

# Cheryl Goldsleger: “Unquiet Territories” at Morris Museum of Art in Augusta

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Cheryl Goldsleger, *Interference*, 2016; mixed media on linen, 36 by 36 inches.

The works that comprise Cheryl Goldsleger’s current exhibition “Unquiet Territories” at the [Morris Museum of Art](#) in Augusta may be described, as the introductory panel does, as weaving together “clearly delineated geometry with abstract, painterly marks to express something akin to our contemporary sensibility.” A far simpler way to describe them might be thus: cartography collides with Constructivism. Her paintings and drawings seem identifiable and impenetrable at the same time—the works are filled with geometric shapes that suggest forms, but never construct complete narratives. They connect with the history of art, but never quote from it directly. And, they toy with the complexities of the polychromatic: at a glance, it may look like Goldsleger works in black and white, but up close these works are an explosion of color. Graphite is a key element of her work, but colored pigments also emerge from beneath her accruing layers.



Cheryl Goldsleger, *Indeterminate*, 2016; mixed media on linen, 54 by 54 inches.

*Turbulence*, for example, lives up to its name. In this large-scale, mixed-media work — 36 by 48 inches — rectilinear planes seem to float above and below something resembling a topographic map. It is as if Goldsleger is representing the world from a distance, placing the viewer outside the area her map would plot. This sense of invitation and detachment continues in *Indeterminate*, although seemingly on a more human and personal scale. The work suggests an imminent encounter with the Vitruvian Man, or, more likely, a ride with the Russian Futurist [Natalia Goncharova's cyclist](#). For what Goldsleger truly does effectively is combine the formalism of Constructivism with the energy of Futurism, all the while wrapping each in an overlay of individual experience. It is almost as if you could read the layers of her works as you would the transparencies of body diagrams in old volumes of Encyclopedia Britannica, each sheet serving to reveal or conceal one of the body's vital organ systems. Goldsleger's works feel as if they operate in much the same manner, except the layers are all on the same surface.

This means that, at times, they feel as if they might leap off the surface as well. Through her use of mixed media, pieces such as *Polarized* have dimensionality, making their surfaces seem precisely like the spaces they are attempting to convey.



Installation view of Cheryl Goldslegers exhibition "Unquiet Territories," at the Morris Museum of Art in Augusta through March 12.

One of the key observations in Georges Didi-Huberman's *The Index of the Absent Wound: Monograph on a Stain* might resonate with viewers here. He reminds us that, in the act of viewing, it is possible to convince oneself of what it is that one can *almost* see. Looking at Goldsleger's works in "Unquiet Territories" is suggestive of this experience. There is just enough familiarity for these works to be inviting, but not quite enough for each to be too familiar. In some sense, that is her intention: to situate the familiar just outside the realm of the comfortable. Freud had the uncanny; Nietzsche had the unfashionable; and Goldsleger is content with the unquiet.

*"Unquiet Territories" is on view at the Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, through March 12.*

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