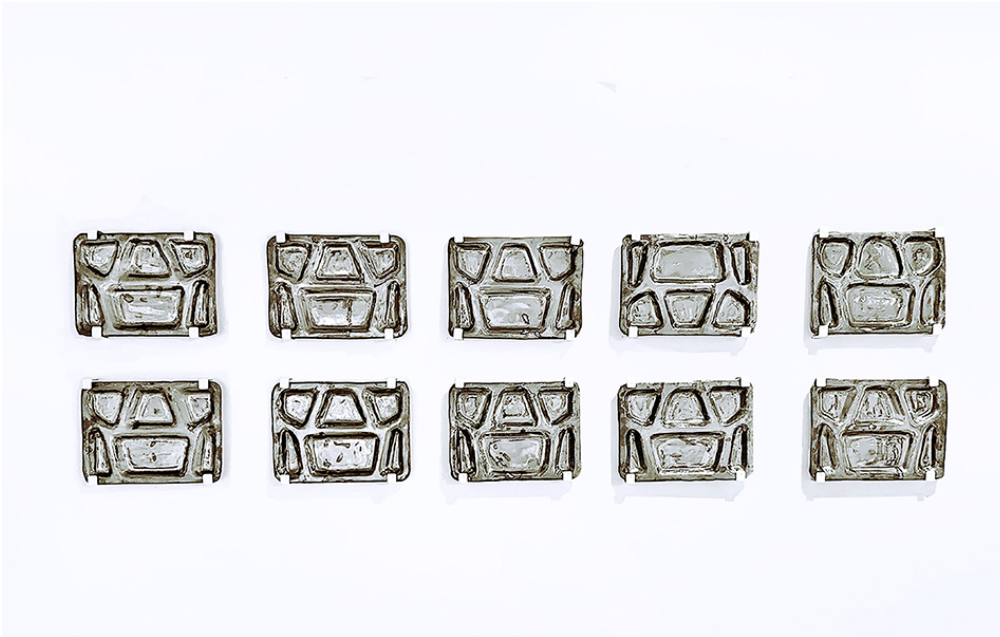


Ruiz Healy Art in New York exhibits 'Contemporary Bodegones'



Vick Quezada, *Stainless Remains*, 2023, 10 x 13.5 x 1 in, 25.4 x 34.3 x 2.5 cm.

SAN ANTONIO, TX.- [Ruiz-Healy Art](#) is pleased to present *Contemporary Bodegones*, a group exhibition of works by Pedro Diego Alvarado, Yvette Mayorga, Eva Marengo Sanchez, Vick Quezada, and Chuck Ramirez, on view from May 9th to September 6th, 2024, at the gallery's New York City gallery. *Contemporary Bodegones* brings together works related to the featured artists' individual lived histories and explores how food interlinks us with both identity and broader social issues.

Pedro Diego Alvarado draws a compelling parallel between the historical context of the Dutch Golden Age and contemporary points at issue. Alvarado's work highlights a deep engagement with themes like urbanization, globalization, and international trade, echoing the social and economic factors that originally fueled the popularity of still-life genres in the Northern and Spanish Netherlands, with a growing emphasis on domesticity and personal possessions. The inclusion of fruits such as pomegranates, zapote, and naranjas Chinas in Alvarado's paintings serves multiple symbolic purposes, reflecting the influence of global trade on local traditions. To him, the wide array of tropical fruits, their cultivation, and their presence in everyday life "are a part of what it is to be Mexican." Alvarado invites viewers to reflect on the ongoing dialogue between the past and the present, between local identities and global currents.

Similarly, Eva Marengo Sanchez shares Alvarado's perception, illustrating the links between food, culture, and geography and how food is quintessential to contemporary San Antonio. "I love food and its power to carry memory, create community, and shape identity, and as the subject of my work, it's how I express my family history, life in San Antonio, and contemporary Mexican American culture."

Chuck Ramirez's *Coconuts* series transforms the slur "coconut"—brown on the outside, white on the inside—and converts degrading name-calling into the proud tag of another, more layered identity. Ramirez recognizes photography's use in projecting mass-culture representations of identity, even as he undercuts the stereotyped slurs in identity politics and the related artistic and historical canon.

Utilizing the color pink, Yvette Mayorga subverts the notions of girlhood and femininity to deconstruct the notion of the American Dream. Mayorga's work fuses Rococo, Maximalist, and religious iconography. Mayorga states, "It makes sense for pink and Rococo to be powerful in my world, a tool of seduction to draw people in and then force them to sit with the work and find out what it's about." In her painting, *Tweety Hot Lovers* (After *Century Vase* c. 1876), the thick acrylic paint mimics the texture of icing. It creates a form after *The Century Vase*, which originally included bison-head handles and a profile of George Washington. Armed with pink glitz and glam decoration, golden chains, and a Tweety bird, Mayorga

challenges this powerful American patriotic symbol.

Vick Quezada reworks themes surrounding the US-Mexican border, ranging from immigration and colonialism to capitalism, mass production, and the constitutional system. *ICE Remains*, and *Stainless Remains* are ceramic hand-pressed stylized stainless trays inspired by the cafeteria trays found at Fort Hood, now named Fort Cavazos, in Texas. The form of the trays imitates a product of industrialization, questioning established economic concepts of "value," but the hand-made quality and materials link them to the Earth. These trays illustrate colonial histories endured by Mestizx-Indigenous people. The artist's choice of medium emphasizes their call for land rights and reparations from colonialism while honoring and embracing the ceramic traditions of the Indigenous people of Northern Mexico.