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## THE HAMMER MUSEUM PRESENTS

### ***ED RUSCHA: ON THE ROAD***

On View June 11 – October 2, 2011



Left-right: Ed Ruscha. *California Grapeskins*, 2009, Acrylic on canvas, 38-1/8 x 64-1/8 in. Ed Ruscha. *Greatest Passers*, 2010, Acrylic on canvas, 38 x 64 in. Images courtesy of Gagosian Gallery.

**Los Angeles**—This summer the Hammer Museum presents *Ed Ruscha: On the Road*, on view **June 11 – October 2, 2011**. This exhibition, organized by Hammer chief curator Douglas Fogle, brings together two great visionaries of art and language - **Ed Ruscha** and **Jack Kerouac**. Both men revolutionized the transparent use of words to document and comment on the shifting character of the American cultural landscape.

In 1951, Kerouac wrote *On the Road* on his typewriter as a continuous 120 foot-long scroll, feverishly recording in twenty days his experiences during road trips in the U.S. and Mexico in the late 1940s. With its publication in 1957, Kerouac was acknowledged as the leading voice of the Beat Generation, a group of writers that included Alan Ginsberg and William Burroughs.

Over the last few years Ed Ruscha has continued to explore his own fascination with the shifting emblems of American life by turning his keen aesthetic sensibility to Kerouac's classic novel. Having created his own limited edition artist book version of *On the Road* in 2009 published by Gagosian Gallery and Steidl, and illustrated with photographs that he took, commissioned, or found, Ruscha has created an entirely new body of paintings and drawings that take their inspiration from passages in Kerouac's novel.

As Douglas Fogle suggests, "It is completely fitting that Ed Ruscha would take up the challenge of looking at Kerouac's *On the Road*. In many ways Ruscha's entire career has offered an artistic corollary to Kerouac's linguistic portrait of the American landscape, giving concrete visual form to the poetry of our vernacular roadside. These new works are no different except that they channel one of the greatest chronicler's of the

American landscape by appropriating and artistically framing fragmented instances of Kerouac's language."

This exhibition consists of entirely new work, including Ruscha's edition of Kerouac's legendary novel, eight large paintings on canvas, and nine drawings on museum board, each taking its text from *On the Road*. With this work, Ruscha creates his own psychic road trip through the pages of Kerouac's America. Whether painted over snow-capped mountains in his signature ALL CAP typography or drawn atop delicately spattered abstract backgrounds, Ruscha uses Kerouac's words to explore his own archetypal American landscape. Isolating key sentences and phrases from the novel for his paintings and drawings such as "In California you chew the juice out of grapes and spit away the skin, a real luxury," "the holy con man began to eat," or "fit and slick as a fiddle," Ruscha adds another layer of deadpan aesthetic analysis to Kerouac's original and radical use of language.

### **Credit**

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### **ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM**

The Hammer Museum, a public arts unit of the University of California, Los Angeles, is dedicated to exploring the diversity of artistic expression through the ages. Its collections, exhibitions, and programs span the classic to the cutting-edge in art, architecture, and design, recognizing that artists play a crucial role in all aspects of culture and society.

The museum houses the Armand Hammer Collection of Old Master, Impressionist, and Post-Impressionist paintings and the Armand Hammer Daumier and Contemporaries Collection. The Hammer's newest collection, the Hammer Contemporary Collection, is highlighted by works on paper, particularly drawings and photographs from Southern California. The museum also houses the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, comprising more than 45,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists' books from the Renaissance to the present; and oversees the management of the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden on the UCLA campus.

The Hammer presents major single-artist and thematic exhibitions of historical and contemporary art. It also presents approximately ten Hammer Projects exhibitions each year, providing international and local artists with a laboratory-like environment to create new work or to present existing work in a new context.

As a cultural center, the Hammer offers a diverse range of free public programs throughout the year, including lectures, readings, symposia, film screenings, and music performances. The Hammer's Billy Wilder Theater houses these widely acclaimed public programs and is the new home of the UCLA Film & Television Archive's renowned cinemathèque.

**HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION**

For current program and exhibition information call **310-443-7000** or visit **[www.hammer.ucla.edu](http://www.hammer.ucla.edu)**.

**Hours:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 11am – 7pm; Thursday, 11am – 9 pm; Sunday, 11am – 5 pm; closed Mondays, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.

**Admission:** \$10 for adults; \$5 for seniors (65+) and UCLA Alumni Association members; free for Museum members, students with identification, UCLA faculty/staff, military personnel, veterans, and visitors 17 and under. The Museum is free on Thursdays for all visitors. Public programs are always free.

**Location/Parking:** The Hammer is located at 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, at Westwood Boulevard. Parking is available under the Museum. Rate is \$3 for three hours with Museum validation. Bikes park free.

**Hammer Museum Tours:** For group tour reservations and information, call 310-443-7041.