

Soft Control

A dense web of prohibitions, almost imperceptible actions, seemingly invisible. Silently, they penetrate the everyday substrate, slowly insinuating themselves, anesthetizing our imagination. A power that operates more through seduction than coercion. Control manifests itself through violence, not spectacular, but pervasive and structural, delineating the boundaries of our very existence. Veiled intimidations, under the guise of norms deemed necessary for the realization of the foundational principles of common life, sustain conventions and gender hierarchies. Born from the blind application of alienating and standardized procedures, seemingly neutral yet alive with the latent possibility of force, these practices are violent simplifications of social complexity. They foster habituation and contribute to the impoverishment of individual experience. Historically, those who wield power, those at the apex of hierarchical orders, resist a broader understanding of the dominated subject. Myopic and intent on perpetuating their privileges over time, they struggle to decipher otherness. In contrast, marginalized subjectivities, discriminated minorities, and women oppressed by patriarchal systems exercise what the American anthropologist David Graeber termed *imaginative identification*, an interpretive practice essential for survival in relation to power, a capacity through which one can imagine another's point of view, forming the basis of all relational practices of care and support. *Soft Control* thus seeks to operate within this fracture. It is an alternating movement, oscillating between a state of latent violence inherent in power structures and the will to reactivate imagination as a space of resistance. The exhibition project brings into dialogue the artistic practices of Paulina Aumayr and Lorenzo Conforti, two painterly languages that, while operating through different formal registers, interrogate the invisible devices shaping body and mind.

Paulina Aumayr investigates, through a feminist lens, the intersections of violence and seduction, desire and trauma, vulnerability and resistance. A pallid green filter colors the dreamlike yet disturbing atmospheres through which she challenges conventional narratives. An introspective motion that unfolds into a universal narrative. Her compositions, charged with violence and instinctual impulses, contemplate simultaneously seduction and threat, horror and desire. A suspended, almost spectral dimension. A complex negotiation between seduction and control. Teeth and canines, visceral imagery, flames illuminating darkness, mouths, specula, bodies, and scars: recurring symbols in a pictorial corpus that, by engaging with the physical and psychological traces of violence, seeks to interrupt patriarchal narratives, restoring a feminine condition at the threshold of desire, loss, and transformation. In contrast, Lorenzo Conforti presents hybrid bodies, anamorphic subjects born from a deconstructive process that reinterprets and entwines heterogeneous organic anatomies. Rejecting univocal reading, his compositions resist the compressed, frantic tempos of image consumption so characteristic of contemporary life. By invoking suspension, they reclaim duplicity as an expressive form without resolution. A resistance arising from continuous negotiation between symbols and meanings, painterly gesture and abstract tension, decay and rebirth of matter. Conforti's research defuses the more or less subliminal violence inherent in a series of images: single elements and often imperceptible details now convey an interstitial condition, a metamorphic motion that transforms indeterminacy into a political gesture.

Between seduction and latent violence, the works on view open a space of suspension, a fracture inviting deceleration, a flexion capable of slowing and defusing processes so pervasive they appear invisible. The painting of Aumayr and Conforti—both a site of political and affective resistance and a space of indeterminacy and perceptual complexity—exposes the operative structures of control,

suspending their presumed neutrality. Through formal ambiguities, semantic shifts, and material tensions, the works activate an interpretive space where resistance does not manifest as frontal opposition but as a practice of slowly redefining the gaze.

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