

# Head in the Clouds



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### Artist Statement

My piece *Head in the Clouds* represents the conflict between my childhood whimsy and the world around me. From a young age, I was deemed as distracted and overemotional by both teachers and other adults. In this oil painting, childhood me desires to be free from this judgement, represented by her sky-blue dress and clouds that hover around her as a form of escape. Her eyes are closed to block out the dull world around her, replacing it with her fantasies, depicted with oil pastel scribbles. Blue sky expands out of me as I try to preserve that creativity. However, I cannot close my eyes indefinitely nor make the entire world my sky: I had to “grow up.”

As I matured, I have had to conform to the sternness of society since when I express myself people find me unintelligent and treat me condescendingly. People have told me my voice is too annoying, too high pitched, too smiley and cheerful, not serious enough, too emotional. Don't forget that I jump around and gesture and stutter too much when I talk. The constant barrage against my personality shaped me. I conformed easily, too easily, and now I don't know what's me and what isn't. Would I rather be inauthentic or insufferable?

So, I paint this as a homage to my childhood self, who was unashamedly loud and bright and talkative and honest, as well as a promise to one day reclaim my authentic self and look past the opinions of others.