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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LA MecCA:
L.A. as the promised Land

An Exhibition of Photography from
5 Southern California Photographers

April 1st – 14th, 2011

Opening Reception: Friday, April 8th, 6:30-9:30pm

The Terrell Moore Gallery

1221 Hope Street

Los Angeles, CA 90025

www.terrellmoore.net

213-744-1999

In ***LA mecCA: Los Angeles as the Promised Land***, five well-known Los Angeles photographers traverse the geographic and cultural boundaries that bisect Southern California producing a poignant look at the lives of its inhabitants, the dreams they seek, and the realities they find.

The promise of sunshine, escape, and opportunity, have long made Los Angeles a Mecca where people come to find and live their dreams. For the last century, the allure of Hollywood's glamour and glitz and chance for yet-to-be discovered stardom have inspired countless hopefuls to pack their bags and head west. The attraction of blue skies and sunny days, the scent of orange blossoms mixed with ocean breezes, and the prospect of starting over in wide-open spaces have defined life in Southern California for decades. But once here, dreams become elusive, morphing into the unexpected. What's behind the velvet curtain isn't always the yellow brick road.

Douglas McCulloh takes a look at the marketing of dreams in collision with the housing crash in his project, *Dream Street*.

"I won the right to name a street in southern California," writes the author and photographer. The chance win at a charity event launched McCulloh into an obsessive relationship with a 134-home subdivision just commencing in Southern California. Captivated by the creation of this new neighborhood, he haunted the place he named Dream Street, vividly chronicling the lives of builders, workers, and prospective homebuyers with his camera and tape recorder. McCulloh puts a human face on the process that has shaped so much of America. And by a fateful quirk of timing, McCulloh's presence at Dream Street also cuts a clean slice straight through the heart of the U.S. housing boom and bust.

Mark Indig's images explore the one element that connects our city, The Los Angeles River.

There is nothing quite like the Los Angeles River. It runs over 50 concrete miles through the heart of a metro area of 10 million people. Yet in a place where water is precious, hardly any of those millions know its history, where it begins or ends, its current function or have ever put even their pinky toes in its water. In fact, the patchwork of governments and agencies that control the river make it almost impossible to access it without trespassing. No other American city has so completely turned its back on such a resource. Most see it as a hideous scar on the landscape; a polluted dystopian highway through the heart of urban darkness. Yet it is also a rich cultural canvas of striking visuals and unlimited potentials. Los Angeles could not have evolved in its current form without the "river," and it cannot fully thrive without at least its partial restoration

Larry Brownstein's series, *Hollywood, A Live Show Daily*, finds humanity on the streets of the city of dreams.

The glitz and glamour of Hollywood beckons, but what awaits for those who are called? Hollywood, A Live Show Daily shows the reality behind the image that Hollywood projects to the world, by looking at the real day to day live show on the streets of Hollywood Boulevard and beyond. It's a show, a reality show you might say, that transcends the fabled image of an iconic place.

Ken Haber explores a community where dreams turned into a nightmare, in his project, *The Salton Sea*.

The Salton Sea was created at the turn of the nineteenth century by a breach in the Colorado River. Developers capitalizing on this catastrophe were determined to turn the area into the Palm Springs for the middle class in the 1950's and 60's. But Agricultural run-off, resulting in excess salinity and pollution, turned the Salton Sea into a very different place.

Just as the Colorado escaped from the confines of it's banks, the inhabitants of the Salton Sea have escaped from society, living amongst the skeletons of what might have been, each seeking out their own piece of nirvana.

Aline Smithson's series, *Unreal/Reality*, celebrates a southland attraction where expectations and observations are illusions in perception.

Hollywood is based on false truths. For decades, set builders and art directors have created new worlds, playing with our acuity in interpreting what's in front of us. The designers at Legoland have also created new, yet familiar, landscapes where unreal realities are celebrated in miniature. The images are created with a toy camera, and when color, scale, and the certainty of sharpness are removed, the result is a fantasy of perceptions.

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