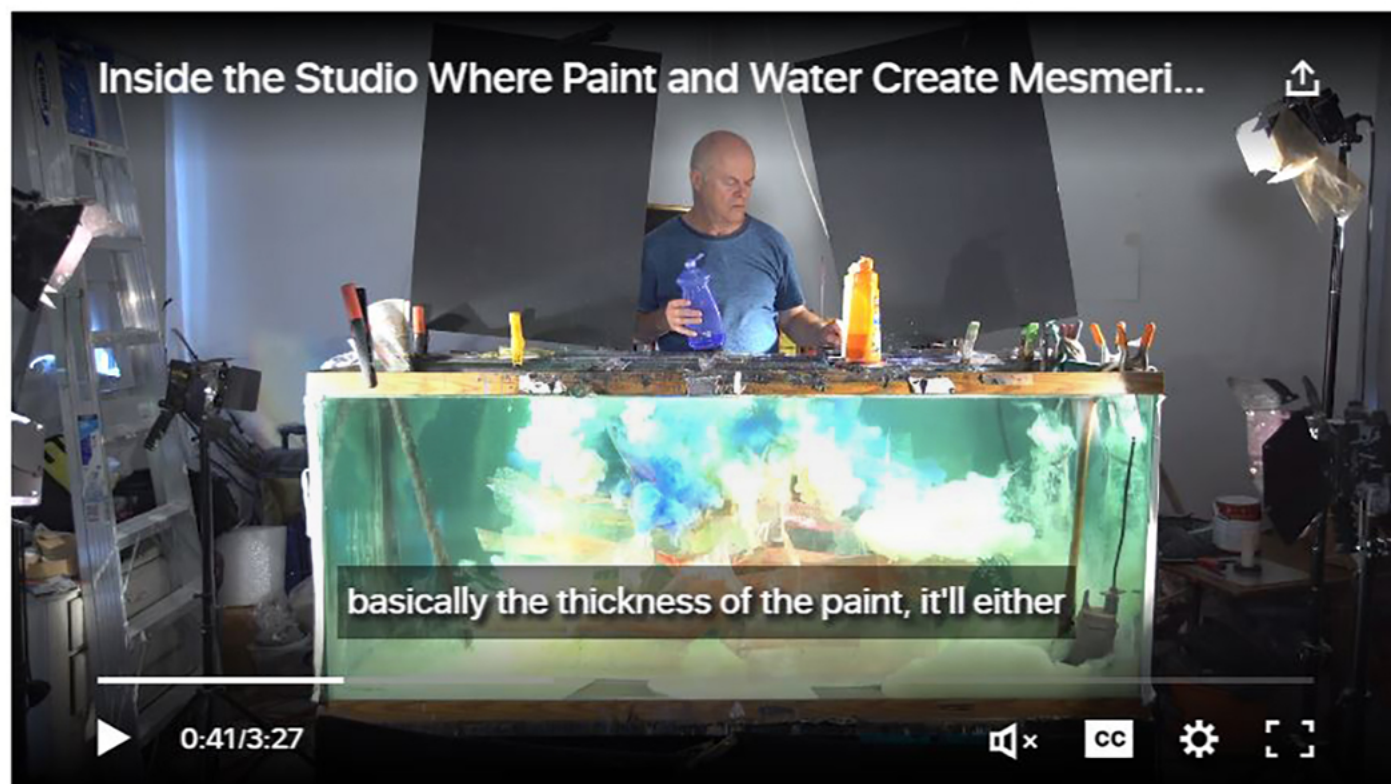


THESE ABSTRACT PRINTS TURN PHYSICS INTO ART



KIM KEEVER WORKS with paint, but he's not a painter. Inside his New York City studio, dozens of squeeze bottles are scattered on different tables, their soapy contents replaced with a rainbow of pigments. "These are like my paintbrushes," Keever says, nodding to the plastic bottles. And in the center of the room, a 200 gallon tank serves as his canvas.

The artist creates his abstract prints by dripping different colored pigments into the tank. The paints swirl around each other and dissipate into colorful clouds that he then photographs with a 100 megapixel camera. Keever has made this vibrant water art for more than two decades, and this month, along with 501 Art Books, he'll publish *Water Colors*, a monograph of water tank prints that will be donated to more than 500 high school students across the country.

Keever's work is remarkably photogenic despite the haphazard process. "I love the randomness," he says. "I have no idea what the paint is going to do, what colors are really going to be prominent in the results." Some pigments, like house paint, sink like rocks to the bottom of the tank. Others, like ink, drizzle slowly through the water, creating thin, airy strips of color.



Abstract 9318, 2014

Keever says it's nearly impossible to predict what will happen when he drips paint into the tank, but he'd know better than most. Years ago, Kever studied thermal engineering and spent a summer at NASA researching how fluids bypass solid objects at high speeds. It was a reliable career path, but Kever knew it wasn't for him. "There wasn't much visual going on for me," he says. "I just wasn't interested."

Eventually, Kever dropped out of graduate school, moved to New York City, and began making art. He started out painting, but soon grew bored of the medium. "I didn't feel like I could add anything more to it," he says. When a friend gave him his first tank, he began experimenting with how to harness the diffusing powers of water to make prints that felt atmospheric and volumetric.

After years of making intricate landscapes with props and mossy greens and yellows, Kever decided to try something new. "Gradually I simplified the whole operation to just dropping paint and water and photographing it," he says. Kever admits that there's not much conceptual heft behind his work. His images are vibrant, beautiful odes to physics, and sometimes, he says, that's enough.

"Beauty is often considered a dirty word in the art world," he says. "But some people get away with it, and hopefully I'm one of them."