

Textilmuseum St.Gallen

**Portrait of a Swiss company.
A photo series by Barbara Davatz
05 June 2026 – 28 February 2027**

From 5 June 2026, the Textile Museum St.Gallen presents a photo series by Barbara Davatz, who in 1972 photographed the entire workforce of a textile printing factory in Appenzell. The exhibition "Portrait of a Swiss Company" features authentic images that place the human being at the centre and carry a timeless relevance.

In 1972, the Swiss photographer invited the employees of the textile printing and twisting mill H. Walser AG in Zürchersmühle to step in front of her camera: 38 women and men, briefly lifted out of their everyday working lives. The result is a multi-layered portrait series that, through its calm, unsentimental objectivity, bears witness to social engagement as much as to openness and respect.

While the series can be read as a response to the so-called Schwarzenbach Initiative, the portraits are far more than a snapshot in time: they have become a striking testimony to a bygone world of work. They also reflect questions of identity, belonging and humanity that reach beyond their era and take on a particular urgency in the current political climate.

Concurrently, from 3 July 2026, the exhibition "Mise en Scène. Fashion Photography from the Belle Époque to the Present Day" (until 28 February 2027) will also be on view: where Barbara Davatz turns her lens on the person behind the scenes – unvarnished, authentic – "Mise en Scène" presents the staged, flawless face of the fashion industry, suspended between glamour and ideal.

On Thursday, 2 July at 10 a.m., a joint press briefing for both exhibitions will take place. If you are interested in a preview visit beforehand, please do not hesitate to contact us.

About the Artist

Barbara Davatz worked as a professional photographer for 40 years and realised independent artistic projects: "photographic sequences." Her work is characterised by precise observation, conceptual clarity and a particular attentiveness to interpersonal relationships.

Among her best-known works, alongside "Portrait of a Swiss Company," are the photo series "As Time Goes By," "Beauty Lies Within," "Doppelgänger" and "Gsüün," in which she explores themes such as identity, change and social belonging across several decades.

Duration 05 June 2026 – 28 February 2027
Venue Textilmuseum St.Gallen, Vadianstrasse 2,
9000 St.Gallen, Schweiz
Curation Silvia Gross, Textilmuseum St.Gallen
Photo Artist Barbara Davatz
Scenography and Exhibition Design André Meier, Meierkolb

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PHOTO CREDITS



„Frieda Oertle“, Barbara Davatz, photo
portrait, 1972



„Max Guerra“, Barbara Davatz, photo
portrait, 1972