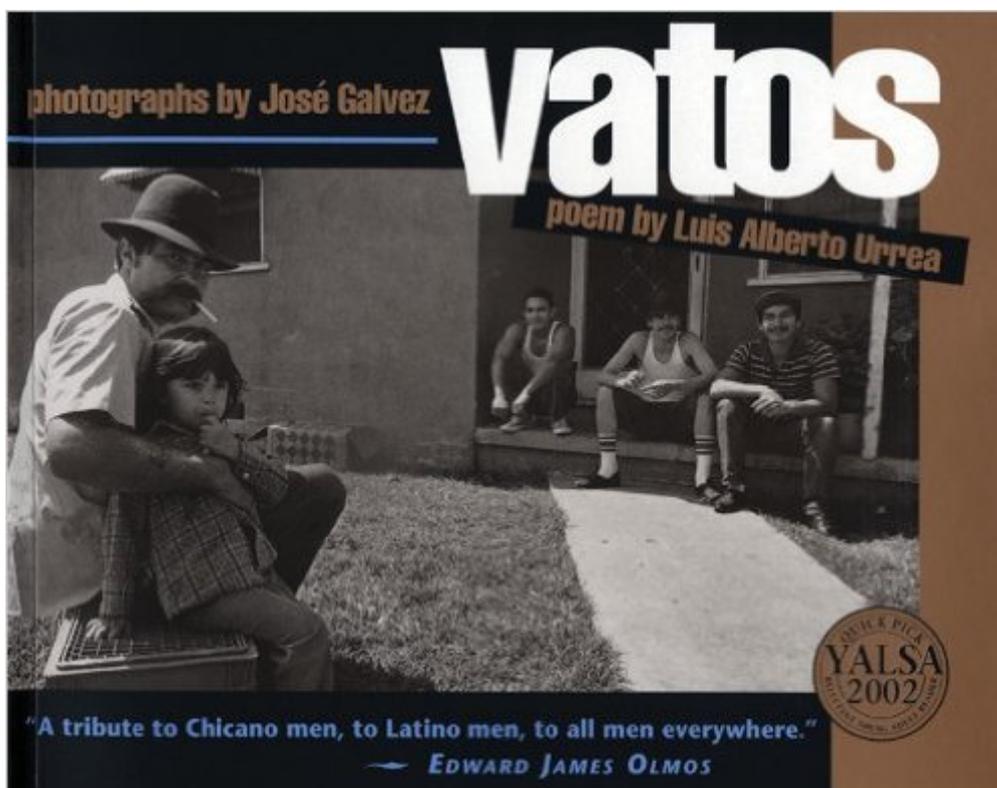


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# Vatos



## Synopsis

One evening, Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Jos  Galvez heard Luis Alberto Urrea read "Hymn to Vatos Who Will Never Be in a Poem" with its chant-like repetitions and its evocation of Chicano manhood. As Luis read each line, an image clicked in Jos 's memory, and he knew that he had already taken that photograph. The result of that experience is this remarkable book. A unique collaboration of two acclaimed artists, *Vatos* is a tribute to Latino men who are too often forgotten, ignored and misrepresented by the larger culture—children playing in the streets, migrant workers toiling for a better life, homeboys in the barrio, young men with their girlfriends and their mothers, blue collar workers, activists on the streets, sons, uncles, fathers, and grandfathers. *Vatos* recognizes their joys, their sorrows, their tenderness and their strength. Through Galvez' photographs and Urrea's words, they will not be forgotten. The word "vato," by the way, is Mexican-American slang, a word that means "dude" or "guy," but here it carries more soul than either of these. Jos  Galvez was lead photographer of a L.A. Times team that received a Pulitzer Prize for a stunning portrayal about Latinos in Southern California. Jos  and his colleagues were the first Hispanics to receive a Pulitzer. For over 30 years, Galvez has been documenting his Mexican-American culture, through photographs. He has done much freelance photojournalism and has contributed photos to the book *Americanos* produced by Edward James Olmos. Bloomsbury Review named Luis Alberto Urrea as one of its "10 Young Writers to Watch." His book *Across the Wire*, which depicts life at the edges of the dumps in Nogales, is in its 10th printing. A novelist, essayist and poet, he has received the Christopher Award, the Colorado Center for the Book Award, the Western States Book Award for Poetry, and the American Book Award.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The title "Vatos" and the picture of the homies on the cover are a little deceptive as this book covers many different men in varied situations. There are also farmworkers, mariachis , Aztec dancers, lawyers, men with their mothers and daughters and children in church included but the vast majority are mostly your stereotypical images of hard core dudes or vatos. These are images of strength, of strangers in a strange yet familiar land. The beauty of the strength and yet vulnerability of the young and old men is frozen in time, locked into the moment for future generations. The pride and respect for family tradition, the refusal to assimilate, to stay separate but within the confines of barrio pride and the cultural pride glow from these beautiful black and white photographs. The words or the poetry accompaning the images make for a heartfelt experience revealing the deep conviction of Pulitzer Prize winning photographer Jose Galvez and award winning young writer Luis Alberto Urrea. The imagery is touching and gives a glimpse into the ordinary lives of people who have claimed a piece of the American dream through tinted brown glasses, squinting from the shiny veneer of traditonal American life. The vatos portrayed have claimed their own dignity even under undignified conditions. The pictures span decades of time and when you look at them you can't help but speculate about the people in them. When you see a young teenage vato, dressed in typical homie attire, you wonder where he is now and if his chosen path has detoured for the better or worse. Looking at the old men, the lines revealing the years , the paths of experience, the eyes looking at you showing the depth of their experiences , you can't help but feel the time lost. This book is a moving visual experience and a great gift idea.

I have thousands of photos posted of Ciudad Juarez "most violent city in the world" and of the border region, including in local newspapers, including one body.I work under the motto of "Often published, never paid."Working with a similar culture in Tucson and Los Angeles, including as staff photographer for a major daily there, Galvez inhabits very similar territory, very successfully.I stand as an intrusive tourist.Galvez is one of the people, and so enters, respected, and accepted, and loved, but this is not the only secret to his success in these beautiful, touching, intimate photos made with people who felt safe and happy and proud to have his camera nearby peering at them.I would love to hang out with him one day, to watch him work, to see how he enters the space of these very and rightfully cautious people, safely, inspiring confidence, even of gang members and

bikers, and the tattooed . . . I would love to see his latest work from Tucson, with all that is going on there, persecuting the people so much so the sheriff is now in court for racial discrimination. I wish I could see much more of Galvez's work. Truly he is all that I am not, including a professional photographer. Any photographer of people has much to learn from this book. Any student of our oppressed culture gains much from a careful study of this book, of this culture which it is so profitable and popular to disparage and disperse and deport. Please see this book carefully. It is truly a jewel, a rare and precious jewel and an inspiration and lesson for all photographers, including this timid and intrusive tourist.

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