



ERICK MEDEL | VIDAS
JULY 20 - AUGUST 31, 2024

ERICK MEDEL

VIDAS

Charlie James Gallery is pleased to present *Erick Medel: Vidas*, the artist's first exhibition with the gallery. Erick Medel creates intimate portraits of immigrant life using a sewing machine and thread much like one would use a paintbrush and oils. His canvas is deep blue heavyweight denim, which provides a dark ground that sets off the brightly colored threads that are his chosen medium. Medel draws inspiration from the vibrant Boyle Heights neighborhood outside of his studio, capturing street festivals, sidewalk scenes, and quiet moments in works that tenderly celebrate the joy of a thriving immigrant community.

The works in *Vidas* offer the viewer windows into the lives that make up the artist's community. He finds beauty in everyday expressions of pride and care, whether it is a quietly held hand, an artfully arranged bouquet, or a raucous block party. Medel's thread on denim technique lends itself to these neighborhood scenes, evoking both the hazy atmosphere of Los Angeles and the static vibrance of quickly-glimpsed snapshots, lending each composition the feel of a technicolor memory. Each work also holds personal significance, stemming from scenes encountered in life and rendered in rich, brushstroke-like stitches that celebrate the history and present of immigrant life and labor in Los Angeles.

The largest work in the exhibition, *Sonidero Night*, captures the vibrant, celebratory energy of music bringing people together. In a composition reminiscent of the mid-century dance halls in the paintings of Earnie Barnes, Medel focuses on the movement of the dancers as the dramatic lighting from the stage sets the figures glowing. Sonidero nights unite young and old in joyful leisure, creating a link between different generations of immigrants. Elsewhere in the exhibition, Medel celebrates the hustle of immigrant life. Street vendors push fruit carts or tote Mother's Day bouquets, carving out a living in the chaos of the city. A series of floral still lifes honor the vendors of LA's flower district, standing in as portraits of individuals seen through the products of their labor. These works in particular highlight the nuance that Medel achieves in thread, his delicate linework conveying shadow and light that create subtle shifts of vibrant color.

ERICK MEDEL

VIDAS

Based in Los Angeles, **Erick Medel** was born in Puebla, Mexico in 1992. He holds an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design.

Embroidering denim with an industrial sewing machine, Medel's works touch on everyday life in Los Angeles, particularly those living and working in Boyle Heights and the city's East Side. The painstaking craft of his embroidery is slow and meticulous, a compliment to the snapshot-like scenes it depicts. Equal parts documentarian and synthesizer, Medel strings together his own experiences as well as those of his family and his community into stitched scenes of vibrant color, tactile textures, and labored surfaces which convey his strong sense of identification with and care for his environment.

Artist Instagram: [@erick.medel](https://www.instagram.com/erick.medel)



ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS



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Erick Medel
Sonidero Night
Polyester thread on denim
48 x 54 inches
2024



ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

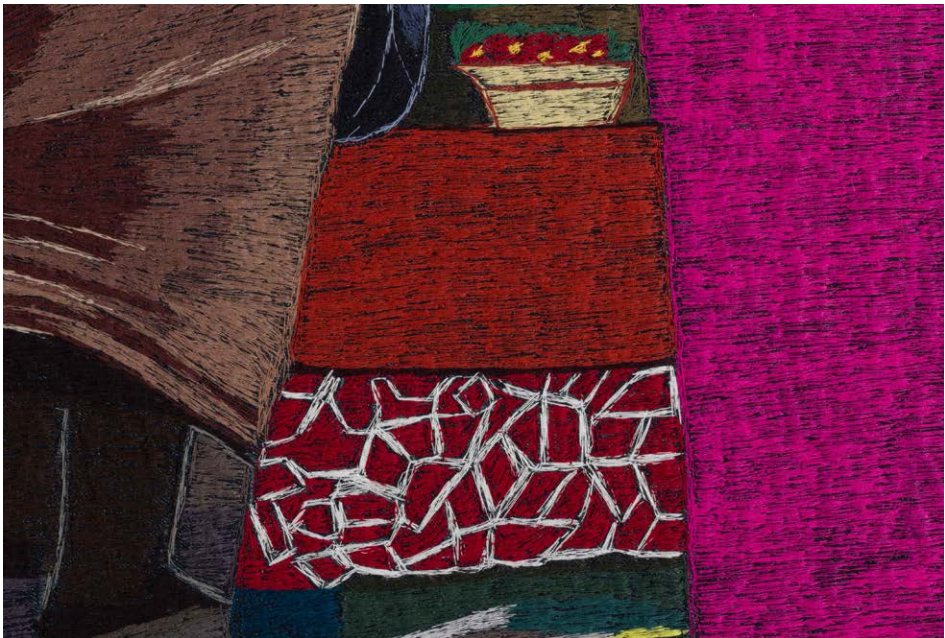
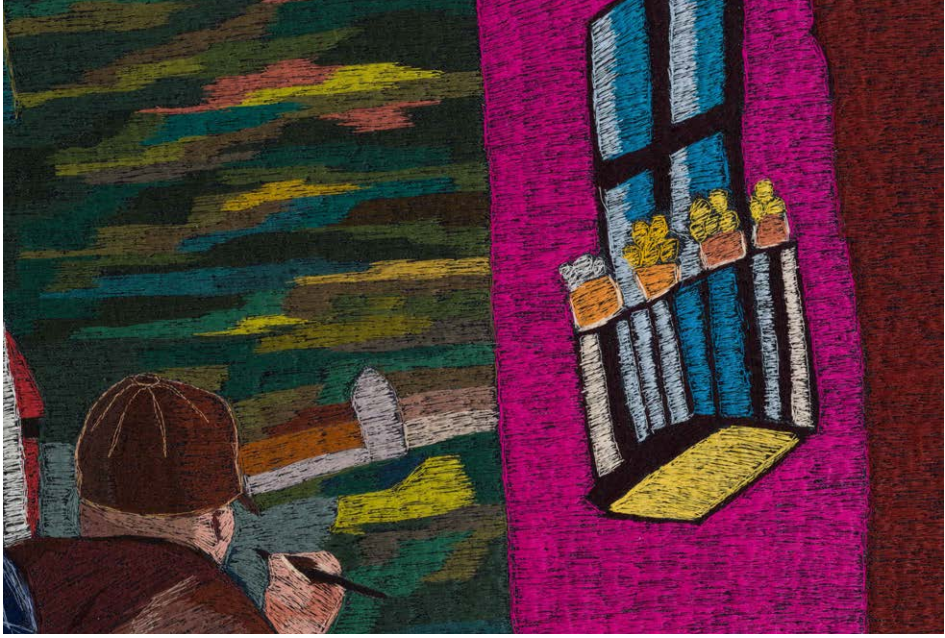
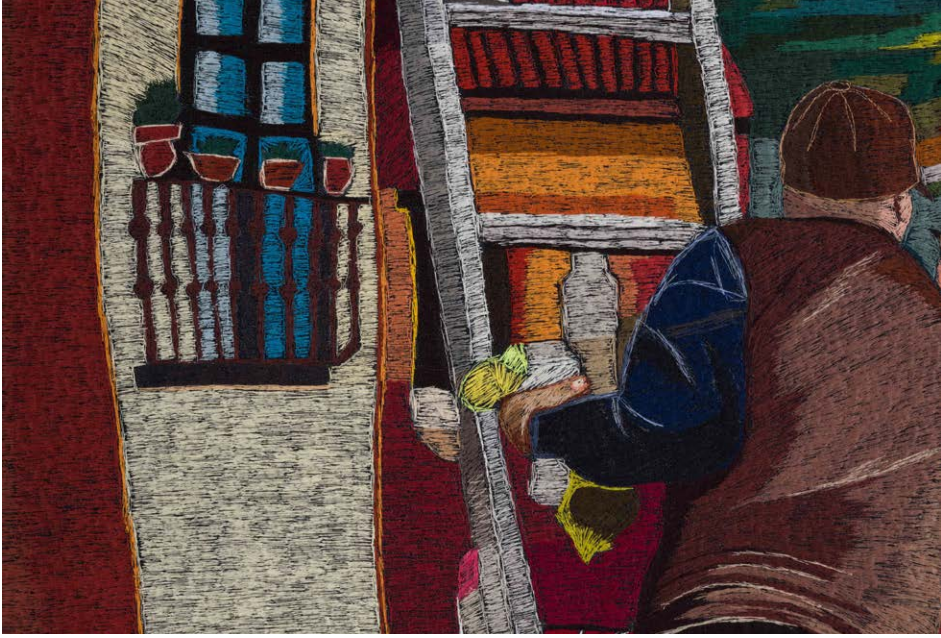


ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
Pintor
Polyester thread on denim
46 x 35 inches
2024



ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS



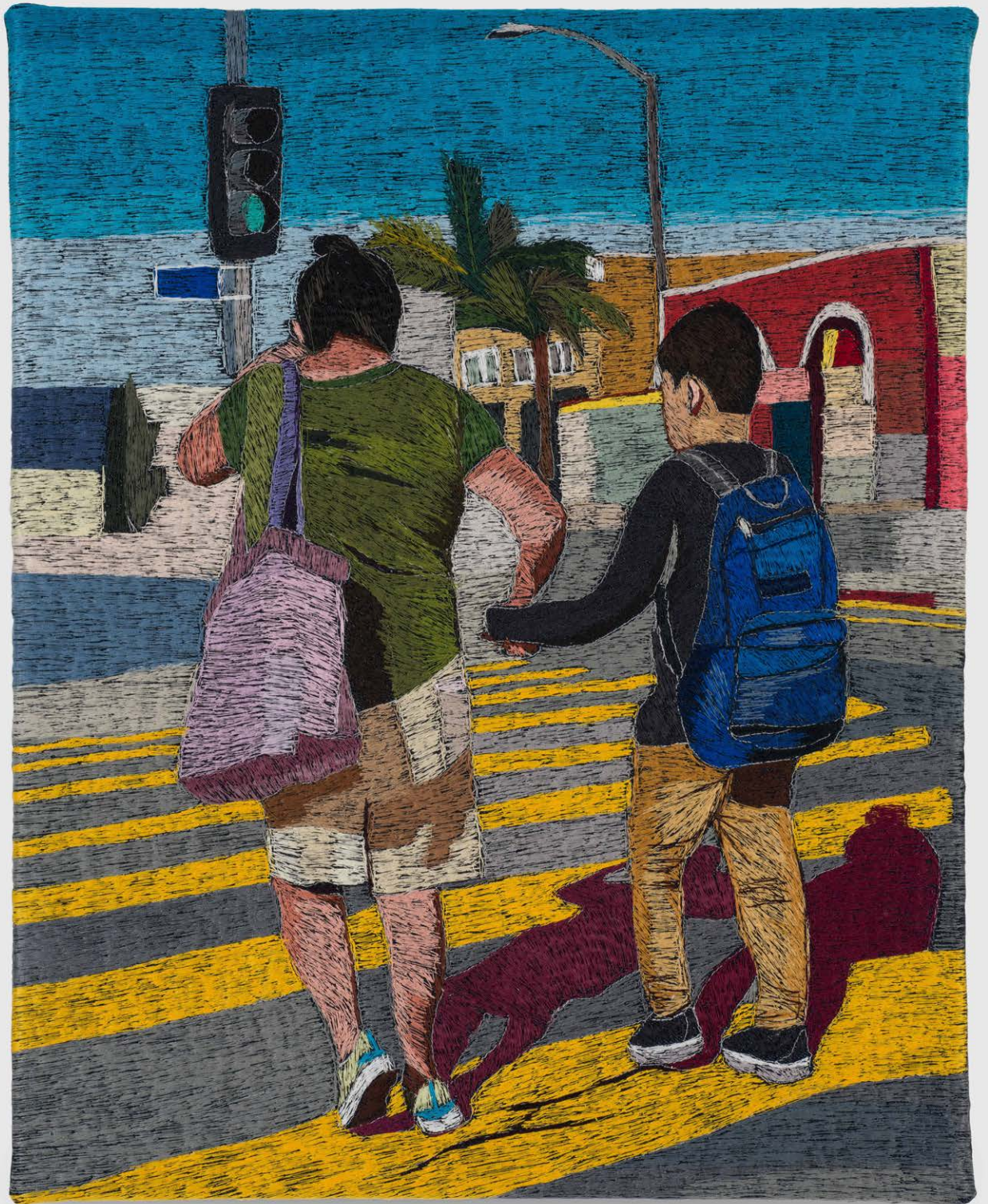
ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
Frutas Frescas (Pride parade 2023)
Polyester thread on denim
24 x 20 inches
2024



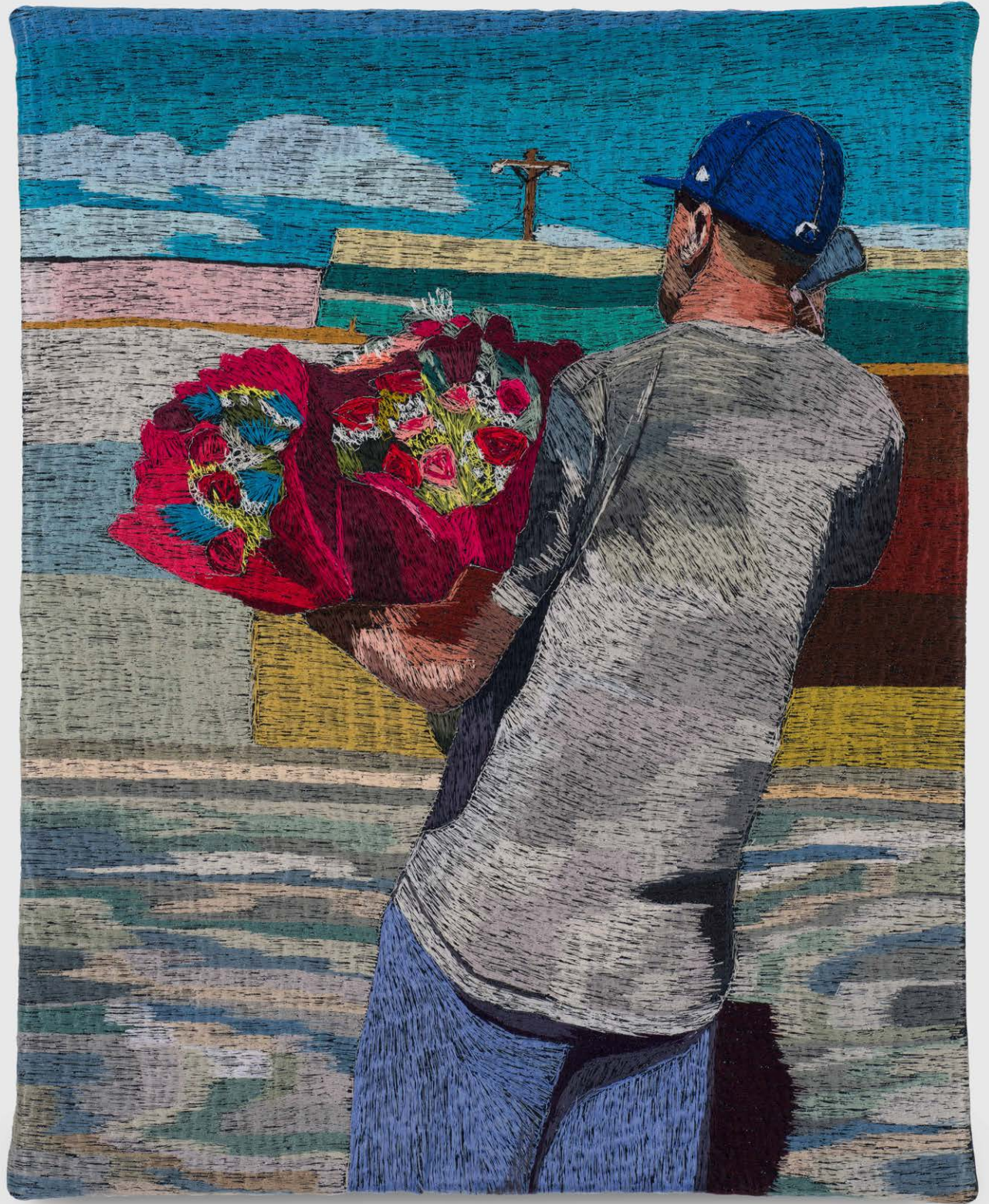
ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
Hold my hand
Polyester thread on denim
20 x 16 inches
2024



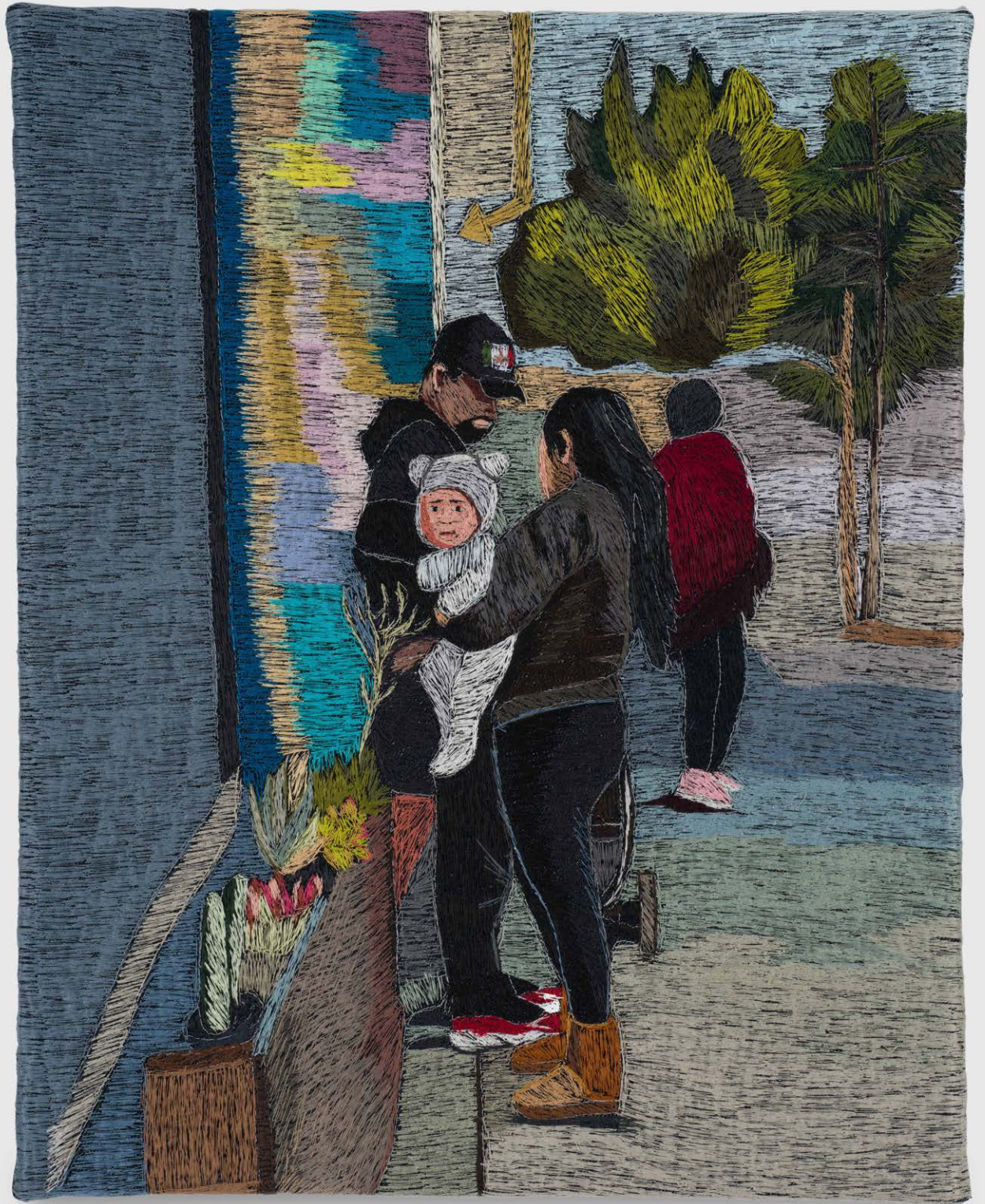
ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
Floras para Mama (Mother's day)
Polyester thread on denim
20 x 16 inches
2024



ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
Young Familia
Polyester thread on denim
20 x 16 inches
2024



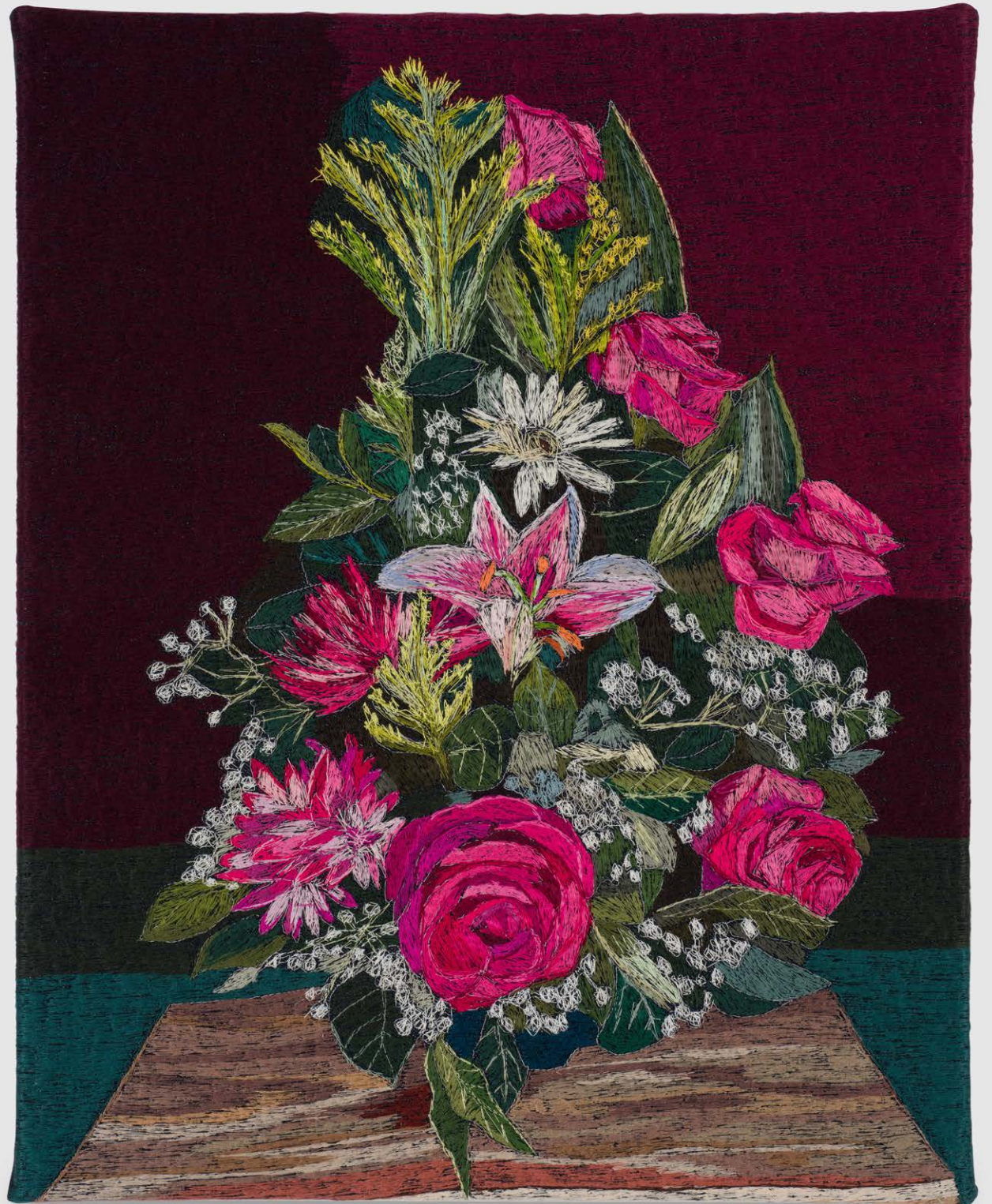
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VIDAS

Erick Medel
Arreglo Floral (bricks and flowers)
Polyester thread on denim
20 x 16 inches
2024



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VIDAS

Erick Medel
Arreglo Floral (muchas rosas)
Polyester thread on denim
20 x 16 inches
2024



ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
Arreglo (8th St flowers)
Polyester thread on denim
20 x 16 inches
2024



ERICK MEDEL
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Erick Medel
Smiley (La Favorita Bakery)
Polyester thread on denim
11 x 14 inches
2024



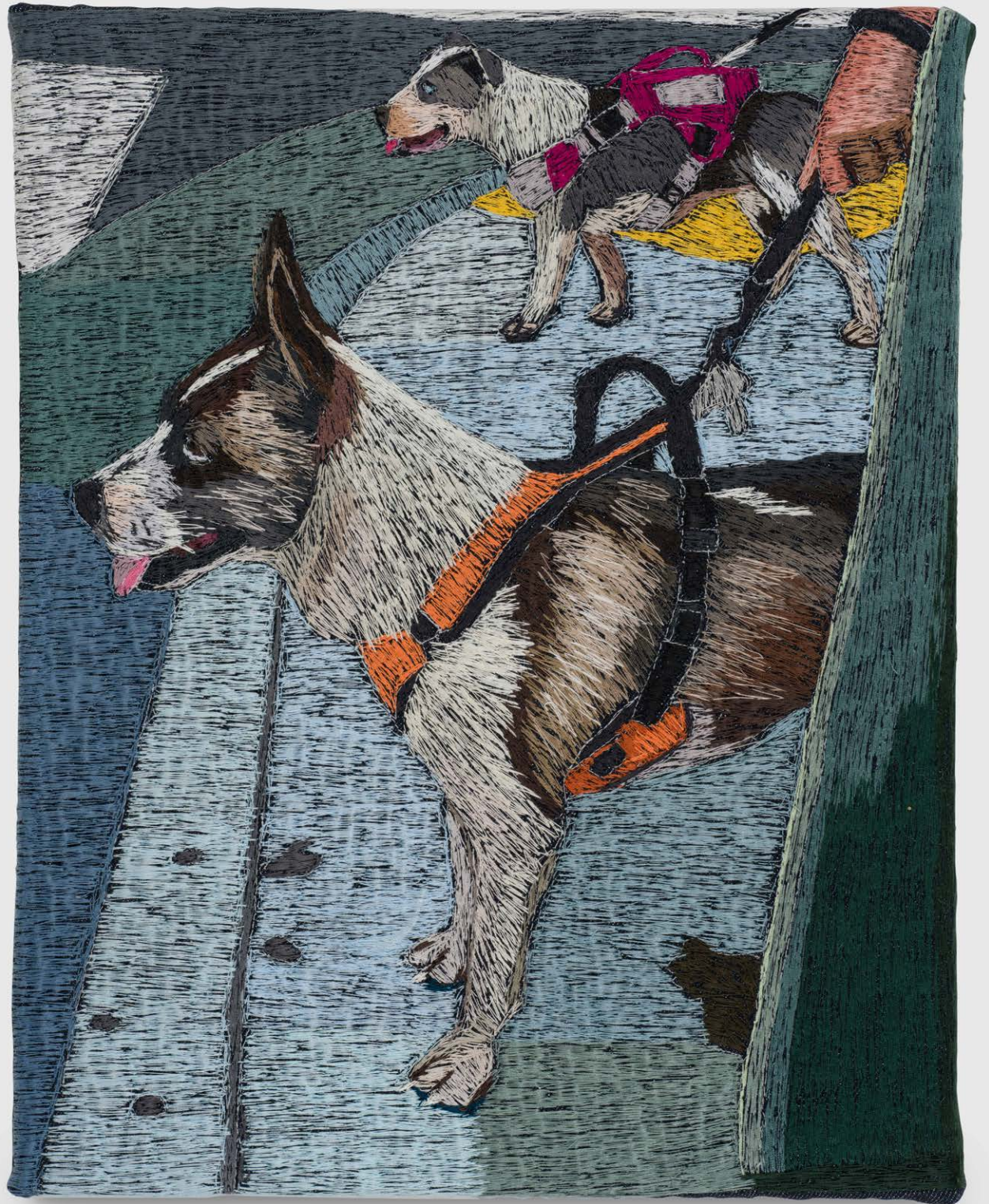
ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
Mis Vecinos (stray cats)
Polyester thread on denim
11 x 14 inches
2024



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Erick Medel
Walk around the block
Polyester thread on denim
14 x 11 inches
2024



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VIDAS

Erick Medel
Showtime
Polyester thread on denim
39.75 x 48.5 x 1.25 inches
2022



ERICK MEDEL
VIDAS

Erick Medel
In Conversation
Polyester thread on denim
48 x 36.75 x 1.25 inches
2022



ERICK MEDEL

CV

ERICK MEDEL

(b. 1992, Puebla, Mexico)

Education

2018 MFA, Rhode Island School of Design, USA

Solo Exhibitions

- 2024 Vidas, Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles
- 2023 Something Familiar, Martha's, Austin
- 2023 Mariachi, Rusha & Co., Los Angeles
- 2022 With Us, Ojiri Gallery, London
- 2021 Hustling De Sol A Sol, Martha's, Austin
- 2020 Americans Only Flags, Liberal Arts Roxbury, Roxbury

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2024 Crescent Heights, Harper's, Los Angeles
- 2023 Traditions, Muzeo, Museum and Cultural Center, Anaheim
- 2023 Ephemeral Pleasures, Richard Heller Gallery, Santa Monica
- 2023 Wet Hot Texas Summer, Martha's, Austin
- 2023 Strings of Desire, Craft Contemporary Museum, Los Angeles
- 2023 Back of Our Hands, de boer, Los Angeles
- 2023 Brendan Lynch: A Walk, Omni Gallery, London
- 2023 Hand Over Hand: Textiles Today, Mindy Solomon, Miami
- 2023 Dirty Realism: Otra noche en L.A., Veta Galeria, Madrid
- 2022 Unseen Threads, Martha's, Austin
- 2021 Breakfast in America, Rusha & Co., Los Angeles
- 2021 The Human Scale, curated by Kristin Van Loon and Ryan

- Fontaine, Rochester Art Center, Rochester
- 2020 Right Now, Hair and Nails, Minneapolis
- 2020 Still Here, Martha's, Austin
- 2020 Custom, Gas Gallery, Los Angeles
- 2019 Ambient Space of Dimension, Sublimation / Stellar Projects, New York
- 2019 Everyday, Everyday, Everyday, Everyday Freedoms, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore

Public and Private Collections

- Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento
- The Bunker Artspace, West Palm Beach, Florida

Selected Press

- 2023 "Erick Medel Weaves Immigrant Labor into Vivid Art", Michael Slenske, Los Angeles Magazine, March 24
- 2022 "The 10 Best Booths at Mexico's Zona Maco, with Pieces Honoring Protest and Place", Shanti Escalante-De Mattei, ARTnews, February 10
- 2021 "Stitched Scenes of Everyday Life in LA's Boyle Heights", Lauren Moya Ford, Hyperallergic, December 27
- 2020 "5Q's with Erick Medel", The Holland Project, October 21
- 2019 "The 7 Best Works (and What They Cost) at NADA House 2019, the Art Fair Taking Over Governors Island in New York This Summer", Caroline Goldstein, ArtNet News, May 24
- 2017 "Artist of the Week: Erick Medel", LVL3, December 2