

## Fluid Paper

Some of the processes of handmade paper take advantage of the fact that paper pulp that has been processed for an extended period of time becomes fluid, creamy and without visible fibre. When this pulp is coloured with pigments, it is much like a paint solution and can be manipulated in ways that suggest the practices of painting. Where this differs from the more traditional painting technique is that the construction of the work and the making of the image are synonymous and the completed work has the image embedded in the physical surface.

As a gardener, for the Garden Afterimage Series, Shadowland, and EmbeddedLandscapes, I harvest plant material from the garden the same day I am doing a studio session and the plant material acts as a direct stencil in conjunction with layers of finely beaten paper pulp which are sprayed in sequence to get the layers of coloured plant shapes. The landscape pieces are a reflection of the brief moments when I get my eyes unglued from the garden work and look up at the sky. Ontario skies are wonderful, varied, full of movement and drama. I attempt to capture the feeling of a moment in one of our distinctive and different seasons.

The reality in the studio is that there is much unpredictability working with so much water. The paper pulps are fragile in this wet stage, susceptible to damage and alteration. The large amounts of water which suspend the pulps disguise the surface, making it difficult to clearly see the actual colour and detail. All this adds to the challenge and excitement of the making, and keeps me returning again and again to the studio.