

EAST BAY EXPRESS

No Can Handle

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Conrad Guevara distinctly remembers driving in Pearl City, Hawaii and hearing two radio comedians yelling the phrase “no can handle” in regard to a ridiculous situation. The common Hawaiian-island colloquialism refers to moments when you just can’t take it any more. In his current solo show at City Limits Gallery (300 Jefferson St., Oakland), titled after the phrase, Guevara elaborates on that sentiment of resistance through a number of mixed-media works that engage with the tension between expression and constraint. Many of the works are gentle, watery, abstract paintings that have been secured to the wall with thick metal bands that obscure the works by running across them. Throughout the room, small hummingbird sculptures hover on metal rods weighed down by concrete cubes. Other sculptures that fill the room pair dense metal with light, natural materials such as wood and husks in dynamic compositions of passivity and power. A cohesive palette of blues, purples, and pinks ties the works together. It alludes to the glistening ocean and the tropical flowers of Hawaii, but also evokes the tender colors of a bad bruise. The show is a refreshingly subtle study of the act of resisting restraint.

— Sarah Burke