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Horowitz, Jane. "Kevin Beasley: 'what delineates the edge'." ArtNowLA (August 2, 2025)
[online]

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Kevin Beasley: 'what delineates the edge'

Exploring Memory and Material Through Sculptural Thresholds

by Jane Horowitz

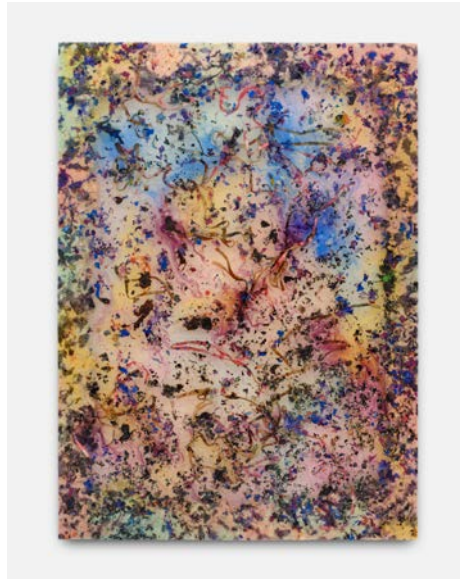


Kevin Beasley's latest solo show at Regen Projects, *What delineates the edge*, continues his deep engagement with identity, memory, and material. Through the transmutation of found objects, Beasley constructs works that challenge viewers to

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reconsider the boundaries between the personal and the historical, the ephemeral and the permanent.

Beasley's sculptural language is grounded in a meticulous layering of everyday materials. Among his preferred media is translucent resin, which allows him to suspend and preserve fragments of the past — such as T-shirts, plastic bags, and raw cotton — into vibrant, textural compositions. These materials, hardened into permanence, become vessels of meaning: a mélange of color, form, and cultural memory.

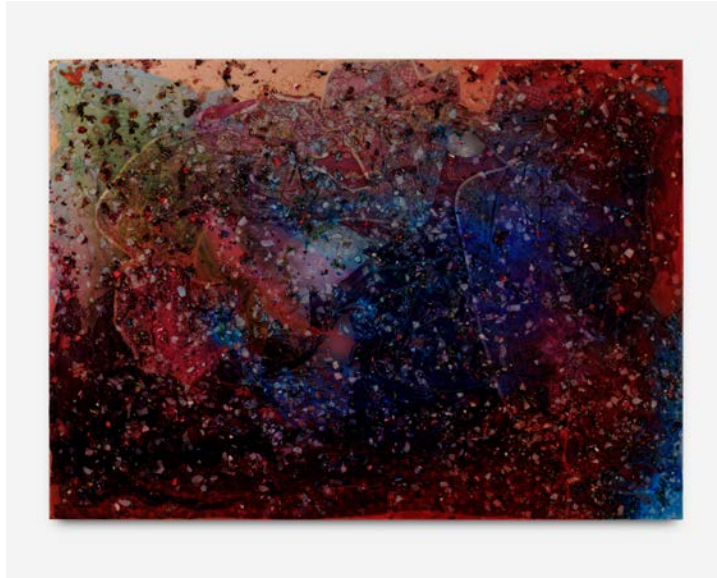


Synth III, 2025

This body of work, like much of Beasley's practice, seems to be in conversation with his lineage. Clothing, frequently shredded, altered, or recontextualized, takes on symbolic weight. Are these garments cast-offs or heirlooms? Who wore them — and what lives did they carry? Beasley presents them as familiar and foreign, inviting viewers to consider the histories stitched into their fibers.

Beasley, a native of **Virginia**, has exhibited widely (he's one of the artists who was invited to inaugurate the expanded **Storm King Art Center** in **New York** this summer) and had a solo exhibit at the **Whitney Museum of American Art** in 2018-19.

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Synth VII, 2025

At Regen Projects, Beasley doesn't just present sculptures — he creates thresholds. The gallery becomes a space to be moved through and looked into, as he places works on both the floor and the walls, asking viewers to shift their gaze and, by extension, their perspective.

The exhibition is anchored by two structural categories: the “gates” which are floor-based installations, and the “slabs”, wall-mounted works titled **Synths**. At the gallery entrance stands the first gate, **Portal II**, which sets the tone for the show. A composition of polyurethane resin, raw Virginia cotton, T-shirt, barber's bib, housedress, and shredded plastic confetti, **Portal II** functions both as an entry point and as a statement of intent. These same materials appear throughout the **Synths** series, where Beasley crystallizes objects into luminous, multi-dimensional forms. The title, **Synths**, is also a nod to Beasley's background in music (synthesizers produce a variety, or synthesis, of sounds) while also serving as a vibrant visual presentation of object, color, and memory.

Before reaching the **Synths**, the viewer encounters sculptures that remain partially exposed, dipped, but not fully submerged in resin. **Portal (I'll go if you go)** and **They know me better than anyone else** bookend the exhibition, incorporating raw Virginia cotton and altered garments attached to stainless steel screens or dividers. The latter piece — dominated by housedresses — evokes a sense of familial shelter. These works suggest both monument and memorial, framing domestic fabrics as carriers of identity and intimacy.

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Let me know when you get there, 2025

Let me know when you get there acts as a prelude to the **Synths**, helping to introduce the palette of saturated colors — yellows, blues, oranges, greens — that will reappear in the wall-mounted works. The piece captures clothing and other objects in suspended states, at once closet-like and exposed, reflecting Beasley's dual meditation on the absent wearer and the origin of the material itself — particularly cotton and its inextricable link to slavery. Here, personal and collective memory blur.

While the floor sculptures communicate transition and layering, the **Synths** offer a striking visual resolution. These wall pieces are dense with embedded material — shredded clothing, textiles, even **PPE** — fused into vibrant blocks. The artist's use of color — the resin is dyed using a liquid urethane colorant — isn't always predetermined, according to the gallery. Where and how it settles can be a surprise.

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Portal II, 2025

The solidity of resin encases what was once fleeting. In contrast to the ‘gates,’ which guide passage, the **Synths** feel fully realized, mesmerizing in their surface complexity and depth.

One of the **Synths**, **Envelope (Sustain)**, a large triptych on the back wall, draws its title from a musical term, referring to how a sound can be shaped and extended. Though silent, the work buzzes with visual rhythm.

Tucked away in a corner of the gallery is Beasley’s powerful outlier: **The beginning of you and the end of me**. A tribute to his family’s military service, it is the most literal work in the show. Garments from multiple branches—the **Navy**, Marines, Army — hang solemnly draped, each representing uniforms worn by a male relative of Beasley. The message is clear: these are clothes worn by men defending a country that has not always defended them. Beneath the clothes shoes are buried in perhaps a gesture of humility or inheritance — Beasley standing in their footsteps, whether in reverence or quiet critique.

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The beginning of you and the end of me, 2025

As with all of Beasley's work, these pieces resist easy interpretation. They invite lingering, questioning, and return. The show doesn't present answers so much as viewpoints through which memory, identity, and history pass, shift, and endure.

Cover image: *On my way*, 2025; all images courtesy Regen Projects.