



# Vatos

*Luis Alberto Urrea*

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**Vatos** Luis Alberto Urrea

One evening, Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer José 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 José'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.

**José Galvez** was lead photographer of a *L.A. Times* team that received a Pulitzer Prize for a stunning portrayal about Latinos in Southern California. José 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.

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