



Cheryl Goldsleger, *Scale: Substructure*, 1988, Oil, wax, and pigment on linen, 48" x 56". Courtesy Bertha Urdang Gallery.

Although Cheryl Goldsleger's "visionary" depictions of contortive architectural spaces have not changed radically over the past five years, her new paintings and drawings—recently on view at Bertha Urdang (January 10–February 4)—exhibit an obsessive approach to pictorial invention and technical execution that is as engaging as it is nerve-racking. In these works, suggestions of interior and exterior containments of space intersect and commingle, Piranesi-like, generating labyrinthine geometries. Devoid of human presence, this convoluted vista of rational organization gone irrational is inhabited by a population of generic office chairs—surrogates of a disappeared Body. Planes and perspectival points fold haphazardly into one another, suggesting a panoply of maze-like permutations designed to wreak havoc on our desire for perceptual order and regularity. Yet all of this apparent disorder is regulated by the barely visible presence of an infrastructural grid, oscillating beneath the surface. In this way, Goldsleger manages to create an implicit balancing act between classical modes of pictorial organization and idiosyncratic variation. But what do these oppressively disorienting and de-stabilizing spaces symbolize? Are they allegorical figures for the "originality of post-modern space" (a notion developed by Fredric Jameson in his examination of certain types of post-modern architecture)? Identifying a paradigmatic "mutation in built space itself," Jameson makes the claim that "we ourselves, the humans who happen into this new space, have not kept pace with that evolution; that there has been a mutation in the object, unaccompanied as yet by any equivalent mutation in the subject; we do not yet possess the perceptual equipment to match this new hyperspace . . ." The architectonic terrain envisioned by Goldsleger inscribes an *evacuation* of the subject, catalyzed by a corresponding mutation in the edifice of the social.

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