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Mauerkircherstr. 186  
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Aileen Murphy  
*We must go under the wallpaper*  
09.01. – 07.03.2026

In her third exhibition at Deborah Schamoni, Aileen Murphy presents a series of five large-scale oil paintings. Departing from the motif of the table, the paintings unfold architecturally inflected structures that divide the pictorial space into an above and a below. What is decisive here is the performative engagement with the table as an everyday object that becomes a stage, opening up new spatial, bodily, and painterly possibilities. These tables are not sites of domestic, office, or productive labour. They are sites of play – variable systems of order that enable retreat and transition – within which animals repeatedly appear.

These animals shape the psychological temperature of the paintings. They inhabit the tables, which offer them support and a protective space. The animals may be read as stand-ins for humans whose existence is not fixed but conceived as fluid. At times, the table itself shifts into other identities: it becomes anthropomorphised through legs (*snacks and sprite*), turns into a landscape, or nearly disappears altogether (*invisible table*).

As a stage within the image – which itself is always also a stage – the motif of the table produces a doubling: a reflection on the painterly material as such, now rendered visible as a fragile medium. Painting here constitutes an open assemblage. Dense, splattered applications of paint encounter illustrative passages, geometric hard-edge forms, and collage-like configurations. Within this diversity of procedures, pink functions as a unifying element across the series. The colour connects the domestic, the bodily, and the tender, particularly through quinacridone and Persian Rose. It carries both affection and unease, binding animals and tables into a shared field of affect and tension.

Aileen Murphy's new works structurally contradict painterly norms; they undermine binary hierarchies of success and failure, strength and weakness, and accept the risk of failure as a productive condition. If painting is understood as a dialogue of surface qualities, one might speak here of queer painting – not in terms of identity or programme, but as a quality inherent to painting itself, one that allows even contradictory states to coexist.

The exhibition title *We must go under the wallpaper* is taken from Elizabeth Bishop's poem *Sleeping on the Ceiling*. As in Bishop's poetic landscapes, Murphy's work unfolds a fantasy that inhabits hidden spaces of behind and beneath, opening playfully onto other realities.