

# HESSE FLATOW



Emma Safir, *PEEK-A-BOO X BRASS RING*, 2025. Digitally printed silk, pewter, silk screened tulle, mirrored glass beads, reflective thread, neoprene, ochre oxide pigment, 33.5 x 26 x 2 inches (85 x 66 x 5 cm)

## Emma Safir: *Uyt Den Gheest*

September 5 – October 4, 2025

HESSE FLATOW is pleased to present *Uyt Den Gheest*, an exhibition by New York-based artist Emma Safir, marking her first solo presentation since joining the gallery. Featuring a group of new works including upholstered panels situated on the wall, pewter casts, and a quilted folding screen, this exhibition marks a significant step in Safir's ongoing investigation into the relationship between collective memory, image-making, gendered labor, and the manipulation of materials. The show coincides with the artist's first solo booth presentation at The Armory Show.

Derived from a seventeenth-century Dutch painting phrase meaning "from the mind, spirit or imagination," the exhibition's title *Uyt Den Gheest* serves as both a guiding principle and method for Safir's works. Photographs often taken on art historical research trips serve as analytic tools for the artist, interrogating the intersections of memory and culture, while integrating historical references into her personal narrative. Through combining computerized and analog processes such as digital printing, silk screen, rubbings, image-transfer, and metal casting, Safir deconstructs and reassembles visual forms across iterative translations, calling attention to the elusive nature of representation, reproduction, and indexicality.

Safir's signature upholstered panel paintings operate as thresholds between the private, domestic and public, digital. Layering and stitching together via screen and thread images of mirrored surfaces, curtained windows, textured glass, and other "privacy solutions," the artist transforms her source materials by negotiating elements to let in and reveal or obscure to keep out. Equipped with irregular edges following the filigreed shapes of Baroque-era frames, drawn and hand-cut from memory, her newest series invoke similar strategies of reflection and transparency. Incorporating her long-time fascination with the decorative grotesque, Safir accessorizes her surfaces with silk-screened tulle, silver seed beads, seashells imperfectly cast in pewter, smocking, and other embroidery techniques, creating a dynamic interplay of texture and imagery.

Central to the exhibition is *screened nacre* (2025), a quilted folding screen whose meandering stainless steel frame doubles as a metal drawing of sorts. Extending the motif of the seashell, the embroidered patchwork transitions from an opaque layer on one side, arresting the viewer's gaze at its surface, to soft, translucent folds of seafoam green and shell pink on its reverse. This precipitation of inside and out is compounded by the folding screen's physical partitioning of the gallery's space. Safir cites the *Tristan Quilt* (c. 14th century) as a powerful symbol of the ephemeral nature of remembering in her processes of disassembling and regurgitation, mirroring the fragmented and re-sewn panels of its predecessor.

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Safir's reintroduction of previously examined photographs create a false sense of truth, nodding to what she sees as the fundamental impossibility of an indexical image. Related to Hito Steyerl's concept of the "poor image" as degrading over time, yet paradoxically made new and singular, *uyt den gheest* functions as a foil to *nae t'leve*, meaning "after life", implying that representation cannot exist only as a copy, but as a conjured reimagination.

**Emma Safir (b. 1990)**, New York) holds a BFA from RISD in Printmaking and an MFA from Yale in Painting & Printmaking. She has had solo exhibitions at Blade Study, Baxter St at CCNY, New York; SHIN HAUS at Shin Gallery, New York; and Bunker Projects, Pittsburgh. Safir has also participated in group shows at HESSE FLATOW, Galerie Nicolas Robert, Charles Moffett, Jack Barrett, Lyles & King, among others. Looking ahead, the artist will have a solo exhibition at the Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art, New York, opening in the spring of 2026. Safir's work is in the permanent collection at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. The artist is represented by HESSE FLATOW, New York.

## SALES

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**HESSE FLATOW** is a gallery and curatorial platform founded by artist Karen Hesse Flatow in 2019. It had its start as "Crush Curatorial", where many artists we work with today had their debut solo show. Hesse Flatow has an MBA and an MFA from Columbia University and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. The program focuses on emerging and mid-career artists with diverse voices, presenting debut solo shows and focused presentations. We are located in an accessible ground floor space in Tribeca, New York City.