

Alex Becerra | *Las Putas Problematicas*

Opening Reception | Friday 5 September 2014 | 7-10pm

Tattooing from Drawing Session #1 | Thursday 18 September 2014 | 11a-6p*

Tattooing from Drawing Session #1 | Saturday 04 October 2014 | 11a-6p*

ltd los angeles is pleased to announce *Las Putas Problematicas*, Alex Becerra's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

In his new series of canvases, Becerra's thickly applied paint renders unusual, fallen bodies, sometimes quite literally. Hips and legs can be seen through impossible prisms; flesh pushes up against mirrors and glass, creating reflections as beguiling as Manet's *Folies-Bergère*. The figures in Becerra's paintings move freely between the plates in an art history text, and the back pages of a free weekend newspaper.

A falling transsexual Christ asks us to consider painting as a space of free fall, a weightless place. Her body sits ambiguously between plummeting to earth, and falling to heaven. This moment of rising and descent is possible in Becerra's work, where contradictions are momentarily suspended, and incompatible realities hold steady.

A heavy buildup of paint allows the canvases to be both objects and images, augmenting line, form, and color with mass and texture. Becerra uses his globs and smears to push his images towards abstraction, but simultaneously to capture their materiality. Paradoxically, he uses abstraction to get at the object-hood of his images; an area of ragged, scraggy paint threatens to overwhelm his figure, but also describes the shaggy carpet on which a strange odalisque reclines.

While Becerra's application of paint feels like a freewheeling experiment, his color palette developed from a sustained practice of observational painting, inflecting the subtle color passages in his canvases. The use of a more traditional palette in some of the work allows it to resonate within a longer history of painting, while not shying away from commenting and critiquing this inheritance. His paintings adopt and skew genres like still life, portraiture, and the nude. Rather than nude, however, Becerra's figures seem decidedly naked; they are vulnerable, imperfect, strange, and familiar.

Becerra uses the format of painting to create a space of permissiveness. A canvas can be as open minded as a pay-per-minute motel about what goes on within its four sides; but it brings considerable attention to every move, a very un-private place for promiscuous acts.

Alex Becerra received his BFA from Otis College of Art and Design in 2011. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

*Both Walk-ins and appointments are welcome. Becerra will administer complimentary black and white tattoos based on his drawings. For more information or to reserve and appointment, please contact ltd los angeles.