

Regionale 26

Don't try to find me

29 Nov 2025–11 Jan 2026

In a synopsis for a film about a break-up, Michelangelo Antonioni wrote: “The film is the story of those five years and those five minutes. Its title could have been *Don't try to find me*, her last words on the phone.”¹

The exhibition borrows that title to explore various forms of withdrawal and strategies of rejection. These may consist in refusing fixed attributions and identities or attempting to break free from certain worldviews, behavioral patterns, or life circumstances, but also encompass states ranging from alienation to dissociation and depersonalisation.

How does one reject an interpellation? How does one reflect back a gaze? What comes after flight, withdrawal, and rejection? What new avenues can open up? The subjects in *Don't try to find me* are not to be found in the places where they are usually assigned. The exhibition also looks at spaces marked by absence, which – perhaps for that very reason – one cannot let go of.

The Regionale is an annual group exhibition developed in the context of a cross-border cooperation of 20 institutions in Germany, France, and Switzerland with a focus on local contemporary art production in the three-country region around Basel.

Artists: Sophie Benwell, Anas Kahal, Leonie Kellein, Ange-Frédéric Koffi, Nolan Lucidi, Maria Mayland, Harumi Mumenthaler, Thalles Piaget, Jade Tang, Kelly Tissot, Lidong Zhao

Curated by Heinrich Dietz and Johanna Thorell

1 Leonie Kellein

At the entrance of the exhibition, Leonie Kellein's video *Sophie* (2022) confronts us with a protagonist who is exposed to the (camera's) gaze and evades it. A girl in a green figure-skating costume looks into the camera. The clicking sounds of a shutter interrupt the flow of images. From offscreen, a man's voice says, "Sophie". The girl stops, then runs toward the camera and disappears. Who directs the gaze? Who is in control of the image? The short video loop reminds us that the camera's gaze is anything but neutral. How someone is represented and perceived reflects relations of power. Yet the snapshot remains suspended between carefree play and latent violence. At the same time, the scene recalls a much-cited example by the philosopher Louis Althusser, illustrating how an individual is constituted as a subject within the prevailing ideology and thus becomes part of a social order. A policeman on the street calls out, "Hey, you there!" The person turns around and recognises that they are being addressed. In that moment, they are interpellated as a subject and assume the role assigned to them.²

2 Ange-Frédéric Koffi

To enter the exhibition is like stepping into a hall of mirrors, where one's own body image is reflected and distorted across various surfaces. The tinted mirrors of Ange-Frédéric Koffi's *Untitled* (2023), nine column-shaped sculptures, initially evoke the cold tactility and seriality of minimalist sculpture. Yet from other viewpoints, the columns are covered in multi-colored fabrics inspired by traditional West African textiles. The patterns originate from textiles Koffi discovered in the house in the Ivory Coast that his family left behind during the civil war but were altered to create a strangely familiar motif. Together, the sculptures form a paravent that physically divides the room and offers a fragile sense of privacy – a delicate interplay of seeing and being seen. As viewers move through the space, their own images flicker in the tinted mirrors, forming a cinematic montage that binds them into the sculptural

dialogue between Western modernist aesthetics and diasporic cultural memory.

3 Nolan Lucidi

In six wall-sculptures made of folded aluminum sheets, Nolan Lucidi traces the architecture of memory. Modeled after perfume sample holders, the inside of the folders holds digital imagery reconstructed from recollections of domestic spaces and hotel rooms in which the artist did sex work. The titles of the works – *Only the Brave*, *Shocking*, *Manifesto*, *Obsession*, *Guilty*, *Boss* (all 2025) – reference the fragrance Lucidi wore in each room. The perfumes not only form a personal olfactive archive, but they are also explored as mask or means of inhabiting other selves, creating a dissociative state that introduces distance into the intimate encounters. The folded, envelope-like sculptures conceal and disclose the images of the rooms, inviting an intimate viewing while withholding full reflection. In the blurred metallic surfaces, the viewer – or voyeur – encounters a spectral version of themselves. The scenes emptied of their protagonists also have something ghostly to them: they are pierced with blanks as the details that the artist cannot recall have been left out. Like renderings of rooms of the past rather than a projection of a space yet to come, they stage a tension between the cold, almost clinical metal and the warmth of the rooms that lingers in one's mind.

4 Jade Tang

Arranged across the exhibition hall, Jade Tang's *Blinds* (2015–16) – suspended sculptures made of thin slats of bronze one-way mirrored film – cut through the exhibition hall's visual axes. Depending on where one stands and how the light shifts, the *Blinds* alternate between translucence and reflection, acting as agents that determine what can or cannot be seen. While their form draws on vertical Venetian blinds once created to regulate vision and light, their materiality evokes the imageless surface of analog film.

Les Absents (2013–16), two sculptures cast in paraffin wax, deepens Tang's queries into the absence of the image.

Whereas the sculptural shape is much like a passe-partout that directs the gaze toward what it encloses, the material's translucency extends the interplay of revealing and concealing. The title, *Les Absents* (The absent), evokes a sense of loss and disappearance. Through its semi-transparent surface, light and background bleed into view, replacing the missing image with a haunting presence.

5 Sophie Benwell

In the center of the room hangs a body shell – an empty skin shed, as if its occupant had metamorphosed and left the scene. Sculpted from latex, Sophie Benwell's *Organe-contenant (Lieu de Transit I)* (2020) probes the human body's largest organ, the skin, as a protective yet porous barrier through which information flows or becomes sedimented. Positioned at the threshold between self and world, the skin shields us from external stimuli and harm while also acting as a tool of communication. It is a site where touch and sensation occur, and where signs of mental illness may surface. Like the mouth, our skin is akin to a complex border zone, mediating the delicate relationship between our interiority and the outer world.

6 Kelly Tissot

In an almost anthropological manner, Kelly Tissot's two large-scale, black-and-white prints display sequences of tightly cropped imagery of wrecked cars. The prints are part of the series *Youth (Bows, Bones and Ribbons)* (2024), a title whose play on similar-sounding words oscillates between adornment and morbidity, much like the adolescents who vamp up cars only to crash them in illegal races aiming at the collective destruction of all cars involved. Tissot homes in on the metallic surfaces as textures of rural adolescence and its violent rites of passage. The car appears less as a symbol of freedom or a means of escape, and more like an object upon which community and identity is built. Or is it a sort of liberation that comes through (auto-/self-)destruction? The way in which Tissot keeps returning to these scenes from her youth

suggests that one may physically leave a place yet remain haunted by its rituals.

7 Thalles Piaget

Thalles Piaget's work revolves around the conditions of image-making and the materiality of the digital realm. In *there is no longer a body without its extension* (2025), a filigrane chain links parts of dissected cameras and smartphones using the same-sized, pre-existing holes that are integral to the devices. The chain presents an ambiguity of our relation to these technologies: on the one hand, it symbolises a network that connects us to others, and on the other hand, it mirrors our simultaneous attachment and captivity to these devices. The work also reveals a paradox of the virtual body. In the digital realm, it might seem as if we can escape or transcend our bodies, and yet the body is hyper-located and tracked. The map-like sculpture evokes a somber reflection on separation disguised as connection. It questions how these digital extensions, while linking us through networks and cables, ultimately fragment human presence and intimacy.

8 Anas Kahal

The horizon marks the boundary of what I have access to, of what I can perceive and understand. It encloses my world. It is dynamic and expandable but always remains unreachable. When the horizon shifts, my world changes. Projected onto the end wall of the exhibition hall, Anas Kahal's video work *Himmel und Meer* (Sky and Sea) (2019) creates the exhibition's horizon. Yet something is clearly off: the recordings of the sky and the sea do not fit together. They do not form a unified space but lie disjointedly on top of one another. In fact, the image consists of two video projections made from separate recordings. In this way, the work resembles a dissociative state in which normally integrated mental processes become disconnected – for instance, when a person feels detached from their own body or sense of self. The video projections open a horizon devoid of wholeness or unity, dissolving instead into separate worlds.

9 Maria Mayland

How are behavioural patterns, social values, and traumas reproduced within a family? How can a new generation free itself from inherited influences and traditional role models? In her autobiographical documentary *Lamarck* (2022), Maria Mayland traces constellations and events that shaped the family life of her childhood and youth yet were rarely spoken about within the family. The camera scans interior spaces, records the arrangement of objects, and lingers on old photographs, as though it could uncover what lies hidden, layer by layer. In intimate conversations, the filmmaker speaks with her siblings and parents. They tell of the gardening business the father was forced to take over; of the house in which the mother never wanted to live in; of the uncle's mental illness, which the grandparents never wanted to face; of the nuclear war that never arrived. They speak of unrealised intentions: to be sterilised, to take one's own life, to pack up and leave. This archaeology of family life is framed by shots taken from a viewpoint overlooking the Garzweiler open-pit mine – a vast desert landscape carved into the earth by brown coal mining.

10 Lidong Zhao

Packaging transforms food into products – turning groceries into consumable abstractions. For his series *Lebensmittel. Glanz. (Food. Shine.)* (2023), Lidong Zhao photographed groceries he purchased at the supermarket. Although the plastic film is transparent, it reflects the light and creates a seductive gloss. The flawless surface wraps itself around the goods like protective skin and awakens desire. It promises freshness, purity, and untouched perfection. At the same time, the vegetables appear estranged, taking on bizarre shapes. Is there anything natural concealed beneath the artificial wrapping? These foods belong to the world of consumption; they are highly cultivated and most likely originate from industrial agriculture. Rather than staging an image of untouched nature, Zhao's series points to the inseparability of the natural and the cultural. Just as no untouched nature hides behind the synthetic surface,

there may be no authentic self to be found behind masks and disguises, attributions and roles.

11 Harumi Mumenthaler

Harumi Mumenthaler's performance *Welcome to our Island* (2025) explores the meaning of home and identity from a binational perspective through movement and sound. It is inspired by the work of cultural theorist Anne Anlin Cheng, who analyses how clothing read as "foreign" becomes, under a stigmatising and exoticising gaze, a symbol of otherness that turns its wearers into consumable attractions.³ The performance translates the interplay between two cultural contexts, as well as the search for self-positioning and wholeness within a continuous process of constructing and deconstructing identity. The bridge symbolises the act of connecting and constructing, while the island represents a space beyond clear cultural boundaries that still conveys a sense of ease. As part of the exhibition *Don't try to find me*, Mumenthaler's performance will be presented at Kunstverein Freiburg on Sunday, 4 Jan 2026, at 3 pm.

¹ Michelangelo Antonioni, „Such mich nicht,“ in: *Bowling am Tiber. Erzählungen* (Berlin: Wagenbach 1985), 139.

² Cf. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in: *“Lenin and Philosophy” and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press 1971), 142–166.

³ Cf. Anne Anlin Cheng, *Ornamentalism* (Oxford: OUP 2019), 1–26.

Artists

Sophie Benwell lives in Strasbourg, FR, and studied MFA at the Haute École des Arts du Rhin, Strasbourg, FR. Film screenings (f), solo (s) and group exhibitions (g) (selection): Festival Ciné-motion, Saint-Herblain, FR, 2025 (f); Festival International du Film d'Animation de Metz, Metz, FR, 2025 (f); Si Cinéma, Caen, FR, 2025 (f); *Après les corps*, le Séchoir, Mulhouse FR, 2025 (g); *Après les corps*, Syndicat Potentiel, Strasbourg, FR, 2025 (g); *BRICKS*, LUCA School of Arts, Ghent, BE, 2023 (s).

Anas Kahal lives in Freiburg, DE, and studied MFA at Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste Karlsruhe, DE. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *Fear-Less-Hope: Framing Time*, DELPHI_space, Freiburg, DE, 2025 (g); *Between War and Sea*, Helmut-Space, Leipzig, DE, 2024 (s); *Dreisam*, Pfortnerhaus, Freiburg, DE, 2024 (s); *Das Lied der Straße*, Biennale für Freiburg 2, DE, 2023 (g); *We are so many here*, Kunsthalle Basel, CH, 2022 (g); *Between War and Sea*, Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, E-Werk Freiburg, DE, 2021 (s).

Leonie Kellein lives in Berlin, DE, and studied MFA Artist's Film and Moving Image at Goldsmiths University of London, GB. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *NORDWEST-KUNST*, Kunsthalle Wilhelmshaven, DE, 2025 (g); *I only work with lost and found*, Kunstraum Kreuzberg, Berlin, DE, 2024 (g); *It's in my body*, Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof, Hamburg, DE, 2023 (g); *Stile Gazing*, Heit, Berlin, DE, 2023 (g).

Ange-Frédéric Koffi lives in Mulhouse, FR, and studied MA Visual Arts at ECAL, Lausanne, CH. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *On the Vastness of our Identities*, Mois de la Photo, Bordeaux, FR, 2025 (g); *First proposition – Word images & myth*, Réseau Lux, Paris, FR, 2024 (s); *On the Vastness of our Identities*, Rencontres d'Arles, FR, 2024 (g); *at limit of dream*, Nosbaum Reding Gallery, Brussels, BE, 2023 (s); *Territoire des perceptions*, Sérénade des formes, Galerie Cecile Fakhoury, Abidjan, CI, 2023 (s).

Nolan Lucidi lives in Basel, CH, und studied MA Fine Arts at Institut Kunst, Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst FHNW, Basel, CH. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *JKON 2025*, Kunstverein Olten, CH, 2025 (g); *A Friend of a Friend of a Friend*, Der TANK, Basel, CH, 2025 (g); *A Private Smile*, Kunsthalle Basel, CH, 2024 (g); *A cappella*, Espace d'Art Contemporain – Les Halles, Porrentruy, CH, 2024 (g); *A Letter from a Friend*, Bacio, Bern, CH, 2024 (g); *Unprecedented Times*, Fabienne Levy, Space Invasion 3, Geneva, CH, 2024 (g).

Maria Mayland lives in Mannheim, DE, and studied MA Fine Arts at Institut Kunst, Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst FHNW, Basel, CH. Film screenings, solo and group exhibitions (selection): *RPM in Motion*, Goethe Institut Boston, US, 2025 (f); *Internationale Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen*, DE, 2024 (f); *Kunstmuseum Bochum*, DE, 2024 (g); *Kasseler Dokumentarfilm- und Videofest*, DE, 2024 (f); *Misfortune must be fought back*, L6, Freiburg, DE, 2023 (g).

Harumi Mumenthaler lives in Basel, CH, and studied contemporary dance. Performances (selection): *Tanzfest Basel*, CH, 2025; *Tales of the Club*, with Lukas Stäuble, Kaserne Basel, CH, 2024; *Lesser Gods*, with Charlotte Horn, Kunsthaus Baselland, Münchenstein, CH, 2024; *Métissage-Projects*, Tanzhaus Basel, CH, 2024.

Jade Tang lives in Strasbourg, FR, and studied MFA at Haute École des Arts du Rhin, Strasbourg, FR. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *Artistes et paysans. Battre la campagne*, Les Abattoirs, Musée – FRAC Occitanie Toulouse, FR, 2024 (g); *Caresser l'histoire*, L'ahah, Paris, FR, 2023 (s); *La ligne bleue*, FRAC Alsace, Rupt-de-Bamont, FR, 2023 (g); *Eau de-là et autres arpentages*, La Chaufferie, Strasbourg, FR, 2023 (g); *Chantiers domestiques*, Syndicat Potentiel, Strasbourg, FR, 2019 (s); *Evolving Shape*, Openbach, Paris, FR, 2018 (s).

Thalles Piaget lives in Biel/Bienne, CH, and studies BA Fine Arts at Institut Kunst, Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst FHNW, Basel, CH. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *Morning ritual*, AXA Wall Superblock Winterthur, CH, 2025 (s); *Vaivén*, smol, Buenos Aires, AR, 2024 (g); *Vom Körper im digitalen Leben*, Kunsthaus Langenthal, CH, 2024 (g); *A Letter from a Friend*, Bacio, Bern, CH, 2024 (g); *Gleichzeitig zwei Seiten*, Juraplatz, Biel/Bienne, CH, 2023 (s); *Swipe to Reveal*, lokal-int, Biel/Bienne, CH, 2023 (s).

Kelly Tissot lives in Basel, CH, and studied MA Fine Arts at Institut Kunst, Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst FHNW, Basel, CH. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *Licorice Harmony*, ART FLOW – Kunst im Limmattal, Unterengstringen, CH, 2025 (s); *Soft Structure & Hard Edges*, Projektraum M54, Basel, CH, 2025 (g); *Zufall??? Schicksal!!!*, Gallery l'elac, Lausanne, CH, 2025 (g); *Relics from an Imaginary Friend*, Tara Downs, New York, US, 2024 (s); *Spurious Crops*, Kunsthaus Baselland, Münchenstein, CH, 2022 (s).

Lidong Zhao lives near Freiburg, DE, and studied BA Photography at Folkwang Universität der Künste, Essen, DE. Solo and group exhibitions (selection): *Über Sehen*, Katholische Akademie Freiburg, DE, 2025 (s); *Über uns, unter uns*, Kaiserwache, Freiburg, DE, 2025 (g); *great divide*, E&K Stiftung, Freiburg, DE, 2024 (g); *Gesehenes*, Museum für Neue Kunst, Freiburg, DE, 2023 (s); *andererseits*, Kunstkoch, Freiburg, DE, 2022 (s).

1
Leonie Kellein
Sophie, 2022
Video installation
16 mm, colour, sound
1 min.

2
Ange-Frédéric Koffi
Untitled, 2023
High Resilience foam, wood, mirror,
fabrics
160 × 30 × 30 cm
Edition of 9 sculptures

3
Nolan Lucidi
a
Only the brave, 2025
Gel transfer on aluminium
17 × 28.5 × 12 cm

b
Shocking, 2025
Gel transfer on aluminium
17 × 28.5 × 12 cm

c
Manifesto, 2025
Gel transfer on aluminium
17 × 28.5 × 12 cm

d
Obsession, 2025
Gel transfer on aluminium
17 × 28.5 × 12 cm

e
Guilty, 2025
Gel transfer on aluminium
17 × 28.5 × 12 cm

f
Boss, 2025
Gel transfer on aluminium, anal plug,
synthetic fox tail
17 × 45 × 12 cm

4
Jade Tang
a
Blinds, 2013–2016
Installation of 4 blinds,
bronze one-way mirror film
Variable dimensions

b
Les Absents, 2015–2016
Paraffin, steel, oak
2 sculptures, variable dimensions

5
Sophie Benwell
Organe-contenant
(*Lieu de Transit I*), 2020
Latex
150 × 40 × 1 cm

6
Kelly Tissot
a
Youth (Bows, Bones and Ribbons)
VIII, 2024

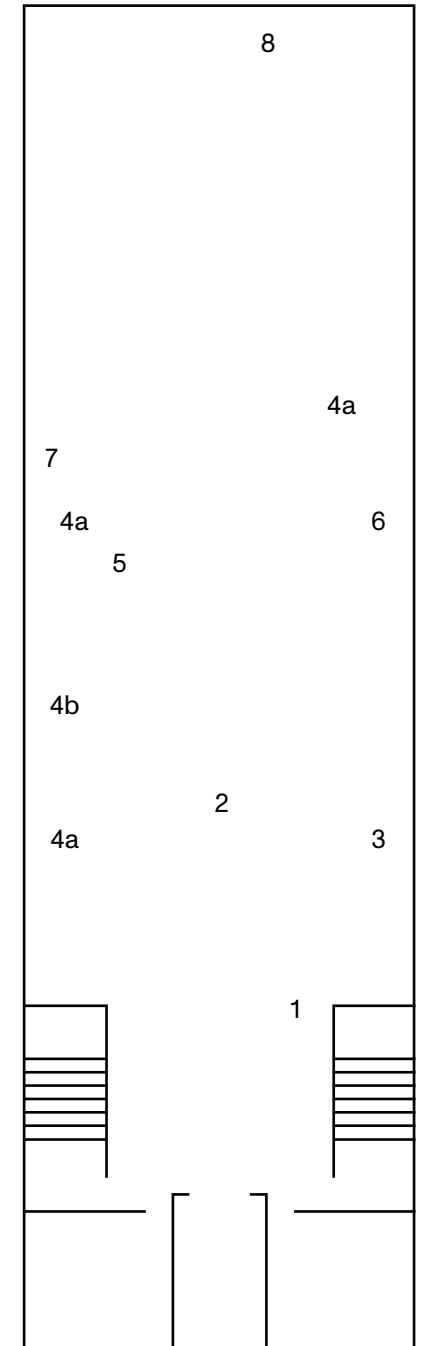
b
Fine art print on canvas, raw steel
165 × 110 × 5 cm

Youth (Bows, Bones and Ribbons) X,
2024
Fine art print on canvas
165 × 110 × 5 cm

7
Thalles Piaget
there is no longer a body without its
extension, 2025
Chain, nails, various recycled
devices (smartphone, camera, etc.)
200 × 60 cm

8
Anas Kahal
Himmel und Meer, 2019
2-channel video installation
2 full HD videos
1:34 min. and 4:08 min.

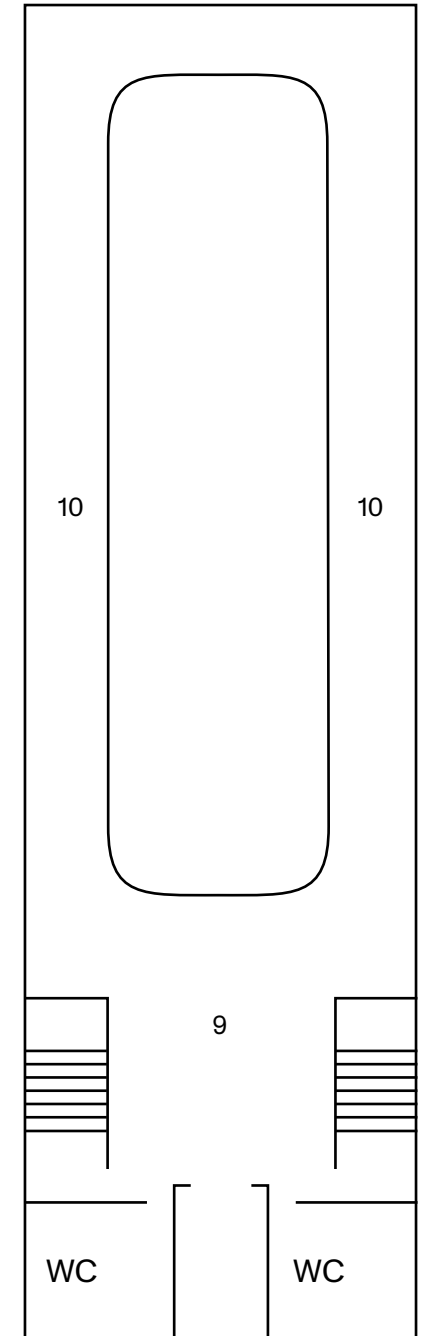
Hall



9
Maria Mayland
Lamarck, 2022
2K-video, colour, sound
28 min.

10
Lidong Zhao
Lebensmittel. Glanz., 2023
7 photographs, C-prints, aluminium
frames
Varying dimensions

Gallery



Programme

Fri, 5 Dec 2025, 4–7 pm

Junge Kunstfreund*innen

Walk to the Regionale 26 exhibitions in the Galerie für Gegenwartskunst in the E-WERK, DELPHI_space and Kunstverein Freiburg

Meeting point: E-WERK, Eschholzstr. 77

Sun, 7 Dec 2025, 12:45 pm

Regionale 26 Bus Tour 1 Basel–Freiburg
Guided Tour with Dieu Thanh Hoang

Wed, 10 Dec 2025, 7 pm

Curators' Tour with Heinrich Dietz and Johanna Thorell

Mon, 15 Dec 2025, 7 pm

Table Talk

Her last words on the phone
with Michelangelo Antonioni

Sun, 21 Dec 2025, 9 am

Regionale 26 Bus Tour 4 Freiburg–Basel
Departure from Konzerthaus Freiburg

Sun, 4 Jan 2026, 11 am

Regionale 26 Bus Tour 5 Basel–Freiburg
Curators' Tour with Heinrich Dietz and Johanna Thorell

Sun, 4 Jan 2026, 3–5 pm

Performance afternoon in collaboration with DELPHI_space

Welcome to our Island

Performance by Harumi Mumenthaler
(Kunstverein Freiburg, 3 pm)

followed by: *soft hours*

Performance by Natascha Moschini
(DELPHI_space, 4 pm)

Wed, 7 Jan 2026, 7 pm

Curators' Tour with Heinrich Dietz and Johanna Thorell

Sun, 11 Jan 2026, 2–4 pm

Find me, but now I'm a butterfly!

Workshop for Children

6–12 years (registration required)

Sun, 11 Jan 2026, 4 pm

Guided Tour with Dieu Thanh Hoang

Opening Hours

Wed–Fri, 3 pm–7 pm

Sat–Sun, 12 pm–6 pm

24–26 Dec 2025, 31 Dec 2025, 1 Jan 2026
closed

6 Jan 2026, 12 pm–6 pm

Admission prices: 2 € / 1.50 €

Thursdays free

Members free

Regionale 26

Kunstverein Freiburg is supported by:



Baden-Württemberg
Ministerium für Wissenschaft,
Forschung und Kunst



Sparkasse