

Two Old Dogs  
Mario Sergio Alvarez  
14 September - 26 October

When I first moved to The Netherlands, one of the first lessons I learned was how to furnish my shared student house on a budget. Coming from Southern Europe, I was struck by how people would leave almost pristine furniture on the streets, when too lazy to sell them on Marktplaats. On specific days, depending on the neighborhood, I would find these forgotten items, left behind. It embodied the saying, "One man's trash is another man's treasure." Since then, I have often wandered through wealthier neighborhoods on these evenings, peeking through windows and sifting through discarded fragments of other people's memories.

In recent years, Mario Sergio Alvarez has used this kind of discarded furniture as the foundation for his work. The traces and marks left by the previous owners become the first brushstrokes of Alvarez's carefully depicted animals, always in peaceful sleep. The use of abandoned furniture as a medium ties deeply into his personal narrative of migration from Cuba and the displacement that journey entails. These once-loved objects, stripped of their original homes, resonate with his experience of leaving behind a country shaped by its own losses and transformations. As Alvarez migrated, seeking a new beginning, so do these objects.

For Two Old Dogs, we have turned the gallery into something reminiscent of a scene from Storage Wars; just before they open, furniture is frozen in time. In addition to the signature furniture pieces, Alvarez has produced a new film that tells a parallel story of the protagonists depicted in the paintings. In his practice, Mario has always been interested in stories, particularly those meant for children, which might also tell something more depending on who reads them.