

The New York Times

October 7, 2021

Art Gallery Shows to See Right Now

Joey Terrill

Through Oct. 23 at Ortuzar Projects, 9 White Street,
Manhattan. 212-257-0033; ortuzarprojects.com.



Joey Terrill's triptych "Chicanos Invade New York,"
from 1981. Joey Terrill and Ortuzar Projects

In 1981, Joey Terrill made a series of tall, narrow canvases, titled "Chicanos Invade New York," for Windows on White Street, a contemporary art series exhibited at a Lower Manhattan storefront. Painted with flat, high-contrast colors in a style that evokes a rotoscoped music video, the canvases present the Angeleno artist and his friends as fish out of water in New York and its art scene. Terrill rolls out tortillas in someone else's loft; squints into a snowy squall outside the Guggenheim Museum; reads a copy of *The New York Post* with the headline "John Lennon Shot Dead."

At Ortuzar Projects, a couple of blocks west of that storefront, the same triptych is one of the highlights of "Once Upon A Time:

Paintings, 1981-2015," Terrill's first New York solo show in the 40 years since. Other pieces — a double portrait called "Not All Our Lovemaking Had to Smell of Poppers," an extraordinary polyptych about the end of a relationship called "Breaking Up / Breaking Down" — take on alienation and belonging, or race and orientation, more baldly. In works from the '90s and 2000s, Terrill adds more elaborate backgrounds or, working from photos, more punctilious detail. But the same beguiling tone runs through the whole exhibition, an inwardly turned combination of bravado, self-deprecation and vulnerability.

WILL HEINRICH