



Silke Schönfeld
schoenfeldsi@aol.com
www.silkeschoenfeld.de



Family Business — Ruhr Ding: Klima
installation view "Ruhr Ding: Klima"
former McDonald's restaurant, Herne, May 2021
photo: Daniel Sadrowski

Family Business

In 1975 the Vossen family gave up their family business in Herne's pedestrian zone and in its place the first McDonald's in the Ruhr Area moved in. Methods of staging and documentary are intertwined when hopes and expectations raised by entering the franchise business during the 1970s are contrasted with the shop's present-day reality.

In a three-channel video installation personal recollections merge with collective remembrance. *Family Business* portrays how the place has evolved from a household goods store to a fast food restaurant and its temporary function

as a rehearsal room for a band. The history of this site and its protagonists is interwoven with broader themes that continue to exert a marked influence on the region: from structural change and the changing concept of work to the future of our inner cities and what culture means for the Ruhr Area.

The installation *Family Business* was developed as part of the exhibition Ruhr Ding: Klima and was on display from May 22—June 27, 2021 in Herne.



extract "children's birthday party" (14 min)
<https://vimeo.com/622434504/fd72a3b6ec>



"Family Business"
full HD, film stills, 2021



Family Business - Ruhr Ding: Klima

installation view "Ruhr Ding: Klima"

former McDonald's restaurant, Herne, May 2021

photo: Daniel Sadrowski



Rhetorics of the Unknown

installation view "Beyond all reasonable measure [Über alles vernünftige Maß hinaus]"

solo exhibition, KIT - Kunst im Tunnel, Düsseldorf, May 2021

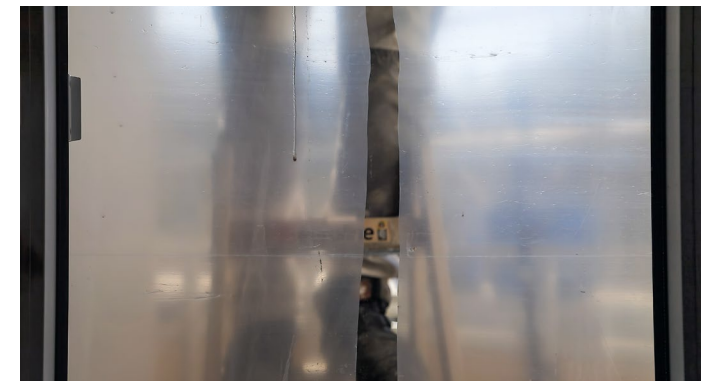
photo: Ivo Faber

Rhetorics of the Unknown

"In *Rhetorics of the Unknown* viewers find themselves excluded from the events and enclosed within their own introspection. Silke Schönfeld's films come without acoustic processing. The unfiltered and raw nature of the ambient noises underscores the importance of sound. Its excessive use culminates in this film – produced during the pandemic lockdown – in which the artist allows sound to become the most important protagonist. The static camera is located

inside an apartment while renovation work is taking place. What can be seen are windows covered with plastic film, which only allow a view through the glass to the outside within certain exposed areas. The viewer fixates on the sense of hearing in order to piece together the puzzle of place, time, and event through the isolated soundscapes."

Luisa Rittershaus



"Rhetorics of the Unknown"
full HD, 7 min, film stills, 2021



Mainacht – invented traditions part one

installation view "Beyond all reasonable measure [Über alles vernünftige Maß hinaus]"

solo exhibition, KIT - Kunst im Tunnel, Düsseldorf, May 2021

photo: Ivo Faber

Mainacht – invented traditions part one

In a small village in West Germany young adults engage in a tradition, that involves a bachelorette auction and decorated trees. The camera becomes part of the group while the rituals unfold within a framework of brotherhood, nationalism, catholicism and militarism.

Religious and secular traditions are intertwined. Through an ethnological and empathetic perspective on a domestic tradition questions about common values and certainties are raised.



“Mainacht - invented traditions part one”
installation view, KIT – Kunst im Tunnel, photo: Ivo Faber



“Mainacht - invented traditions part one”
full HD, 35 min, film stills, 2019



Mönchszüge – invented traditions part two

installation view "invented traditions / imagined communities"

Gemeinde Köln, Ebertplatz Passage, Cologne, March 2021

photo: Tommy Scheer

Mönchszüge - invented traditions part two

The short documentary introduces members of a social club, which organizes choir processions in a small town near the Zittauer Mountains in the German province of Saxony. The singers are dressed up as monks and wear torches to reenact the rituals of a 16th century monastic order. The picturesque imagery of this reenacted monk procession raises questions about narratives of national and religious identity.

The tradition was invented¹ in the small village Oybin in 1851.

The processions took place even when political regimes were in power that were rather hostile towards religion, like the Nazi Regime or the communist East German Regime (GDR). Fragments of family memories shine like flashlights on the collective memory of Germany and raise questions of personal responsibility.

¹ *invented tradition* [Hobsbawm, Eric & Ranger, Terence, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1983]



extract "Mönchszüge – invented traditions part two"
<https://vimeo.com/432508674/d2504798bd>



"Mönchszüge - invented traditions part two"
full HD, 22 min, film stills, 2019



Mönchszüge – invented traditions part two

installation view "invented traditions / imagined communities"

Gemeinde Köln, Ebertplatz Passage, Cologne, March 2021

photo: Tommy Scheer



One Percent – imagined communities
installation view "invented traditions / imagined communities"
Gemeinde Köln, Ebertplatz Passage, Cologne, March 2021
photo: Tommy Scheer

One Percent – *imagined communities*

›Ein Prozent für unser Land‹ [One Percent for our country] is a self-appointed citizen's initiative that propagates protest campaigns against Germany's migration politics. The members of this association have alliances with the far right and the populist right wing party AfD. The association was founded in the small Saxonian town Oybin.

The association produces emotionalizing propaganda videos of their actions, that aim to influence the masses. I visited sites throughout Germany where their so-called protest campaigns already took place and their propaganda videos were shot. The imagery I shot on the original sites is calm, unspectacular and accompanied by ambient sound. Textual information, designed like lexical definitions, provide insight into what has happened in the respective places.



extract "One Percent – imagined communities"
<https://vimeo.com/313542144/d6ff25afb4>



"One Percent – imagined communities"
full HD, 8 min, film stills, 2019



One Percent – imagined communities

installation view "Atelier No. 62"

PACT Zollverein, Essen, April 2019

photo: Tommy Scheer



They just watch, they don't know anything

Full HD, 27 min, film still, 2020

They just watch, they don't know anything

The short documentary portrays a 16-year-old female Thai boxer from Dortmund, Germany. Aleyna Asya Akgün naturally devotes her entire freetime to this male-dominated sport. The camera closely follows her during the preparation for the European Championships. A crucial moment in the life of the young protagonist is depicted. The short documentary focusses on her physical and psychological experiences.



“They just watch, they don't know anything“
full HD, 27 min, film stills, 2020

They just watch, they don't know anything

installation view "Beyond all reasonable measure [Über alles vernünftige Maß hinaus]"

solo exhibition, KIT - Kunst im Tunnel, Düsseldorf, May 2021

photo: Ivo Faber

