

CHURNER *and* CHURNER

ARTslant New York

Anthony Campuzano: Waters' March

Anthony Campuzano

Churner and Churner

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Only So Deep by Aldrin Valdez

Anthony Campuzano's recent drawings in his solo show "Water's March" at Churner and Churner combine text and graphic elements with explorations of color and mark-making. Graphite and colored pencil laid atop bright washes of ink fill the poster-size rectangular boards. Pencil marks busily crowd around the nooks and edges of letters that come down in columns as big, bold shapes or as stuttering notations. The page is divided into smaller quadrants by the structural motif of window, doormat, or book covers. These depictions of objects are not really still-lives; they are ways of arranging space. Aesthetically, what is most appealing about Campuzano's drawings is their texture. Take a piece like *Caution* (2011), for instance, with its cruciform window panel segmenting the surface into long rectangles of reds and ultramarine blues. There are bristling grays set next to sections stippled and dashed like strands of eyebrow. Campuzano likes to layer various colored marks on top of one another to make dense passages that feel crunched and satisfy the eye.



However, despite what the press release claims as Campuzano's exploration of "doubling and distance" in his remaking of works damaged in a flood, most of the drawings don't dive strongly enough into deeper waters. But when the text begins to tell a story, the looking holds more than the eye. The act of scanning the surface turns into a kind of reading that is both physical and psychological. This is what happens in *Self-Portrait with Lenora McDuffy* (2011), the darkest of the group both in palette and content. With blocky, awkward lettering in red, black, and yellow, Campuzano recounts a murder which he had witnessed after moving to New York from Philadelphia. The experience has been a source of trauma for him. Twice he tells the story, reversing the orientation so that the upright message meets its mirrored reverb at the center. Here the writing, the filling-in of letters, the haywire scraggly marks of the space around them, which render the words as more of a negative-shape to be dealt with than the page they inhabit, all synthesize in the poignant act of telling. Loss, doubly recorded, written and drawn, assumes a palpable form.

~Aldrin Valdez

Images: *Caution*, 2011; *Self-Portrait with Lenora McDuffy*, 2011. Courtesy Churner and Churner.