

ARTFORUM

Sayre Gomez

FRANCOIS GHEBALY GALLERY
2245 E Washington Blvd.
October 10–December 6

On Sayre Gomez's Instagram, in a shot of his latest solo effort, "I'm Different," a visitor bends down to clean up his dog's poop. It's easy to see how a dog could get confused: Sprinkled across Ghebaly's spacious main gallery, like a kind of attitudinal filler, is a thin layer of dark, trashy mulch. The spread is studded with toxicologically painted speakers that resemble foam rocks, (*Hypnotic Presence of Popular Music in Southern California*, 2014), each leaking out pop hip-hop hits—not least of which is 2 Chainz's "I'm Different." This ironical dawg park declares this exhibition "different" from your traditional bleached-white painting show, while clumping together Gomez's disparate production: paintings from several series, banners by Chicago designers Struggle Inc., a pair of coffee-table sculptures—the mulch adding "substance" to works otherwise united mostly by style.

In the gallery's mulchless second room, a salvaged window set into an interior wall (*Uww (Untitled Window Work)*, 2011/2014) dates the trajectory common to Gomez's past several shows: a "window" motif, also represented in *Thief Painting in Violet over Orange*, which shows a pair of white gloves raising a sash from the inside a house, or *Untitled Painting*, both 2014. One might think of Gomez's ten large vertical canvases as themselves "window-like"—a toss to pictorial tradition, or to the picture-dense windows of the Internet (which—besides the airbrush—is seemingly Gomez's main tool). The moody reiteration of found images, like the hands or a dewy brush line (*Untitled Painting* and *Untitled Painting, II*, both 2014), approaches a kind of souled mass production. But this hazy intensity is dispelled, if not effaced, by the posturing evident in works like *Bench with Figure (Angst model) in Cerulean*, a knockoff-Klein-blue mannequin observing the field of mulch. Though its self-consciously "different" setup is, in its painfully contemporary way, nothing new, this is no plain-old painting show. Indeed, the mannequin seems to stare longingly at the wall, toward distant paintings hung like windows above a crapscape of cool.

— Travis Diehl



Sayre Gomez, *Bench with Figure ('Angst Model) in Cerulean*, 2014, painted manikin, custom-dyed clothing, painted wooden bench. 96 x 18 x 52".

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