

NOAH BECKER'S

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"THE BEST ART IN THE WORLD"

Interview with Hannah Beerman



Trust, 2025

By Noah Becker, 2025

Noah Becker: How does your process begin when starting a new painting, and has that process shifted over time?

Hannah Beerman: Before I make a mark, before I'm even conscious of what I'm going to do, the paintings are already taking form. Paintings are always happening. The juice and the meat of the paintings, the essence and the heart of what they really are, doesn't begin and end with the paint brush. I feel the point of painting is to be as human, present and vulnerable as possible - it's all about impulses, explorations, attempts, successes and failures. We express, we unfold, we trip and fall. In an attempt to connect with other people. I'm trying to process the wildness and non sense of life in the only way I know how. While I'm working I don't usually know what the paintings are about besides the risk I take in the process of making them. Weeks, months, years later - I realize what my unconscious was expressing about my relationship with a certain person, with myself, a dynamic I was working through, grief, desire....The process has shifted over time because I've changed over time.

Noah Becker: What role does experimentation play in your work, especially when navigating abstraction and materiality?

Hannah Beerman: Everything is about experimenting. I'm only here once. I'm not interested in having solid answers. I believe in risk and I believe in chance and operating outside of established structures. I don't want to make the same painting over and over again. I want to discover things that can only happen in slippery moments. Exploration and play with materials brings in depth and complexity but also absurdity and humor. I investigate so many instincts - artistic, erotic, and the part of myself that's still a child.

Noah Becker: Can you describe the influence of place—Brooklyn now, Nyack then—on your artistic language?

The landscape that influences my artistic language the most is my internal one. More than the topography of a city, the temperature of a town, population or climate, my invisible internal map impacts my work instead of anything measurable outside of it. The dynamics of my internal atmosphere direct the show. I have periods of wild output and periods of recovery.



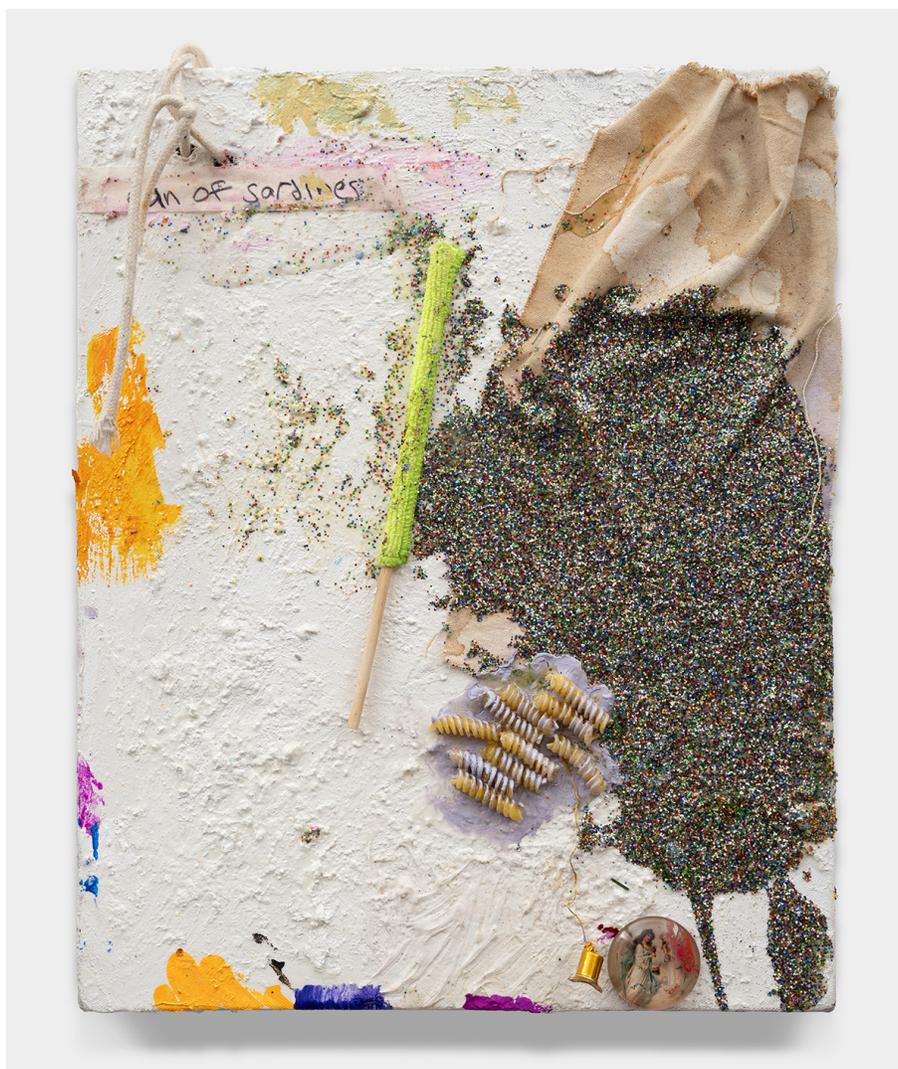
Right Where It Should Be, 2025

Noah Becker: You've exhibited in both major institutions and smaller project spaces; how does the context of a show affect your approach or presentation?

Hannah Beerman: A museum context carries certain and specific histories and ideologies, as do particular commercial spots, while small artist run spots have separate concerns. The work is always in dialogue with its surroundings and that conversation does change based on the context. That is certainly something I consider with seriousness and playfulness when the time comes to work on planning the install. But apart from what a space formally permits and can withstand, beyond its physical limitations, the exhibition space does not affect my approach to the making of the work. The location ends up being an ingredient in the overall conversation but often I work without knowing where the paintings will end up being exhibited so it is not a starting off point.

Noah Becker: What ideas or questions are you exploring in your upcoming exhibition at Thomas Erben Gallery?

Hannah Beerman: Risk. Color. Play. Desperation. Absurdity. Survival. Romance.



Locus of Control, 2025

Noah Becker: How have teaching and lecturing shaped your thinking as a painter, if at all?

Hannah Beerman: Teaching has made me a better painter because I'm hoping it's made me a better friend. More available, more aware, more accessible. When I'm working with students it's impossible to ignore how brave they are. If I can admire that in students, maybe I can recognize that in myself.

Noah Becker: In what ways did your time at Bard and Hunter shape your perspective on art-making and community?

Hannah Beerman: We can create communities within these spaces where we practice generosity of spirit, of resources, of opportunities personal and professional. We can commit to each other's work and growth. You can figure out how to create the community you want. Sometimes this is in opposition to the environment or structure of the setting as institutions are known to breed competition and ideas of scarcity. I'm very lucky. I've been able to find constellations of teachers and peers who continue to show me how abundant it can all be. I think these communities can be essential to survival. WM