

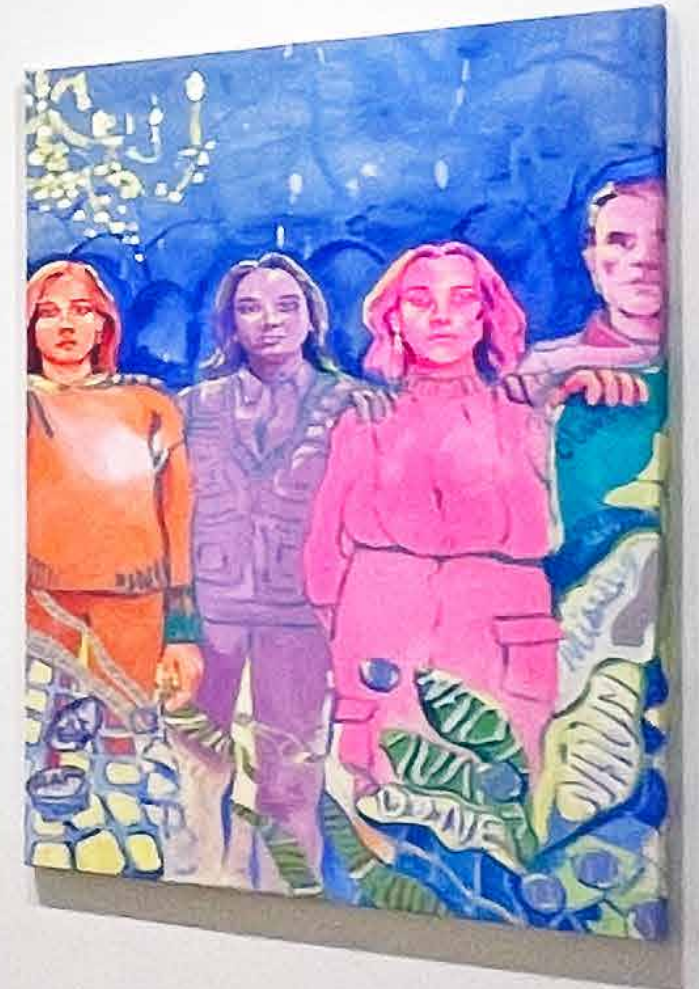
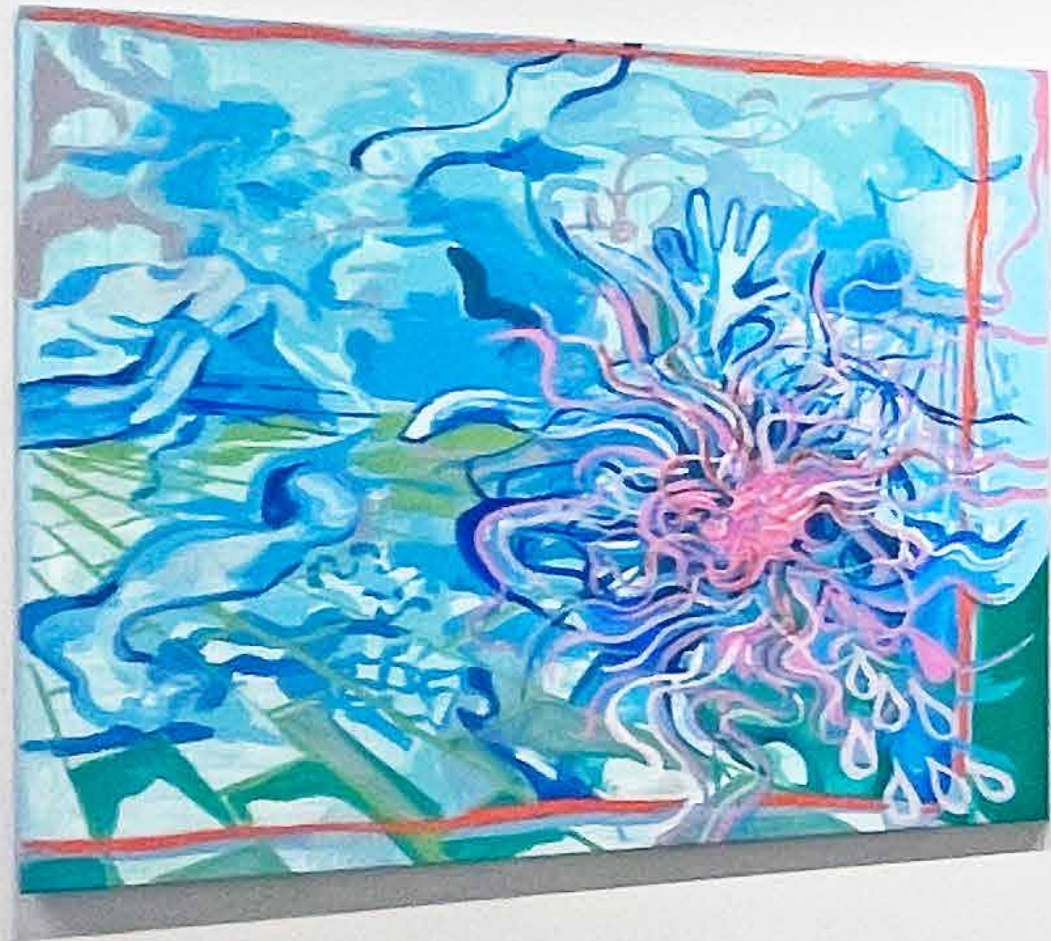
MADALENA PEQUITO

*Shared Roots / Private Jokes*

March 1 - March 30, 2024

FREIGHT + VOLUME

39 LISPENARD STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10013  
FREIGHTANDVOLUME.COM  
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# MADALENA PEQUITO

## *Shared Roots / Private Jokes*

March 1 - March 30, 2024

Freight + Volume is pleased to present *Shared Roots / Private Jokes*, an exhibition of recent works by Lisbon-based artist Madalena Pequito. *Shared Roots / Private Jokes* will be on view at 39 Lispenard St. in Tribeca opening March 1st with a reception from 6-8:30 pm and closing March 30. This is Pequito's first solo exhibition with the gallery.



Madalena Pequito, *A book called 6th of January*, 2023

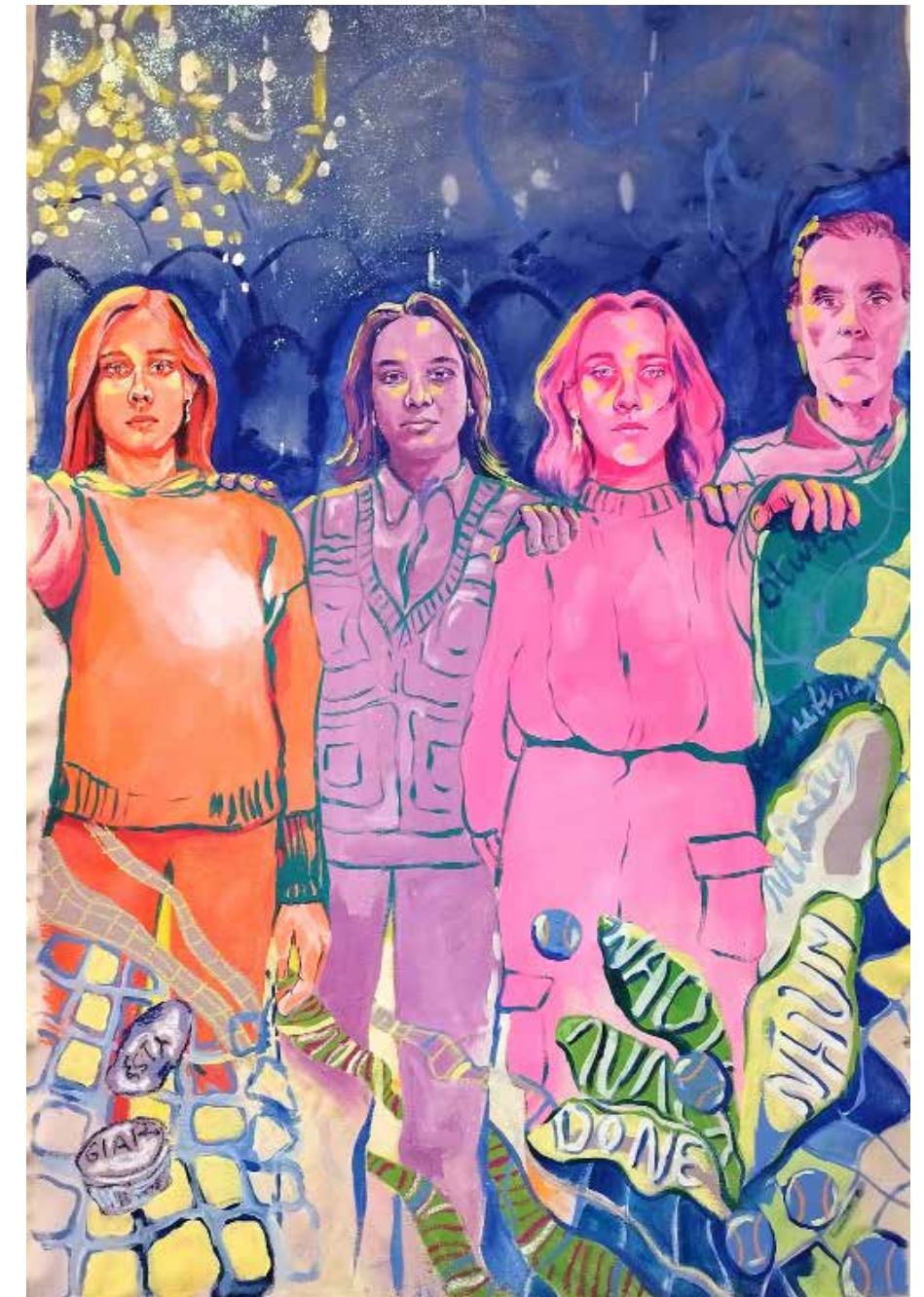
Madalena Pequito's works give voice to storied themes of migration, familial lineages, and identity. Memories both personal and collective saturate her paintings in graceful washes of color and accretive textures. The gestural aspects inlaid into each of her pictures effortlessly toggle between a layered intensity and a watery translucency. All of which imbues her work with a hidden typography inherently significant in its own right.

Pequito's work is as much a matter of metaphor and symbolism, as it is the preservation of persons and family members she has come to know across her life. Her figures are always situated in a haptic context

that reframes their literal presentation, and which makes the activity of preserving their likeness all the more intimate. At the same time, she pushes past the putative limits where an artist remains a neutral observer, unbiased and contemplative. In a painting like *A Book Called the 6th of January*, for example, Pequito has inserted her own likeness into the scene—not strictly in the manner of self-portraiture, but more in an effort to fuse two distinct temporalities: the time of the painting, as gradually realized by the artist, and the time of the viewer, who sees only the finished product.

Pequito's paintings not only depict time spatially, in the form of repetition, but durationally, by way of signs, signatures, and other nuanced textual markings. In *These Roots Put a Roof on My Head*, different implications are suggested by the words stippling the fresco-like scene of several generations of Pequito's family. Although the family stands together, like a fortress or a wall, the wavy grids and translucent aspects of the work instate a sense of open-endedness rather than closure. In a similar vein, the numbers that feature in the painting *Growing Pains* have a fragility about them which contrasts with their seeming exigence. The colored patterns developed across the work suggest that linear time, with its incessant measuring of loss and separation, is a camouflage for something more formless, joyful, and sporadic.

In her desire to preserve personal memories that might otherwise be lost to a kind of collective amnesia, Pequito's malleable depictions of objects and persons, her use of language as an open-ended gesture more than a closed-off statement, creates a familial nexus of portraits, a developing series of intertwined, colorful roots. Viewing her works in this way underscores the symbolism flowing through the exhibition (grids, flowers, faces, roots), while also calling attention to the sense of excitement and hopefulness that animates the carefully cultivated gaps and translucencies her paintings characteristically showcase. What results is as much symbolic as descriptive: a journey through different fields of energy, as the eye observes order forming out of wilding, exuberant growth.



Madalena Pequito *These Roots put a Roof on my Head*, 2023



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Madalena Pequito  
*Van egy Kicsi Alma a Zsebében, 2023*  
Acrylic and pigment bar on canvas  
60h x 42w in  
152.40h x 106.68w cm  
\$7,500

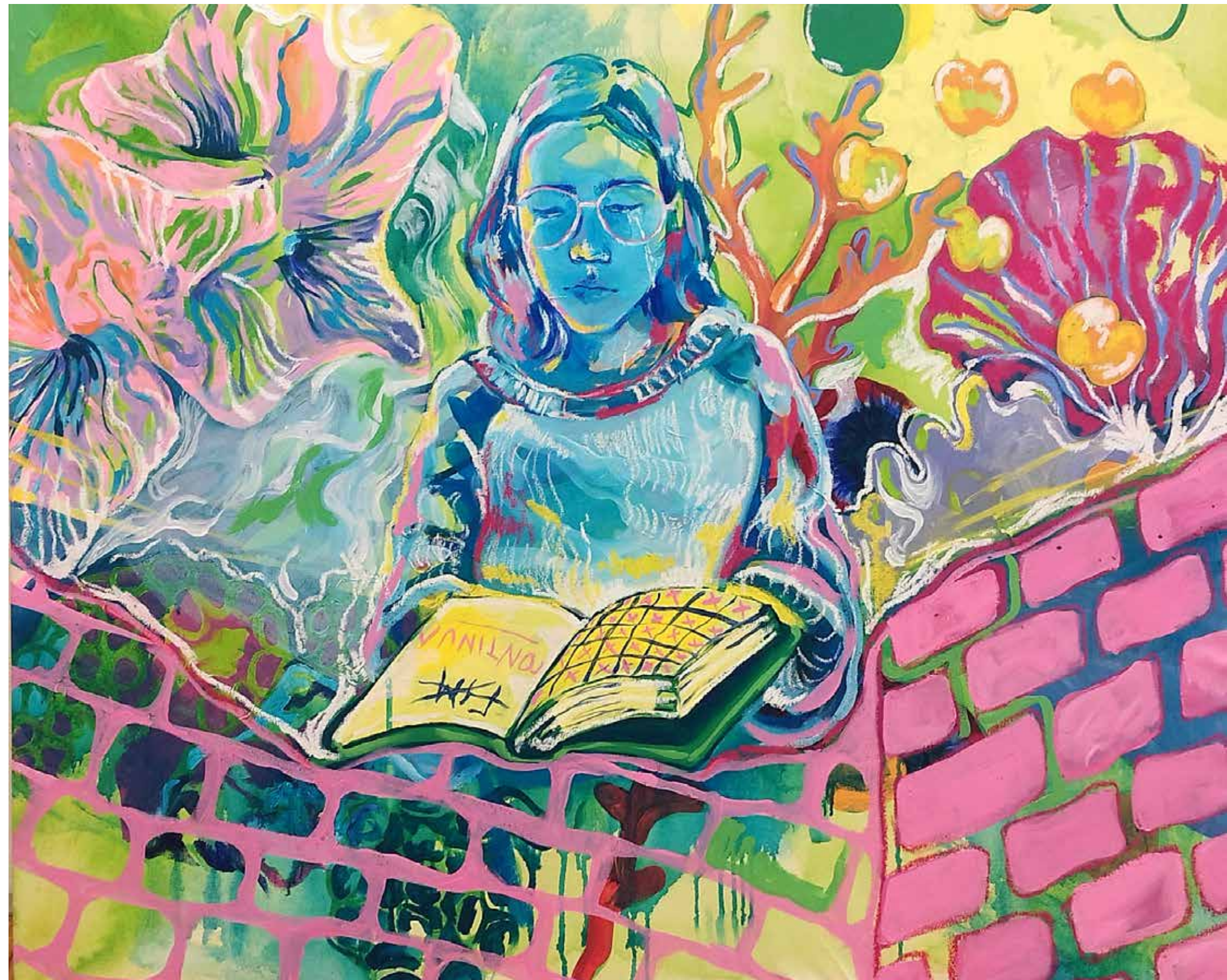




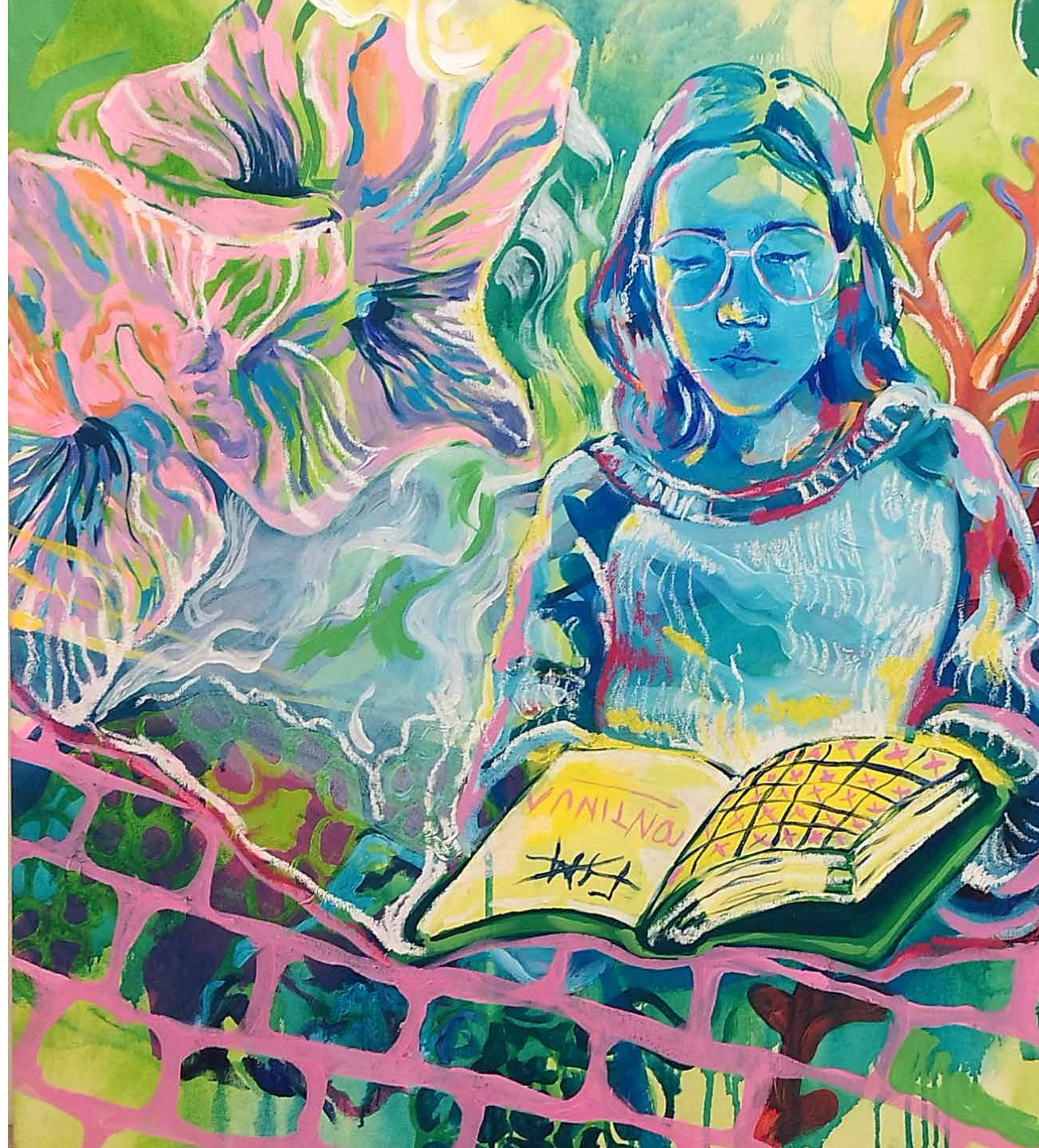
## *Van Egy Kicsi Alma a Zsebében*

*Back in 2017, I lived in Budapest for a few months in an exchange program. I never forgot something my painting teacher Szatilla told me when we were visiting a museum. He told me “Van egy kicsi alma a zsebében” (translation: You have a tiny apple in your pocket) and he laughed like he had just said the funniest thing ever. He says it is a very common word play in Hungary but it doesn’t really mean anything. Little did I know that this moment would be stored in my memory as a moment of beauty, peace and contemplation. This moment is already gone, but I still cherish it.*

*When I first came to New York, in September 2023, I was struggling with all the expectations I had created from my past living abroad experiences. I had all the weight in my shoulders of having to take advantage, take a bite. Somehow, I just kept feeling like everything around me is like that little apple in your pocket, you don’t really see it but you remember it. Like every instant is a memory that keeps slipping through my fingers as I try to hold on to everything, as I try not to let the past be in the past. This is one of the first paintings I made in New York and it depicts a moment of fall, of me trying to grab this tiny apple, whilst being both underwater and above the clouds, lost between reality and in the world of thoughts and memories. There are many apple trees around but I just want one tiny apple.*

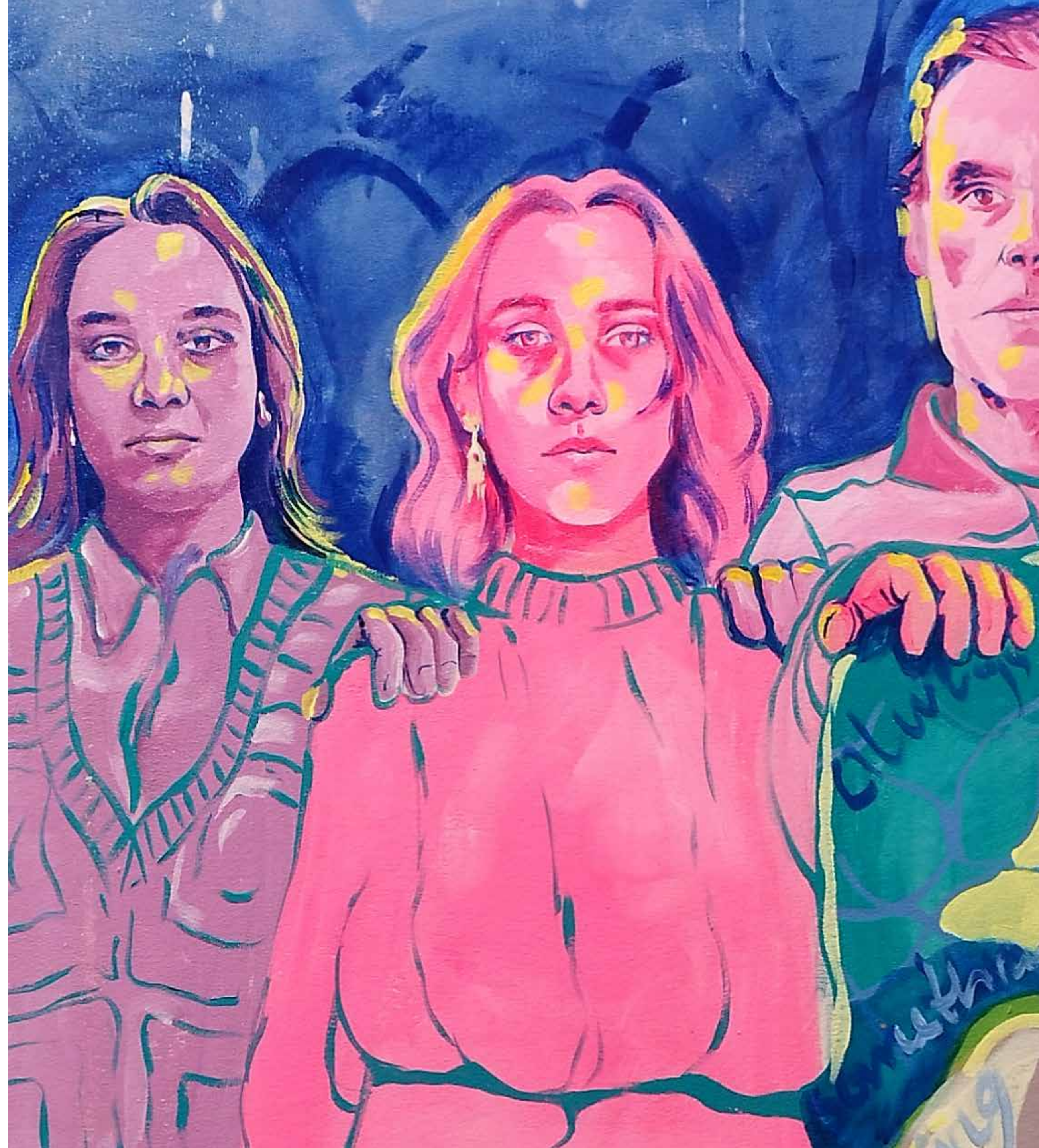


Madalena Pequito  
*A Book Called 6th of January, 2023*  
Acrylic and pigment bar and oil pastel on canvas  
32h x 39.50w in  
81.28h x 100.33w cm  
\$4,500





Madalena Pequito  
*These Roots put a Roof on my Head*, 2023  
Acrylic, glitter, and oil pastel on canvas  
39h x 58w in  
99.06h x 147.32w cm  
\$7,500



## *These Roots put a Roof on My Head*

*I once read a book that explained how the trees communicate under the soil. Their roots intertwine and tell each other information about the world. Even if a tree is cut down, it is still part of this communication and memory system.*

*My grandma has dementia and doesn't remember me sometimes, but I remember her. I celebrate our story, our roots. The path from India to Portugal, the cuisine, the clothes, the private jokes. She doesn't remember, but she is not alone. She is part of this thread of people.*

*In this painting, I portray me and my family as a fortress, holding each other's shoulders, and there are many layers of generation behind us to show that our collective memory can't be erased.*

*But I wonder if, as a society, do we suffer from chronic collective amnesia? Isn't our collective memory strong enough to remind us that nothing can erase someone's culture? Shouldn't we have learnt so far that these roots are submerged deep down in the soil, and that they should be celebrated? In today's world we keep watching humans trying to erase other human's history. "Your history gets in the way of my memory" (phrase taken from "Here the Earth Grows Gold" by Suneil Sanzgiri). In the bottom of the painting, I wrote some private jokes from my family. Most of them, I don't even know where they started, but I still use them. These figures stand in the hope no culture is ever erased again, no community is forgotten again, no one is left behind again.*





Madalena Pequito  
*Under the Weather*, 2023  
Acrylic and modeling paste on canvas  
39.50h x 39.50w in  
100.33h x 100.33w cm  
\$5,000

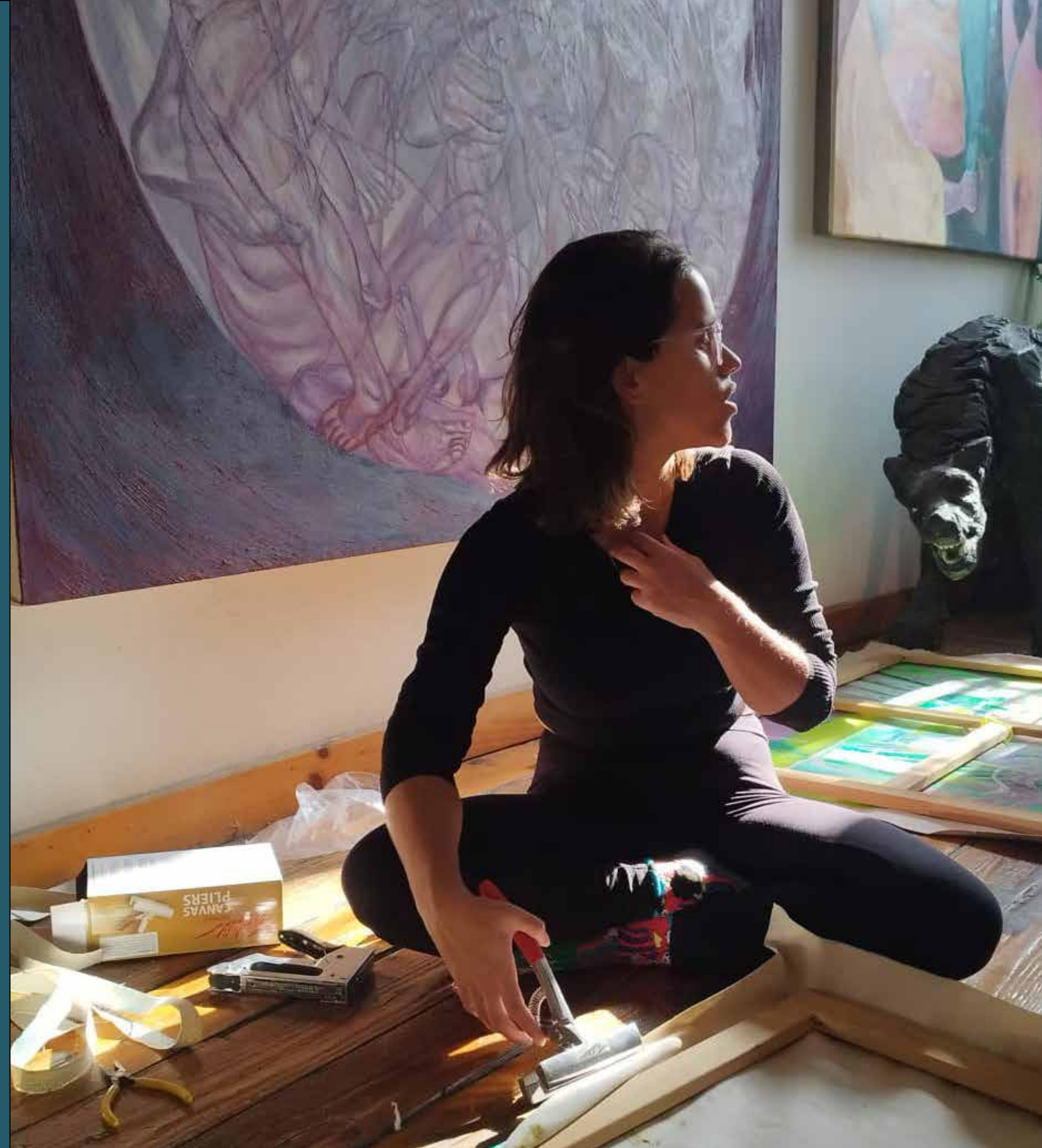




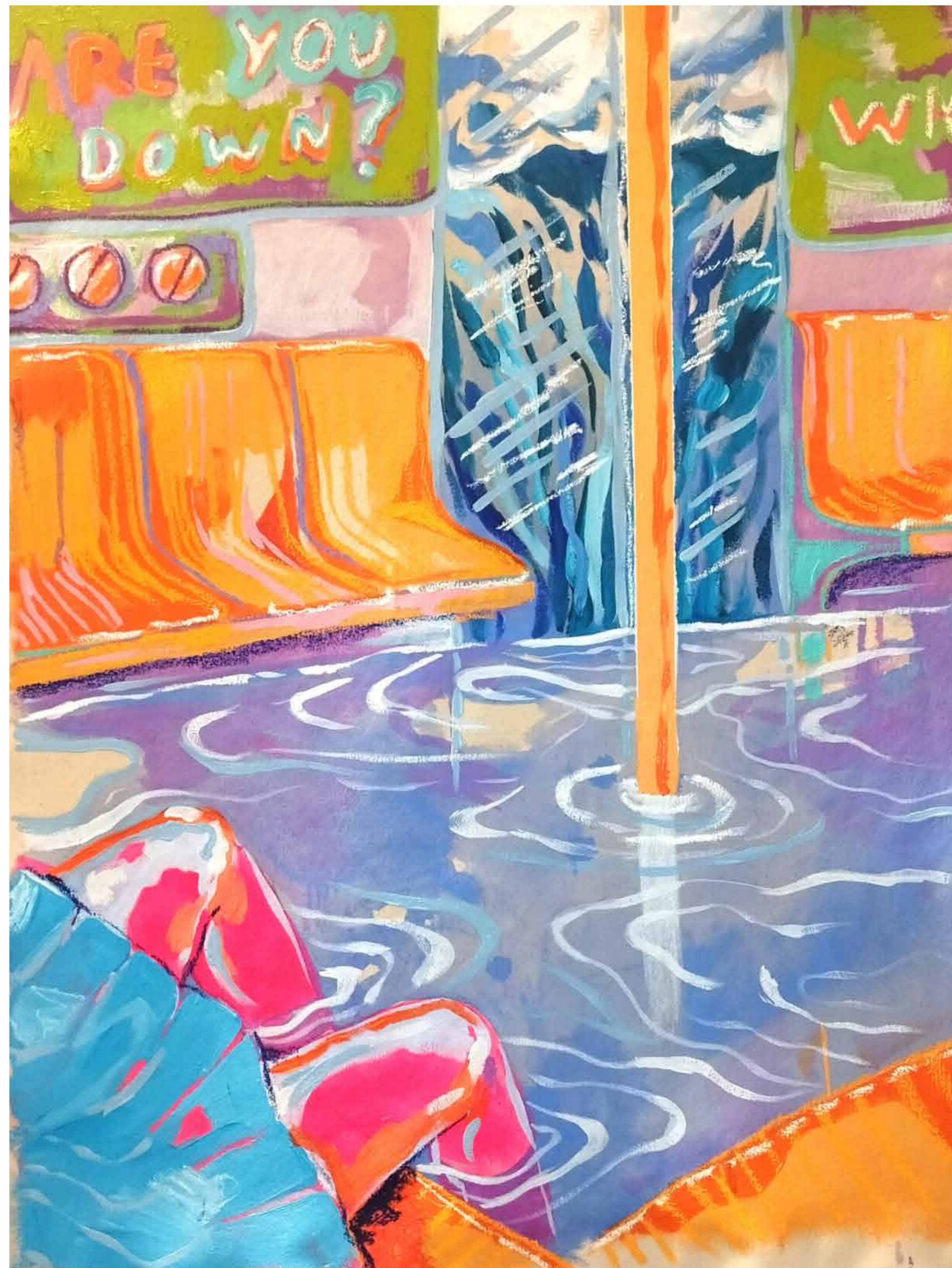
## *Under the Weather*

*In this piece, I represent myself literally under the weather. The floor doesn't really exist but I am grounded. The clouds aren't real but they absorb my colors and reflect their opposites. This is a very introspective work about my art practice, about how everything around me influences my work.*

*When I was in university, a teacher told me I was too sensitive and therefore I was doing "female labor". For a long time, I avoided being emotional as an attempt to be taken seriously as an artist. Today, I am aware that this is nonsense and that this emotion and sensitivity is mine and I am using it to create. As if this comes out as female labor, then I cherish my position as a woman, which I value and has a great impact on who I am and what I create. And if I am sensitive and under the weather, may that be a tool for creation.*



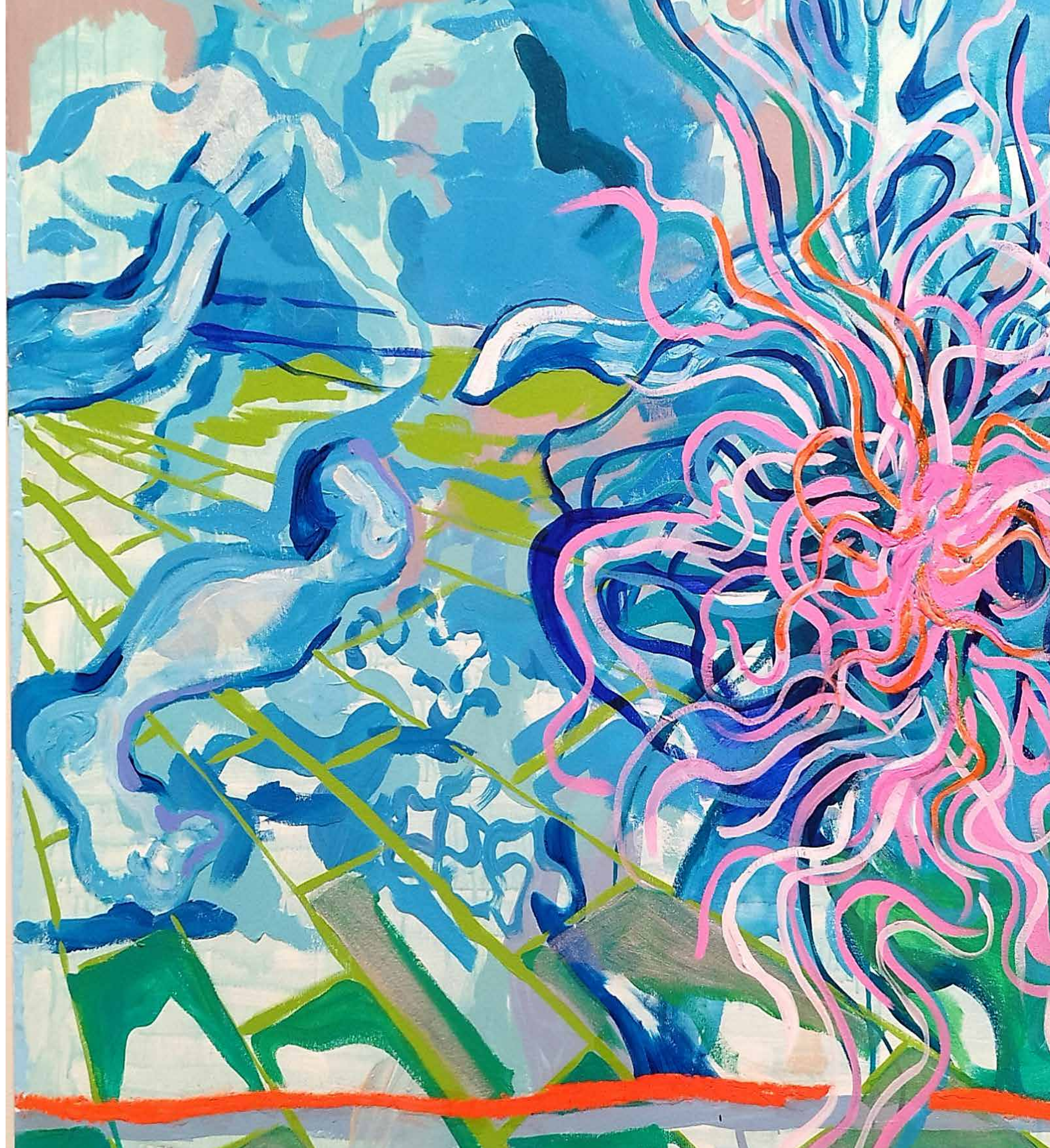
*This piece represents a real moment from one of my subway experiences in New York. I feel like I could paint infinite paintings about subway experiences. The women holding the bearded dragon is real, but it felt like the world she lives in only exists in her mind. I was thinking about how lucky I am to be here (in NYC) with all the support I have received, but how hard it must be to climb the social ladder in this city. There are so many people, so many stories.*



Madalena Pequito  
*What's Next?*, 2023  
Acrylic, oil pastel, and pigment bar on canvas. Diptych  
Two panels, 32h x 24w in. each  
32 x 48 in. overall  
\$6,000

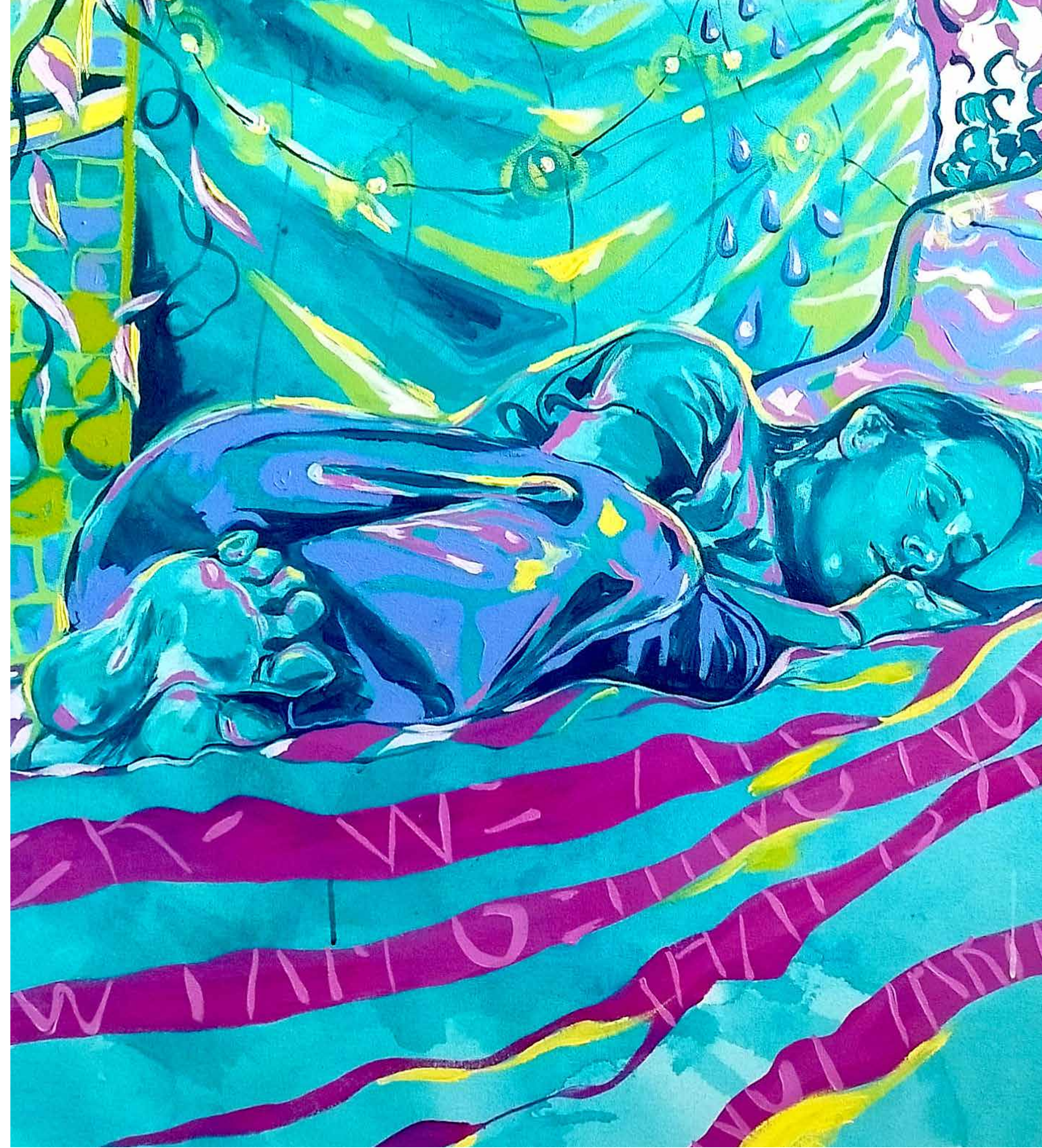


Madalena Pequito  
*The Roots of the Problem*, 2023  
Acrylic, modeling paste, glitter and pigment bar on canvas  
48h x 48w in  
121.92h x 121.92w cm  
\$6,500





Madalena Pequito  
*If Anybody's Sleepy, Let Them Go to Sleep, 2023*  
Acrylic and pigment bar on canvas  
39.50h x 39.50w in  
100.33h x 100.33w cm  
\$5,000



*If Anybody's Sleepy, Let Them Go to Sleep*

*I created this piece after seeing the installation "Dial a Poem" by John Giorno, at the MOMA. I sat on a chair, dialed a number and I heard some poems.*

*The following were stuck in my mind:*

*"Here we are now*

*I am getting nowhere*

*That is a pleasure*

*It is not irritating*

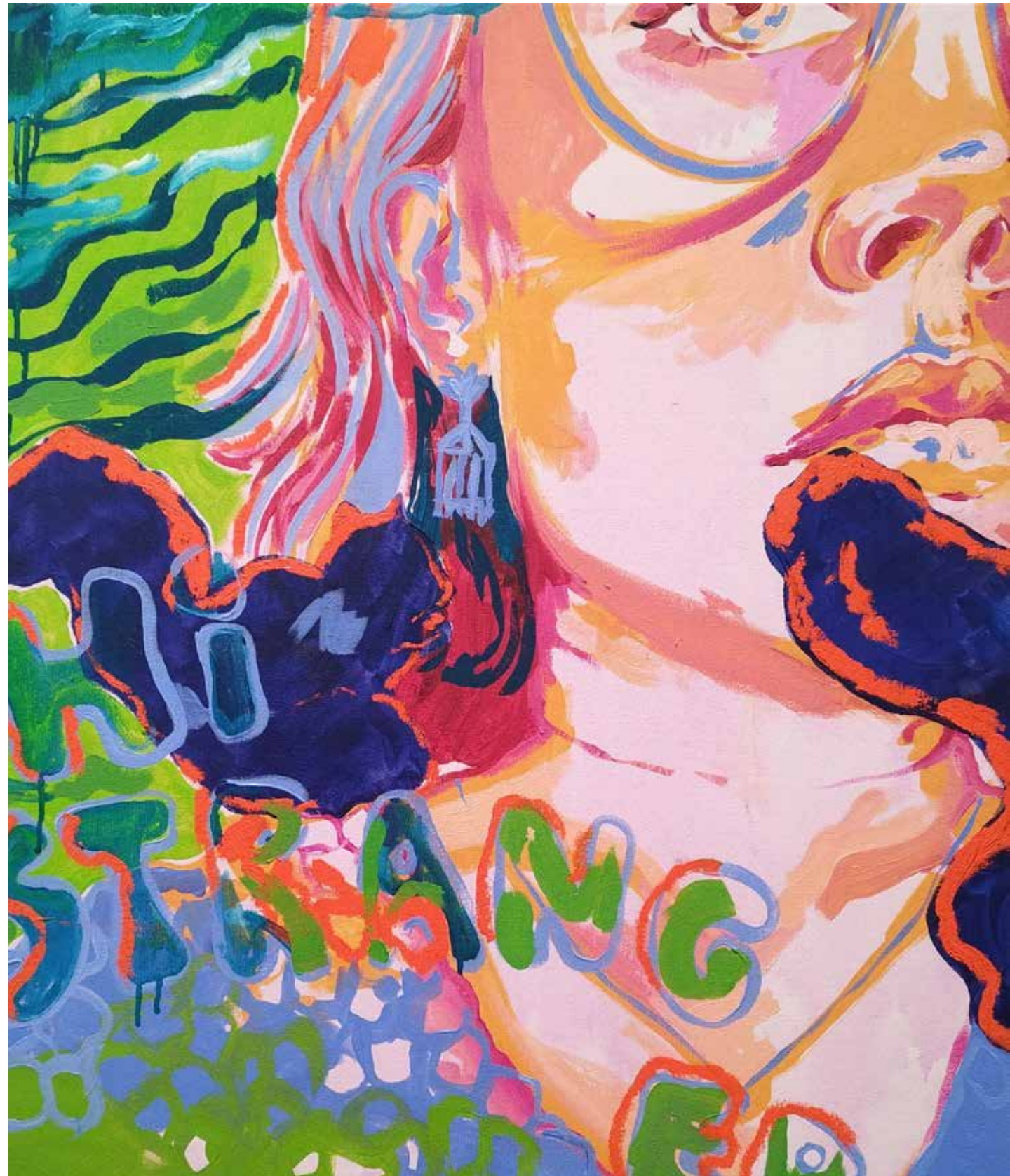
*It is irritating to want to be somewhere else"*

*"I don't know what I am doing*

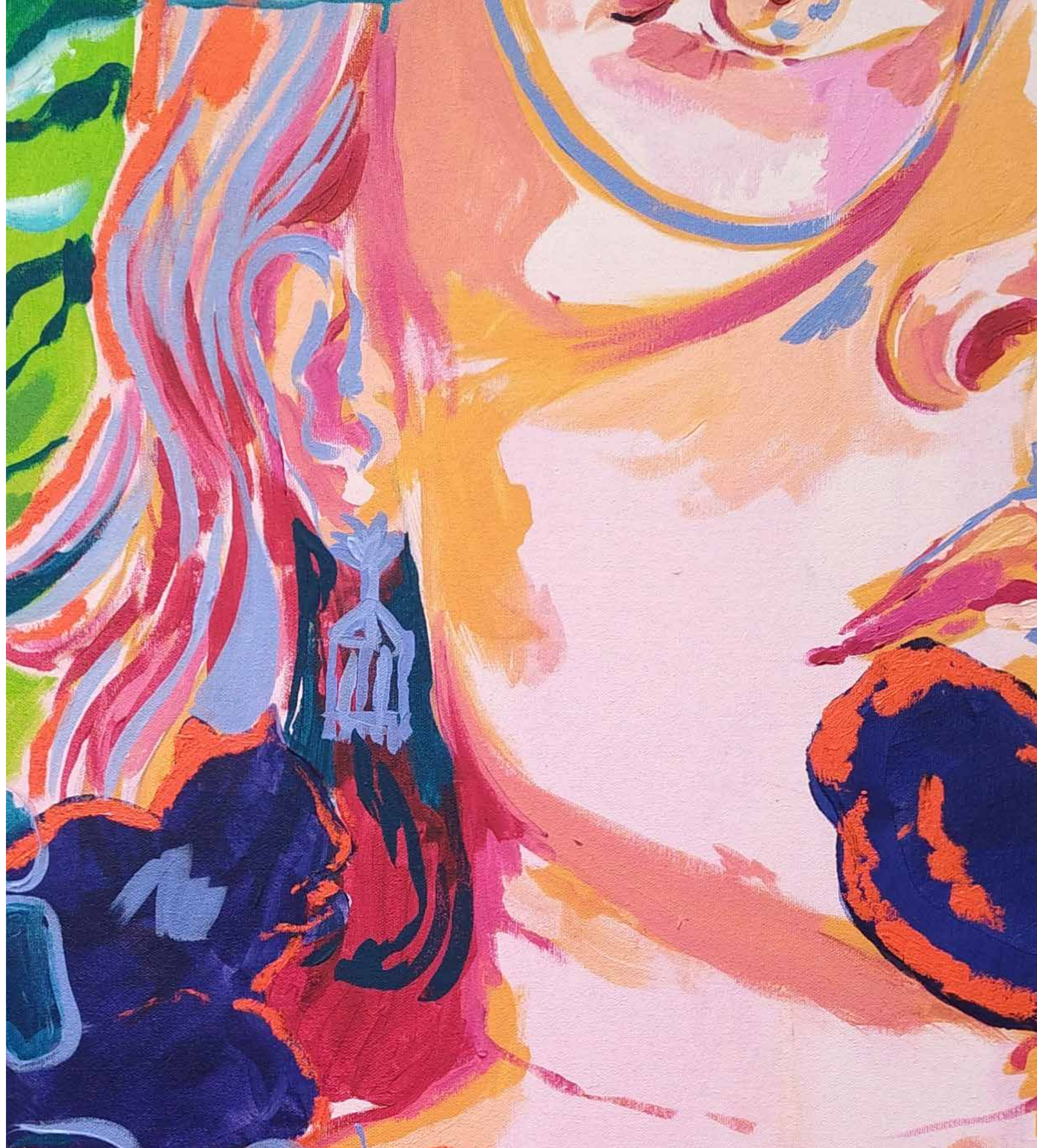
*Making explicit this intention of not being clear"*

*These excerpts spoke directly to me, to my way of living, my pace, my fear of missing out. As an artist, I feel like I must always be aware, and must always be working, to balance the uncertainty and precarity of this sector. However, there is a beauty in not knowing, not planning. In this piece, I am just present, just resting, and everything around me is coming out of my mind, my thoughts, they invade the room and flow into the paintings.*





Madalena Pequito  
*We Have a Lot in Common*, 2023  
Acrylic and pigment bar on canvas  
27h x 23w in  
68.58h x 58.42w cm  
\$3,000



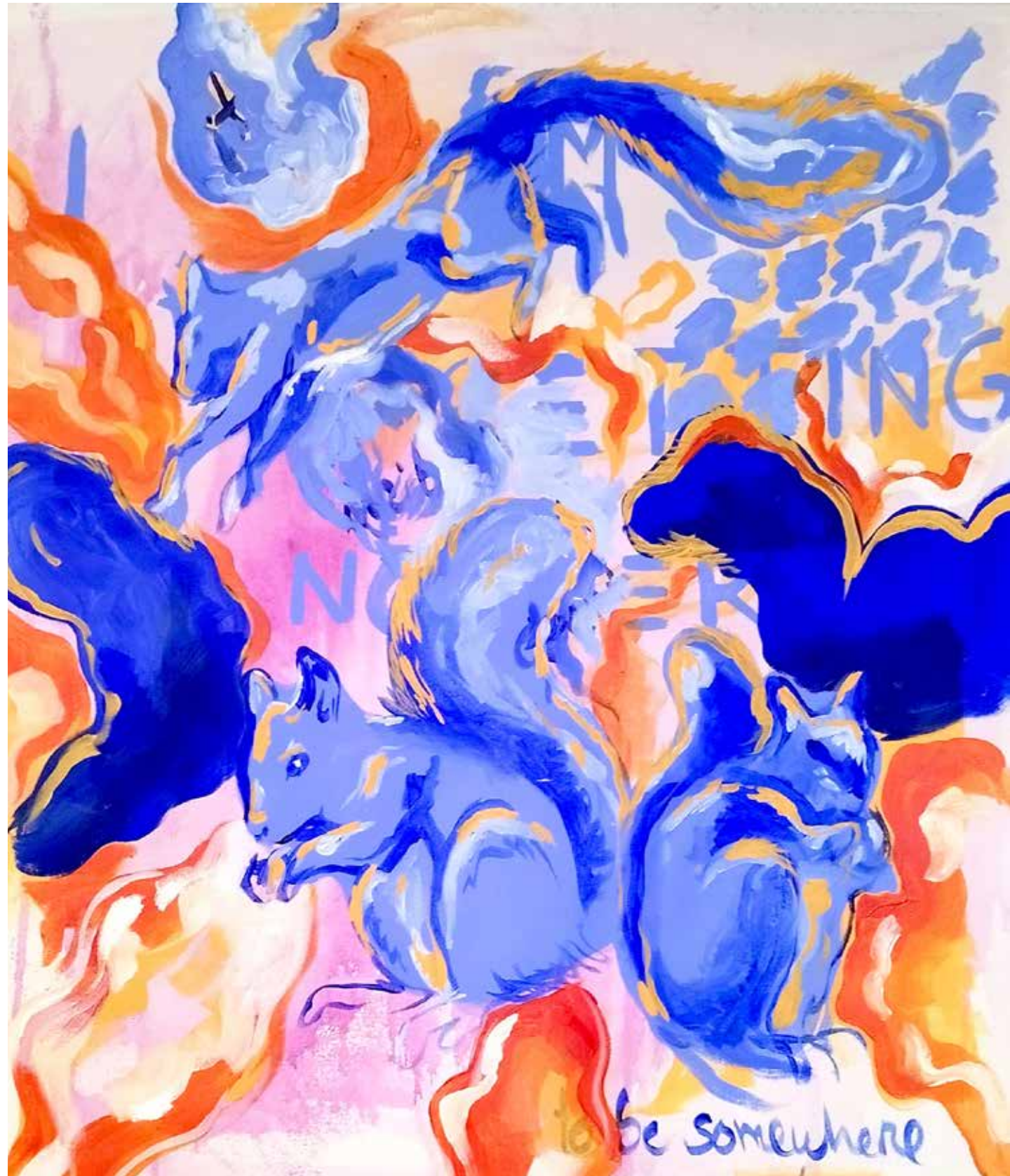
*We Have a Lot In Common*

*Hi stranger - we have a lot in common!*

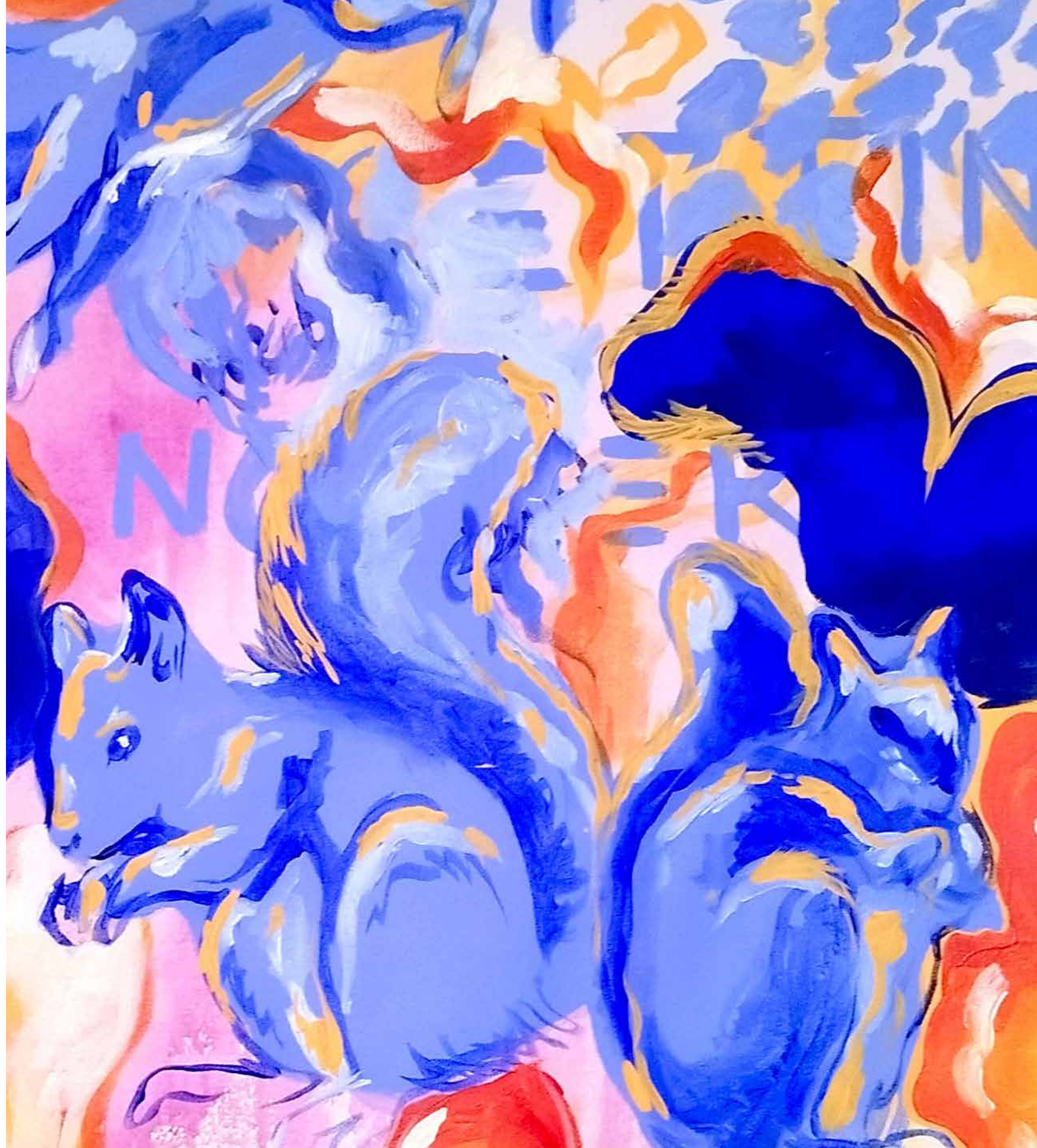
*I made this painting after spending some time in Central Park looking at squirrels and noticing how they store every little thing they find, noticing how they go on with their lives.*

*This is just a message to random strangers who look at my work. It is an invitation to anyone who wants to relate, to communicate. Sometimes it feels like there is nothing that unites us all as humans. In the past years, and in the past - months even more - it feels like we just keep drifting apart from our collective memories. This painting just wants to create a bridge, to start a conversation.*





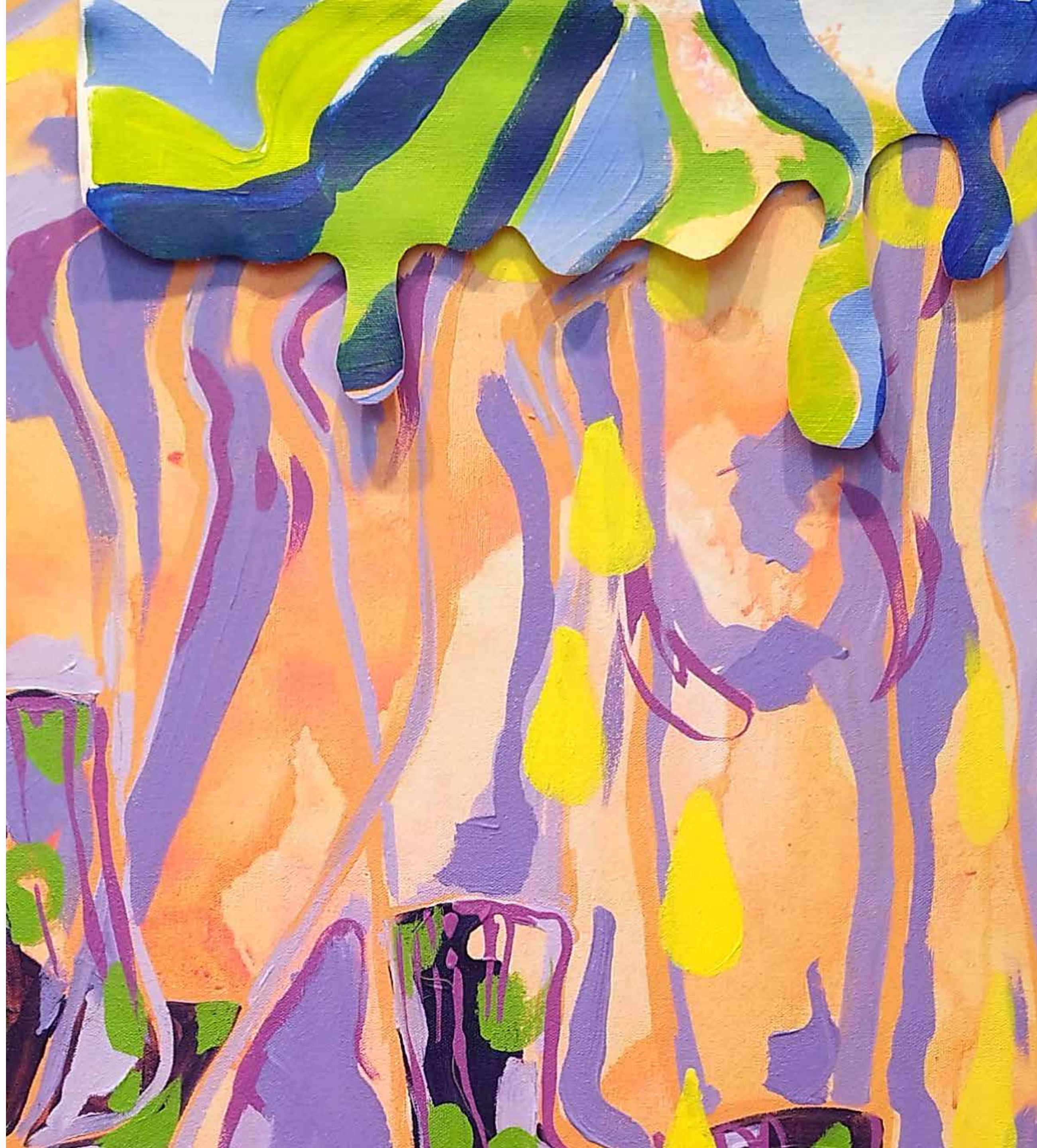
Madalena Pequito  
*To be Somewhere Else*, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
27h x 23w in  
68.58h x 58.42w cm  
\$3,000







Madalena Pequito  
*Growing Pains*, 2023  
acrylic and collage on canvas  
27h x 23w in  
68.58h x 58.42w cm  
\$3,000





Madalena Pequito  
*Handle with Care*, 2023  
Acrylic and oil pastel on canvas  
27h x 23w in  
68.58h x 58.42w cm  
\$3,000



*The shadow of a hand that opens the door. From that door many other hands come to grab me or to call my attention. They are not real. They look real. They are like ghosts, like old memories. Or maybe they are the reflections of what I am doing and what I am fighting for in the future. Maybe those are just my hands.*



Madalena Pequito  
*Run the Extra Mile*, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
55h x 19w in  
139.70h x 48.26w cm  
\$4,500

### *Run the Extra Mile*

*Sometimes I feel like artists have to go through punishments in life for being artists. Like a punishment for not dreaming of labor in a consensual way. We always heard we need to run the extra mile if we want to do this. And I've always taken that seriously, so, so seriously. Does it have to be like that? Are there other possible ways? Can the art world be more open? Is this ladder climbable?*





Madalena Pequito  
*Because it's Not My Story*, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
22h x 28w in  
55.88h x 71.12w cm  
\$2,750

## *Because It's Not My Story*

*This piece is a message to myself and whoever relates. It comes from the Portuguese expression “A galinha da minha vizinha é sempre melhor que a minha” (similar expression in english: “The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence”). it comes from my passion for animals, for how I relate them to humans, but also as a reminder to be more gentle to ourselves and to celebrate our victories.*



Madalena Pequito  
*Please?*, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
20h x 16w in  
50.80h x 40.64w cm  
\$1,800



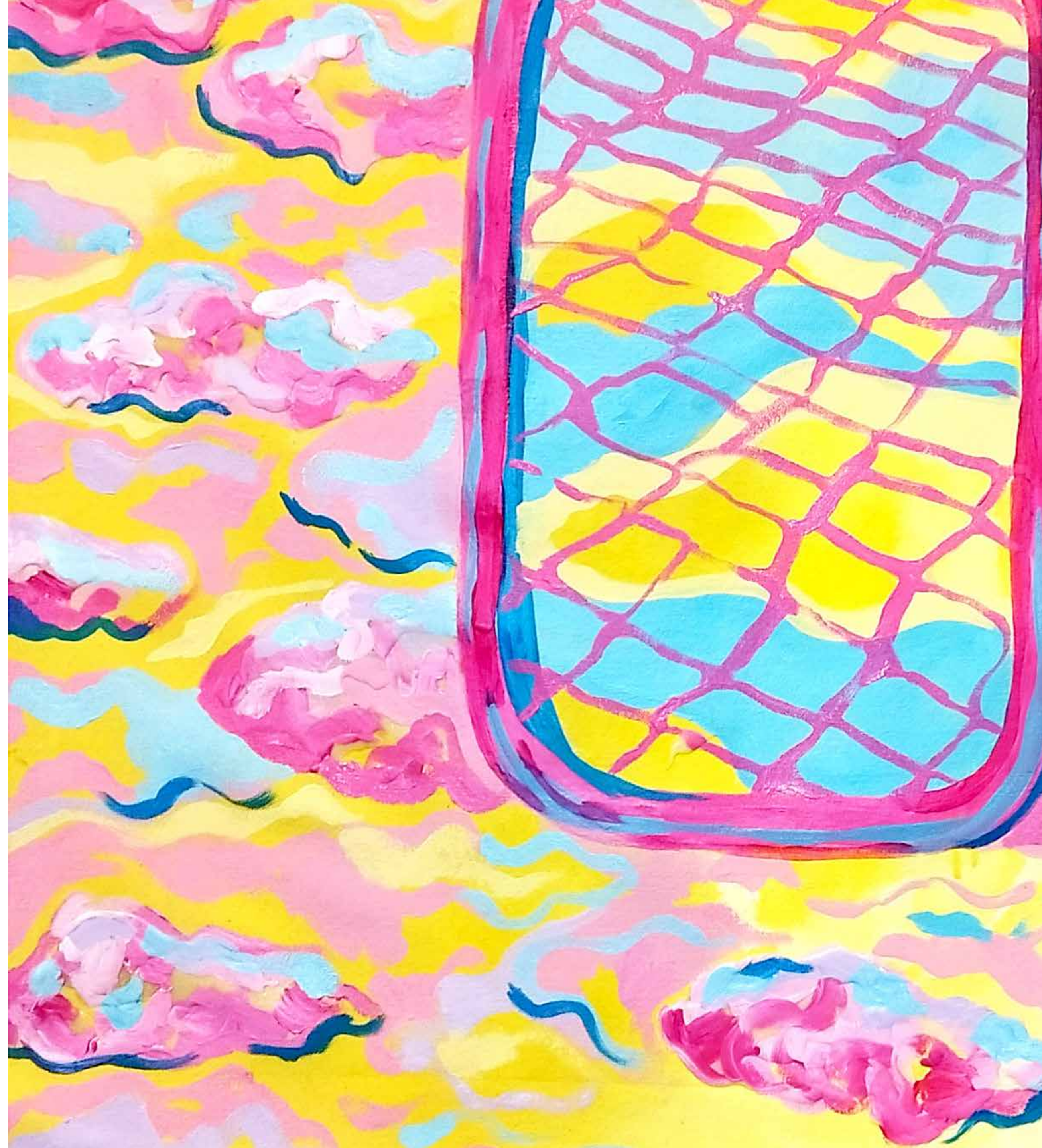


Madalena Pequito  
*Bichinho Carpinteiro*, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
20h x 16w in  
50.80h x 40.64w cm  
\$1,800





Madalena Pequito  
*I Think NY Likes Me More than Lisboa Does*, 2023  
Acrylic and modeling paste on canvas  
32h x 32w in  
81.28h x 81.28w cm  
\$4,500





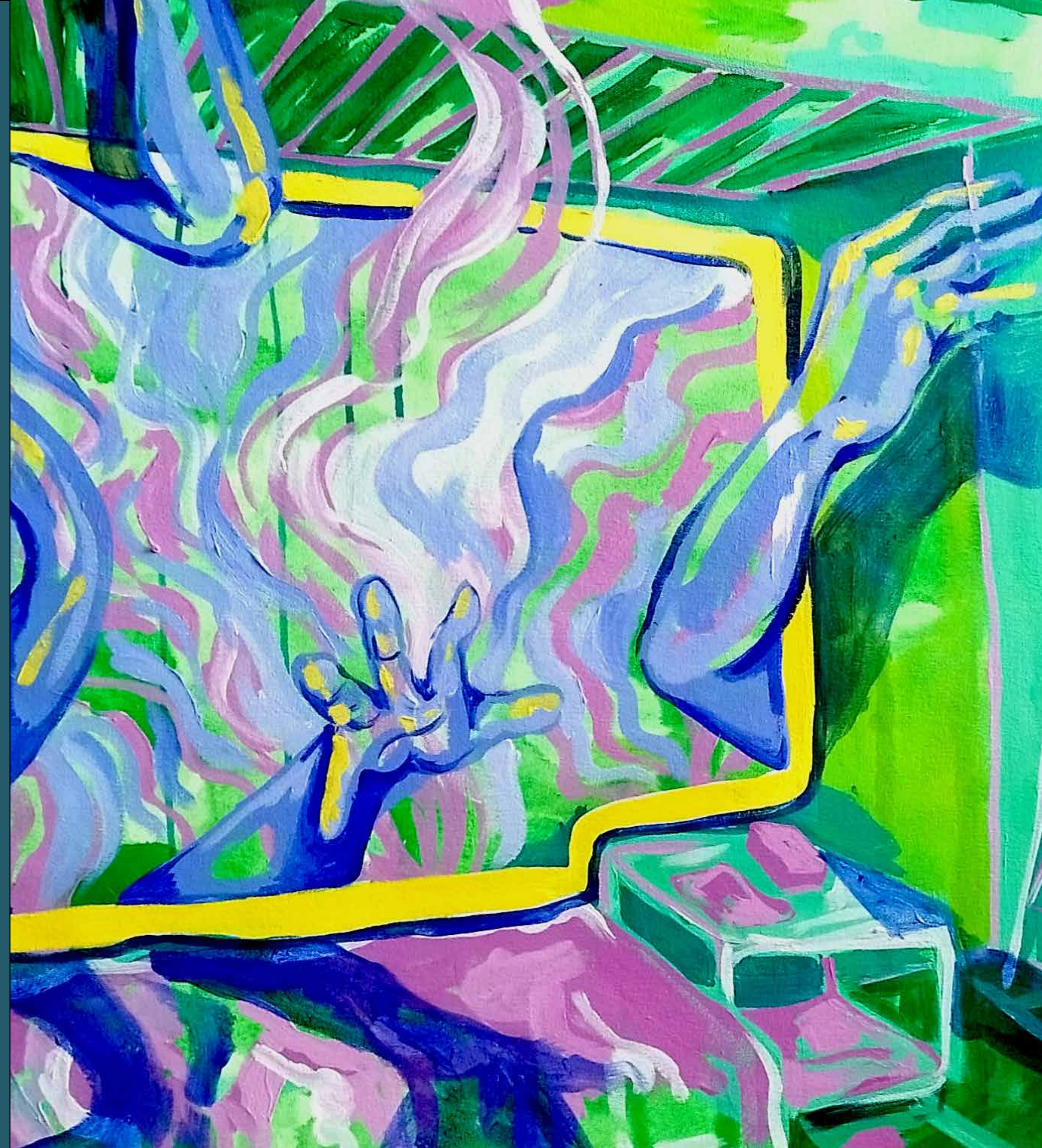
Madalena Pequito  
*While they Mention Your Name*, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
35h x 45.50w in  
88.90h x 115.57w cm  
\$5,000





## *While They Mention Your Name*

*The hands from the work “Handle with care” come back but with a different scenario. This is the room I lived in while in New York, in the Mothership residency. This work represents a moment of inner thought, of myself as an artist wondering about my role and my situation, wondering about my next steps, self-questions, self-doubting. At the same time, the hands from another time (past or future), or just another space, come back to remind me that at that specific moment someone is mentioning my name and my work. This work was created right after receiving the invitation by Freight+Volume gallery for my first solo show in New York City.*



# MADALENA PEQUITO

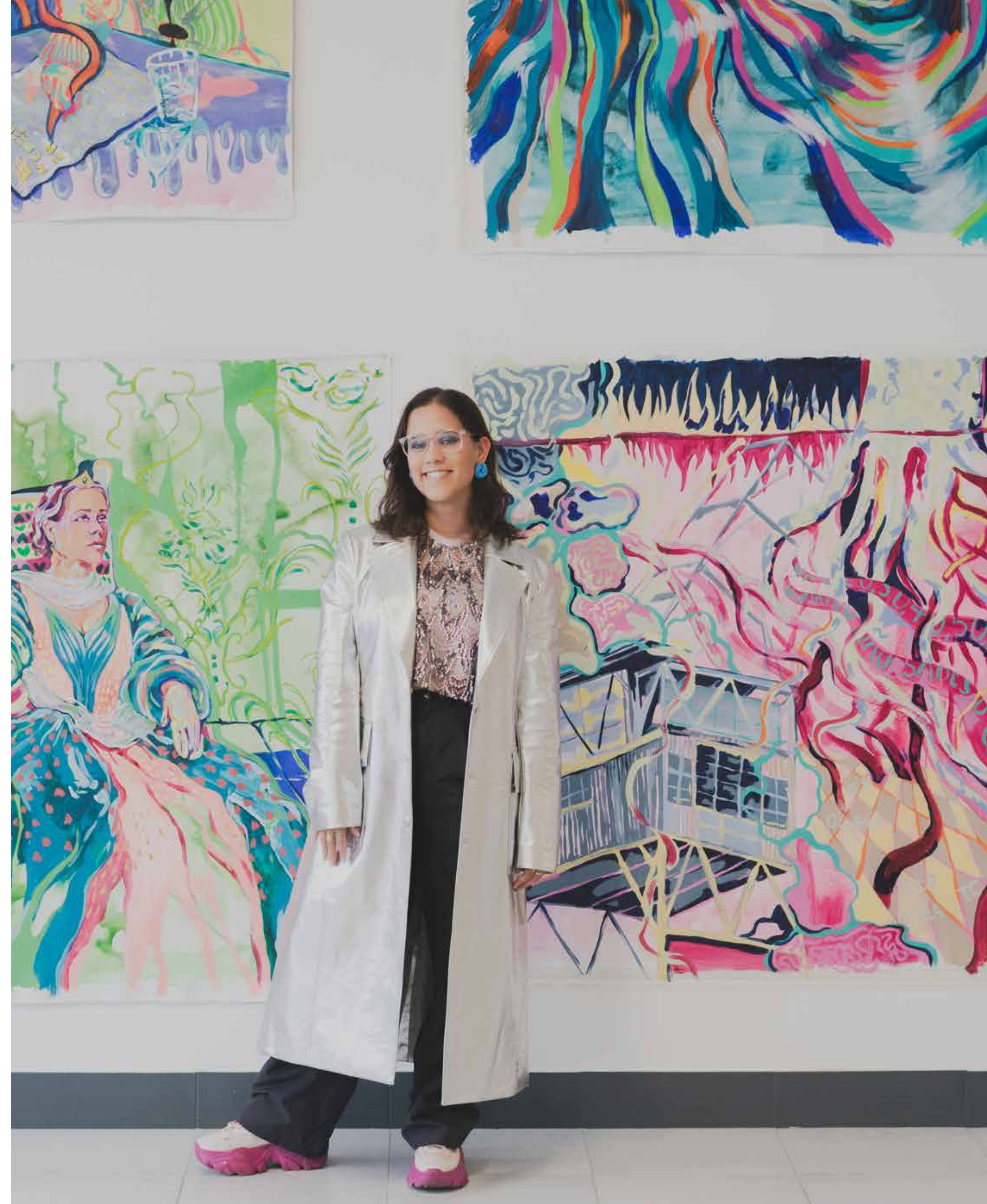
## BIO

Madalena Pequito was born in Lisbon, in 1996. She lives and works in Lisboa.

Pequito studied Scenography and Costumes at António Arroio Art School, graduated in Painting at Lisbon Faculty of Fine Art in 2018, and completed a Masters degree in Arts and Cultural Enterprise at Central Saint Martins, in London, in 2021. Pequito participated in an exchange program in Budapest Hungary, at the Magyar Képzomuveszeti Egyetem (Hungarian University of Fine Art).

Throughout her career, the artist has sought to integrate different disciplines into her work and collaborate with other artists. She was a resident at the cultural organizations Nucleo A70 ad Casa da Dona Laura. Pequito was awarded with FLAD's prize, which fully funded her artist residencies in New York, at Mothership NYC and Kunstraum Llc. She is also part of the Vês.Três Collective.

Pequito has taken part in two International Biennials: Contextile Biennial, in Guimarães, in 2022, and ArtFem Macao Female art Biennial, in Macao, in 2018. She was a finalist in some art prize contests, such as the Young Creators Art Prize, Guarda's International Art Prize, and Paula Rego art prize, and has received an Honorable Mention at Jovarte Biennial. Pequito's work has been included in more than 50 solo and group shows since 2015.



# MADALENA PEQUITO

## EDUCATION

2020 - 2022	MA Arts and Cultural Enterprise, Central Saint Martins University of The Arts of London
2014 - 2018	BA Painting, Fine Art Faculty, Lisbon
2017 - 2018	Erasmus+ Programme, Hungarian University of Fine Art, Budapest
2011 - 2014	Costumes and Scenography, António Arroio Arts School, Lisbon

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023	How to build a Villain, Passe Vite Gallery, Lisbon
2022	Underwater, Thank you Mama, Lisbon
2021	We need to Talk, A-Space Gallery, Lisbon
2021	By Invitation, Mercês Cultural Space, Lisbon
2020,	Containers, Lx Jovem City hall space, Lisbon
2019	Wraps, Fábrica Braço de Prata, Lisbon

## SELECT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023	The Low Spark of High-heeled Boys , Freight+Volume, New York
2023	Limpezas de Primavera, Galeria Graça Brandão, Lisbon
2022	São ou Não, São Mamede Gallery, Lisbon
2022	Atlas of ideal Landscapes, Campo Pequeno Gallery, Lisbon
2022	AMAGAO. Amagao Gallery, Macao
2021	Revert, Revert Gallery, Milan
2020	Mostra-online, Avenida Gago Coutinho 30, Lisbon
2019	Fine Art Finalists, Fine Art National Society, Lisbon
2017	Busman Holliday. Lábor Gallery, Budapest
2017	Glass Skin - Congresso Internacional de Vidro. Diversos locais em Lisboa

## SELECT PROJECTS

2023	Painting of site specific objects for Music Festival with collective Vês.Três Creation of painted obstacles for skate show for Sumol Summer Festival, Portugal
2022	Collaborative Mural “I haven’t given up” Creation of Collaborative mural at Kalorama Music Festival, exploring UN’s 17 Global Goals. Partnership with Underdogs Gallery.
2020/2016	Co-creation with Away To Mars Creation of clothes based on collaboration with the brand Away To Mars. Lisbon Fashion week, Boundless Edition at CCB and Plus Edition, at Estufa Fria.
2018	Installation “Memorial For those who don’t have memorials” Activist Intervention for underrepresented communities, followed by talks with local communities. Szabasag Tér, Budapest

## PRIZES

2023	Grant for Art Residencies in the US, Monetary prize by FLAD
2021	Young Creators Art Prize - finalist, ISLA Gaia
2021	Guarda’s International Art Prize - finalist, Museu da Guarda
2020	Retirement Call - finalist, Espaço Espelho D’Água, Lisbon
2019	Jovarte Biennial - Honorable Mention, Vieira da Silva Gallery, Loures
2017	II Prémio Paula Rego - finalist, Casa das Histórias, Cascais

## BIENNIALS

2023	Loures Biennial - Jovarte, Galeria Vieira da Silva, Loures
2022	Contextile - Contemporary Textil Art Biennial, Palácio e Jardim Vila Flor, Guimarães
2018	ArtFem - 1st International Biennial of Macao, Museum of Art of Macao

## V3 COLLECTIVE - SELECT EXHIBITIONS

2023	Running Riot, Augustine Gallery, Lisbon
2022	Its crystal clear, Lx Lapa, Lisbon
2022	Piquenique, Oficinas de Formação e Animação Cultural, Aljustrel

## PUBLICATIONS

2022	Fine Art Awards 2011-2021, Faculty of Fine Art of Lisbon 2021 . FITA Magazine - Invisible Atlas Edition
2020	Altiba9 Magazine- Issue 07

## RESIDENCIES

2023	Kunstraum Llc, New York City
2023	Mothership, New York City

## ARTIST STATEMENT

I find it difficult to separate being an artist from being a young woman. And I let my everyday life influence my paintings. My central object of study is contemporary society. I don’t find this very original, but I can’t stop thinking it is relevant in present-day. I use my practice to explore issues like identity, cultural differences and collective memory. My work shares a very personal perspective on these issues.

I can not stop wondering what is my role in all this. I explore the challenges I face as an artist and an individual, the sacrifices I have to make, my insecurities, anxieties, and fears. I also ask questions like: *How can artists impact the world? Am I just selfish for thinking everything in this world is connected somehow? Would it be more helpful if I were less emotional? Is there any way to make the art market more transparent and inclusive?*

I believe my work process starts the moment I write random ideas on my notebook, or on my phone notes. Sometimes, I spontaneously write a small text about an idea, and then I paint about it. However, in other moments the image may come before the text. Despite this connection, I see images and text as independent. That is because I believe in the aesthetic experience an artwork may bring.

Colors and contrasts drive me. I am very interested in exploring complementary colors, and sensations. I also find it highly appealing to leave parts of a painting unfinished, whilst other parts are denser. I explore patterns and organic shapes. Even though I may represent figurative objects, I see them as abstract compositions, because all objects together represent an unreal world, a fantasy universe.

I delve into the space around paintings, and I believe the painting can be more than just the image on a canvas. It may invade space and objects. This way, I create installations with a pictorial perspective. I also explore participatory projects. Even though the final results may be unpredictable, I believe these projects reflect my practice, by following its intention to foster collaboration, encourage discussion, and share perspectives on today’s world issues.

## ARTIST SPONSORS

