

PAUL BOOKER

By Todd Camplin

Most of us have flipped through a science textbook and stopped on a page with a complex image illustrating an object or concept. Usually these images are pretty simple, but a few books will have an energetic, ambitious illustrator that will create a complex design that puts you in a state of wonder. A really dynamic illustration of a cell helps explain and inspire future scientists. Although Paul Booker isn't closely portraying scientific phenomenon, you get the feeling his imaginative images of flowing systems could easily inspire someone to become a scientist, meteorologist, or an engineer of fluid dynamics. Even someone to become an artist, after all, seeing his work back in his Dunn and Brown show encourages my own development as an artist.

Paul Booker is now showing with Cris Worley Fine Arts in a solo show titled Flow Through. A show of little particles flowing all over his image. His blog points to his interest in extreme weather patterns, sound waves, and the not so empty space of the cosmos. All of which fell relevant to many of his works. Pink Current is an ink enamel and polyurethane on panel painting which depicts little black and also little white particles flowing around, leading your eye all over the panel. His method of applying 100 or so layers of polyurethane to the work makes the image seem dimensional. Booker manages to get his flowing objects not to act as drawings on a flat surface giving the illusion of space, but rather drawings on several layers. So, the drawings are on lower layers and upper layers, thus these paintings are not really flat. I know what you must be thinking, I just called them paintings, then drawings, then paintings again. Well, I am not afraid to say I am unclear what to call them, because Booker seems to be creating both. I first encountered his method of painting years ago when I visited Dunn and Brown, but before then I saw Booker drawing on the wall with sculpture at 500x. He had drawn on small clear sheets, and then pinned them to the wall. With all those pinned sheets, Booker made the pieces flow across the wall. His paintings, though contained within a rectangle, still accomplish a similar experience.

Traditionally watercolor is used as a sketch for a larger work on board or canvas. Only a few masters at watercolor helped to raise its profile now and then. Booker's

watercolor is as solid as any painting or sculpture he has done. It looks to me Booker was fearless in his execution of this often overlooked medium. The title suggested that water was there and dried up, leaving ridges. Well that is true both symbolically and literally. Water did dry to make this image. Flow Through is a title of another watercolor that captivated my attention with the drama and energy of his lines.