

SHANE CAMPBELL GALLERY

It's Nice That
March 15, 2018

Self-styled renegade, LA painter Alex Becerra

LA's art scene is often considered splintered, not least because of the city's sprawling topography. Inglewood, situated in the city's south west in the industrial South Bay area might be better known for the Los Angeles Stadium under construction at Hollywood Park and cult bakery Randy's Donuts than its creative residents, but look a little closer and it's not hard to miss painter Alex Becerra.

From a sizeable live/work studio space that he's dubbed Lexus of Inglewood, the Latino artist transforms pretty much anything he can lay his hands on into a canvas. Often starting life as drawings, ideas crawl their way from paper onto canvases of wood or morph their way into ceramic sculptures. With a history of selling his drawings from pizza boxes, Alex is no stranger to DIY merch, among his creations a range of hand-painted record covers featuring his own band Los Tres Pericos and a range of t-shirts promoting the band splashed with illustrations of strippers and borrowed car company logos.

A self-styled renegade, Alex's work orbits around themes of fantasy. At one end of the spectrum are paintings that seem designed to shock — female figures dressed in stilettos and little else glistening with the prospect of readily available sex, at the other, in self-portraits and motifs, sit fantasies of the artist's constructed self, an alphabet of wine bottles, hot sauce and crocs. Alex's paintings, the most recent of which are currently found in his solo show *Sueños Eróticos* at Chicago's Shane Campbell gallery until 18 March, are vast, stretching nearly two metres wide and high, making the layering of oil paint appear intensely physical to the point of aggression.

Whatever the prolific artist puts his hand to seems to fly, so we expect to hear much more from Alex Becerra over the coming months. -Bryony Stone



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