Frau Debisch hebt ab

> „[…] And in order for there to be an opening, something has to be closed, we have to touch upon closure. To touch on what's closed is already to open it. […] And to open—to touch—is not to tear, dismember, destroy.
>
> - Jean-Luc Nancy[1]

At the end of the long, narrow corridor, a fur coat painted on canvas hangs on the wall. The arms are stretched forward at right angles, as if it were being worn by an invisible person who has turned their back on us and is running away purposefully. We do not know whether the wall is a dead end or whether the coat will run through it. It seems as if the coat has sprung from the painting with the large cutout in the middle, which hangs some distance in front of it. Perhaps the painting was held up and the garment, along with its invisible wearer, decided to move on with its own mission.

Another image shows a LEGO-like figure clinging to a canvas. Like a flying carpet, it floats through the picture space in a column with other canvases. The column seems to float into the picture from the right, pass through it, and leave the picture space again in the upper left corner. The pond hinted at in the lower right corner gives us a sense of spatial orientation. Nevertheless, we are given no information about where the column is coming from or where it is going—nor do we learn anything about the intention of the cloak.

Maria Moritz's paintings provoke a sense of movement, even though they are placed statically in the space. The hallway of the SCHLEUSE becomes a busy passageway for the paintings. There is turmoil, even though nothing appears to be moving. Words such as „Abheben" (takeoff) or „Abflug" (departure) reinforce the impression that Maria Moritz is showing us fleeting snapshots of a process rather than self-contained scenes. The supposed movement arises from suggestions and what is not shown: Where is the floating column of canvases traveling to? What is the destination of the coat? Is Ms. Debisch its wearer, or is she the figure clinging to the canvas?

Maria Moritz's paintings are constantly undergoing transformation—even individual elements of the image can leave their originally assigned place. The SCHLEUSE becomes a place of transit, which the invisible figure in the coat or the figure floating with the canvas pass through fleetingly. They remind us that the only constant is constant change.

Text by Louisa Behr

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[1] Nancy, Jean-Luc (2000), Corpus, translated by Richard A. Rand, Fordham University Press, New York 2008, S. 122.