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Snapshot: 'Venegas and Venegas'

Yasmin Omar

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The Mexican photographer José Luis Venegas has devoted himself to memorialising family history and capturing rites of passage on film



'Self-Portrait' (1973)

©José Luis Venegas



Since 1970, Mexican photographer José Luis Venegas has devoted himself to memorialising family history and capturing rites of passage on film. This picture, taken at a wedding reception, shows the Jimenez and Perez men raising a glass to celebrate their relatives' union in matrimony. Venegas's photographs of society weddings were notable for combining colour shots from parties and those from his studio in single albums.

In her new exhibition, curator Ares Casado establishes a dialogue between the work of José Luis and that of his daughter, Yvonne, also a photographer. Though she cites her father as an influence on her aesthetic, Yvonne also recognises the stylistic distance between them, claiming they are “completely opposite”.

The younger Venegas is a social documentary photographer, whose recent work wrestles with themes of class and wealth in Tijuana.

These imperfect images are set in contrapuntal tension with those from José Luis's polished archive. The collection is featured as part of New York City's Celebrate Mexico Now Festival alongside Yvonne's projects.

'Venegas and Venegas' is at Baxter St at the City College of New York from October 27 to November 28, mexiconowfestival.org

Slideshow photographs: José Luis Venegas

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