

# LAMONTAGNE GALLERY

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Esteban del Valle  
“a little something more”

March 31st to May 6th

LaMontagne Gallery is please to present a solo exhibition of new paintings, drawings and sculptures by Esteban del Valle.

Originally inspired by two extreme ends of culture, *a little something more* is a series that began as a personal reflection on the conceptual overlap between Fyodor Dostoevsky’s “The Grand Inquisitor”, excerpted from his 1880 novel, *The Brothers of Karamazov*, and The History Channel’s competitive survivalist TV show, *Alone*.

## Artist Statement:

In “The Grand Inquisitor” a Christ-like figure returns to Earth during the Spanish Inquisition and performs a series of miracles, leading to the church authorities to detain him. In a private moment inside a cell, the Inquisitor launches into a diatribe expressing his belief that Christ thought too highly of humanity when he offered them freedom. He continues his argument by reexamining the biblical narrative of the three temptations of Christ in the wilderness. The Devil’s first suggestion was for Christ to solve the problem of his hunger by converting stones into bread. His response was, “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” The Inquisitor then argues that humanity does not need freedom, they need bread. It is his belief that through an alliance with the Devil, the church has protected people from the spiritual challenge of “freedom” and thus provided them with a more tangible path to happiness through manipulation.

I was reminded of the Inquisitor’s claims while binge watching The History Channel’s reality TV show *Alone*; a show placing experienced survivalists in the isolated wilderness to see who can endure the longest. After several seasons, I noticed participants with the most effective survival techniques and available resources did not necessarily outlast other participants. These highly-skilled contestants seemed to always require something more to cross the finish line. On the opposite end, when a contestant was unable to complete their shelter or faced starvation, they equally seemed to search for something more to keep motivated. In both cases, whether an individual’s basic needs were met or not, they found themselves needing something more to keep going. This often took the form of a creative project accompanied by memories and/or thoughts of loved ones and home.

Often formulating my ideas using text from literature, music, or film that inspired me, my process takes an anachronistic approach to histories as a means to explore figuration and storytelling through an autobiographical lens. Pulling from my lived experience, using friends and family as models, this series uses drawing as a space to explore my thoughts, feelings, and critiques about the “little something more” we need to keep going.