

The Village Voice

June 22nd, 2006

"Best in Show"

by R. C. Baker

Christian Hellmich

These beguiling canvases feature depopulated plazas, stairwells, and vestibules, the angled planes of modernist architecture recreated in slabs of grayed-out blue, dirty yellow, and clotted red. Snaking handrails provide a sinuous counterpoint to rectangle, square, and trapezoid, drawing the eye into virtuoso palette-knifing and brushwork. The bleakness of these concrete-and-steel dead zones is transcended by Hellmich's sharp formal instincts, which make abstract slats and checkerboards surprisingly beautiful.