

“Beier’s recent inquiries are centered on ubiquitous representations of things that appear on and within other things, questioning the ways objects at once are exhausted by human signification yet are not fully determined by language and apprehension.” (Post Brothers)

Nina Beier’s first institutional solo exhibition in Germany, *Cash For Gold*, at Kunstverein in Hamburg, consolidates the artist’s negotiation of the space between representation and value. Persistently tracking the status of images in our contemporary reality, Beier develops a transmutable lexicon of her own. Suggesting the acuity of authorless domains, anything from the commercial, traditional and natural fields of production enters her vocabulary. She extracts material such as nicotine chewing gum, Hermès ties, human hair wigs and artificial sweat from their circumscribed settings. By subjecting her material to a flattening of both pictorial and socio-political hierarchies, she exposes the potency of the surface as a container of the convoluted layers of cultural and historical information always present in the image. In times of mass-produced and homeless images the body becomes the carrier of impossible promises. Beier’s work pinpoints moments of confusion between the image and what it depicts to show complex affiliations in which meaning is never stable.

*Exhibition Glossary:*

**Artificial Sweat:** For Testing of Product Colorfastness, Corrosion, Discoloration.

All concentrations closely match experimentally determined values for adult human eccrine sweat. Custom formulations are available on request. (pickeringlabs.com) **Artificial Tears:** Most artificial teardrops strive for the same goals: consistency, comfort and an interaction with the ocular surface intended to ease discomfort and promote protection of the ocular surface.

(reviewofophthalmology.com) **Bronze:** Bronze was used to make weapons, tools and armor, but it was also used extensively in the creation of art; and indeed, even functional bronze items were often treated to artistically rendered decoration. (arthistory.net) **Cash:** The process of according value to a symbol is psychological and social. Money is a social institution based on the consent of the

population and a psychological symbol based on the consent of the individual (Varian, Hal: *Why Is That Dollar Bill in Your Pocket Worth Anything*, *The New York Times*, January 15, 2004) **Chewing Gum Cigarette:** Imitation tobacco products that could be attractive for minors and form a potential entry point to tobacco consumption are forbidden. (EU Directive) **Dog:** The dog is an apt animal, which shows a lot of loyalty, obedience and blind love towards humans. (DPH Trading) **Figure-**

**Ground:** A property of perception in which there is a tendency to see parts of a visual field as solid, well-defined objects standing out against a less distinct background. (dictionary.com) **Gold:** Since the abolition of the gold standard in 1971, currencies have not longer corresponded to a substantial

material. Thus coins and bank notes have lost their historical value guarantee and as a result capital is doomed to self-referentiality. **Handmade Persian Rug:** Oil provides the largest export income, but when it comes to occupation carpet manufacturing dominates. Millions of Iranians are involved in some way with manufacturing of carpets. (carpetencyclopedia.com) **Hermes:** Because of his speed, Hermes received the role of the messenger and conductor of souls to the Underworld. Hermes was the only Olympian god who was authorized to visit Heaven, Earth and also the Underworld and thus enjoyed popularity among all the Greek gods and spirits. (greek-gods.info) **Human Hair Wig:** There are generally four basic types of human hair used in wigs: Chinese, Indonesian, Indian and European/Caucasian. The majority of wigs are made from Asian hair. (wigs.com) **Image:** Image early 13c., “artificial representation that looks like a person or thing,” from O.Fr. image, earlier imagene (11c.), from L. imaginem (nom. imago) “copy, statue, picture, idea, appearance,” from stem of imitari “to copy, imitate” (see imitate). Meaning “reflection in a mirror” is early 14c. The mental sense was in Latin, and appears in English late 14c. Sense of “public impression” is attested in isolated cases from 1908 but not in common use until its rise in the jargon of advertising and public relations, c.1958. (thesaurus.com) **Nicotine Gum:** Is a type of chewing gum that delivers nicotine to the body. It is used as an aid in nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), a process for smoking cessation and quitting smokeless tobacco. The nicotine is delivered to the bloodstream via absorption by the tissues of the mouth. (Wikipedia) **Oversize:** Wearing the oversized suit was a declaration of freedom and self-determination, even rebelliousness. (Osgerby, Bill (2008): *Understanding the 'Jackpot Market': Media, Marketing, and the Rise of the American Teenager*) **Palm Tree:** In many historical cultures, palms were symbols for such ideas as victory, peace and fertility. Today, palms remain a popular symbol for the tropics and vacations. (Wikipedia) **Sculpture:** Intrinsic to sculptures third-dimensionality is mass and volume, both actualities of form that cannot be captured in painting. As W.J.T. Mitchell argues, “it [sculpture] does not project avirtualspace, opening a window into immensity as (say) a landscape painting does; it takes up space, moves and occupies a site, obtruding on it or changing it.”(csmt.uchicago.edu) **Stock Photography:** These authorless and homeless images found in image banks spring from freelance photographers trying to figure out what might need to be communicated today. Empty and open metaphors are created and the less these images mean, or to put it differently, the more they can mean, the more successful they are. (Nina Beier) **Wagireh Rugs:** Made as a template or pattern for the carpet design and production of larger rugs, they are generally small pieces the size of a scatter rug or mat. The utility and need for such patterns or guides is certainly clear: they provided an abbreviated and readily portable means of preserving and transmitting designs that could be used over and over in different variations and circulated widely. (nazmiyalantiquerugs.com)

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