

HESSE FLATOW

Alyssa Klauer: *The Dreamers*

February 14 – March 15, 2025

Opening Reception: February 14, 5-8PM

HESSE FLATOW is pleased to announce the opening of *The Dreamers*, an exhibition of paintings by Brooklyn artist Alyssa Klauer, marking her inaugural presentation with the gallery.



Alyssa Klauer’s vivid and layered works invite viewers into an ethereal world of color and meaning, where the boundaries between reality and dream, time and space, are blurred. The artist’s practice explores the concept of “Queer Time,” a term that speaks to the non-linear, often fragmented experiences of time felt by Queer individuals—particularly those who come out later in life, navigating a second adolescence of sorts. These works delve into the intimate yet collective understanding of time as fluid, personal, and deeply transformative. Through her use of oils and acrylics, Klauer captures this delicate passage, using vibrant hues and transparent layers that evoke a sense of spectral presence, as if the figures in her paintings are caught between moments, suspended in a liminal space of both self-discovery and self-affirmation.

Klauer’s focus is on feminine figures—girls and women—whose development is both suffocating and liberating. These protagonists are surrounded by visual motifs that echo the complexity of growing up Queer: pressure to conform, while also seeking autonomy and freedom. The figures are often enmeshed in precarious, dreamlike trappings that suggest both fragility and strength. Their environment—soft yet sharp, tender yet imposing—is marked by symbols of transformation: stars, moons, rainbows, and fluid elements like tears, water, and ice. These recurring images transcend traditional markers of femininity and evolve in the artist’s hands, becoming both material and metaphysical, at once grounding the figures in the physical world while hinting at something more mystical and transcendent.

Klauer’s work is imbued with a deep, present-time nostalgia—a longing for a past that never fully existed due to the complexities of gender, identity, and societal constraints. Central to her pieces is the desire to reclaim a hetero-temporal childhood, one where the self could be freely expressed without limitation. Her figures are shaped by the tension between lost memories and the lasting impact of repression, which ripples through both formative years and the trajectory of adulthood. The struggle to reconnect with a true, authentic self speaks to the ongoing process of healing and reclaiming what was lost amidst the fragmented landscapes of time and identity.

At the heart of Klauer’s process is a distinctive layering technique that infuses her work with depth and texture. Each successive layer serves not only to build up the figures but also to enrich their complexity, allowing their emotional and psychological dimensions to emerge gradually. Her paintings feel surreal, as if they were created through an ongoing, meditative process of unearthing deeper truths about identity, time, and the self. The works shimmer with a sense of mystery, hinting at secret knowledge of the universe—a world beyond the visible that is constantly shifting, folding, and reconfiguring itself.

Through a careful balance of stenciling, splattering, staining, and resistance techniques, Klauer contains her paint within specific shapes, creating clean lines and sharp edges. This technique highlights the tension between structure and freedom, control and spontaneity. The outermost layers of her canvases are where the fine details and delicate nuances are revealed, as if the artist’s final gesture is an act of releasing the painting from its own constraints, allowing it to breathe into the viewer’s space.

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Through these paintings, Klauer refracts her own personal experiences through an idiosyncratic painterly lens, blending realism with the dreamlike, and conscious moments with unconscious ones. The result is an emotionally resonant exploration of both the present and the future, of desires unspoken and truths unearthed. Viewers are invited to step into a space where time and identity intertwine, where memory and possibility coexist. Klauer creates a portal to a world where transformation, liberation, and self-discovery are not linear but ever-expanding. This latest series of paintings presents a new chapter in her exploration of queerness, time, and identity, encouraging us to reflect and dream about our own relationship to the infinite possibilities of becoming. -- *Phillip Edward Spradley*

Alyssa Klauer is a painter based in Brooklyn, New York. She received her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2017 and her MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2019. She has been awarded the TOY Foundation Fellowship alongside the NXTHVN Studio Fellowship, and was nominated for the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland Toby's Prize. In addition to being written about in *The New York Times*, *Vogue* and *New American Paintings*, her work has been exhibited at venues such as Sean Kelly Gallery, New York; Fredericks & Freiser, New York; and the Museum of Museums, Seattle. Her work meditates on "Queer Time," the idea that Queer individuals often experience a delayed or second adolescence when encountering time-bending experiences such as coming out later in life.

Phillip Edward Spradley is a program director and cultural producer based in New York. With degrees in Art and Art History from Pratt Institute, New York University, and Georgetown University, he specializes in public programming, institutional partnerships, community engagement, and business development. His work bridges fine art and the performing arts, with a focus on creating meaningful experiences and collaborations.