

Long Beach Museum of Art

CALIFORNIA, SEEN

LANDSCAPES OF A CHANGING CALIFORNIA, 1930-1970

SEPTEMBER 26, 2008 - JANUARY 11, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Long Beach (September 2, 2008) – The Long Beach Museum of Art will present *California, Seen: Landscapes of a Changing California, 1930-1970* from September 26, 2008–January 11, 2009. The exhibit examines the important California Scene Painting movement through paintings and prints depicting the rural, urban, and changing landscape of southern California by such featured artists as Loren Roberta Barton, Emil Kosa, Phil Dike, Rex Brandt, Leon Amyx and Charles Keck—some of the most well-known California Scene practitioners.

As opposed to the often dark and brooding realist styles from other parts of the country, many of the works in *California, Seen* were painted in vibrant watercolor. The medium, owing its popularity to the radiant climate of southern California, allowed artists to work outdoors and capture their “scenes” at specific moments when the natural light was ideal. (Oil paints being generally too messy and unwieldy to transport and use away from the studio). Although often dealing with heady issues of social realism, urbanism and industrialization, California Scene painters generally portrayed their environments as fresh, energetic bastions of natural beauty and American ingenuity. To provide context, the exhibition will begin with works representing the regionalist movements that were popular in the Midwest and New York, including works by Thomas Hart Benton, John Steuart Curry and others.

California, Seen will be enjoyed by approximately 20,000 visitors, and roughly 2,500 Long Beach Unified School District students. The Museum is planning a full spectrum of FREE educational activities for children and adults that will explore the themes, historical background and artistic techniques presented in the exhibition. Activities include lectures, artist discussions and tours, as well as artmaking activities for both children and adults, including opportunities to paint outdoors as did many of the artists in the exhibition. Additionally, the Museum will provide students and their teachers with *California, Seen* programming through the Museum’s KidsVisions program that targets all of the District’s fifth-grade classes, and the Transitional Art Program that provides all 200 students at Bethune Transitional School for Homeless Students with visual arts lessons and hands-on activities at their school site and at the Museum.

California, Seen is made possible through the generous support of American Express, Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation, Evalyn M. Bauer Foundation, Gordon and Ruth Dougherty Foundation, the Port of Long Beach, Farmers & Merchants Bank, Bess J. Hodges Foundation, Sandy Hunter, Bud and Mary Ellen Kilsby and Art Design Resources.

About the Long Beach Museum of Art

Located on a magnificent bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the Long Beach Museum of Art features an historic mansion and carriage house, expansive galleries and gardens, oceanfront dining at Claire’s at the Museum and a unique Museum Store. The galleries and store are open Tuesday – Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Claire’s at the Museum is open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday – Friday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$6 for students and seniors age 62 and older, free for Museum members and children under 12, and free for everyone on Friday. For more information, call (562) 439-2119 or visit www.lbma.org.

Images: Leon Amyx, *Farm in the Pomona Hills*, n.d. Watercolor on paper, Purchased with funds provided by Earl and Margaret Leake; Leonard Cutrow, *The Gravel Pit*, ca. 1950, Watercolor on paper, Gift of Allan Cutrow and Robert Cutrow; George Gibson, *Near Gorman*, 1966, Oil on canvas, Purchased with funds provided by Charles and Jean Lane; Leonard Cutrow, *The Plaza*, 1948, Watercolor on paper, Gift of Allan Cutrow and Robert Cutrow; Charles Keck, *Bean Hopper*, n.d., Watercolor on paper, Purchased by the 2007 LBMA Collectors Circle with additional funds provided by Long Beach BMW.

