

NUMARK GALLERY

625-27 E Street NW Washington DC 20004
T. 202.628.3810 F. 202.628.1925
numarkgall@aol.com www.numarkgallery.com

ARTFORUM

Yuriko Yamaguchi

Author: Nord Wennerstrom
11.16.05

11.04.05-12.17.05 Numark Gallery, Washington, DC

Virginia-based, Japan-born artist Yuriko Yamaguchi has a distinct and subtly unsettling way of expressing vulnerability. Like Kiki Smith and Do-Ho Suh, she creates objects and installations that hint at impending physical and psychological collapse. *Return*, 2005, the sculpture from which the show takes its title, is vaguely protective yet also carceral—a fragile, igloo-shaped open mesh of wires studded with sandwiched translucent, honey colored resin discs that resemble tiny finger cymbals or nipples. A motion detector embedded in the ceiling registers one's presence via spasms of tinny "heartbeats" emitted by small speakers. The sound confirms we're within the sheltering environment, but also warns of intruders, instilling a sense of paranoia that keeps us inside. *Web #6*, 2005, a sagging tangle of bright brass filament suspended from the ceiling, suggests a decaying collapsed lung. Wires like the tendrils of pea shoots coil around the exhausted husk, preparing the way for the inevitable biodegradation. *Metamorphosis/Transient*, 2005, features fifty-nine small-scale, palpably organic cast resin sculptures. An informal grid of translucent, frosted, green-tinged recreations of delicate marine forms, including anemones and shells, is mounted on a matte black wall. Amid this group, a small right hand tentatively held open reveals an ambiguous tubular form, a heartbreaking metaphor for how the weakest among us can be exposed to any and all danger.