

## Press Release

For Immediate Release

### **Sakhile&Me presents solo exhibition of new works by Raelis Vasquez**

*As We Were* is the artist's first solo exhibition outside the US and opens during the Frankfurt Gallery Weekend.

September 3, 2021

Frankfurt/Main, Germany – Sakhile&Me is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of Raelis Vasquez outside the United States. Titled “As We Were,” the exhibition will open on 3 September 2021, coinciding with the Frankfurt Art Experience and Frankfurt Gallery Weekend, and will run until 23 October 2021.

Raelis Vasquez is a visual artist who draws on historical, political and personal narratives through depictions of daily life and whose painterly compositions evoke the complexities of Afro-Latinx experiences. Through attentiveness to the people and places he portrays and through his gestural brushwork, contrast of warm and cool hues, and use of texture, the figures in Raelis Vasquez' work often appear to simultaneously inhabit a space of ease and vulnerability, encouraging viewers to consider their own positions on class, race and geography.

On his work, Vasquez shares that “today, I feel an overpowering responsibility (or calling) to the arts and towards my Black, Latinx and immigrant communities. I paint using oils in a naturalistic manner as a means to give clarity to the subjects I present. My devotion is to the accurate representation of the convoluted histories of the Dominican Republic. I am aiming to highlight an allegorical narrative that presents the psychological states of the figures in my works while presenting a window to the viewer of their daily lives.”

For “As We Were,” Vasquez created a new body of work that focuses on family memories of a time before 2002, the year he and his family emigrated from the Dominican Republic to the United States. In these works, on canvas and on paper, made with acrylic, oil paint, oil stick and some textured with sand, Vasquez depicts scenes of family life: embracing, swimming and sitting in and tending to the garden. Since Vasquez and his family moved to the U.S. when he was seven years old, a significant aspect of “As We Were” is a glimpse into quiet intimate moments of the artist's family life during his childhood.

Vasquez earned a BFA in Painting and Drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and he is a 2021 MFA candidate in Painting and Drawing at Columbia University. His work is in several notable public and private collections, such as the Perez Art Museum in Miami and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. The artist lives and works between New Jersey and New York.

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#### **About the gallery**

Sakhile&Me is a contemporary art gallery and research space based in Frankfurt, Germany. Founded in 2018 by Sakhile Matlhare and Daniel Hagemeyer, Sakhile&Me works with both young and established international artists, curators, and researchers and intentionally prioritizes the African continent and its diasporas with the goal of drawing attention to contextual specificity in and through art – in content, artistic medium, and genre. Sakhile holds a doctoral degree in Sociology from Northwestern University and wrote her dissertation on how contemporary artists work alongside art curators, historians, gallerists and other experts in the gatekeeping process within and beyond the rubric of contemporary African art. Daniel holds a Master's degree in Communications from the University of Sydney. The gallery is committed to building a strong art program that invests in its artists' development and encourages audiences to come to a deeper appreciation and understanding of their work.

#### **Opening hours**

Tuesday - Friday: 12 pm - 6 pm; Saturday: 10 am - 4 pm; by appointment.

#### **Image Material**

*Raelis Vasquez*. 2021. Portrait. **File name:** raelis-vasquez-large.jpg. **Caption:** Raelis Vasquez.

Raelis Vasquez. *Samaná*. 2021. Acrylic, oil and sand on canvas. 91x122cm. **File name:** raelis-vasquez-samana-large.jpg. **Caption:** Raelis Vasquez: Samaná (2021).

Raelis Vasquez. *Noches Vivas*. 2021. Acrylic, oil and sand on canvas. 152x122cm. **File name:** raelis-vasquez-noches-vivas-large.jpg. **Caption:** Raelis Vasquez: Noches Vivas (2021).

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