

Phantasia
Benjamin Hirte

Kornhäuschen
July 5 - September 14, 2025

1		4
2		5

1 *Moon*, 2025
traffic light

2 *Shed*, 2025
wood, stain, metal

3 *Core*, 2025
sand stone

4 *Animation*, 2025
traffic light system

5 untitled, 2025
plaster

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Arkadenhof, Kunsthalle Jesuitenkirche and Christian Schad Museum
July 5 - August 10, 2025

Figure, 2025
plywood, paint

The exhibition *Phantasia* takes place at two locations in Aschaffenburg: the Kornhäuschen and the inner courtyard of the Kunsthalle Jesuitenkirche.

Hirte's works reference elements of Aschaffenburg's cultural history and their role during the Romantic era. This era remains visible in numerous buildings shaping the contours of the city. Clemens Brentano, one of the most influential authors of the period, spent his final years here.

Romantic literature idealized the Middle Ages – among other things as a reaction to increasing industrialization and rationalization – as a time of origin, simplicity, and direct connection to life. Themes such as death, loss, or the ruin as a symbol of transience are central.

Romanticism continues to resonate in cultural modernity and pop culture – for example in Walt Disney's *Fantasia* (1940), based on Goethe's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, which draws on key motifs of the period. Disney's first animated feature film *Snow White* (1937) is also based on a fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm from that era.

In one of the two rooms of the Kornhäuschen, a plaster bust is on view, based on Snow White motifs. At the time Disney was bringing his first animated films to cinemas, sculptural abstraction was being fundamentally redefined.

Within the symmetrical neoclassical architecture of the Kornhäuschen, the bust is mirrored by a model of a decaying hut with enigmatic metal elements; both are accompanied by a modified traffic light system whose colors have been symbolically reassigned: orange at the top, red at the bottom, white instead of green. The original function of these lights is lost, and they become metaphorically legible – as sun, moon, or times of day, but also as a juxtaposition of still image and moving image.

In front of the colonnade of the Kornhäuschen lies a stone sculpture: a fragment of an oversized anatomical heart and its vascular structure, carved from local sandstone – the same material as the building itself and the historical town center.

In the arcaded courtyard of the Kunsthalle, three white cubes are installed within the existing glass pavilion, forming a highly abstracted figure. The structure's composition evokes the timber framework of a traditional 'Fachwerk' house – an image of southern Germany that, like the fairy tale, has long since become a cultural export.