

Paul X. Rutz is an artist based in Portland, Oregon. He says: Moving bodies are the subject of my work. I love to study athletes and other kinds of dancers (everyone is a dancer) twisting their muscles around their bones. And while I do that, I'm thinking about you, the viewer. How might I get you moving?

Lately I've been preparing plywood surfaces to paint on. While I carve and sand each one—in the shape of a curtain, maybe a hammock or chain-link fence—I'm making a visual question waiting for an answer. Once sealed with gesso, these wood slabs act on me like propositions, the first steps on a trial-and-error painting journey. Some of the paintings in this show have three abandoned paintings underneath, each a different subject or color scheme than what you see here. The combination of shiny oily paint and gold leaf on undulating 3-D surfaces hopefully leads you to dance a little, stepping close to see the brushwork, back again to enjoy the illusion, then to the side to see what's hidden in a fold of plywood or the glint of real gold shining against the wall.

In other words, these paintings really want you to be there with them. I've filled them with details that reward a second viewing from another angle, then a third.

My route to painting like this has been full of tight turns and continuing education. After working at sea on an aircraft carrier, as a reporter, and as an academic, it's a great honor to spend the day making objects for you to see.