

Title: Home is the Place to Dream

Artist: Emily Hsiao



Description:

My home is located in Wellington Heights, East Los Angeles. I have always felt that it was the main lens I saw the world through. The frame of the picture is my living room. My mom decorated the walls with Chicano/a/x art, antiques, and pieces passed down from my grandpa Frank. In the painting, I eliminated the wall facing the street in order to make my house appear like a doll house. This was to express my feelings towards energy. I always felt like the energy outside was constantly flowing into my house, as though we were all one entity. I also always felt watched by people, mainly because I was always watching them. The outside world consisted of a few constants depicted here, despite the unrelenting change the city has gone through over the years. Across the street, on beautiful sunny days, there was always a boy smoking weed. I never had the chance to actually get to know him; he lived 3 houses down, his mom was legally blind, and I always saw him help her walk across the street. He liked his solitude, so he used the elementary school

stairs as his home away from home, a safe place to dream. The *raspado* man/woman (it depends on the day) is always busy when the kids get out of school. The people in line are all based on real people as well. The mother used to be my neighbor, and with her are her three kids, Stephanie, David, and Oscar. They were all my friends when I was a kid, but I haven't spoken to or seen them in a very long time. The two little girls standing next to them are me and my best friend Laura. We first met at the elementary school across the street. Every once and a while I see two little girls holding hands, getting *raspados*, giggling and dancing. They remind me of a time when everything was perfect, and I didn't even know it. They continue the cycle of friendship, love, joy and naivety. There isn't a ceiling in my home, it is a little cliché, but I wanted to literally say "the sky's the limit." My home was always my safe place to dream.

Biography:

Emily Hsiao, a freshman at Cal State Los Angeles, identifies as Chicana-Taiwanese and is pursuing a major in music performance with a specialization in the saxophone. Raised on First Street in East LA, Emily has been honing her saxophone skills since the age of 10. She received formal training at the Colburn School through the Herbert Zipper scholarship.