

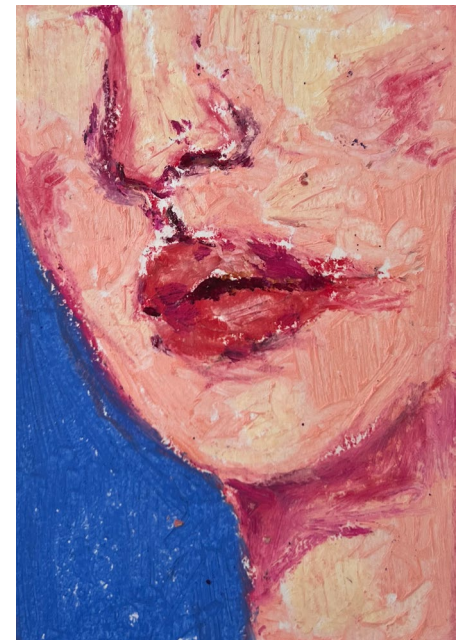
“Ephedophilia”



would you undress me
with your eyes

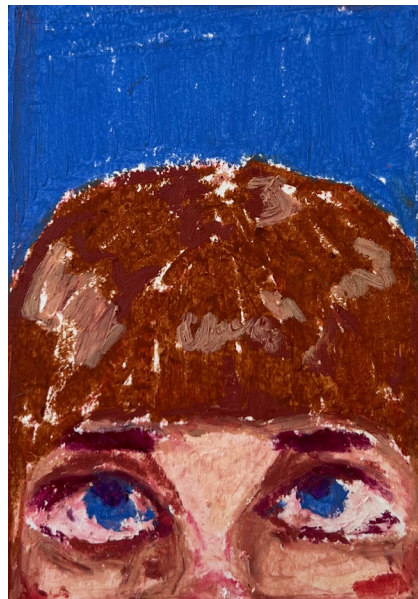
stare me down
size me up

If I told you I was a child





make comments about my body



like its already yours

to take



is unsafe

from your gaze
your comments
your fantasies

So, tell me
Would you?

Now, could you tell me

why
my 16 year old body



In our modern-day world, there is an obsession with being perceived as young. Traits that are commonly associated with growing older are taboo. We don't speak of our periods, remove body hair and fight wrinkles with Botox. These days kids as young as 11 are putting anti-ageing products on their skin and kids as young as 16 are questioning whether they should use Botox to prevent lines from showing. Media like our favorite movies, TikTok and other social media are teaching young girls that they should hold themselves to the unrealistic beauty standards we have these days.

While the media teaches us to stay young, the numbers of sexual harassment also further prove this bias towards younger people. According to research done by Plan International 83% of women between 15 and 25 have experienced sexual harassment in public spaces. In 2022, CBS found that the

biggest age group of harassment was the 18-21-year-olds, with the 16-17-year-olds closely following. After the age of 25 these numbers start declining.

From my personal experience, I noticed the rapid decline of sexual harassment as I got older. While we should be happy as women that after the age of 25, we experience less sexual harassment, we often see the age anxiety rising. 42% of the women between 25 and 34 experience this age anxiety. These numbers go up to 54% of the women between 35 and 44. As we fall out of the desired age group, we lose our value as women according to the unrealistic standards society has put us to. This fear further teaches us to be perceived as young as possible.

Now you might be wondering why this information is relevant as most of us are aware of what I'm saying here. The main point is, how modern-day media

is normalizing the sexualization of children.

As we try to erase signs of growing older, how can we blame others for getting more comfortable in sexualizing the bodies of youth.

Mail me your thoughts, experiences and comments for future research.

