



PRESSE

REUBEN NEGRÓN

H GALLERY

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Forbes

Forbes
Jenn Rice
1 avril 2025

LIFESTYLE > DINING

One Of Paris' Coolest Restaurants Is Hidden Inside This Chic Hotel

By [Jenn Rice](#), Contributor. ⓘ Jenn Rice is a nomadic journalist who...



Follow Author

Mar 27, 2025, 05:45pm EDT



A prestige room at Hotel Hana in Paris.
ROMAIN RICHARD

I checked into [Hôtel Hana](#), a five-star hideaway in Paris—just a short stroll from ‘Little Tokyo’—for a 24-hour staycation with minimal outside distractions (aside from a quick jaunt to [H Gallery](#) for my friend [Reuben Negrón](#)’s solo exhibit and a few Japanese snacks). At check-in, the concierge mentioned that [Takara](#), a five-minute walk from the hotel, was allegedly the oldest Japanese restaurant in Paris. Noted.

Otherwise, the rules were simple: slip into the zen robe and only leave the room for dinner at Hanabi, which will live rent-free in my mind forever thanks to chef Roberto Sanchez’s creamy, absurdly delicious cacio e pepe sea urchin udon.

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lomography

Lomography
Alexa Alexiades
7 juin 2024...

A Half-Frame LomoHike with Ball Photo Supply and the Diana Mini

Summertime is upon us and it's about time that we all get back into nature! For this reason we partnered up with [Ball Photo Supply](#) of Asheville, North Carolina to bring our community of film photographers out on the trails together.

With lush trees, birds chirping, and an abundance of rushing water traveling through the Appalachian mountains, Asheville is a serene corner of the USA that everyone must visit. The scenes are so gorgeous that 36 frames to a roll are simply not enough to capture the beauty.

That is why we sent the [Diana Mini](#) to do the job; with her half-frame abilities, participants each came home with 72 photos reflecting the wonder of nature and kinship of community.



Photos by Elliot Kulwiec, Ana Alegrias, Reuben Negron, and Harrison Hawkins

Aside from a Diana Mini camera to shoot with, participants were supplied with a mix of [LomoChrome](#) and [Berlin Kino](#) film stocks. As you can see from these photos, everyone produced wildly different results, from the moody [Metropolis](#) and psychedelic [Purple](#) to the classic black & white.

The Diana Mini may have been the star of the show, but the [Spinner 360](#) had its moment as well. Check out this fun group selfie from everyone who participated at this event!

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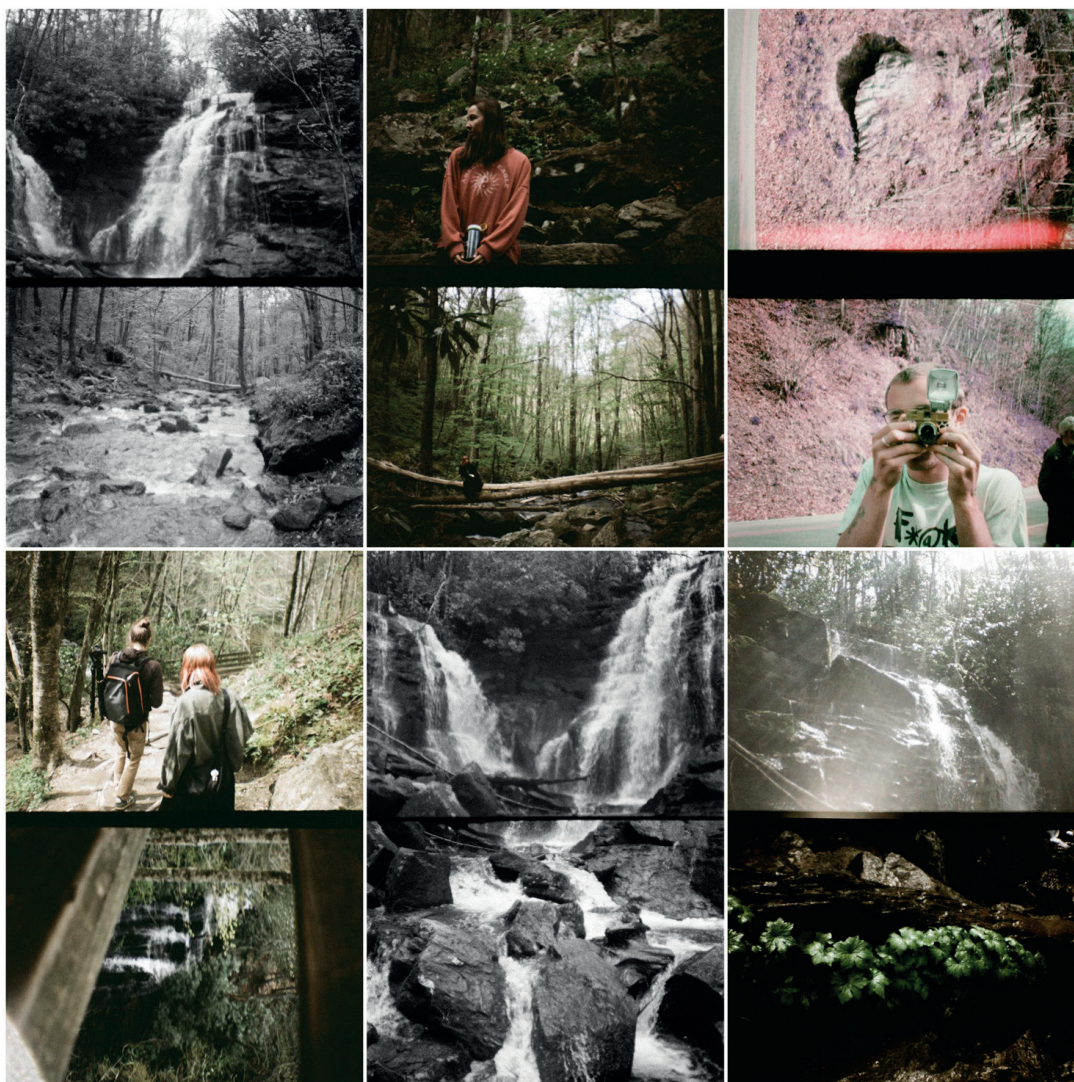


Lomography

Lomography
Alexa Alexiades
...7 juin 2024...

On a sunny Sunday at the end of April, the group hiked along a trail leading to Soco Falls, located in the Cherokee Reservation amidst the Great Smoky Mountains. Late spring and early summer are a prime time for hitting the trails in this corner of the woods, with unique bird sightings and freshly bloomed wildflowers abound.

The group spent two hours exploring the waterfall location and the rivers around it. There was plenty to photograph so everyone shot their rolls pretty quickly! There was such a large response to this photo walk that we decided to open the event to anyone who wanted to join.



Photos by Elliot Kulwicz, Harrison Hawkins, and Mikey Hans-Barrientos

In business since 1960, Ball Photo Supply is a locally owned photo supply store dedicated to promoting film photography and fostering a vibrant photographic community. Here are a few words from Elliot Kulwicz, owner of the shop!

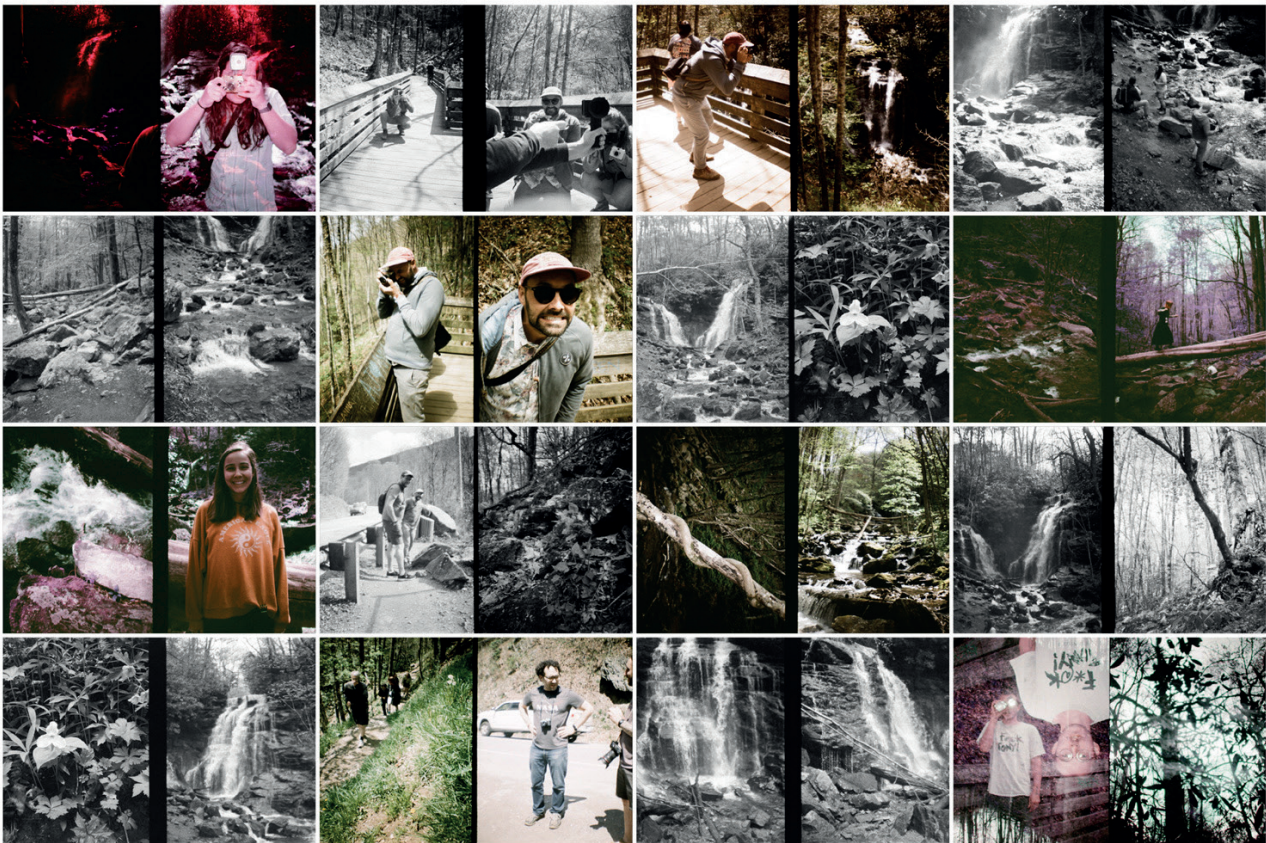
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Once all of the film was gathered from the participants, we brought it to our in-house professional film lab and began processing and scanning the negatives. Scanning the images as a 2-in-1 frame is a personal favorite, as two images, both in a separate space and time, can share the same canvas, often invoking a story with one another. Engaging discussions about camera settings, use of flash, and what types of Lomo film stocks we were using enriched the learning experience. We're grateful to have Lomography collaborate with us to put on this memorable event!"



Photos by Elliot Kulweic, Joe Pollock, Gabe Robbertz, Harrison Hawkins, Reuben Negron, and Mikey Hans-Barrientos

Thanks to everyone who came out to our event, and to Ball Photo Supply for hosting!

For more information on their services, you can check out Ball Photo on their [Instagram](#) and [website](#)!

WRITTEN BY ALEXA_ALEXIADES ON 2024-06-07 #GEAR #PLACES #PARTNERS #EVENT #LOMOWALK #HALF-FRAME
#PHOTOWALK #DIANA-MINI #DIANA-FAMILY

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THE LAUREL OF
ASHEVILLE
THE ARTS AND CULTURE OF COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS

The Laurel of Asheville
mars 2021



SPRING EXHIBITS AT BLUE SPIRAL 1

These Small
Remembrances.
Reuben Negrón,
artist

Blue Spiral 1 (BS1) presents the work of Alex Bernstein and Reuben Negrón in two new exhibits running from Friday, March 5, through April 30. The artists will also host virtual events, providing an opportunity for viewers to ask questions and learn more about their work, on Friday, March 5, and Friday, April 2, respectively.

In BS1's Small Format Gallery, Bernstein presents a new body of cast, carved and polished glass sculptures inspired by the rise and fall, ebb and flow, and rhythm and harmony of the Blue Ridge landscape. The exhibit includes new experimental work as well as more traditional pieces. A common thread is seamless connections between contrasting light, texture and color, creating visual tropes for mountains, rivers and sky.

"As a psychology major at University of North Carolina Asheville years ago, I was very interested in how people perceive what they see," says Bernstein. "As an abstract sculptor, I love that people can bring their own experiences and ideas and see those in my sculptures."

In the BS1 Showcase Gallery, Negrón presents *Echoes*, a series of drawings as a visual response to his encounters in southern Appalachia, touching on

both the personal and historical complexity of time and place. Drawing inspiration from the poem *Fable*, by Louise Glück, the large-scale charcoal drawings are a melancholic love letter of sorts. The drawings explore the people, places and moments that make up southern Appalachia filtered through what Negrón describes as "the monochromatic lens of film noir."

"I often say that my work isn't complete until the viewer finishes the narrative in their own head," says Negrón. "I want that connection, in whatever way it manifests."

BS1's *Celebrating 30!* exhibit also continues through spring. In honor of the gallery's 30th anniversary, works by its represented artists will be on display on all three levels through June. The artists include painters, sculptors, glass blowers, ceramicists, weavers and photographers who define the heart of the gallery and its mission to celebrate the arts. Works rotate regularly, creating new vignettes and pairings for visitors to explore.

Blue Spiral 1 Gallery is located at 38 Biltmore Avenue, Asheville. Hours are Sunday through Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, visit BlueSpiral1.com or call 828.251.0202. Links to the March 5 and April 2 virtual events can be found @BlueSpiral1 on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

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LA RAZÓN

La Razón
Concha García
février 2021...

LIBERTAD DE EXPRESIÓN

El arte que censuran las redes sociales

Para señalar el veto, la campaña «Don't delete art» recoge las obras de arte que eliminan de Facebook o Instagram, denunciando el consecuente «efecto nefasto para los artistas emergentes»

CONCHA GARCÍA

Creada: 01.02.2021 10:50
Última actualización: 01.02.2021 10:50



Imagínese que dedica horas, días o, no importa, minutos, a producir una obra artística. Una pieza que ha sido fruto de su trabajo y que transmite una idea, sea cual sea, pues ese es el «late motiv» del arte: expresar, denunciar, impresionar, comunicar, evitando dañar. Luego, imagínese que quiere difundir su creación, porque quizá su intención es vivir de ello, y, para su sorpresa, no puede, porque ciertos algoritmos deciden censurarla en las redes sociales. Esta eliminación del arte es la que se produce, a diario, en **Instagram, Facebook o Tik Tok**. Unas advertencias que, desde la red social, **informan al usuario de que su obra no se puede ver, por motivos que nada tienen que ver con el significado original de la pieza**. Las redes sociales censuran el arte y, para evitarlo, ha nacido una iniciativa tan interesante como necesaria. Se trata de una página web que funciona como antídoto a este veto, y cuyo lema es que, en el arte, todo cabe: **«Don't delete art» («No elimines el arte»)**.

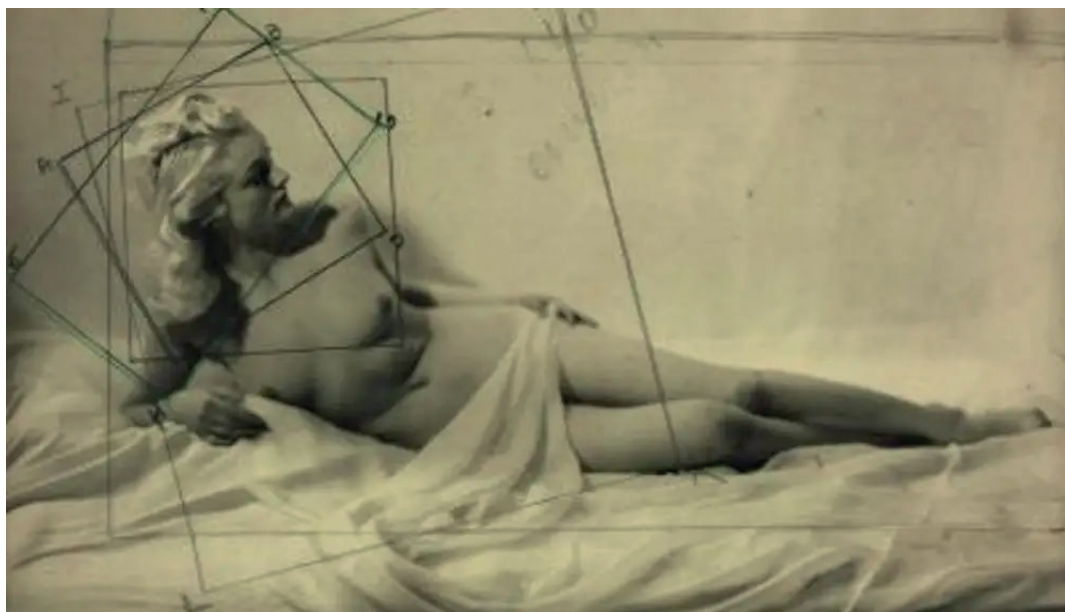
El objetivo de esta campaña es recoger todas aquellas pinturas, fotografías o esculturas que, aunque puedan exhibirse en un museo o galería, son eliminadas por las redes sociales. «Los guardianes digitales que controlan las plataformas más grandes del mundo tienen un enorme poder para determinar qué contenido puede circular libremente y qué debería prohibirse», explican sus creadores. Por ello, denuncian que ese poder se ejerce **«de una manera, a menudo, caótica y demasiado amplia»**, pues el contenido no solo se suele eliminar bajo «pautas comunitarias demasiado restrictivas y, a veces, poco claras», sino que también



LARAZÓN

La Razón
Concha García
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«desaparece» de las búsquedas. Es como si, en lugar de admirar la pincelada suave y la vitalidad de los detalles de **«Las tres gracias» de Rubens**, nos centráramos en que se muestran desnudos.



▲Fotografía de Laure Albin Guillot (1940) Don't delete art

O que el espectador, en vez de perderse en la iconografía que contiene **«El jardín de las delicias», de El Bosco**, se espantara por contener escenas lujuriosas y lascivas. Y, como consecuencia de esas reacciones carentes de sentido, el Museo del Prado decidiera descolgar estas obras de arte de su colección. Es una situación tan impensable como ilógica. Por ello, sorprende que esto se produzca en pleno siglo XXI y, precisamente, **desde aquel espacio que más presume de independencia y que, por tanto, menos esperaríamos: el de las redes sociales.**

Una cultura «hipócrita»

De esta manera, siendo el arte la mayor vía para reclamar la normalidad frente a ciertas realidades que, desafortunadamente, siguen siendo tabús en nuestra sociedad, la campaña busca mostrar todos los tipos de obras de arte posibles. Por ejemplo, de Instagram también eliminó **una acuarela de Reuben Negrón porque «infringía las normas de la comunidad»**. Se trata de una obra en la que dos hombres aparecen abrazados, desnudos y sentados en un sofá. El artista explica que «originalmente publiqué esta imagen para promocionar la exposición donde



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se encuentra actualmente». Ante su eliminación, denuncia que **«la censura de las obras de arte obstaculiza la voz y la creación del artista para minar su carrera.** En un mundo donde se realizan tantos negocios online, el poder de las redes sociales de lo que se ve y lo que no afecta directamente al sustento de todos los artistas del mundo». Por su parte, es curioso otro caso de Instagram, en el que se deshicieron de una composición realizada por **un conjunto de pastillas rosadas,** dispuestas de tal manera que formaban una cara sonriente. La realizó Loz City, y tampoco fue la primera vez que le desaprobaban una obra. De hecho, el artista reclama cómo le censuraron por la misma idea que denuncia la propia obra: se eliminó por «ventas de bienes ilegales o regulados» una imagen que rechaza «la cultura hipócrita de las drogas y la medicina en la sociedad en la que vivimos».

Ante esta caótica contradicción y, en la mayoría de las veces, fruto de malentendidos, «Don't delete art» se muestra firme en su cometido y sugiere soluciones: **«Las plataformas deben tomar medidas para asegurarse de que no se silencien a los artistas,** y una opción es verificar sus cuentas y, luego, someterlas a un nivel diferente de escrutinio algorítmico». Es decir, un cambio que haga que las redes sociales sean, en lugar de un saco repleto de «fake news» y otros contenidos inútiles, un nuevo campo donde disfrutar y aprender del infinito y maravilloso mundo del arte.



Beautiful Bizarre Magazine
Luke W. Barratt
décembre 2020...



REUBEN NEGRÓN

STRIPPED BARE

reubenegron.com // words by Luke W. Barratt

For you to be where you are right now, your hands gripping the edges of this magazine and your eyes focussing on each successive word as this sentence unfolds before your eyes, it was necessary for every single event which has occurred in your life so far to happen in the precise way in which it happened. At the time, many of the events befalling us may seem random, mundane or even adverse. But in hindsight, the inconsequential can be revealed to be consequential, the mundane to be significant, the set-back to be new opportunity and weakness to be strength. The random events of today will form a causal chain connecting us, guiding us, even leading us, to our future selves.

Whether they be dyslexia, the games we played with ourselves as children, an encounter with a homeless man or a friend coming out, these experiences all shape us in ways which we will only understand later. The specifics vary from person to person but the phenomena is one which we all have in common and which none of us can escape from.

This is a story about the American watercolour virtuoso, Reuben Negrón. It is not the only story that could be told, no doubt there are others, but it is the one which bubbled to the surface today.



The story culminates with his body of work investigating human nature, individuality, identity and desire. Much of Reuben's investigation focusses on what happens behind closed doors, in the hours between arriving home and venturing outside once more. His paintings imply a rich narrative, as if they were stills from the motion picture of life which plays out away from the prying gaze of those around us, his brush proving just as effective as Sir David Attenborough's best hidden camera.

We would all have our own impressions and assumptions about watercolours. For me, I cannot think about watercolours without instinctively imagining the dried-out circular, powdery patches of dehydrated paints from my own childhood, the diluted colours, the inevitable drips and paper which buckles and crinkles like fingertips after a long bath. This is where Reuben works his magic. The phenomenal realism which Reuben achieves with his watercolors borders on photographic perfection. The 'wow' factor is undeniable.

But let's rewind the tape. This story began with the birth of a boy into a close-knit family unit which worked hard for what little money they



Beautiful Bizarre Magazine

Luke W. Barratt

...décembre 2020...



opposite page, top
Persephone: A Myth Of Devotion N°5, 2020
Watercolor on paper mounted on aluminum panel, 16" x 12"

opposite page, bottom
Ophelia N°3, 2019
Watercolor on paper mounted on aluminum composite panel, 20" x 15"

top left
Twisting Breath Escapes, 2018
Watercolor on paper mounted on wood panel, 12" x 16"

bottom left
Unjust Contentment N°1, 2020
Watercolor on paper mounted on aluminum panel, 16" x 12"

right
Persephone: A Myth Of Devotion N°1, 2018
Watercolor on paper mounted on aluminum panel, 16" x 12"



had, creating a happy household that was rich in the sorts of family experiences that happen when you grow up surrounded by love, with grandparents, uncles and cousins all living in the same apartment building.

The boy was born with a wide-eyed fascination for the lives of others and grew into a teenager who struggled through the dyslexia nobody knew he had; and the teenager became the man Reuben is today: gifted artist, articulate, intelligent, humble and humorous. Speaking with Reuben, it quickly becomes apparent that he has acquired a deep wisdom concerning matters of human nature and a genuine empathy and tenderness for others. If the viewer is up to the challenge, Reuben's paintings may even inspire an epiphany within the viewer which reveals something about their own nature.



Dyslexia meant that reading and numerical mathematics were a struggle for the young Reuben, but he was spared a capacity for geometry. At the time, the young Reuben was not to know that his ability to think spatially and to work with shapes would become the basis for his future career.

Like an invisible hand, Reuben's undiagnosed dyslexia guided him towards reading graphic novels, dodging the heavy word-count of more traditional literature and subtly sparking an interest in sketching along the way. A darker-than-expected novel about a particular caped crusader, set amidst the underworld of child sex tourism, stirred Reuben. It became the spark which lit a fire, setting him on a course of raising awareness about hidden truths and stories which the broader public is either unaware of or turns a blind eye to.

When one of Reuben's childhood friends came out as Transgender, Reuben started thinking deeply about all the countless untold private



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stories which people have. "I was struck by the amount of energy - the effort it took - to conceal her truth from us for so long, even as we were daily fixtures in each other's lives growing up. It solidified my resolve to be open to others' experiences, to ask questions and to share what I learned from others' narratives in whatever capacity I could, so that we all might learn from one another and cultivate a dialog of mutual understanding."

Reuben's childhood had primed him for this sort of empathetic reaction and curiosity: partly nature, partly nurture. As a child, Reuben used to play a game which he invented while sitting in the back of his parent's car. "I would stare out the window at the people in the cars driving the other way on the other side of the road. I would find a face, and lock eyes with them, and try to imagine what it was like being them, looking through their eyes, back at me. I would imagine the conversations they were having in their car, the music that was playing and the smell of their car. I have always wanted to know the stories of others so we can better understand each other." Reuben also remembers going for a walk one night with his father through Chinatown, near SoHo. "We walked past a homeless man who was sleeping. My father stopped and he wanted me to look at the homeless man. I remember him saying, "There but for the grace of God go I." It taught me that everybody has their own lived experiences and we are fortunate to have ours."



left
Of His Golden Hour, 2019
Watercolor on paper mounted
on wood panel, 24" x 18"

top right
*Retracing A Path Of Earth
And Stone*, 2017
Charcoal on paper, 22" x 30"

middle right
Untitled (Morganne N°1), 2016
Watercolor on paper mounted
on panel, 12" x 12"

bottom right
Like Crashing Waves At My Ear, 2017
Charcoal on paper, 30" x 22"

opposite page, top
*Sharp Outlines Cut Against
The Hour*, 2018
Watercolor on paper mounted
on wood panel, 12" x 16"

opposite page, bottom
Unjust Contentment N°2, 2020
Watercolor on paper mounted
on aluminum panel, 16" x 12"

"I didn't set out from the beginning thinking I would deal with sexuality in my art - it was only through very vulnerable conversations with people that I began to realize that most of what people felt they were hiding or wishing to convey more openly had to do with their sexual identity and experiences."

Reuben feels that, a decade ago, conversations about sexuality and sexual identity had become normalised and were taking place within families and amongst friends. However, Reuben believes the tide has changed and art is the canary in the mine. "We have turned a corner regarding how work is perceived. The gallery world was much more open to nudes and works exploring sexuality ten years ago. Now some of that work is considered extreme or explicit"

Facebook and Instagram are implicated. "Their rules about what is allowed is subconsciously dictating taste. We are no longer being confronted with





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"I RESOLVED TO BE OPEN TO OTHERS' EXPERIENCES, TO ASK QUESTIONS AND TO SHARE WHAT I LEARNED FROM OTHERS' NARRATIVES IN WHATEVER CAPACITY I COULD"

images that challenge us in that respect and, as a result, we don't have the same level of tolerance or even curiosity about it."

This is a shame, because the viewer performs a crucial role in imbuing a piece with meaning. "An artistic work is only complete when a viewer sees it. The viewer brings their own story into the interpretation of an artistic work. What the viewer brings to it is part of the work."

As you glance at the surrounding images of Reuben's work, take notice of the sentiment within your reactions and interpretations. Do you see subjects



who are lonely and melancholy? Or do you see contentment and comfort with one's own company and simple pleasures, like the warmth of sunshine falling across your face? Do you see authentic beauty or a forced depiction of real bodies in a woke world? Do you see boredom, shame and regret or relaxation and exhaustion following intimate exertion? Who's coming and who's going? All these readings are possible, but the sentiments you are experiencing come from you. And this is the moment where Reuben has revealed something about you: what is it from your past that led you to reach that interpretation?

Some of Reuben's paintings can provoke strong reactions amongst conservative viewers. "My hope is that someone with a prejudicial stance will take the time to live with it and ask questions about themselves about why they feel that way."

In the end, Reuben, his models, the viewers, you and I have all been stripped bare - just a little.

Reuben Negron is represented by Blue Spiral 1, Asheville, NC, USA and H Gallery, Paris, France.

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RÉPONSES PHOTO

Réponses Photo
février 2020

The Myth of Devotion



Du 31 jan 2020 au 04 avr 2020

Exposition de Reuben Negrón

Pour sa deuxième exposition personnelle à H Gallery, Reuben Negrón, l'un des aquarellistes américains les plus virtuoses de sa génération, examine certains grands mythes au travers de poèmes. Il remet en question la façon dont l'Occident prétend aimer en redonnant une place particulière au personnage souvent exploité par ces récits : la femme.

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Point
contemporain

Point Contemporain
Valerie Toubas et Daniel Guionnet
22 janvier 2020...

janvier 22, 2020

REUBEN NEGRÓN – THE MYTH OF DEVOTION – 30/01 AU 05/04 – H
GALLERY, PARIS



EXPOSITION PERSONNELLE **THE MYTH OF DEVOTION** DE **REUBEN NEGRÓN** JUSQU'AU 05 AVRIL 2020 À
H GALLERY, PARIS.

Vernissage le jeudi 30 janvier 2020 de 18h à 21h30

Pour sa deuxième exposition personnelle à H Gallery, Reuben Negrón, l'un des aquarellistes américains les plus virtuoses de sa génération, examine certains grands mythes au travers de poèmes. Il remet en question la façon dont l'Occident prétend aimer en redonnant une place particulière au personnage souvent le plus exploité par ces récits : la femme.

Il existe beaucoup d'histoires entourant l'amour et la romance : des histoires de passion et de dévotion, d'épreuves et de courage mais également des histoires de conflits, de folie, d'obsessions et de sacrifices. Pour sa deuxième exposition personnelle à H Gallery, Reuben Negrón, l'un des aquarellistes américains les plus virtuoses de sa génération, examine certaines de ces histoires et remet en question la façon dont nous « savons aimer » en redonnant une place particulière au personnage souvent le plus exploité par ces mêmes récits : la femme.

Cette série s'attache aux femmes de légendes, qu'elles soient des muses, des héroïnes ou de grandes amoureuses. Elle est, à la fois, une étude et une critique de la façon dont, dans notre civilisation occidentale, ces femmes sont définies seulement par leur relation, par leur histoire avec leur partenaire masculin, tels Hamlet et Ophélie, Hadès et Perséphone, Pygmalion et Galatée. Leur mythe semble écrit en creux, comme s'il était un négatif photographique, une partie d'une histoire mâle et non un positif direct, une légende complète. Sans compter que le résultat de ces relations tumultueuses s'avère souvent toxique, tragique voir létal.

Né d'un désir de recadrer ces histoires depuis le point de vue des femmes, Reuben Negrón replace l'héroïne, la muse, la maîtresse, au centre de la narration. Les thèmes et compositions classiques sont réadaptées à un contexte moderne. Une attention particulière est portée à l'intimité du moment, offrant assez d'espace au sujet, pour que celui-ci ne soit plus défini uniquement dans le cadre du contexte fourni par son homologue mâle.

Le propos de Reuben Negrón va au-delà du mythe pour questionner le rapport entre l'homme et la femme. Il s'intéresse, par-dessus tout, à des êtres humains de chair et de sang, à leur place dans nos sociétés, à des réalités complexes. Ses déesses ne sont, par conséquent, pas des femmes idéales ou idéalisées mais des êtres quotidiens, tragiques et beaux, que le regard du peintre sait nous donner à voir et dont il a le talent d'en faire émaner la plus grande force.

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Valerie Toubas et Daniel Guionnet

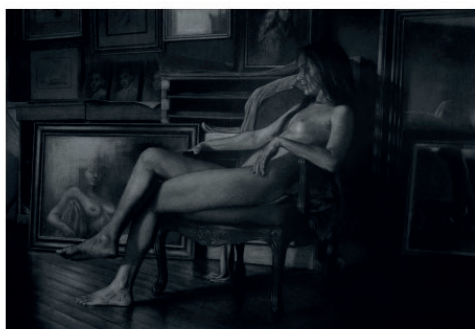
...22 janvier 2020

Pour Reuben Negrón, les recherches qu'il mène, autant sur le terrain que dans la littérature ou dans divers milieux et cultures, nourrissent son œuvre de façon primordiale voire séminale. Dans le cas de cette série, chaque œuvre est donc inspirée d'un poème. Par exemple, les Ophélie de Negrón évoquent directement l'*Ophélie* d'Arthur Rimbaud (1870) et *A Myth of Devotion* est inspiré par un poème du même nom de Louise Glück.



Reuben Negrón, *Odalisque (Catherine #2)*, 2018
Aquarelle sur papier marouflé sur panneau de bois
Diam. 45,75

Reuben Negrón est né en 1979 à Orlando en Floride. Il a vécu et travaillé à New York pendant quinze ans et depuis peu, il vit et travaille à Asheville en Caroline du Nord. Reuben est diplômé du Maryland Institute College of Art de Baltimore (Licence Beaux-Arts) et de la prestigieuse School of Visual Arts de New York City (Master Beaux-Arts). Jeune artiste contemporain américain, il est connu pour la virtuosité inénarrable de ses aquarelles figuratives. Le travail de Reuben explore la psychologie de ses sujets, en se concentrant sur l'identité, la sexualité et la narration personnelle ainsi que sur la transparence des matériaux, la qualité de la chair, les jeux de lumières et d'espace. Ses aquarelles ont été exposées à travers les Etats-Unis, avec récemment des expositions à New York, San Francisco et Miami. Son travail est souvent apparu dans la presse dans des magazines comme Vogue, Juxtapoz, Time Out New York, PoetsArtists, Manifeste, DevoraRan ou Playboy



Reuben Negrón, *Galatea #1*, 2020
Fusain sur papier monté sur aluminium, 112 x 76 cm



ASHEVILLE MADE
celebrating local makers

Asheville Made
décembre 2019 - janvier 2020

ASHEVILLE MADE

celebrating local makers

GALLERY HAPPENINGS

Reuben Negrón, All Star

Blue Spiral 1

Opening Reception:
Jan. 10, 5-8pm
Exhibit runs Jan. 10-Feb. 28

A ten-year-reunion show at Blue Spiral 1's Lower Level Gallery brings together 18 represented artists. All of them were invited to join the gallery after inclusion in one of its annual "Into the Blue" exhibits. Started a decade ago, the shows are held around the first of the year to debut artists new to the venue. Participants for "All Stars" are: Chris Ahalt, Luke Allsbrook, Ele Annand, Robert Burch, Lilian Garcia-Roig, Charles Keiger, Bill Killebrew, Connie Lippert, Mitchell Lonas, Douglas Miller, Reuben Negrón, Alberto Ortega, Isaac Payne, Michael Pones, Deborah Rogers, Brad Sells, Kirsten Stingle, and Katie Walker.

One of the All Stars, Reuben Negrón, best known for his extremely detailed, figurative watercolor paintings, says, "It was a complete and unexpected honor when Blue Spiral 1 asked to continue working with me after this past year's invitational — and, quite frankly, I'm glad I accepted.



Faint promises lead the hand - Reuben Negrón

"As an artist, Asheville has been a wonderful place to live and work," he continues. "It's one of the few places I've lived where being a creative is treated with respect, and while that may seem small, living in an environment where your career is legitimized by those around you goes a long way to foster wellbeing."

Negrón's works focus on the personal narratives of his subjects, exploring sexuality, identity, and mental health. His

raw use of imagery and visual storytelling have gotten him featured in galleries and publications across the world.

For the local show, Negrón will display the first major body of work he created after moving to Asheville five years ago. "It's a visual poem of sorts — meant to be finished by the viewer — touching on themes of desire, metamorphosis, memory, and mortality," he discloses. "It's some of the most personal work I've created to date."

Blue Spiral 1
38 Biltmore Ave.
Asheville
www.bluespiral1.com
828-251-0202



Like crashing waves at my ear - Reuben Negrón



These small remembrances - Reuben Negrón

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Beautiful Bizarre Magazine

2019

INPRNT Traditional Art Award Finalists Announced

Beautiful Bizarre Art Prize 2019

The final votes to determine the Winners of the 2019 Beautiful Bizarre Art Prize are now being cast! Our sincere thanks to the **Jury Panel** and particularly the Category Judges: Tom Bagshaw [Digital Art], Jeremy Geddes [Traditional Art], Haris Nukem [Photography] and Crystal Morey [Sculpture] for giving their time, expertise and experience to the Jury Panel.

We are very grateful to all the artists who entered and shared their work with us. It has been a pleasure to be able to discover the work of so many gifted artists across all genres and static mediums.

“ New Awards added in each category! 1st Prize + now also 2nd and 3rd Prize Winners will be awarded in each category.

As you have seen from our blog posts and social media shares since the Art Prize opened on 1 February, the entries to the 2019 Beautiful Bizarre Art Prize have been truly exceptional! With so many amazing entries, Beautiful Bizarre Magazine has decided to award not just an overall 1st Prize Winner, and 1st Prizes Winners in each category, but also a 2nd and 3rd Prize Winner in each Award category! This means we will announce the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Prize Winners in the Sculpture Award on 21 October via this website and the Beautiful Bizarre Magazine social media, then the Stocksy United Photography Award 1st, 2nd and 3rd Prize Winners on 22 October, Digital Art Award 1st, 2nd and 3rd Prize Winners on 23 October, the INPRNT Traditional Art Award 1st, 2nd and 3rd Prize Winners on 24 October, and finally the 2019 Beautiful Bizarre Art Prize 1st Prize Winner, three Honourable Mentions and Peoples Choice Winner on 25 October.



Reuben Negrón

“Ophelia” [Watercolour on paper mounted on aluminium panel, 24” x 24”]

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American art collector
janvier 2018...



AMERICAN art COLLECTOR



UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / CHARLESTON, SC
January 5-February 23, 2018

Robert Lange Studios
2 Queen Street | Charleston, SC 29401
(843) 805-8052 | www.robertlangestudios.com

The color of water

This January 5, Robert Lange Studios will premiere their group show *The Color of Water*, featuring 20 contemporary watercolor artists from around the globe. Each artist will create multiple works exemplifying their specific style, genre and subject matter. Participating artists include **Dylan Scott Pierce**, **Reuben Negron**, **Alexandra Becker-Black**, **Mario Robinson**, **Michiyo Fukushima** and **Kerry Simmons**, to mention but a few. The exhibition will hang through February 23.

"Local favorite Mary Whyte is responsible for introducing me to contemporary watercolor painting," explains gallery owner and artist Robert Lange. "Before seeing her work, I was unaware of how versatile watercolor could

be, and since that day I've wanted to bring together a group of contemporary painters that are using the medium and choosing subject matter that truly propels the genera forward."

Robinson recently began to incorporate rural subjects into his pieces, with each being personal in selection and execution. "As the work progresses, my relationship with the sitter develops, and a uniquely personal story begins to evolve," he explains. "I frequently depict subjects framed within the context of their daily lives. The underlying narrative counters sentimentality and serves as the underpinning for my figurative images."

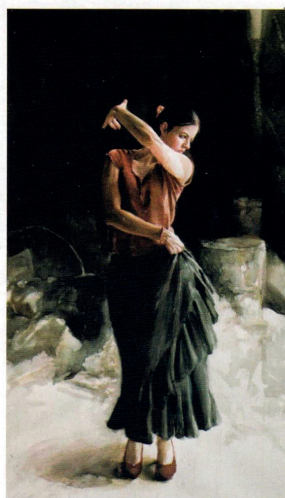
Artist Negron uses his watercolors to create a visual narrative. "I've long been interested in using art to tell stories," he

explains. "Beyond the larger ideas that hold up contemporary art, an image's ability to transport me into a narrative has always resonated most. Taking a page from those I've worked with in the past, this new series allows me to turn my lens inward for the first time to tell my own personal narrative."

His piece *Untitled (Catherine no. 1)*—a bright, bold snapshot of a nude woman lounging in her sitting room—uses carefully positioned objects and the subject's body language to create a sense of passing time. "Each image in this new body of work is approached as a passage (and in some cases a full chapter) in what is essentially a visual novella. Over the next year or so, this series will touch on themes of loss, sexuality, memory and discovery—



1



2

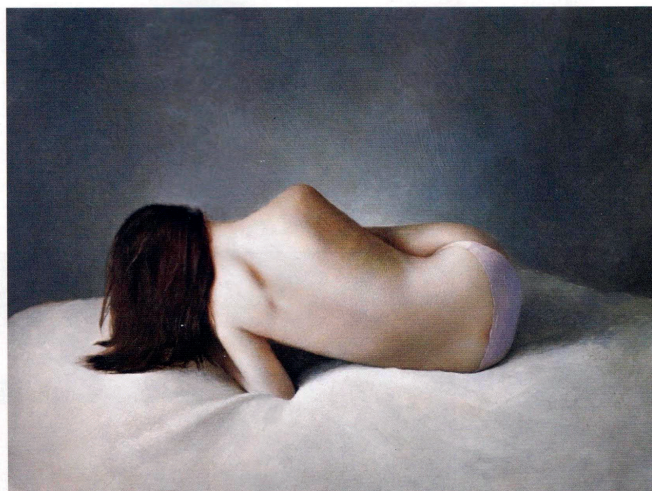
- 1 Alexandra Becker-Black, *Boy*, watercolor on paper, 24 x 18"
- 2 Suzy Schultz, *Dancing in the Ruins*, watercolor on paper, 40 x 23"
- 3 Kerry Simmons, *Frost*, watercolor drybrush on paper, 9 x 12½"
- 4 Reuben Negron, *Untitled (Catherine no. 1)*, watercolor on paper, 18"



American art collector
...janvier 2018



AMERICAN art COLLECTOR



"We hope to inspire people with these kinds of shows. If you are a watercolorist, perhaps you'll find renewed inspiration for your medium of choice and if you are a collector, perhaps you will purchase your first watercolor piece."

—Robert Lange, owner and artist, Robert Lange Studios

all while pushing and expanding my relationship with watercolor, and finding ways to utilize the medium in a manner that challenges public perception of what it can or should be."

According to Becker-Black, who paints portraits of contemporary figures, "watercolor is a delicate medium with a powerful impact. Every mark must be a deliberate decision, because there is no undoing what has already been done. It's a slow and challenging dance that at first was very difficult and had a lot of disadvantages. But now I only see advantages."

Her piece *Boy* layers liquid to create a texturing that emphasizes the medium. "As a watercolorist, I am forced to work in the moment, to consider every stroke that I make and to proceed with confidence and grace, even if I know that a large painting could be ruined at any moment because of one mistake. I feel that working with

watercolor keeps me focused on the true meaning of what each painting is and urges me to remove everything but the key elements. It's a beautiful dance that I wouldn't trade for any other medium."



says the artist.

Many of Becker-Black's pieces have large areas of negative space around a single figure. She says, "I'm magnetized by the power of simplicity. I think the best stories of any kind are the ones with just enough detail to deliver a message, but still enough space to leave some mystery. Whether it be a painting, a song, a film or a novel, I love art that makes us wonder."

At Robert Lange Studios, the exhibition is about celebrating watercolor, its uniqueness and its future as a medium. "We have really tried to find artists with unique voices for our group exhibits," says Lange. "No two are alike in their approach, and specifically for this watercolor exhibit we wanted to find painters that didn't create traditional watercolor scenes."

The Charleston, South Carolina-based gallery will host a public reception with music, wine and hors d'oeuvres on February 2 from 6 to 8 p.m. ●

PREVIEW

111

American Art Collector, January 2018

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CULTURA INQUIETA

Cultura Inquieta
20 janvier 2017...



CULTURA INQUIETA



INICIO ARTE FOTOGRAFÍA ERÓTICA ESTIMULANTE LIFESTYLE CINE AGENDA FESTIVAL SHOP



DIRTY DIRTY LOVE POR REUBEN NEGRON

20 Enero 2017 PINTURA

PUBLICIDAD

LO + VISTO



Reuben Negrón es un pintor que actualmente reside en Asheville, Carolina del Norte. Él explica su serie *Dirty Dirty Love*, diciendo:

"Explorando el sexo, la sexualidad y la identidad como conceptos, Dirty Dirty Love es una serie aún en curso que pivota en torno a mis interacciones con individuos y parejas en el ámbito doméstico y privado."

Cada imagen muestra encuentros reales que representan la naturaleza vulnerable del sexo más allá de las visiones sensacionalistas que encontramos en los principales medios.



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Los modelos son todos voluntarios, atraídos por el proyecto por sus propias razones, pero motivados a compartir su intimidad con los demás. El trabajo comienza con una conversación a puerta cerrada entre el modelo(s) y yo mientras exploramos los matices de lo que los hace ser como son. A partir de ahí doy un paso atrás y adopto el rol de documentalista, observando en silencio sus comportamientos. Las imágenes resultantes son una mirada privilegiada y despojada de glamour sobre cómo vivimos cuando pensamos que nadie está mirando".



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...20 janvier 2017



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HUFFPOST

The Huffington Post US
Daniel Maldman
24 octobre 2016

THE BLOG 10/24/2016 03:06 pm ET | Updated Oct 24, 2016

Didi Menendez's 'Chévere'



By Daniel Maldman



Reuben Negron, *Chris and Mario* | watercolor on paper | 36 x 48 inches | 2016

Reuben Negron, a Latino artist raised in a white community, has struggled over the years to distinguish an authentic sense of his Latino heritage from ideas about it derived from his surrounding culture. As a human being, he continues to work toward a serenity he has long since reached in his artwork. His watercolors evoke scenes of luminous, sunlit domesticity. They have the stillness of home, of being at home. His people are generally caught in scenes of the eroticism of those well along the path of commitment to life together. In *Chris and Mario*, a couple fools around on an enclosed porch. The uncurtained windows expose them to public view, but their focus and activity are private. They are, of course, gay, transgressing against expectations of masculinity which Negron does not find authentic to his experience of Latino-ness. They are lost in each other, and in the enjoyment of a vivid present. Negron evokes this overwhelming, ripe present with his eye for detail, his patient and loving observation of those tiny elements which make a scene recognizably itself: the reflection of windows in the curved glass of a television screen, the exact shapes of wooden furniture legs, the cool shadows of a plant pot, the different lusters of various cushions, the rippling of an old rug. The scene is anchored in the minute, the specific, and the real, and this anchoring liberates its emotional core to represent any such scene among lifetime partners glimpsed in their home.

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JUXTAPOZ

Juxtapoz Magazine
29 mars 2016

PAINTING

DIRTY DIRTY LOVE AND THIS HOUSE OF GLASS

March 29, 2016



A visual exploration of sexual identity, [Reuben Negrón's Dirty Dirty Love](#) series is an on-going series pivoting around real-life interactions with individuals and couples in intimate and domestic settings. The models, all drawn to the project for reasons of their own, reveal themselves in vulnerable moments that challenge staid perceptions of sexual acts.

Read more below



All volunteers, each model brings their own experience to the project, crafting a varied approach to the discussion of sexual self-concept. Each piece begins as a conversation between the model (or models) and myself as we explore the nuances of what makes them who they are behind closed doors. The resulting images are a privileged and deglamorized exposé on how we live when we think no one is watching.

Evolving from the photo-journalistic sensibilities of *Dirty Dirty Love*, his more recent series, *This House of Glass*, is an intimate exploration of what we keep hidden from others - and in many cases, what we hide from ourselves. Working with volunteers, I interviewed each model about the relationship between their public lives and personal history; specifically focusing on sensitive and vulnerable details they normally keep veiled. Through this process their personal narratives were dismantled and reconstructed into the watercolors seen here. Staged in the model's own home or place of particular meaning, each painting is a cumulative experience not meant to document a singular instance but to illustrate the entirety of the model's story.

REUBEN NEGRON PAINTING NUDE EROTICA NSFW

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The Huffington Post US

John Seed

19 mars 2016

HUFFPOST

THE BLOG 03/19/2016 01:22 pm ET | Updated Mar 21, 2016

Empathy, Humanism and Liberalism: Today's Realism is Anything But Conservative

 By John Seed



Reuben Negron, *Aida*, 2013, Watercolor on Arches Cold Press Paper, 20x16 in.

“I am greatly interested in examining identity and how it manifests in one’s public and private personas. Much of my work deals with body politics, physical and mental health, gender identity, and sexual identity. My source material comes from interviews I conduct with the models about their personal lives and experiences. I work with them to showcase their narrative as a means to promote open dialog about the topics at hand and give a voice to those typically underrepresented in representational art.”

- Reuben Negron

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PoetsArtists
WWW.POETSANDARTISTS.COM

Poets Artists
Didi Menendez
12 mars 2016...



FREAK OUT!! Reuben Negron

FREAK OUT!! EXHIBITION

Reuben Negron is a contemporary artist best known for his highly detailed, figurative watercolor paintings. Negron's work explores the psychology of his subjects, focusing on identity, sexuality and personal narrative.

Negron is a graduate of the Maryland Institute College of Art (BFA) and the School of Visual Arts (MFA). His watercolors have been exhibited internationally, with notable exhibitions most recently in New York, San Francisco, and Miami. Negron's work has been featured by Vogue, Juxtapoz, Time Out New York, PoetsArtists, Manifesto, Devora Ran, and Playboy, among others.

Do you remember the 1970's and if so what are three highlights of that time frame for you?

I was born in 1979 so I never experienced it directly - but I was raised on an eclectic mix of seventies music. Stevie Wonder, the Bee Gees, Earth, Wind & Fire, Barry White and Curtis Mayfield were played just as frequently as Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Jethro Tull, Queen and The Allman Brothers. That was the soundtrack of my childhood.

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Tell us about the artwork you are submitting for the exhibition.

My three watercolors are inspired by the undulating, trance-inducing electronic rhythm of Donna Summer's "I Feel Love." I've always been drawn to that song's slow and steady melodic build. It seems to draw out this latent energy that radiates in all directions and swirls around the dance floor. It's repetitive mantra is hypnotic to the point of meditation. Summer's voice is that of a siren, calling you to open your arms and accept just as much love as you give. In trying to capture that I knew I'd have to let go and allow the medium dictate what the art became. And so here we have three maiden of the dance; three sirens a blaze with their own energy, naked and calling you to join them in the maelstrom.

Do you use photography as a reference for your artwork?

Yes, I used old photos of models I'd previously worked with in the past. These are images I hadn't seen in several years.

Do you listen to music while you work?

All the time. I paint to the tempo of the music I'm listening to at the moment. When I need to take my time work my way through a complicated portion of a painting I'll listen to thoughtful, complex and downtempo beats. When I'm in a time crunch and I need to speed things up or inject a bit of energy into a painting I opt for harder, pounding, uptempo music.

How do you see the current state of the art market in response to your body of work?

My normal body of work centers around personal narratives that tackle what some may consider to be difficult topics (sexuality, mental and physical health, identity). That being said, I've been very fortunate to make a living off what I do. The collectors I've gained over the years tend to be invested beyond the face value of the work. These there pieces, however, are a sizable departure from what I'm known for so It will be interesting to see how they are received by "the market."



PoetsArtists
WWW.POETSANDARTISTS.COM

Poets Artists
Didi Menendez
... 12 mars 2016

Have you experience a eureka moment while working on the artwork for Freak Out?

The entire process of working on my contributions to Freak OUT! was an exercise in relinquishing control and feeling more than thinking. I had several revelations about the practical application of the medium as well as some insight into how my work will evolve moving forward. All in all letting go allowed me to explore avenues I hadn't previously had the opportunity to try. It was a learning experience from beginning to end.

What collections would you like your work to end up in?

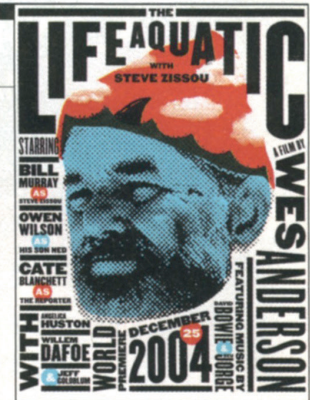
I don't have my sights on any particular institutional collections. I just want my work to find homes with people who appreciate the statements I'm making and can help further the dialog. It's not about being popular, it's about having an impact.

DIDI MENENDEZ



Time Out New York
 Dana Varinsky
 août 2015

The Week in
 New York



The life artistic with Wes Anderson

Last month, Ken Harman, the owner and curator of San Francisco's Spoke Art gallery, created a Facebook event for a New York pop-up show of artwork inspired by Wes Anderson films. When he checked his phone the next morning, there were 10,000 R.S.V.P.s.

"That's with no promotion, no advertising," says Harman. "It's a true testament to how passionate Wes Anderson fans are."

Harman's gallery has organized five Anderson-inspired art shows, called "Bad Dads," each with an

original set of artwork custom-created for the exhibition. This is the first time the concept is coming to NYC—the show runs from Friday 7 to Sunday 9 at Chelsea's Joseph Gross Gallery and boasts 100 works from 70 artists. Parameters were loose for the commissioned pieces—artists could pick their medium (there's everything from oil paintings to sculptures), as well as the film they use for inspiration. James Charles painted Bill Murray's portrait from *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* on actual U.S. currency, while Jayde Fish

created her own line of luggage, hand-painting patterns inspired by *The Darjeeling Limited* on purses and bags.

"We actually had to create a ticketing system. We've never had to sell tickets to an art show," explains Harman. The three thousand available tickets (which ranged from \$5 to \$15) are sold out, but a waiting list is accepting names. "If someone shows up without a ticket and there's not a crazy line, we'll try to let them in," he says.



The demand may be unexpectedly high, but Harman's pop-culture-inspired art shows have been a hit in the Bay Area for years. In addition to Wes Anderson, he's put on exhibitions devoted to David Lynch, Quentin Tarantino and the Coen brothers. Harman says merging the worlds of film and visual art creates an interesting exchange between art buffs and cinephiles.

"We've had people walk into our gallery, love a painting, buy it and then ask what film it's from and go watch it," he says. (All of the pieces are listed online a week after the pop-up ends, with prices ranging from \$100 to \$4,000.) "Then we have people come in because they love Wes Anderson and get turned on to a new artist."

Of all the film-inspired shows Harman has put together, he says Anderson movies have lent themselves best to the project.

"The characters, the set design and the soundtracks converge in a way that makes it easy for a visual artist to interpret and be inspired," he says. "I don't have a least-favorite Wes Anderson film, let's put it that way." —Dana Varinsky

To see the art, visit timeout.com/nywesanderson

PHOTOGRAPHS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): HEUBEN NEGRON; MATT CHASE; DEAN STUART



JAN
16

The Artist's Gaze: Reuben Negron



Interview with Reuben Negron

The Artist's Gaze

Curated by Victoria Selbach

Sirona Fine Art Gallery

What compels you to the specific women you choose to paint?

Many of my models come to me as volunteers. Most have seen my watercolors online or in various galleries and are compelled for reasons entirely their own to be a part of the work. The majority have never even posed nude before. My work investigates the relationship between what we project in public and how we live in private. Much of the subject matter deals with body politics, sexuality, and identity. It's all very personal and requires a level of involvement from the models that goes beyond posing - it asks that they share a part of their own story in addition to their likeness.

Reuben Negron is a contemporary American painter best known for his highly detailed, intimate watercolors. His work explores themes of psychology and social politics, most recently examining gender, identity, and sexuality through visual narrative. Negron holds a BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, and a MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York. Negron exhibits nationally and internationally, most notably with shows in New York, London, Miami, France and El Salvador. His work has been featured in Manifesto Magazine, Rooms Magazine, Devora Ran, Playboy Magazine, Spectrum, and Communication Arts. Reuben Negron currently lives and works in Asheville, North Carolina.



PoetsArtists
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Poets Artists
Didi Menendez
...16 janvier 2015...

It's not easy to open up like that, especially to a stranger, so I find that all of my models, regardless of gender and age, possess a level of bravery that I admire and am immediately drawn to. In many ways I don't choose them, they choose me.

When do you know you have made a significant connection to your subject and what does that feel or look like from your perspective?

Since I work with people who aren't professional models there is an understandable awkwardness when we begin to work on a painting. Much of what I do as the artist actually revolves about establishing a safe, trusting environment where my models feel comfortable enough to drop their guard and allow their true nature to come through. With every model I've ever worked with there's a very palpable moment when that tipping point is reached and we are no longer strangers but collaborators. It's a transformative moment where we both slip into a groove and feed off of each other's energy. Ninety percent of all my art comes from that exchange.

Tell us about a strong reaction you have received to your work and the impact you sense it has made on the subject, viewer or the greater cultural landscape.

Most recently I was showing a small watercolor at Claudine Maidique Gallery at Select Fair in Miami when a woman remarked how she was so moved by seeing herself - or rather a woman with her same body type - represented amongst the high glamour and polish of Art Basel. Much of the correspondence I get about my work is from people who see themselves reflected in the faces and stories I paint. Complete strangers have opened up to me about illnesses, past traumas, personal conflicts and a bevy of other empathetic reactions. It touches me - it's the best proof I could receive that what I'm doing matters and is successful in some degree. I make it a point to write

back to every person that reaches out to me and thank them for sharing a piece of their story with me. It's the most rewarding part of what I do.



What is it about your personal journey that has brought your gaze to focus so deeply on women.

In an ideal world I would paint men and women in equal frequency - but because I rely on volunteers rather than professional models I am beholden to those who wish to be a part of what I do. For whatever reason, women tend to be more apt to collaborate on pieces together.

Perhaps it's that women and men are raised to think and feel differently about our bodies - especially in relation to another male... Or maybe it has to do with the ability to share openly what most men deem private. In truth, the fact that women are drawn to my work draws me to them.

Why this visual dialogue? What do you hope to accomplish through your work?

I began dealing with sexuality as a way to promote considerate dialog about taboo subjects. From there the content has grown but the goal has remained the same - dialog. I firmly believe that images can have the power to affect real change and by presenting sexuality, gender, and age in a thoughtful manner my hope is to be a spring board for that conversation to begin.

How does your subject make a change in your artist's gaze?

Each person I work with opens my eyes to a new perspective. Part of the reason I started working with personal narratives was to challenge my own views by exploring and adopting another person's frame of reference. Since the early days of Dirty Dirty Love and later with This House of Glass, I've evolved and matured as a person and artist because of this. Above all it's taught me compassion.

Tell us about your current series or work and how it may be different from the work submitted for the show.

I am still continuing my exploration of personal narratives, however, lately I've become very interested in the concept of fantasy and how it plays into our perception of self. I'm still trying to figure out how this will be incorporated into my work so I don't want to say too much... But I am pretty sure I'll have something to show by late 2015.

DIDI MENENDEZ



BOUM! BANG!

Boum ! Bang !
Bastien Stisi
29 janvier 2014...

Reuben Negrón

Au plus proche de l'intime.

Bastien Stisi

29 janvier 2014

Masochiste et soumise (« Dirty Dirty Love »), charnelle et passionnée (« The Embrace »), pudique et anecdotique (« This House Of Glass »), la thématique de la nudité apparaît chez le plasticien américain **Reuben Negrón** comme le leitmotiv central d'un travail qui expose plus qu'il n'analyse le caractère intime de la sexualité.

Confrontés à leurs espaces citadins et familiaux tout autant qu'à leur enveloppe corporelle la plus naturelle, les sujets de l'artiste trouvent tous leur origine dans le réel et sont inspirés de modèles originaux, anonymes désireux de s'affranchir des conventions modernes envisageant le nu comme un élément strictement réservé à la sphère intime et privée.

Dans une démarche de mise en scène de leur propre réalité, certains modèles semblent ainsi avoir été représentés sans modification quelconque de leur environnement journalier, à l'image de la série « This House Of Glass » qui énumère les silhouettes poseuses et conscientes avec une neutralité parfaitement prononcée. Dans une salle de bain sans relief (« Tom »), dans un appartement arty et moderne (« Tia »), dans une cuisine soignée (« Jsun »), nudité et banalité cohabitent dans une osmose normalisée.



© Reuben Negrón série This House of Glass, Tom



© Reuben Negrón série This House of Glass, Tia



© Reuben Negrón série This House of Glass, Jsun



© Reuben Negrón série This House of Glass, Aida



© Reuben Negrón série This House of Glass, Brooke



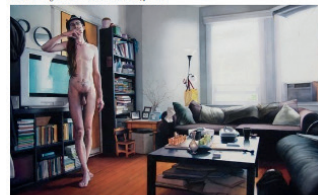
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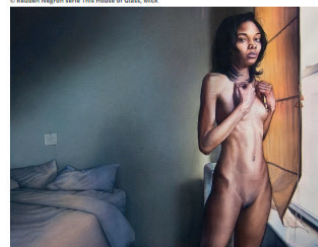
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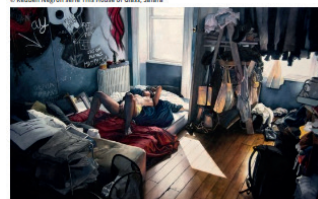
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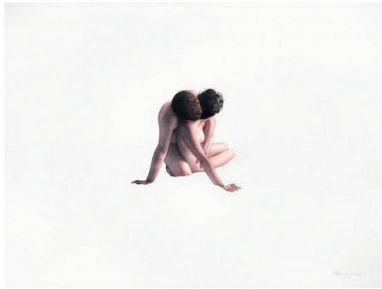
BOUM! BANG!

Boum ! Bang !

Bastien Stisi

...29 janvier 2014...

À l'opposé de cette théâtralisation sans artifices enjoliveurs, certains tableaux se rapprochent d'une peinture réaliste, presque photographique, offrant une proximité inédite entre le spectateur et les modèles, comme dans la série « The Embrace » qui accumule les étapes d'une sexualité anodine tout autant pénétrée de superbes victoires que de retentissants échecs. À force de promiscuité, le pinceau de l'américain tend aussi à tomber dans une représentation proche du voyeurisme intrusif, comme dans cette toile (« Marley ») représentant une jeune fille en train de se masturber dans l'intimité moite et foutraque d'une chambre d'adolescente post-punk.



© Reuben Negrón série The Embrace



© Reuben Negrón série The Embrace



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BOUM! BANG!

Boum ! Bang !

Bastien Stisi

...29 janvier 2014

Malgré l'immoralité de certaines de ces situations, qui tombent même parfois vers la perversité ostentatoire (certains effluves de la série « Dirty Dirty Love » pourraient rappeler à première vue les délires macabres de Patrick Bateman dans « American Psycho », la torture et les massacres sanguins en moins), l'artiste se défend de proposer une quelconque analyse psychologique de ses sujets, préférant à l'intellectualisation médicale la mise en place d'un schéma narratif relativement neutre et proche dans son équation de la bande dessinée.

Ainsi, même lorsque la série « Dirty Dirty Love » (on pourra écouter le morceau de Frank Zappa « Dirty Love » dans le même temps...) présente la satisfaction libidinale d'un couple par le biais d'un sado-masochisme affirmé (« Karin Sin I », « Karin Sin II »), le portait qu'en fait **Reuben Negrón** ne présente rien de glauque ou d'exagérément obscène. Le coloris y est sans doute pour beaucoup, ainsi que la remarquable luminosité qui transparait paradoxalement dans la plupart des scènes.



© Reuben Negrón série Dirty Dirty Love, Karin-Sin-I



© Reuben Negrón série Dirty Dirty Love, Karin-Sin-II

Les sujets de **Reuben Negrón** (dont l'on peut constater la diversité sociale via les éléments de leurs habitats) ne sont pas des cobayes mis en scène au sein d'un tableau naturaliste, mais bien les personnages d'une histoire dont l'on peut suivre l'évolution à travers les différentes séries proposées par l'artiste. On retrouve par exemple les mêmes acteurs dans la série « The Embrace » que dans « Dirty Dirty Love », qui relate l'évolution de la sexualité suggérée (tâche de vin rouge sur un sol blanc, rasoir phallique prêt à raser une joue recouverte de mousse à raser blanchie...) à la sexualité consommée.

Une histoire, surtout, qui n'inscrit pas simplement la nudité dans une stricte affaire de sexualité: les nus solitaires sont sans doute aussi nombreux chez **Reuben Negrón** que les nus doublés et confrontés au regard scrutateur d'on œil extérieur, et cette distinction n'influence en rien la beauté des corps proposés. Un corps exposé de la plus pure des manières semble en effet porter ici, et quoi qu'il arrive, une beauté originelle qu'aucun habillage ne pourra jamais parvenir à égaler...



Deviant'Art
25 janvier 2014

INTERVIEW

— with —

REUBENNEGRON

1 What are your favorite brushes, paints, paper?

REUBENNEGRON —

I prefer to use Arches Cold Press paper, typically the 300gsm weight. I also pretty much exclusively use Winsor & Newton Artist Colors. My brushes vary. I'm a fan of the Raphael Kolinsky brushed but lately I've been relying heavily on the Escoda Prado brushes. I tend to beat up my brushes so I also like the Winsor & Newton Sceptre Gold series for their affordability and durability.

2 What artists have influenced you?

REUBENNEGRON —

I've been influenced by a number of artists across several different media. My work is very narrative so I am drawn to anyone that can tell a story or convey a mood. I value empathy over technical skill. Some of my favorites (in no particular order) are Nan Goldin, Andrew Wyeth, Stevie Wonder, Stanley Kubrick, Bernardo Bertolucci, The Talking Heads, Neil Gaiman, John Gardner, Douglas Adams, Dave McKean, Kent Williams, Diego Velázquez, Gregory Crewdson and Tori Amos.

3 What drew you to watercolors?

REUBENNEGRON —

Oddly enough, I started using watercolors out of necessity rather than choice. In college I painted with oils and the fumes from the medium and thinners started giving me migraines so I switched to watercolors to avoid any longterm health issues. I've never looked back.

6 Are you a purist? Do you consider the use of gouache/masking fluid cheating?

REUBENNEGRON —

I rarely use masking fluids in my own work but that's a personal choice. The same goes for gouache. Up until very recently I'd regularly employ gouache as part of my paintings but now it's all pure watercolor. I stopped using them for color and opacity issues over anything else. As for masking fluid - I have from time to time used them but I like seeing the flaws in my work and often try to capitalize on overlaps or drips.

7 How long does your average watercolor take to paint?

REUBENNEGRON —

It depends on the size of the piece, complexity of the drawing and the weather. Some can take a few days while others have taken me months. On average I'd say I'm hovering around 2 weeks for a large-scale (40"x26") watercolor.

4 What is your favorite aspect of watercolors?

REUBENNEGRON —

I love that every time I begin a new piece it's as though I've never used the medium before. Watercolors always present a different challenge—from taking into account the humidity in the air, the quality of the paper, or the complexity of a drawing, to the mineral content of the water or the wear of my brushes... that is always some variable I can't control so I have to be flexible and quick on my toes while I paint. It's controlled chaos.

5 What do you feel is your unique technique/skill with watercolors? Weakness?

REUBENNEGRON —

I think my strength in watercolors doesn't necessarily come from a learned technique but rather a desire to challenge people's perceptions of what a watercolor can be. It's such a beautiful medium but is often relegated to second class status under oils. I enjoy creating dense, opaque watercolors that are often frustrating to create but fulfilling when they demonstrate the versatility of the paint. As for my weakness - Sometimes I wish I had someone standing behind me telling me to stop. I often find myself over-working a painting and then struggling to get back to where I was the day before.

8 With the rise of Digital Art what do you see as the future of traditional art/watercolors?

REUBENNEGRON —

Digital art is a tool, not a replacement. It has its place right along side oils, acrylics, graphite, charcoal and anything else we use to express our selves. I embrace digital art and find it new and fun and intriguing. But it's no threat to traditional mediums.

9 What question would you like to be asked?

REUBENNEGRON —

I get a lot of questions about my technique and tools and I'm also no stranger to discussing the larger, social issues that surround my work. Honestly, rather than being asked questions I love hearing how about others' reactions to my work how it affects them or how they read it. My work is only partial stories that I depend on the viewers to complete. Hearing how each painting is seen by the audience never gets old.

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MANIFESTO

Manifest Magazine

Gili Karev

juillet-août 2013...

112 MANIFESTO

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CURATE

JULY & AUGUST 2013 113



CLOSE QUARTERS

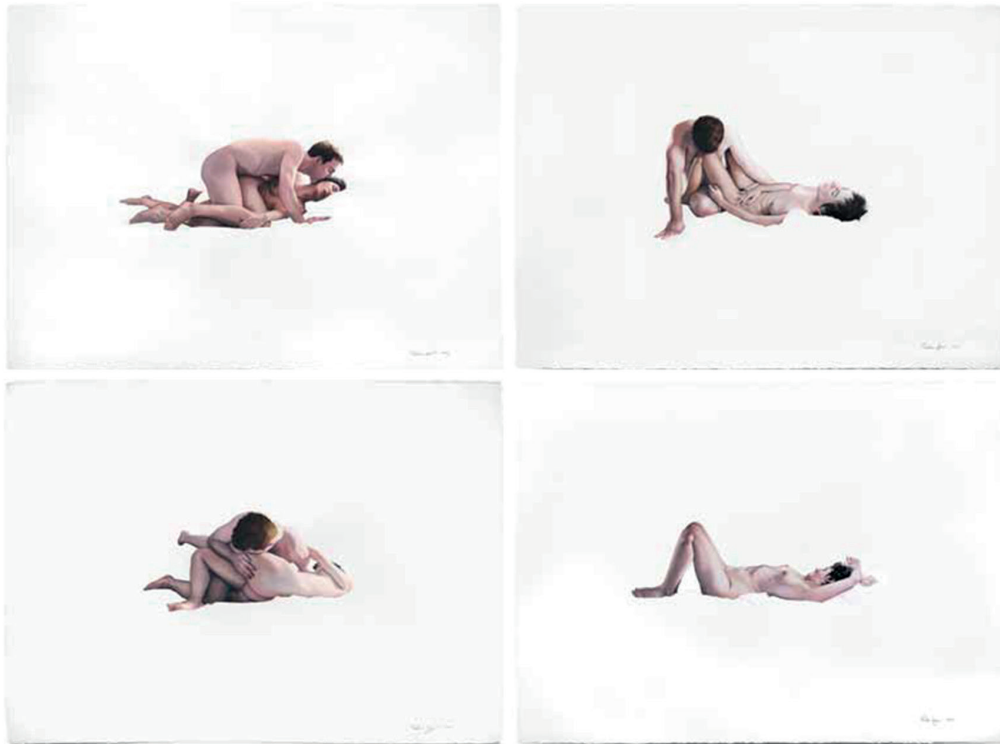
New York-based artist Reuben Negrón's watercolour paintings are casual observations of his subjects in their most intimate and natural habitat. Their vulnerabilities and secrets are exposed, creating an open dialogue between sexuality and psychology.

TEXT: Gili Karev

Photo courtesy of Reuben Negrón

Black and Norm

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The Embrace

It is a common coping mechanism of our overwhelming state to try and understand the world through sweeping generalisations and compartmentalised notions of behaviour and intention. But when it comes down to the nitty gritty, when we manage to see beyond time-sensitive trends and definitions, what is revealed is that the stuff that makes up the essence of human nature remains eternal, despite irrepressible changes on the surface of things. Passion, sexuality, intimacy: these are the materials that have sustained human beings, and in turn human nature, since the beginning of time.

Though our minds adapt better to the reassurance of definitions, the preset notion of a painter fails to underscore the extent of Reuben Negron's genius. His art, a rare combination of exquisite technique and stirring subject matter, applies insight, intuition and psychology. With images that touch on the universally introspective, Negron's portraits are exposés on the most poignant depths of human experience. Naked, exposed and piercingly alert, the models in his searing portraits manage to convey what often gets lost in the embellishments of the everyday.

Negron's gradual evolution into the particulars of human psyche began at a rather young age. Afflicted with dyslexia as a child, the painter

recalls his past as a tapestry of oral storytelling and visual expression. "Everything I am doing now I started working on when I was in high school", he begins. "I got heavily into comic books – *Sandman*, *Mouse*, *Stuck Rubber Baby*." – sophisticated works considered as some of the genre's most prolific, graphic and compelling – "One of the most transformative moments for me when I was a kid was when I picked up a book called *Batman: the Ultimate Evil*, thinking it would be a novel about Batman." The novel, an investigative work on child abuse and the Thai sex trade, became the basis for Negron's infatuation with the power of visual expression. "It was an *ah-hah* moment for me". Negron recalls. "Here were stories of people I had never heard of, living outside of my high school bubble. I had stumbled upon it by chance but felt it was too important to let go."

Inspired by the way in which disturbing content was produced in such an accessible way, the then 17-year-old Negron created and published a comic strip for his local high school literary magazine told from the point of view of a child victimised by the sex tourism trade. At the end of the strip was information about sexual assault and abuse, as well as resources for abused children to find help.

While it may seem like surprisingly mature subject matter for a high school kid, the seeds for Negron's

infatuation with the intricacies of the individual soul had only just been sown. The sheer impact and effectiveness of visual communication became the core of his art, and continued to resonate through to an MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York.

It was during his final project in graduate school that the artist began experimenting with the deconstruction of storytelling. "Because my final project was about storytelling, I started having dialogues with people about their personal narratives. I was living in the city, so it was easy to go out every night and have these offhanded discussions with people. I realised that I wanted to start dealing with the subject of people's personal narratives. I started thinking: what is the one subject I can focus on that is universal, a subject to be used as a vehicle to touch as many bases as possible? I decided to deal with sexuality: with love, sex, everything that is tied up in it."

"At first I wanted to document marital intimacy, to show the beauty of the mundane. When I began talking to the couple depicted in *The Embrace* I told them that I wanted to document a day in the life of a married couple – all of the ups and downs, the monotonies, the moments of joy. I spent a day with them in their home, acting sort of as a photojournalist, trying to blend in and not interfere



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Aida



Dana



Mick

too much with their natural activity.”

What results from his observations are a series of hypnotising sketches of wordless passion, two bodies converging into a vibrant creation of intimacy, intensified by the blank, irrelevant background of the world around them. The series symbolises more than raw sexual desire. It represents the longing to physically manifest the elusive yet universal mysteries of romantic love.

“I was there in their bedroom,” says Negron with intention and respect. “It was unexpected, but I began looking at them as a breakdown of shapes and movements in order to later translate what I saw into these sketches.”

From there, Negron began working on a new series entitled *Dirty Dirty Love*. Wanting to move away from classic representations of love and intimacy, the artist began exploring new ways to represent personal narratives based on intrinsic sensuality. Approached online from various individuals interested in working with him, Negron and his models worked together – sometimes over the course of years – to find a way to communicate their stories. Though he is modest about the healing process inherent in these dialogues, Negron’s natural curiosity, passion and intuition no doubt facilitate a certain therapeutic discovery that can only be met after the eradication of words and interpretations.

All too often, art becomes a portal for the depiction of what lies beyond realism, for the metaphysicalities that lack realistic representation in our physical and fantastical world. Negron’s paintings are the brutal truth – the rawness, beauty, ugliness and strangeness that define each and every individual as distinctly separate and interconnected. Unlike the classically realistic medium of photography, Negron’s paintings do not capture single moments in time. They are a culmination of hours of dialogue and observation of each model in their natural habitats: “Working with people in places that are important to them, that they feel ownership over, helps them feel more confident and willing to open up and drop their guard.”

In *This House of Glass*, Negron’s work digs deeper into the dynamics of identity. “The models in these portraits usually take up no more than a quarter of the visual real estate of the painting. I wanted people to get a better understanding of who they are by peering into their homes and therefore their psyches. *This House of Glass* it was about the figure and the setting working in conjunction.”

In this series, Negron introduces us to the humans of our world, and through their eyes perhaps also to ourselves. We see *Aida*, with her piercing intelligence, challenging conventional conceptions of beauty in her riveting gaze. In another portrait, her husband *Mick* stands casually in their living room, devoid of the vulnerability and doubt we often associate with full-frontal nudity. These are people reveling in their own humanness; nuanced into individuals while exposing the secrets we all share. “As I progress with my work I see myself moving from the sex to psychology. *The Embrace* is erotic, while *Dirty Dirty Love* is a smattering of all these different aspects of sexuality. In *This House of Glass*, the sexual takes a backseat to the psychological, which is what I was trying to focus on with each personality.”

reubennegron.com

Manifest Magazine, July/August 2013

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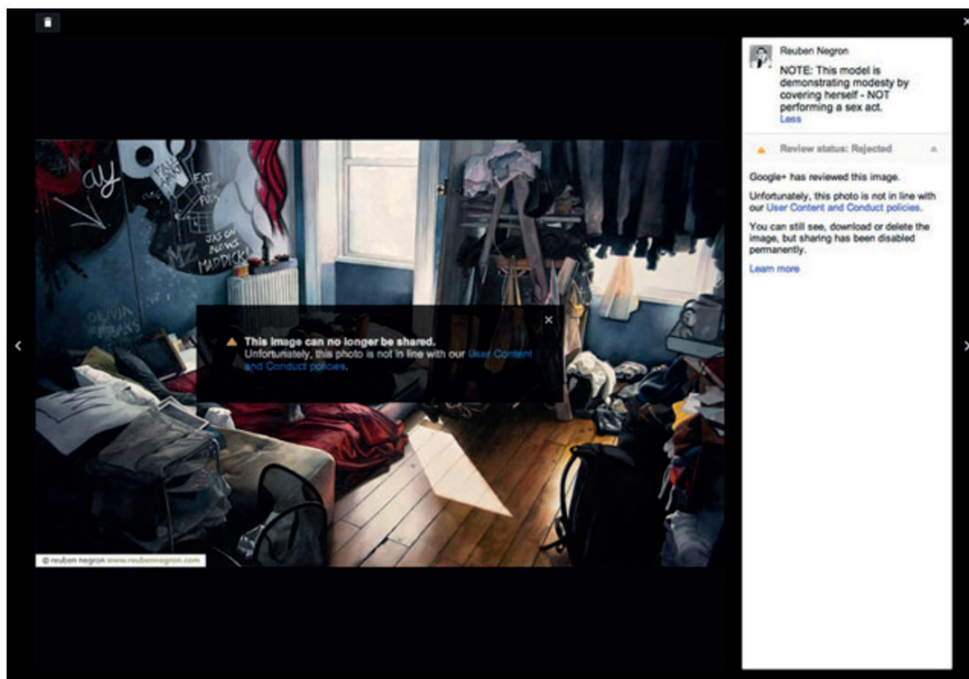
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INTERVIEWS

The New Digital Puritans: Social Network Censorship #NSFW



Samantha Villenavo | May 7, 2013



An image of Reuben Negrón's "Marley" was flagged by Google+ (all images courtesy the artist)

Reuben Negrón, an artist who lives and works in Connecticut and New York, is best known for his realistic watercolor depictions of intimate moments, ranging from the raw to the vulnerable. His scenes often give me the impression of looking in a mirror. Negrón's series *This House of Glass*, "an intimate exposé on what we keep hidden from others – and in many cases, what we hide from ourselves," and *Dirty Dirty Love*, an exploration of "sex, sexuality and identity as concepts ... [through] interactions with individuals and couples in domestic and private settings," were both shown as separate solo exhibitions at Like the Spice Gallery in Brooklyn.



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I first “met” Negrón in September 2011, when artists on social media were sniffing around the closed beta of Google+. Another artist, [Paul Roustan](#), who treats the nude body as canvas, protested the [banning of Negrón’s profile by Google](#). The account was reinstated after Negrón agreed to change his profile avatar, but this was not the last I was to hear of his ongoing issue with online censorship.



Reuben Negrón, “Becky and Neomi” (click to enlarge)

Samantha Villenave: *Would you tell me a little bit about the first time you experienced online censorship of your artwork?*

Reuben Negrón: I’ve been dealing with censorship and criticism of my work since I first joined Facebook. Like so many others, I moved to Facebook after MySpace started

running amuck with illegible, GIF-heavy pages and unchecked spam. My first profile picture on Facebook was a painting of two women in bed, one nude, the other covering herself modestly with a pillow. In my eyes the figures directly reference classic academic nudes, but right away the image was flagged by a “friend.” To her credit, she admitted that as a teacher and the wife of a conservative older man, she wouldn’t be able to accept my friend request with such a “racy” profile picture. I was amused and changed the profile picture without protest — after all, I was on Facebook to reconnect with old friends, not ruffle feathers. At that time, I also hadn’t thought of using Facebook as a marketing tool.



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Fast forward three years and I was using Facebook as my number one source of online self promotion. I kept my work organized in public albums just as I'd done on MySpace, however, I now noticed that certain images were going missing. I'd occasionally get a message from the powers that be that an image was in violation of the Terms of Service, but more times than not I'd notice a missing photo when I went to share it directly with a friend or potential collector. I ran trials to test if my images were being flagged by someone or just falling prey to some algorithm by reuploading deleted images. Some were caught, others weren't. Mind you, this entire time I was aware that Facebook had a strict no nudity policy. I just tend to not agree with most policies involving the human form (which in turn informed some of my more controversial paintings for *Dirty Dirty Love*).

By 2010 (maybe after even after?) Facebook had changed its Terms of Service to include "art" alongside "breast-feeding mothers" in their short list of tolerated nudity. I created a separate "Page" for my work, hoping to draw attention to it as art rather than blatant nudity. Three days after launching the page, one of my images was deleted from my account. This happened a few more times over the course of the year, prompting me to open a dialogue with my followers about nudity in art and ways artists can promote their work without self-censoring. It's unfortunate, but there is a trend for artists, models, and photographers to censor their work with marring black bars or solar flares. I refused to do that with my own work, and as a consequence saw much of it pulled from my page.



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Reuben Negron, "Tom"

The situation really crescendoed in February 2011 when the [event page](#) for a show called *Hotter Than July*, curated by Savannah Spirit, was pulled from [Facebook](#) completely. I believe they even went so far as to suspend her entire account and delete all the images associated with that show, my work being a part of it. It caused a big uproar in the art world. At that time I remember seeing articles about other artists with similar stories of being locked out of their accounts or being forced to take down their work. Luckily enough noise was made that Savannah was allowed back into her account, but ever since then the mood has changed. I took down my artist page and absorbed its content into my personal page. My work is still on Facebook, but I keep my albums viewable only to my friends. I trust that if someone is going to send me a friend request they know what I do, and therefore won't report my work haphazardly. The downside to keeping my work private is that I've now cut myself off from a huge resource. As I understand it, people who aren't in direct contact with me can only see my work if it's shared publicly, which I do from time to time, but with caution.



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Samantha Villenave: As you said, you have deleted your Facebook art page and no longer have that as a marketing tool. How has this affected your online visibility as an artist? Have you found other solutions to fill that void, other social networks, perhaps, where you feel you are free to share your work without the constant concern that it will be censored? Or are you battling these same issues elsewhere?



Reuben Negron, "Roxy" (click to enlarge)

Reuben Negron: Facebook was an efficient tool to reach a large group of people, but I was by no means dependent on it. I have my own website and news feed that I often direct my friends to whenever I have an upcoming event or bit of news to share — but I will admit that it's limited my ability to broaden my exposure. Most people want their content delivered directly to them, having it embedded in a status update or email. Click-throughs ask a bit of investment on the audiences' part,

and therefore a drop-off is expected when posting an external link. But we make do with what's available.

I have been active on Google+ for the past year and a half. I was excited when it first came on the scene. Nascent social networks are great because you get to be a part of their development, and I was hoping that with a more mature target audience, Google+ would become the refuge for artists and creatives Facebook wasn't. However, like Facebook, my first profile picture for Google+ was flagged and I was locked out of my account until I changed the image.



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While you can search for pornography and other graphic materials with a Google search, Google+ has an understandably more conservative approach to content. What they do right, in my opinion, is let you know what images violate their Terms of Service and give you an option to either alter, delete, or hide them on your own. It's much more empowering. There is also a review process that you can submit flagged images to if you feel one was singled out in error. Since joining I've only had one image flagged that failed the review process and two others that were censored in a public post but are still viewable in my photo albums. All in all they seem to have a less reactionary stance on artistic nudes, and the available options to challenge censorship are reason alone for other creatives to consider using it over Facebook.

But Facebook and Google+ aside, I know my work is always going to raise eyebrows simply for its content. And that's partly the point. I have a very specific agenda with my work — I want to challenge people's attitudes toward sex, nudity, and taboo subject matter. I feel that our culture has an unhealthy disconnect between our bodies and personal identities, and the only way to confront this is to create work that shines a light on it. For every piece that is deleted I get to ask the question, "Why?" Is a nipple more damaging than hate speech? Are a man's genitals more threatening than firearms? What does it say about us that we are so willing to self-censor in the face of self-critique?



Reuben Negron, "Karin"



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Samantha Villenave: *Having, as you state, an agenda of challenging “attitudes toward sex, nudity, and taboo subject matter,” what’s the effect of the online censorship that you’ve experienced? Does it provoke you to further push the boundaries? Do you feel that the “snap judgement” universe of social networks leaves any hope that such efforts can be thoughtfully considered?*

Reuben Negrón: Censorship has only prompted me to continue doing what I do. In the beginning I admit that I was angry and took the deletion of my work personally. It’s easy to be influenced negatively by such things. But I quickly realized that it opened the door for much broader dialogue. I’ve never wanted my work to be easy — it’s a means to an end, impact beyond the aesthetic. If controversy on social networks can be the catalyst for viewer participation beyond the gallery walls, then so be it.

But before I’m misunderstood, don’t think I’m making a case for online censorship. This is merely how I’ve come to utilize it in my favor. Just because social networks don’t allow nudity doesn’t mean it’s stricken from public awareness. If anything I think this type of censorship shines a spotlight on the issue and forces some, if not many, to take it up as a cause. Our sense of decency evolves with time and so do our social networks. One easy way around needless censorship is content filters. Photography and art sites such as [500px](#) and [deviantART](#) already employ content filters based on nudity, sexual themes, offensive language, and violence, and while they aren’t always perfect, they do a much better job of nurturing creative talent. That being said, where 500px and deviantART fall short is their ability to connect with an audience outside the creative fields, which is why places like Twitter, Google+, and Facebook are so vital to artists.



Juxtapoz Magazine

16 juillet 2012

JUXTAPOZ

EROTICA

REUBEN NEGRÓN: THE EMBRACE

July 16, 2012



[View Gallery](#)

"In his drawings *The Embrace*, from the series *Dirty Dirty Love*, Reuben Negrón allows his public to enter into one of the most private of realms, a couple's intimacy. He bares his images naked of any superfluous detail, so that we can focus entirely on the hypnotizing silence of two bodies meeting. We are transformed into the voyeuristic eye that cannot help but stare and be amazed by how this couple craves to become one. Yet, we stay put in this space, not because we seek for some sort of free sexual gratification, but because we find pleasure in another's ability to share themselves so openly and completely. Sex moves beyond being a simple act of intercourse and becomes a possibility to feel and know one another, to hold one's partner as if the love was so profound it could consume. In this discovery, sex loses all its scandalous implications and transforms, in the mind of the spectator, into an act of pure love. Negrón is able to capture the magic of this moment so convincingly that he engraves the images in our subconscious and makes us question if we are so lucky to have what the couple portrayed shares."



REUBEN NEGRON EROTICA NUDE

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The Long Branch Press

Jack Kearns

mars 2005



At the Shore Institute of the Contemporary Arts (SICA), "The Dance," a watercolor, will be on display along with a collection of paintings with story telling characters. Here is the exhibitor's Curator, Helianthe Bourdeaux-Maurin displaying the painting, which portrays her and the artist, Reuben Negron, a new artist with great talent.

Art Review

SICA studio in Long Branch: Characters, Scene I

By Jack Kearns

Long Branch — If you have missed the human sparkle in paintings and other art works, then come to "The Dance" at the Shore Institute of the Arts on Third Avenue in Long Branch where the painting in water will steal away your love for oils. "The Dance" is a brilliant watercolor that amazingly lifts the characters, two dancers, off the page with what appears to be three-dimensional depth transforms in sculpting or at times in oils or acrylics.

The artist, Reuben Negro, a 2004 graduate of the School of Visual Arts in New York, is showing three of his works at the March-thru-April exhibit in the SICA studios at 20 Third Avenue in Long Branch. As one draws closer to "The Dance," the fact that it is water becomes even more unreal.

Negron has developed his technique to bring the sense of texture to the painting. And an implied density, the sensation of depth flows from the images on the paper. Negron uses light, space and color in great detail to create the realism of the characters in the painting.

If you go to SICA during the Artist's Reception on Sunday March 6 between 3-7 p.m. you will meet the two dancers in person – Reuben and the gallery's curator for the exhibition, Helianthe Bourdeaux-Maurin. Their likeness is transformed from life to art, and both are charming acquaintances.

The two-month exhibit, "Characters, Scene I" will feature art filled with human forms and characters, telling stories in each work in various media. Another painting, of a series from artist James Jean, is "The Bus," filled with persons from a dream. "The Bus" will take some time to absorb. The more you linger the more you will find your own version of the artist's visual tales.

If you just cannot find the time to stop at SICA for a coffee with a friend or a romantic partner, stop on the way to or from dinner, take a look at what SICA has for you at www.sica.org. Or call for directions at 732-263-1121.

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THE TWO RIVER TIMES

Thursday, April 7, 2004

The Two River Times

Sheilagh Casey

27 avril 2004

Artists' Characters Stretch The World At SICA

By Sheilagh Casey



The Little Red Riding Hood's Perspective by Nora Krug.

WE ALL KNOW Little Red Riding Hood's story. But do we know the Big Bad Wolf's version? Or the Grandmother's?

At the Shore Institute of Contemporary Art in Long Branch, artist Nora Krug offers the classic story four ways, through the eyes of four different characters, in the exhibition "Characters: Scene I."

The show, running through April 23, explores the narrative trend in contemporary art through the works of 21 diverse artists. Some of the artists, like Krug and Reuben Negron, are in their 20s. Others, like R. Crumb, D. Dominick Lombardi, and Tracy Moffat, have already achieved international recognition. Philip Guston, who died in 1980, is represented by two lithographs. What they all have in common is the drive to create or represent characters.

The curator of the show, Helianthe Bourdeaux-Maurin, says in the show's catalog, "The link of characters to narrative is deep and necessary; they are, after all, the primary vehicles of story."

The drive to create characters, and thus to tell stories, is primal for us humans. And yet it was suppressed from visual art for much of the 20th century.

During the show's panel discussion on March 17, Krug, Negron, and Lombardi, along

with Bourdeaux-Maurin, offered many possible reasons why storytelling is emerging so strongly in fine art now.

Negron, whose virtuoso watercolors offer scenes from movies never to be filmed, said, "The age of information is what we're leaving now and we're entering the age of storytelling." Creating narratives is what we naturally do in order to make sense of the infor-

suit, re-enacts the classic myth. James Bewley draws his character, the Bat, in mostly boyish situations. "Greetings from the Dork Table," for instance, shows the Bat sitting with the pocket-protector crowd in the lunchroom.

Lombardi shows his characters painted in reverse on plexiglass panels and in mixed-media sculpture. Although only a few of them are shown at SICA, Lombardi has

created hundreds of these curious creatures, whose appearance derives from cartoon and tattoo art. He describes them as beings from the future, after generations of mutations caused by environmental pollution.

Lombardi says that his characters have complex relationships with each other.

In SICA's exhibition space, the works themselves form complex relationships with each other, with R. Crumb's drawings of people he observed in French cafes playing off Japanese artist Yoshitomo Nara's angry little girls and sculptor Nina Levy's mesmerizing two-part old woman, whose head floats away from her clenched body.

"Characters: Scene I" is running simultaneously with the show "Characters: Scene II" at the Silvermine Gallery in Norwalk, CT. Both are curated by Helianthe Bourdeaux-Maurin, a young but accomplished French art historian, now resident of New York.

The characters in the show tell as many stories as you will let them.

"Artists leave enough mystery and freedom in their works to let the imagination of the viewer flow," Bourdeaux-Maurin says. And she quotes Susan Sontag, on why we need fiction: "to stretch our world."

The exhibition at SICA runs through April 23 and can be seen from 1-5 Wed.-Thu. and Sun., 1-8 Fri., and 1-6 Sat. For more information on SICA, visit www.sica.org, call (732) 263-1121, or stop in at 20 Third Ave. (just off Broadway), Long Branch.

"Artists leave enough mystery and freedom in their works to let the imagination of the viewer flow."

mation we have, Negron said.

The variety of work in "Characters" is astonishing. Chinese artist Fay Ku offers two large drawings depicting an abused child's view of her mother.

Kyung Jeon, from Korea, uses the style of Indian erotic paintings in a suite of strange, definitely feminine and definitely humorous, sexual fantasies.

A particularly masculine take on character, also very funny, is given in Julian Stark's film "The 12 Labors of Hercules," in which our hero, dressed in a wrestling

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