

# ARTFORUM

## London

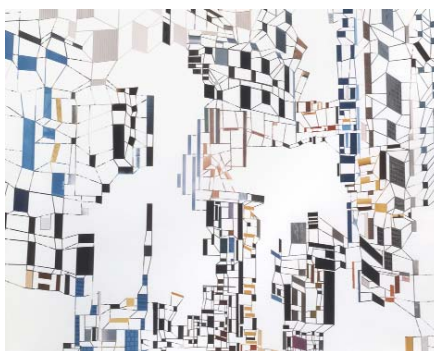
### Richard Galpin

HALES GALLERY

7 Bethnal Green Road

September 14–October 21

It seems appropriate that Richard Galpin apprenticed to a relief woodcarver as a teenager. Since 2001, he has made an intriguing career of chipping away at the urban environment, creating new cityscapes out of panoramic photographs of urban settings (in this exhibition, titled “Revisionary,” that setting is London). The wholesale erasure in his “peeled photographs” belies the delicate nature of the scalpel work that leaves entire blocks of office buildings not just unidentifiable but entirely unrecognizable as photographs. The result, in some cases, is delicate, as in Cluster VII (Globopolis) (all works 2006), a cross between a Schwitters collage and a Klimt painting, and Cluster IV (Sporopolis), which echoes a Theo van Doesberg color study. At other times, there is the fug of bleak futurism: Cluster I (Neopolis) could be a bulging Death Star emerging from a doomed metropolis. Interestingly, the form that appears out of Cluster III (Noopolis) bears a striking resemblance to the facade of architect Steven Holl’s colorful, punchcardlike Simmons Hall at MIT. In earlier work, Galpin’s environments were analyses of deletion, deconstructions that left just enough intact to lead the viewer to obvious conclusions about the original forms; these new works have stripped away the knowable and lifted unfathomable new assemblages from the depths of the city.



Cluster 1 (Neopolis), detail, 2006,  
courtesy of Hales Gallery

—Eugenia Bell