

HESSE FLATOW

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Name: **Aglaé Bassens** Age: 39 Birthplace: Mons, Belgium
Home: Brooklyn, NY, USA Practice: Painting

What's your earliest memory of art?

I recall going to the museum as an 8-year-old with my parents, at a time when we lived in Sweden. I was drawn to snow paintings by Bruno Liljefors in particular, and wondered how and why it worked that something white could be painted in blue.

Where does your creative process start, and where does it end?

It usually starts by noticing something in real life, an ordinary sight that suddenly feels significant. The next step involves photography: seeing if I can frame that moment and give it weight by cropping it in an unusually close-up manner. If that works, it is usually confirmation that there is something there, an emotional potential in that ordinary thing. I will then paint it in one sitting, combining the qualities of the photograph with my real-life observation.

What's your uniform?

I paint in my normal clothes. I do not have an apron or overalls. I am quite a tidy painter and almost never get paint on myself or my hands. My studio is fairly organised, and everything has its place. I try not to hoard clutter and regularly clear out old work, reassessing what is worth holding on to.

What would be your dream set for presenting your work?

I love making work in reaction to a space, thinking about how to use its particularities to my advantage. For instance, I am interested in setting up unexpected moments of encounter with the work in awkward spaces. For that reason, I would love to show my work in atypical venues such as an empty storefront, a living room, or gallery spaces with interesting structural qualities.

What are you scared of?

Not being able to paint and create in some way. The older I get, the more I realise my happiness depends on it. I feel restless and sad without it.

What are you hopeful for?

I am hopeful for more time! Time to experiment, and even time to just look and think, without feeling rushed to pick up the brush. It can be difficult to try something without the expectation of a specific outcome or measure of success. I am currently trying out monotype printing for the first time. It's hard and frustrating, but it stretches creative muscles I didn't know I had, broadening my language and my appreciation of other artists.



Top left: *Dinner plate*, 2025, oil on canvas, courtesy of the artist and HESSE FLATOW, New York, photo by Jenny Gorman

Right: *Deflated*, 2025, oil on canvas, courtesy of the artist and HESSE FLATOW, New York, photo by Jenny Gorman

Bottom left: *Idling*, 2025, oil on canvas, courtesy of the artist and HESSE FLATOW, New York, photo by Jenny Gorman

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