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PRESS RELEASE

Nina Hartmann
Actualization Machine

April 24 – May 30, 2026
Opening Reception Friday, April 24, 6-8pm

Silke Lindner is pleased to announce *Actualization Machine*, the second solo exhibition with New York-based artist Nina Hartmann.

Hartmann's new body of work, comprised of shaped pieces of encaustic panels, resin sculptures, and lightboxes, carry images collected during her research into the U.S. government's attempts to understand and develop methods of mind control, telepathy, and other mysterious phenomena during the Cold War.

In 1979 former State Department officer turned journalist John Marks published *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate"*. This explosive book laid out evidence of the controversial U.S. government efforts to develop methods of behavioral control under the umbrella of MKUltra and its subprojects in the 1950's and 1960's. Through a Freedom of Information Act request, the author gained access to a trove of declassified CIA documents revealing investigation into the potentials of LSD, "truth serums", hypnosis, and other psychological and chemical mind control techniques.

In an era of existential panic and paranoia, when the future was uncertain and anything seemed possible, U.S. agencies investigated intelligence suggesting that the Soviet Union was researching parapsychological tools and individuals with paranormal abilities. This instigated the Stargate Project and related operations. Videos from the USSR circulated in the West depicting demonstrations by purported psychic operatives with alleged abilities to read minds and perform telekinesis. These discoveries fueled a bizarre psychic arms race between the two superpowers, causing the U.S. to fund an array of parapsychological programs.

The body of work endeavors to connect related Cold War timelines through the shared theme of attempts to gain control over the unknown. In Hartmann's works, these reality-bending events exist at the intersection of mysticism, magic, and the power of belief, linked through diagrammatic compositions that operate within and across individual pieces. Conceived as intentional destabilizations of presumed knowledge systems, the works in the exhibition offer unconventional versions of history, inviting viewers to reconsider what we accept as axioms.

Understanding the historical origins of attempted psychological control serves as a focused study within a larger inquiry of Hartmann's practice, which highlights and examines the ways in which humans are influenced by information on a daily basis through aesthetics, symbolism, and context.

Nina Hartmann (b. 1990, 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. She has had solo exhibitions at Silke Lindner, New York, NY (2023); Gathering, London, UK (2024); and Gern en Regalia, New York, NY (2021). Her work has been included in group exhibitions at Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, CA (2025); Voloshyn Gallery, Miami, FL (2025); Susan Inglett Gallery, New York, NY (2024); Clima, Milan, IT (2024); Rose Easton, London, UK (2024); Tara Downs, New York, NY (2022).