

Let the Machine Do the Work

Huge fuzzy streaks of color traverse five-foot high sheets of paper in Rosemarie Fiore's seven "Good-Time Mix Machine: Scrambler Drawing" pieces at Bodybuilder and Sportsman. But for all their bold, colorful beauty they are strangely unemotional, perhaps because Fiore made them using an amusement park ride, the Scrambler, installed in a warehouse for the purpose. She fastened a sprayer at the bottom of the Scrambler's rotating seats and placed a huge sheet of paper under the ride; these pieces are cut from that sheet. (A video included in the show shows the process.) "I'm interested in popular technology that we all use," says Fiore.

Fiore's dad was an amateur artist who filled their house in a suburb of New York City with his paintings of opera singers. She still remembers her first art project, made when she was about five. "I found a huge bag of cement in my friend's garage," she says. "I added water and went outside and got all these sticks and stones and cemented them to the side of the house." Her friend's father chipped it off a few hours later. But, she says, "I sort of lost my free impulse" after getting lots of assignments in her art classes.

While in college, Fiore traveled to Europe, where she was inspired by the Renaissance masters and worked as an art restorer. She was also blown away by Rachel Whiteread's House, for which the artist displayed a concrete cast of the negative space in a London house. To see the inside of something made solid was very disorienting, Fiore says, and tied in with the abstract paintings she'd been doing inspired by bodily organs. She began to make sculptures of water-filled containers shaped like bellies and installed them to drip on metal, creating what she calls a "symphony of sounds."

In 1999 during a residency at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture after Fiore graduated from the School of the Art Institute, she had a breakthrough. "I never felt I'd made a good painting – I was always following something someone else had done. I wanted to get rid of the object focus. So I started making art with my car." She'd been spending a lot of time in her car because it was the only place she could be alone – at Skowhegan artists share studios and bedrooms. "I started to read through the owner's manual. I said, 'I'm going to start shooting car fluid out of my rear windshield wiper.'" She developed some clear guidelines for the project: "The paper needs to be the same size as the rear windshield, I have to use



Rosemarie Fiore and what she made on the Scrambler, Deep Sea by Summer Zandrew

fluids of the car, the only movement would be the movement of the windshield wipers. I used motor oil, power steering fluid, and transmission fluid." What resulted were "these beautiful fan shapes."

Fiore spent considerable time looking for the right pinball machine to use for the pieces in a 2001 series, four of which are included here. Eventually she selected Evel Knievel machines, in part because of the way he'd "try to make jumps that he knew he couldn't do," she says. She cut paper to the shape of the machine, placed it inside, put paint on the pinballs and played the game.

Fantasy Phytology

Summer Zandrew also avoids emotional evocations in her paintings at the Lobby. Like Fiore, she was fascinated with human anatomy and as a kid would try to draw the inside and outside of people at once – "all

their layers, all their bones and muscles." In one series here, "Bryophyte", she imagined she'd discovered a "new species" of this simpletype of terrestrial plant. Bryophyte B-6669 shows three thick, crooked stems with sharpthorns jutting out; the effect is reminiscent of some underwater plants. Another work, Deep Sea, shows three blue globes wrapped with tiny overlapping tubes; Zandrew says she thought of these shapes as "microscopic things in the ocean – a bubble of air, an egg, a seed, algae."

Zandrew doesn't use a brush but applies solid color fields with a knife, then scrapes paint away to create her forms, which have some of the hard-edged fragility of actual plants. Many of her paintings can be hung in any orientation, she says, and the insubstantiality created by her scraping process adds to the disembodied strangeness of these foreign botanical shapes.

-Fred Camper