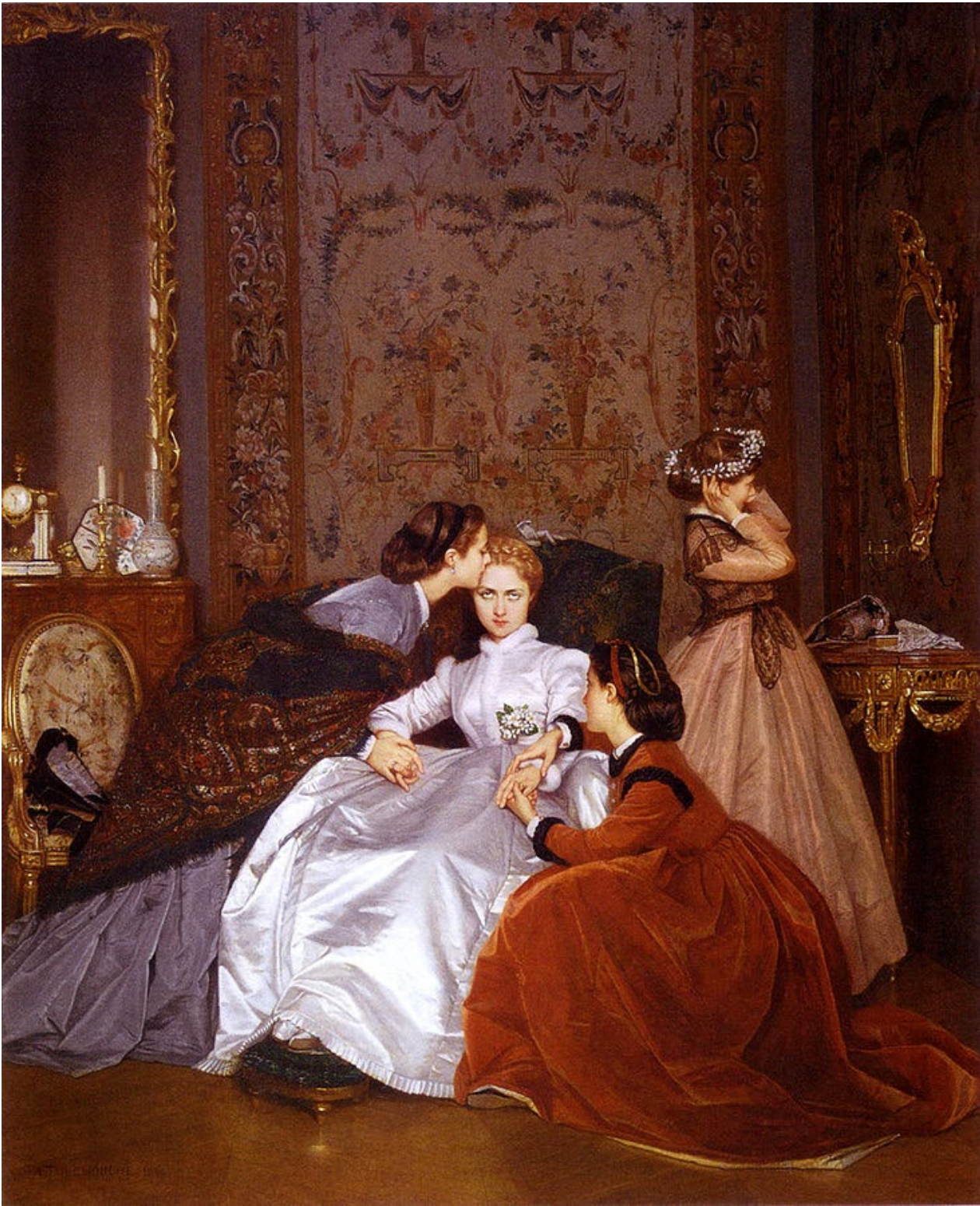
> *Front Room* is rooted in **autobiography** - seated bride-to-be is her alter-ego "**Asme**" (as-me) - stand-in for evolving selfhood (Black, African-born female) and a universal existence across time.

> Composition based on painting by **Auguste Toulmouche - Hesitant Fiancée** - 19th-century French Salon artist known for portraits of elegant bourgeois women in ornate settings. (See next page for the reference artworks)

> Here, Asme expresses **barely concealed rage - defiance to social and cultural norms and expectations.**

> Composition emphasizes **design, patterns** - reductive, flattened pictorial space. Patterns evoke precedents by Edouard **Vuillard** or Henri **Matisse** - used to define space.

>Goal of her work is to honor our full humanity. Painting supports Mia's ongoing efforts to diversity its collections.



Auguste Toulmouche - Hesitant Fiancée