

Kyle Thurman

Off Vendome, New York



Kyle Thurman
Suggested Occupation
7 (2016)
Courtesy of the Artist and
Off Vendome, New York

A large, elevated platform partially covered in black carpet, its sides perforated with holes for gripping, sits in the middle of the gallery. This movable stage, *Tomorrow Will Be Nothing Like Today* (2016), beckons us to dance upon it or speak from it. Yet its emptiness suggests disengaging from the immediacy of exposure, and it's this idea of taking a step back that set the scene for Thurman's empathetic works that explore our speed-date-like relationship with visual imagery.

Back in November 2015 the artist began to make drawings every day from images found in the news. Rendered in charcoal and pastel on seamless white or pink neon paper, the five slightly larger than life-size drawings here show individuals and groups of men in a variety of poses. In some the figures appear to be sleeping, as in *Suggested Occupation 2* (2015), or wrestling, as in *Suggested Occupation 4* (2015). These images offer just enough visual information for us to identify the sitters as young men or boys, and indicate different professions — that of soldier and athlete — recommended to Thurman when he was young. Reinterpreting the imagery of his source material, Thurman encourages the viewer to construct new narratives for each, similar to the way actors reimagine their roles every time they take the stage. Thurman's approach allows us to reflect on the speed with which we shuffle through strongly emotive imagery, in the news and elsewhere.

Two further works, titled *Fear (A Lonely Butcher)* and *Envy (A Lonely Butcher)* (both 2016) consist of black burlap twine affixed to canvas, offering diagrams of two of the emotions — fear and envy — related to social anxiety and conflict. Comprising ovals and straight lines, they resemble abstractions of Warhol's dance diagrams — works that, by being displayed on the floor, literally invited the audience to dance upon them. Thurman's intimate works allow us to share in their direct physicality by also inviting us in, meanwhile reminding us that sometimes less is more.

by Aaron Bogart