



A collaboration between the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur
and the Westfälischer Kunstverein in a joint project space.

RADAR: Tornike Gognadze
Merry-Go-Round
7.3.–31.5.2026

Thinking back to what has already happened, what has been seen and felt, means remembering, to bring the past into the present over and over again, be it in one's own thoughts or through sharing with others. Yet with increasing time and distance, only fragments remain. And so, a complete reconstruction of a life lived becomes increasingly difficult. The images blur, fuse together in new arrangements and result in a narrative reconstruction, which certainly draws on personal experience, but does not correspond to what actually happened, even when it feels 'true'.

This process is a normal, human phenomenon and not necessarily caused by nostalgic distortion, memory loss due to illness or by 'false memory syndrome'. However, when this distorted memory shapes not only a person's individual reality but also that of an entire group or nation, it becomes even more difficult to question it. Tornike Gognadze's RADAR project *Merry-Go-Round* explores these themes and, in doing so, addresses not only the fallibility of human memory, but also the social and political implications of such collectively-falsified memories – a phenomenon often referred to as the Mandela Effect¹.

Central to the exhibition is the short film *Boom Ball* (2025), a chamber drama in which two individuals are confronted with the fragility of their childhood memories. As the experience of seeing a giraffe and the seemingly vivid image of a carousel prove to be false, not only is the credibility of the respective sources called into question, but also the criteria by which an event comes to be remembered at all. This leads to mutual outrage, as neither is able to engage constructively with the other's account. At the end of the short film, shots of the parliamentary buildings on Rustaveli Avenue in the Georgian capital Tbilisi refer concretely to a nation that seems caught in the fraught process of narrating and re-narrating itself. The sometimes-colourful pyrotechnic projectiles, tear gas and water cannons that appear in the archival footage of the protests in 2024 can – by Tornike Gognadze's selection – be interpreted in contradicting ways; even as a celebratory moment.

The film *Boom Ball* is expanded upon spatially through a series of drawings installed in the gallery window, as well as through a light installation. Reminiscent of a storyboard, the drawings provide a glimpse into the film playing behind the heavy black curtain. The light installation in the RADAR space uses ten light bulbs that illuminate in an alternating pattern based upon the rhythms and colours of the film. In this way, the affect of the film's images circulates beyond the medium and into the exhibition space, amplified by the elaborate make-up and costumes. *Merry-Go-Round* becomes a resonant space in which fictional narrative and contemporary memory audio-visually overlap and, in part, merge into one another.

¹ The term originated with British author Fiona Broome, who, during a conference in 2010, noted that she was not the only one who falsely remembered the death of activist and former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. Many people believed that he had died in prison in the 1980s, when he in fact died of pneumonia in 2013. Since then, the 'Mandela Effect' has been used to refer to the phenomenon of a large group of people collectively remembering something that never actually happened, or that at least happened very differently.

Curated by Vivien Kämpf and Theresa Roessler
Translation by Morel O'Sullivan

Biography

Tornike Gognadze (b. 1999 in Tbilisi, GE; lives and works in Frankfurt a.M., DE) has been studying at the Städelschule in Frankfurt a.M. since 2021. Prior to this, he studied at the School of Visual Arts, Architecture and Design (VA(A)DS) at the Free University of Tbilisi from 2018 to 2020. In recent years, he has realised several solo exhibitions, including *Forever Spin*, SCHLEUSE, Kunst- und Kulturstiftung Opelvillen Rüsselsheim, Rüsselsheim a.M., DE (2024), and *The Dream*, ffriedrich, Frankfurt a.M., DE (2023). In addition, Tornike Gognadze exhibited together with the artist Mari Kalabegashvili in the duo exhibition *Last Song*, Gallery 4710, Tbilisi, GE. His work has also been shown in several group exhibitions, including presentations at the Tbilisi Art Fair, the HETEROTOPIA International London Art Festival and The Tbilisi Online Biennale. His crystal-shaped sculpture *Untitled* has been on view in the sculpture park of the Ria Kiburia Foundation in Kachreti, GE, since 2021.

Tornike Gognadze is the founder of Communion, an artist-run community and performance series initiated in Frankfurt am Main in 2022, within the framework of which he has published two books. In 2025, he co-founded Kunstverein Communion e.V.

List of Works

Boom Ball, 2025

Single-channel 4K digital video, colour, sound
10:38 min

Untitled, 2026

Site-specific installation with 10 LED-lights

Untitled, (Smiling Playfully), 2025

Pencil, oil pastels and pigment on paper, MDF
14,2 x 85,5 x 1,8 cm

Programme

Opening

Fri, 6 March, 6 pm

In Conversation

Tornike Gognadze and Alisia Wood

Thu, 19 March, 6 pm

Public Exhibition Tour

With Vivien Kämpf

Wed, 29 April, 6 pm

Opening Hours

Wednesday–Sunday 11 am–7 pm

Access via the Westfälischer Kunstverein, Rothenburg 30, 48143 Münster

Free entry

RADAR is an exhibition format presented by the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur and the Westfälischer Kunstverein. Works will be displayed by younger, still lesser-known artists who

are beginning to attract attention and appear on the 'radar.' The exhibited pieces provide insights into the artists' current fields of work.

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