

VISUAL ARTS » REVIEW**GARY MICHAEL DAULT
GALLERY GOING**

garymdault@sympatico.ca

**JOAN KAUFMAN
AT THE REDHEAD GALLERY**

\$500-\$3,000. Until March 22,
401 Richmond St. W.
416-504-5654

Toronto-based artist Joan Kaufman's exhibition is called *Paper Shadows* and, as she describes it in her artist's statement, it's "a cautionary tale told through the uneasy interplay of human activity within the natural world. The result is an unsettling reflection upon our collective anxieties." Almost everything these days is, but Kaufman's "large format film-based photo installation of constructed realities," although made up mostly of soft, grey, ostensibly pastoral takes on watery surfaces, generates atmospheres of quiet dread.

A work that seems key to the exhibition is Kaufman's *Paper Shadows No. 1*. Here, working in Northern Ireland (so we are told in a short but delicately brilliant essay by writer-critic Gil McElroy accompanying the show), Kaufman has photographed a pewter lake, the still surface of which shows the shadow of an airliner skimming across its surface.

In other works, huge, black, nightmarish helicopters deposit their spawn of paratroopers into the water. In one photo, the softly billowing parachutes of the soldiers lean and bulge like mushrooms. In a sense, there's nothing too untoward going on. And yet everything manages to look disconcerting and even apocalyptic.