

ATM Gallery is thrilled to present its inaugural solo exhibition of drawings by Luisiana Mera, *Solo una vez*.

The flames of birthday candles dance just before they are blown out. White hot, their light nuzzles into the folds of frosting. *Happy Birthday, Luisi! ¡Feliz Cumpleaños!* The person blowing out the candles is both invisible and present, like the twin forces of memory and experience.

In *Solo una vez*, a series of charcoal drawings by Luisiana Mera, ephemeral moments attain cinematic qualities. The tug of loneliness, nostalgia, and sensuality, in Mera's compositions, are as lifelike as her drawings themselves. A drizzle of sweetened condensed milk tumbles forth, tinged with remembrance. Something which will never happen again has been memorialized in vivid detail.

Always working in series, Mera moves from subjects familiar to her childhood in Panama to her life in New York City. Outside the Met, she focuses on mickey mouse balloons which obscure the entrance to the museum. A buffeting wind can be felt jostling over the rush of traffic. In another work, a Dora the Explorer balloon hides the artist's face. In *90's Catholic School Girl*, the Virgin Mary, Jesus, and Dora are locked in a swirling composition; the cultural pulp of Latinidad becoming landscape and self portrait. In every piece, Mera subtly positions herself while documenting her surroundings. All that has passed comes back to life, *solo una vez*.

Luisiana Mera is a Panamanian-American artist. For the past ten years, she has lived in and worked in New York City. Mera holds an MFA from the New York Academy of Art.