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Opinion **Life & Arts**

Should we ever relinquish our dreams?

Believing in the possibility of a different reality is a valuable skill

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I have been a fan of the [Ethiopian artist Tewodros Hagos](#) for a few years. His work threads together narratives about migration, disbelonging and the multi-layered loss that comes with displacement and refugee status. “Fragile 8” (2023) is one painting in a new series, *Fragile*, soon to show at [Kristin Hjellegjerde](#) Gallery, London Bridge. It is a simple but powerful image of a young girl standing in the centre of the frame holding a globe in her hands. The shapeless blue dress she wears suggests she is of modest means and, given Hagos’s themes, likely a character at some stage of a migratory journey. Perhaps she is considering where on earth might be the safest place. She is looking down at the globe, but her eyes appear to be closed, and there’s an expression of quiet sadness on her face.



'Fragile 8' (2023) by Tewodros Hagos © Courtesy of the artist/Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Many thoughts crossed my mind as I stared at this image. First among them was that every person carries some aspect of a dream within them. We might think dreaming is a luxurious use of time that only certain people can afford. But dreaming is for everyone, and it is often the thing that keeps us motivated enough to take the next step forward.

The other thought I had was how much courage it takes to dream of something beyond our present circumstances, and to maintain that dream in the face of challenge and hardship. Far from dreaming being a luxury, it can be painful and courageous work. Granted, not all dreams are equal in their value or worth. Some people's grand dreams would ultimately be harmful to other people or society at large. But dreams that expand our lives or those of others are needed, because they are the seeds for what can continue to move all of us towards creating a safer, fairer, more compassionate world.