

bles. Fittingly, her signature imagery of glass marbles was transferred for the subway mural into tiny glass units depicting shiny spheres dotting a checkerboard.

Dinhofer's consummate skill and sense of play were especially brought to bear in the large painted panels of the two-part *Marble Field #12* (1997–98), representing marbles scattered over silky embroidered and fringed textiles—white in one panel, black in the other. The colors and reflections in the marbles strewn over fabric are painstakingly rendered, while the very notion of all these marbles not tumbling to the floor from their wall-hung canvases is an over-the-shoulder wink.

More curious and metaphysical were Dinhofer's images of stuffed birds and mice, clown faces, glass Kewpie dolls, and jointed fishing lures—artifice built on artifice. Different objects may coexist in eccentric compositions: a mouse observing a model-train hopper, for example. Or they may be spotlighted, as in some oils on paper of half-eaten chocolate-covered cherries or etchings of a tiny bee (1997), complete with *chine collé* shadow. All in all, this was a long-overdue catch-up with the work of a saucy and accomplished realist.

—Cynthia Nadelman

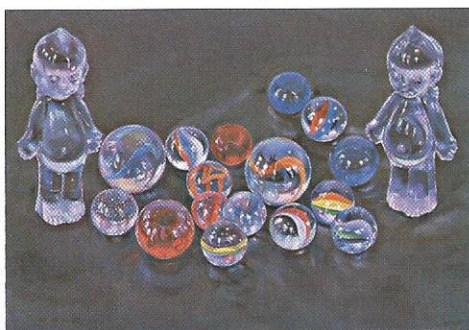
'Physics of Spirituality'

WESTWOOD

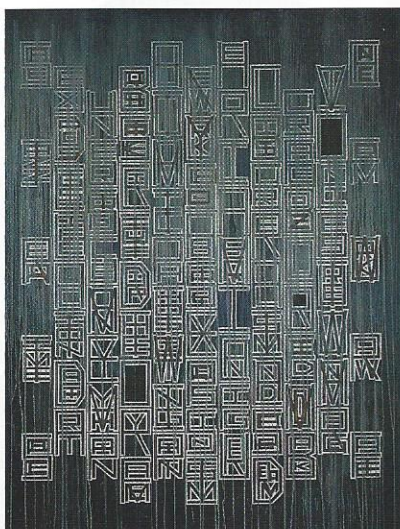
Walking into this fascinating exhibition was like entering a sacred place. Although the 22 artists represented work in widely different styles—from painting and sculpture to video and photography—together their pieces created a unified, almost otherworldly atmosphere. All seemed to be searching for some universal truth, for something beyond the material world.

In Alex Grey's powerful painting *Chapel of Sacred Mirrors* (1980), the figure of a man radiating light stands in the middle of a shrine, his organs and blood vessels visible. He holds his hands open and stares without expression. Around the top of the shrine are tiny figures, and above it all, an apparently all-seeing eye. Part of a series of 21 life-size paintings called "Sacred Mirrors," the piece eloquently presents the anatomy of a man in a cosmic, biological, and technological context.

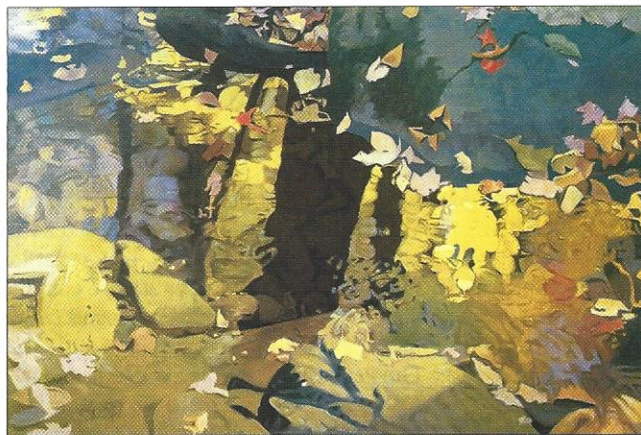
Taking a more abstract approach was JonMarc Edwards's *New York School* (1994). The painting consists solely of symbols enclosed in gray squares. These could be seen as letters in some arcane alphabet or simply as arbitrary patterns. But by virtue of their precise and graceful arrangement, they seem to have a message to communicate, as obscure and in-



Lisa Dinhofer,
Glass Kewpies,
1999, oil on wood
panel, 17" x 23".
Denise Bibro.



JonMarc Edwards,
New York School,
1994, acrylic on
canvas, 100" x 79".
Westwood.



Ralph Wickiser,
Yellow Reflections,
1983, 40" x 60".
Walter Wickiser.

triguing as Mayan writing.

Tina Spiro's beautiful, richly colored photograph, *Break Through* (2003), looks for the spiritual in the real, showing a golden arc of light emanating from performers on a stage. And Tim White's white plastic sculpture, *Interconnectivity* (2003), resembles a strange creature ready to lead believers to another world. Russian collaborators Komar and Melamid contributed *Symbols of the Big Bang* (1994), three large canvases dominated by six-cornered stars that explode with energy. Together these works testified to the diversity and complexity of spiritual investigations.

—Valerie Gladstone

Ralph Wickiser

WALTER WICKISER

This show, "The Reflected Stream: The Early Years 1975–1985," offered a beguiling look at landscape abstractionist Ralph Wickiser (1910–98). Wickiser's near-obsessive focus on reflected patterns of images in the brook near his Woodstock, New York, home and studio resulted in paintings that pulse with concentrated energy. At a distance, these idyllic scenes push and pull the eye between illusion and abstraction. In the haunting *Cow Tracks* (1980) light and shadow flicker on the water's surface, and a floating leaf provides a momentary rest for the eye, only to yield to reflected tree forms that are dematerialized by prismatic blotches of refracted lilac from indentations of cow hooves. All is metamorphosis. Layers of kaleidoscopic subtlety emerge. Although Wickiser used photographs as notes, the feel of his paintings is not of photorealism but of something organic evolving from the joyful application of pigment.

Yellow Reflections (1983) is a tour de force of transformation and dazzle. What appears to be a stony streambed strewn with fall leaves dissolves and reconstitutes itself into a mosaic of gemlike lozenges and patches of pure abstraction. Emersonian metaphors abound in these works: there is an underlying belief in the radical correspondence between visual things and human thoughts. In the late paintings, Wickiser returns to a purer abstraction, flattening his opaque forms to obtain a simple lyricism, reminiscent of the early abstractionist Augustus Vincent Tack, who also turned mountains and clouds into sumptuous dramas of design.

—David Cleveland