

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY

### UP NOW

## Rachel Whiteread

**Hammer Museum**

**Los Angeles**

**Through April 25**

Rachel Whiteread is known primarily as a sculptor with a rather specific preoccupation—the voids surrounding or contained by buildings, furnishings, and quotidian objects. Modeling these spaces with plaster, rubber, resin, and aluminum, she employs the built environment as a mold and then strips it away, making her work less about constructed spaces than about the souls who inhabit them. This first museum retrospective of the artist's works on paper, presenting a voluminous selection of spare and largely monochrome drawings, shows her fretting over the same terrain in a different medium.

Whiteread's drawings are self-contained works of art, resembling but not neces-

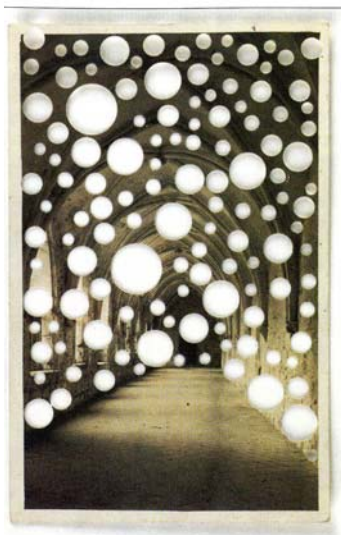
sarily preparatory for her sculptures.

Nonetheless the drawings benefit from being shown beside three-dimensional work with a similar theme, as curator Allegra Pesenti has wisely done. A stunning aluminum cast of a floor composed of 36 abutting squares is surrounded by several renderings of a herringbone-patterned floor, which were created over a nine-year period and vary in treatment from precise to expressionistic, schematic to perspectival, isolated to expansive.

Frequently for these drawings Whiteread used unorthodox materials, such as correction fluid and varnish, that mimic those she favors in sculpture. In works alluding to her 1993 Turner Prize-winning sculpture, *House*, she paints white correction fluid on photocopied images of houses she had considered using as molds for her sculpture, so as to obliterate them. In *Study for Sloping Bed* (1991), the fluid is layered so thickly that the drawing seems like a solid object sitting heavily on a ruffled page. In others, carefully manipulated splashes and splatters make the images appear to weep, as in an exquisite collaged study for a grouping of vintage dollhouses called *Place (Village)*, 2006–8. And in *Embankment* (2005), she artfully collages

images of cardboard cartons stacked upon one another—the ultimate ready-made voids.

—Susan Emerling



Rachel Whiteread, *Untitled*, 2005,  
postcard with punched holes, 6" x 4". Hammer Museum.