

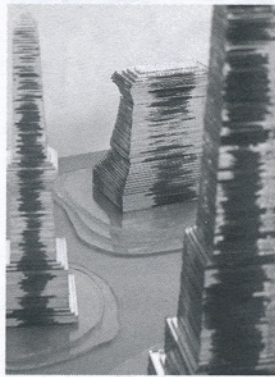
## REGIONAL REVIEWS

Maine/Massachusetts

Center for Maine Contemporary Art/Rockport, ME  
www.artsmaine.org

### **DIANA CHERBULIEZ AND ALISON HILDRETH: UNREAL ESTATE**

The title of this two-person exhibition comes from Vladimir Nabokov: "In a way I inherited an exquisite simulacrum, the beauty of intangible property, unreal estate."



Diana Cherbuliez, *Edgewise*, mirrors and glass, dimensions variable, 2005.

Both Alison Hildreth of Portland and Diana Cherbuliez of Vinalhaven Island explore issues of semblance and the immaterial, the former through enigmatic oils and watercolors, the latter through a wide range of sculptural/conceptual materials and means. Hildreth's work, all from 2004–2005, responds to questions she poses to herself, such as "How do we take stray bits of information, random passages from books, personal trajectories, and relate them to the layers of ourselves that are out of sight?" Certain recurring imagery—an airplane and paratroopers with golden parachutes, for example—hint at historical narratives while references to webs provoke broader social/psychological scenarios. Spiders, beetles, moths, and other insects enliven

the picture plane, as do vortices and honeycombs. Several watercolors brought to mind surrealist inventions.

The simulacra in Cherbuliez's half of the show include small-scale tombstone shapes made from stacked mirrors and glass, each of them exquisitely created. Other pieces speak to existential issues, such as *Not Through* (2004–2005), which features a doll-size Alice unable to break through the looking glass. The artist credits long winters on a Maine island for the attention she brings to everything around her, including a year's worth of dust collected from under her bed that was used to create *Waiting For You* (2005), a small female figure, supine and somewhat disquieting, encased in glass. That a direct connection between the two bodies of work wasn't apparent did not affect one's engagement with wall and pedestal art alike. Whatever the significance of its title, this exhibition offers tangible and real rewards—visual, intellectual, and otherwise. *Carl Little*