

'Stall' at the University of Dallas

By Mike Daniel

What: "Stall", art by Paul Booker, Polly Lanning, Keitha Lowrance and Terri Thornton, at the Haggerty Gallery at the University of Dallas.

Background: Installation art can be difficult and weird. By making specific works for a particular space, an artist can be playful and inventive but may try too hard.

It's challenging enough for one artist to create a convincing installation. Haggerty Gallery director Christine Bisetto has quartered her facility for four of them. Mr. Booker and Ms. Lowrance, both of Dallas; Ms. Lanning of Austin; and Ms. Thornton of Fort Worth have all recently extended their talents into installations. Ms. Bisetto had all four artists work in the gallery simultaneously, so they could react to one another's ideas.

How it Looks: A cross-shaped divider gave each artist equal space to work with. Nevertheless, their pieces bleed into neighboring quadrants visually, physically and aurally.

Ms. Lowrance's two efforts are the most invasive in that regard. The white noise of an escalator, a waterfall and highway traffic in the digital video *Lines: (exc., wat., bli.)* reverberate through the gallery. The long lengths of black and white string woven among more than 130 drywall screws in *Untitled (String Thing, 5)* cover one 46-foot wall and half another, as if an oversized arachnid were taking a break from cocooning the gallery.

There's Ms. Thornton's barely there tattoo drawing on ghost skin, a series of organic and geometric shapes made with stickpin craters and white-on-white paint dabs. The shapes are so subtle they cannot be reproduced in a picture in the newspaper, but they compel visitors to scan a seemingly blank wall for several minutes. Other efforts by her include sound drawing, made of string and graphic artists' tape stuck to the floor in concentric oval shapes,

and wall wounds (pocs 2), innumerable nipples of paint, wax and ink that cover two of the center partitions.

Mr. Booker's three efforts, *Limelight*, *As If* and *Three Inch Dash*, consist of tiny, repeated pen-rendered shapes cut out of paper or thin clear plastics sheets. They were then pinned to walls in happenstance patterns that mimic scientific fluid and particle flow theories.

Ms. Lanning's *Untitled* collection of abstractly painted birch panels has them stacked, leaned, glued and laminated in tense relationships to one another - some are on the floor, others are high up on the wall. A nearby *Untitled* row of 10 figurative color snapshots makes for even more challenging comparisons regarding shape, placement and hue in her quadrant.

Details: On display through Feb. 27 at the gallery, in the Haggerty Arts Village at the University of Dallas, 1845 E. Northgate Drive, Irving. Hours: Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. Free. 972-721-5087.