

ARTILLERY



JONNY NEGRON

by Annabel Osberg ·

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Aftermath of Puerto Rico flooding looms large in the backgrounds of **Jonny Negron**'s psychically charged scenes. Indoors and outdoors, water is everywhere. Resembling graphic novel or zine illustrations, Negron's eleven gouache-on-paper paintings in "A Small Map of Heaven" at **Château Shatto** depict stylistically corpulent Botero-esque figures inhabiting darkly allegorical mise-en-scènes of damaged tropical paradises. These scenarios are often as humorous as they are disturbing. A muscle-bound bodybuilder injects his left arm even as he resolutely continues his bicep curls in *Injection Site* (pictured above, all works 2018), a painting whose surface itself looks water-damaged. With its wearer nowhere to be seen, a ball gown—*J-Lo's Dress*—mysteriously materializes as an apparition in the jungle. In *Denissa*, the Grim Reaper piquantly pats the generous rump of a twerking blond, perhaps Denissa Lopp, a well-known Puerto Rican dancer charged with prostitution. Negron's amusing apocalyptic scenes recall Hieronymus Bosch but their subtext is the opposite of his doomsaying. The Puerto Rican artist taps the flood, a powerful cataclysmic symbol spanning religious myths to climate change warnings, to proffer a message of persistence apposite to his motherland's current struggles. With clothes tattered and skin lacerated, his idiosyncratically painted characters endure. Awash in torrents of water and wreckage, some struggle to stay afloat. Others endeavor to regain normalcy on sodden land. Despite the deluge, life goes on.

Château Shatto

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Show runs through Sep. 1