



Press release, July 2026

SOMETHING IS DREAMING ABOUT US

**a performance by Manuela Gandini on the foundation of the
commandant's villa at the Sachsenburg Concentration Camp Memorial Site**

On 4 September 2026, the Italian art critic and curator Manuela Gandini brings her multimedia monologue on Nazi aesthetics, Surrealism and the power of images to the Sachsenburg Concentration Camp Memorial. Live music: Brando Barbieri.

Frankenberg/Saxony. On Friday, 4 September 2026, at 7 p.m., the Sachsenburg Concentration Camp Memorial presents an exceptional event: the Milan-based art critic, curator and author **Manuela Gandini** performs *Something is dreaming about us*—a multimedia monologue on the language and visual forms of Nazism, the seductive power of its imagery and its afterlife in the present, accompanied by live music by Brando Barbieri. The performance takes place on the exposed foundation of the former commandant's villa—the building from whose windows the camp commandant could once watch the mistreatment of the prisoners on the roll-call square.

The Site

The Sachsenburg concentration camp near Chemnitz (1933–1937) was the largest and longest-operating early camp in Saxony. It played a central role in the National Socialists' consolidation of power and was of vital importance to the later development of the Nazi camp system. In places such as Sachsenburg, both the actual concept of the concentration camp was developed and the camp leadership personnel were trained.

Event information

Something is dreaming about us
Performance by Manuela Gandini
Live music by Brando Barbieri

Friday, 4 September 2026, 7 p.m.
Admission free

**Concentration Camp Memorial
(Gedenkstätte KZ Sachsenburg)**
An der Zschopau 10
09669 Frankenberg/Sachsen

on the foundation of the former
commandant's villa (open air)

In case of bad weather, the event
will take place in the building of the
former spinning mill (Spinnerei).

The performance will be held in English.



Despite the efforts of civil society initiatives, there has been no functioning memorial at this historic site since the 1990s. Most of the buildings of the former camp are privately owned. Due to a lack of information in public spaces and educational institutions, the camp is largely unknown today. The city of Frankenberg/Sa. is now building a memorial at this site with funding from the Free State and the federal government.

Manuela Gandini's performance reactivates memories and creates a space for engaging with the dangers of fascist dictatorship, even to this day.



"The stone monuments to past crimes, among which we stand here, do not speak for themselves," says Dr. Mykola Borovyk, curator of the memorial project. *"We are seeking new ways to make people realize how fragile our democratic way of life is. Art is an indispensable language for this purpose because it is never merely observed; rather, it demands empathy, critical thinking, and personal understanding."*

The Performance

The performance sets two aesthetic worlds against each other: the uniform, angular visual language of dictatorship—and the organic, boundless forms of Surrealism, with which artists drew on the subconscious and broke free of all constraints. This confrontation is told through two women who both loved photography: Eva Braun, who remained an opaque figure in the Führer's shadow—and the American artist and war reporter Lee Miller, who sought the light and became one of the most independent creative women of the twentieth century. The visual layer of the evening spans an arc from the Bauhaus through Max Ernst and Remedios Varo to Marina Abramović and Maurizio Cattelan, Rudolf Herz and other artists.

At its centre stands the question of how Nazism deployed voice, gesture and image as instruments of mass domination—and how much of this persists today. In the run-up to the event, Mykola Borovyk spoke with the artist about her work. According to Gandini, the performance does not remain confined to the past:

"Nazi ideology does not concern only one place or one time," says Manuela Gandini. *"It is a social infection from which entire nations can fall ill at any moment."*

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Cover:

Manuela Gandini, Performance

Something is dreaming about us,
in front of Rudolf Herz's installation
Zugzwang (Munich, 1995),

photo: Andrea Macchia

© Andrea Macchia

P. 2, top:

**The grounds of the former
Sachsenburg spinning mill,**

2023, photo: Falko Schurig

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P. 2, middle left:

The Commander's Villa, 1934

© FSB Archive, Moscow

P. 2, middle right:

**Bird carved from wood by one of
the prisoners at the Sachsenburg
concentration camp,**

photo: City of Frankenberg/Sa.

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That the performance takes place on the very foundation of the commandant's villa is of central importance to Gandini: a deeply symbolic and ritualistic act, driven by the conviction that human beings are capable of change.

Something is dreaming about us has already been shown at some thirty venues, among them the Museo MAN in Nuoro, the Fondazione Mudima in Milan, Cittadellarte—Fondazione Pistoletto in Biella and the MESS International Theatre Festival in Sarajevo. In 2024, Gandini performed in Sarajevo on the anniversary of the liberation from Nazi-Fascism. She describes her cause as a call for each individual to take action:

"This performance is a ritual of purification, an assumption of responsibility, and an attempt to awaken in young people and in the public at large the desire to act—not to react, but to act," says Gandini. *"Art is the science of freedom—which is why it was censored under Nazism and Fascism, as well as under the Soviet dictatorship and as continues to happens today in totalitarian or pseudo-democratic system."* (Manuela Gandini in an interview with Dr. Mykola Borovyk, April 2026)

Manuela Gandini, born in Varese, is an art critic, curator and writer. She graduated in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Milan, teaches Critical Writing and History of Contemporary Art at NABA (Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti) of Milan and writes regularly for the daily newspapers *La Stampa* and *Il Manifesto* on contemporary art and its relationship to politics. She grew up amid the Italian avant-garde—her mother, Milli Gandini, was a co-founder of the feminist artists' collective "Gruppo Femminista Immagine". In her work, Gandini draws on Joseph Beuys, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Fabio Mauri. The musician Brando Barbieri accompanies the performance with live interludes.

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Quotations may be reprinted free of charge with attribution (Interview: Mykola Borovyk, Gedenkstätte KZ Sachsenburg).

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Manuela Gandini, Performance
Something is dreaming about us,
 photo: Andrea Macchia
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