



## PRESS RELEASE

Nina Hartmann  
*Soft Power*

September 8 - October 7, 2023  
Opening Reception: Friday, September 8, 6-8pm

Silke Lindner is excited to announce *Soft Power*, the gallery's first solo exhibition with New York-based artist Nina Hartmann. In her multimedia practice Hartmann explores the functionality and malleability of proof in a modern day information age.

In this new body of work shaped panels of encaustic and resin sculptures carry photographic information from a variety of sources: official government outlets and archives, including the U.S. Air Force or the CIA, are juxtaposed with alternative sources of information like message boards and UFO believer websites. In multiple methods of dissemination, manuals, leaflets and booklets release information to the public that utilize images as indicators of truth to support their carefully crafted narratives. Drawn from archives about the Manhattan Project, the Roswell incident or CIA funded experiments with alleged mentalist Uri Geller, Hartmann utilizes these evidentiary images to deconstruct their power and legitimacy. Using AI and other methods of alteration, Hartmann manipulates the photographs she finds and changes their original states to break down hierarchies within systems of information.

The images that Hartmann employs often convey legitimacy through format and visual objective data - the functionality of the 'operational image', a term and concept explored by German filmmaker Harun Farocki which has been influential to Hartmann's practice. In the operational image, visual components like crosshairs, GPS location signals and framing lines visualize data that read as evidence through the authority we assign to objective data. Hartmann appropriates these visual codes into her own work, assigning images new modes of function and meaning.

Further linking networks of information, Hartmann's work is heavily informed by an interest in mysticism, symbols and diagrams as spaces that organize, display and communicate information of mystical and esoteric belief systems throughout history: kabbalah diagrams, alchemical charts, early astrological maps, all the way to modern diagrams and algorithms depicting methods of AI deep learning. In addition to symbols and diagrams, Hartmann incorporates maps, infrastructures and aerial views of architectural systems of control such as the panopticon and other methods of controlling and surveilling within space, like prisons, hospitals or schools.

At the nexus of sculpture and painting, Hartmann's chosen materials of resin and encaustic solidify her conceptual approach on a formal level. Resin and encaustic painting, also known as hot wax painting and used since ancient Greek and Roman painting history, shift states of matter based on chemical composition and adjustment of heat. Transferred onto glossy or opaque surfaces, the photos are fully suspended within the medium's adjustable conditions. In the fusion of medium, shape and image, Hartmann develops her own symbolic language and forms a new chain of information that enters into a larger system of networks in which everything is interconnected, and impossible to control.

*Nina Hartmann (b. 1990 in Miami FL) lives and works in Queens, New York. She received an MFA from The Yale School of Art in Painting & Printmaking in 2023 and a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2013. Her work has been featured in various exhibitions, among them 'A Signal Urgent But Breaking - Yale MFA Show' at Perrotin New York (2023), 'rhi-zome' at No Gallery, New York (2023), 'The American Friend' at Tara Downs, New York (2022), JUNK IS NO GOOD BABY at Silke Lindner (2022) and FOGBANK at Gern en Regalia in New York in 2021 (solo show).*

For more information, please contact Silke Lindner at [silke@silkelindner.com](mailto:silke@silkelindner.com)