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*PERDIDOS*  
CURATED BY OSCAR J RIVERA

MANY LATINX FOLK BORN IN THE UNITED STATES, OR THOSE WHO IMMIGRATE HERE WHEN YOUNG OFTEN FACE THE CHALLENGE OF HOLDING ON TO THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITIES. THE MORE ASSIMILATED THEY BECOME IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CULTURE AND SOCIETY, THE MORE THE CHASM BETWEEN A CONTEMPORARY AND CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPS. THIS DUALITY HAS BEEN THE DRIVING FORCE FOR MANY LATINX ARTISTS, LIKE GROANA MELENDEZ AND CHRISTIAN RODRIGUEZ.

GROANA MELENDEZ'S SERIES "*EL NOMBRE MIO, AJENO*" EXPLORES THE REALITY OF THE STRUGGLE TO BALANCE OUT ONES IDENTITIES. MELENDEZ USES PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, AND THE US TO POLARIZE THE EXAMPLES OF CULTURE. MELENDEZ'S FAMILY BECOMES A SYMBOL OF THESE DIFFERENCES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH GROANA ILLUSTRATE THE CULTURAL TENSIONS.

CHRISTIAN RODRIGUEZ'S SERIES "*LEARNING FROM MY FATHER,*" MUCH LIKE MELENDEZ, ATTACHES THE REPRESENTATION OF DOMINICAN CULTURE TO A FAMILY MEMBER. RODRIGUEZ PHOTOGRAPHS HIS FATHER, TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HIS FATHER AND HIS CULTURE. RODRIGUEZ'S PHOTOGRAPHS EXPLORE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND MORALITY. ELDERS ARE OFTEN THE ANCHORS TO CULTURE AND HERITAGE AND AS THEY PASS ON, THEY TAKE THOSE CONNECTIONS WITH THEM.

GROANA MELENDEZ AND CHRISTIAN RODRIGUEZ ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF A LARGER COMMUNITY OF LATINX FOLKS, WHO ARE YEARNING TO RECONCILE THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITIES WITHIN THEIR AMERICAN-NESS.