



# Both at Once

RAELIS VASQUEZ & JOHN RIVAS



**LKG**

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April 25 - May 18, 2019



“Immigrants are the mirror in which a nation sees its true self.”  
--- Junot Diaz

LatchKey Gallery is proud to present Both at Once, an exhibition centered around the personal narratives of painters Raelis Vasquez and John Rivas.

Vasquez, born in the Dominican Republic and Rivas, whose family is from El Salvador, ambitiously approach artistic practices through the prism of their lived experience. Navigating their immigrant culture Vasquez and Rivas share views as to what it is to be an immigrant and new American, occupying both at once. This point of view enables the artists to employ the usage of an allegorical narrative that celebrates and humanizes their lives as immigrants in the United States. Each artist finds inspiration from their families, using them as muses and a catalyst to tell their stories to mark the cultural importance of a community who, in this political climate, are often vilified. Both at Once is an exploration at the role family plays in the immigrant household as pillars of shaping personal identity and support.



Raelis Vasquez' paintings are intimate compositions of transient moments, frozen within the canvas; universal scenes give honest access to real life. In the painting, *The Beautiful Ones*, three generations sit around the kitchen table, the youngest stares deeply, consumed by a thought that weighs heavily on his hunched figure while the females engage with the objects in front of them. The eldest woman is surrounded by the glow of a yellow wall, creating an aura of honor. Vasquez invites the viewer to act as an additional family member and engage emotionally with the people existing within the frame. His paintings are a great equalizer, honoring his family while allowing the viewer to step into his world; lending an honest mirror to his lived experience.

The paintings by John Rivas are a stylistic contrast to the compositions by Vasquez however, the sentiments of family and the story of immigration resonate just as strongly. Rivas' works are influenced by family photos, memories and stories. His paintings often occupy space like sculpture, utilizing found objects from his neighborhood in Newark, NJ to materials from his father's job sites as his tools to construct his visual tableau. *Te Extraño* (I miss you) is emotionally charged with grandiose expressive gestures depicting his father as a young boy holding tightly to his mother. Objects are used as signifiers that are part of a codex that Rivas has created invite the viewer to decode the narrative. Rivas' use of materials, his outpour of visceral emotion through gesture coupled with layered imagery lend to an emotionally charged narrative that is essential to the voice of immigrant lives.

Both *at Once* is on view from April 25th through May 18th, at the ChaShaMa space, 340 East 64th. The gallery is open to the public, Wednesday - Saturday 11am-6pm or by appointment. For press inquiries or further information, please email Amanda or Natalie at [info@latchkeygallery.com](mailto:info@latchkeygallery.com)



Raelis Vasquez





*The Beautiful Ones*  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 56 in





*Los Primos de Philly*  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 30 in





*Those Moments*  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 48 in



*Misunderstanding Home*  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 48 in





*Mami*  
Oil on canvas  
30 x 24 in



*Transcending Joy*  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 26 in



*Shawnee*  
Oil on canvas  
16 x 20 in





*Sharraya*  
Oil on canvas  
30 x 24 in



*Portrait of a Potential Artist*  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 30 in





*Seth*  
Oil on canvas  
18 x 24 in





**John Rivas**



*Te Extraño*  
Mixed media on canvas  
60 x 36 in





*Un Dia Mas*  
Mixed media on canvas  
68 x 42 in



*Que Hago Sin Ti*  
Mixed media on canvas  
72 x 49 in





*Llegando a la frontera*  
Mixed media on canvas  
36 x 52 in





*Mujeres de Campo*  
Mixed media on canvas  
17 1/2 x 18 in





*Bandolera*  
Mixed media on panel  
17 x 15 1/2 in



Yo No Se  
Mixed media on wood  
24 x 16 in



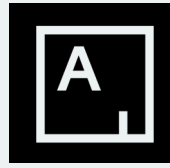


*No Arturo*  
Mixed media with frame  
18 x 16 in



*Mis 15*  
Mixed media on unstretched canvas  
16 x 20 in





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