

Checklist

Venue: Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen

Exhibition Title: Magdalena Frauenberg - Double

Dates: 16.11.25-25.01.26

Participating Artist: Magdalena Frauenberg

Curator and author of the text: Hannah Eckstein

Photographer: Wolfgang Günzel

Website: <https://galerie-sindelfingen.de/magdalena-frauenberg/?lang=en>

Instagram names: @galeriestadtsindelfingen (venue), @magdalenafrauenberg (artist), @hannieckstein (curator), @guenzel.rademacher (photographer)

© 2025: the artist and Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen

Courtesy: the artist and Sies + Höke Gallery

Magdalena Frauenberg

Double - Schaufenster junge Kunst

16.11.25-25.01.26

Magdalena Frauenberg develops hybrid, symbolically charged visual languages by confronting and uniting the present and the past, tradition and transformation. The materials, techniques and media she uses are as diverse as the references she draws on. Sculptures, photographs, texts, drawings and video works are woven together into expansive installations that often appear as stage-like ensembles. Magdalena Frauenberg combines folkloric motifs with art-historical and pop-cultural references, engages with both perception theories and psychoanalysis, and repeatedly explores the question of how cultural and social images first enter and then perpetuate themselves in our collective consciousness. She translates all this into areas of tension between the familiar and the surreal, between technological precision and poetic openness, creating works in which perception, memory and presence intertwine.

In the right-hand room of Magdalena Frauenberg's exhibition *Double*, the face of a South German tower clock from 1850 closes off the entrance and at the same time opens up a view into the interior. The opening, once created for repair purposes, now serves as a passe-partout¹ for the film *Why do I still sleep*. A work shot in Super 8 that interweaves staged and unstaged moments.

When the first mechanical clocks were installed on church towers and town halls in the 13th century, it meant a profound change in people's relationship to time. For the first time, time could be measured independently of the sun and natural rhythms. The tower clock became a symbol of human reason, order, and control over the daily routine. With the chimes of the bells, which could be heard far and wide, setting the pace, time emerged as a public, collective

phenomenon. In the cities of the Middle Ages and early modern times, it became an expression of urban authority and religious order. This technical power was further strengthened in the course of industrialization.

Again, and again there were protests against the symbolic power of tower clocks, especially during periods of social upheaval. In rural areas and small towns where new clocks were installed, many people felt that the strict timing was an intrusion into their familiar way of life, which was determined by sunlight. Bells were silenced, hands were torn off, and clockworks were sabotaged. Reports from the 18th and 19th centuries tell of farmers shooting at newly erected tower clocks to resist "city time." With the decision to display the clock face detached from its architecture and function in the exhibition space, it can be read as the death mask of a once-central figure in a social structure.

On the right side of the same room stands a loudspeaker sculpture that plays a repetitive piece of music for hurdy-gurdy by Phil Niblock. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the area around Sindelfingen, Böblingen, and Herrenberg was part of the Kingdom of Württemberg, a region with a strong culture of emigration. Thousands of people emigrated from all over Württemberg to North America, mainly to the states of Ohio, Missouri, and Indiana. Among them were itinerant craftsmen, musicians, and showmen who traveled with portable instruments such as the hurdy-gurdy.

In the left-hand room, visitors encounter a double photograph entitled *Gedächtnistheater*² (Memory Theater). The dimensions of the passe-partouts are taken from the opening of the tower clocks. The photograph on the rear wall reflects the height of the opening of the clock face in the exhibition room opposite, while the photograph opposite shows the dimensions of the clock face in the same room.

Bazin writes that the beginnings of visual art can be understood if viewed as a psychoanalytic process. He believes that the origins of painting and sculpture lie in what he calls the "mummy complex"—the ancient human desire to outwit death by preserving the body and thus holding on to life. In Egyptian religion, continued life was inextricably linked to the physical preservation of the body. The first sculpture was, in a sense, a mummy – preserved, tanned, snatched from decay. But even the pyramids and their intricate passageways offered no guarantee that the tomb would remain intact. So small clay figures were placed next to the sarcophagi, often accompanied by grain as food for the deceased. These small statuettes served as substitute bodies, ready to take the place of the destroyed body.

The four heads, which were brought from the museum's storage into the exhibition space, tie in with this idea. They are the remains of weathered sculptures that once stood in the urban space. Now they look outwards, as a sign of their previous location.

The space behind the second, walled-in clock face reveals a memory theater—this time physically realized—and another film, which was staged in February 2025. It shows the traditional dance of the customs group in Patsch, whose choreography is intended to drive the evil spirits of winter out of the land.

List of Images

01-08

Installation View Magdalena Frauenberg – Double, Photo: Wolfgang Günzel, © the artist and Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen, Courtesy: the artist and Sies + Höke Gallery