

Time Out New York



Caleb Considine

★★★★

Bureau, through May 3

Caleb Considine is one of a small group of realist painters in their early 30s (others include Matthew

Cerletty, Greg Parma Smith and Mamie Tinkler) who are updating the genre for our era of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. While evincing a clear devotion to the craft, these artists reflect the Internet's atomization

of content, a process that has resulted in the online world's peculiar equilibrium between specificity and blandness.

Considine presents six terrific small paintings, including a self-portrait and an abstraction. The rest depict the artist's studio: a place of dust, fluorescent light and managed clutter where Considine clearly spends most of his time.

Considine shifts, unsettlingly, between painting techniques, often within a single work. A view of a corner of the studio, for example, includes a broom painted in Richard Estes's hyperreal style, a cement floor and paint-spattered trash can lid rendered in flurries of brushstrokes à la Josephine Halvorson, and an arrangement of shadows on a sheetrock wall treated as a hard-edged abstraction. The perspective is slightly off—Considine paints from life, not photographs—and the picture plane oddly shallow. In another painting of two sneakers propped in a corner and given a blast of blue spray paint,

exactly reproduced by hand, the impression is of an image that once thought of, had to be made.

Strangely, the self-portrait, a stylized, blurry picture of a sharp-featured young man with a shadow falling across his eyes, is the least revealing of the works. For all their apparent lack of affect, it's the paintings of the artist's studio that provide the real psychic charge. —Anne Doran

THE BOTTOM LINE A new old realism for the digital age.

