

## ARTLOG

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## Rebecca Chamberlain

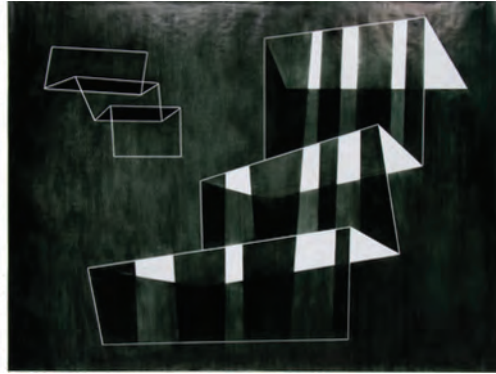
Jarrett Moran



Weber & Reiss, Retail Stair, 1929, 2010. Courtesy of DODGEgallery.



Albers Rooms, Strand Palace Hotel and Gayfere House, 1928-1931, 2010. Courtesy of DODGEgallery.



Rebecca Chamberlain had one of our favorite booths at last year's VOLTA NY, which placed reproduction of Barnett Newman zip paintings alongside images of modernist interiors. Her new show at DODGEgallery (opening tonight) is a similar collection of utopian fragments, taken from the modernist and art deco apartments of the 1920's and 30s. These private residences are now crumbling, preserved in archival photographs.

Chamberlain originally studied fashion design in RISD and ran a successful label for several years. She discovers her source material in rare books in the stacks of arts and design libraries. But that isn't to say her approach is academic. She says that her paintings are also a more personal research into the moods and emotions of these fragments, searching out images that deeply affect her, and perhaps why the modernism of that period continues to affect us.

This was a time when interior spaces became fantastical, enveloping worlds - like Radio City Music Hall - disguised under utilitarian-looking skyscrapers. A color study by Josef Albers formed part of the same project as the Frank Lloyd Wright residence it adorned, for which the architect would have designed not only the apartment but everything down to the napkin rings.

The paintings of interiors flank reproduction of paintings by Albers, looking back on a utopian desire for the convergence of art, design, and life. In this context, the mirrors and stairwells strive to flatten into paintings, while the paintings look like architectural sketches. In one case, Albers is exchanged for a motif from a Beaux-Arts vase by Rene Jules Lalique. Wistful nostalgia coexists with critique, bringing the high ideals of modernism down to the level of glorified interior design.