

Diurnal Rhythm: Head in the Clouds  
Video Installation  
Amy Purcell 2007/08

Diurnal Rhythm; Head in the Clouds, presents a single day constructed out of many days and compressed into an ongoing 15 minute loop. The structure of the temporal compression follows the balance of light duration of an early summer day and is marked by the rhythmic cycles of the moon and the sun. The circular screen presents a physical slice of time and reinforces the cyclic diurnal structure and the endless loop format. The installation of the circular screen invites the viewer to kinesthetically experience having one's head in the clouds.

The meaning of the expression of someone having their head in the clouds is both optimistic and critical. The individual is distracted by a daydream or worldview that is unrealistic and without grounding. However, their view takes them away from the earthly and absorbs them in a rarefied and remote atmosphere. A person with their head in the clouds has given themselves over to a dream, idea, or experience that is all air, atmosphere, and light. It is a state of being that is disembodied and elevated while disconnected from the topical and practical.

While making the work, my intent was to have the camera mirror my frame of mind during the day with the sky and clouds as the subject. The mid day acrobatic swings parallel the swings and shifts of focus and energy that often define that time of day, while the focused pans of the morning contrast the stillness of the evening. My desire was to have the camera mimic my interior and subjective state of that time of day. The capturing of sky and clouds was extended over many days and then edited to become one day and night or diurnal rhythm. Diurnal Rhythm: Head in the Clouds was a concept, process, and now is a physical experience that offers escape and immersion into a daydream of sky.