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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION: **Michael Eastman: Vanishing America**
Gallery II: Richard Gilles: Almost Home-Less

SHOW DATES: **May 31 – July 19, 2008**

RECEPTION: **Saturday, May 31, 6-8 pm**

GALLERY HOURS: **Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm**

DNJ Gallery is pleased to announce its upcoming exhibition, "Vanishing America," presenting the photographs and a new book of the same title by **Michael Eastman**. This monograph will be available for purchase at DNJ Gallery and Eastman will be signing copies at the opening reception.

Michael Eastman's large-scale images record the common, everyday places which once made up the greater American landscape. Eastman's photographs do not depict humans, but nevertheless are about people. He captures the restaurants, movie theaters, bars, bowling alleys, city halls, hotels and the outskirts of the community – focusing on the public space. Eastman is firmly committed to portraying the legacy of small communities. He preserves the vanishing townscape.

One of Eastman's major influences, Eugene Atget, a painter turned photographer, believed he was the author of his environment. He illustrated the late 19th century storefronts of Paris to record them for the future generations. Similarly, another one of his influences, Walker Evans, was known for concentrating on the ordinary. Evans noticed those common places that are not missed until they are no longer there. In this vein, "Vanishing America" celebrates the forgotten, preserving the rich visual relics still remaining, and holding evidence to our collective past.

In 2003, Eastman began his three and a half-year project, traveling across the United States six times. Shooting with his 4x5 camera has made him a keen observer of the world, and given way to a developed poetic vision of what a more superficial observer would consider mundane architecture. Eastman's images have a quiet painterly attention to light and space, which also translate beautifully to the colors of film. "Vanishing America" reveals the hidden jewels of the rural American buildings, recalling a history that in modern times has often been traded for corporate chains and mass uniformity. "The heart of our country is not along its highways, but in the small towns that dot the map along the way," Eastman says about his work. There is a definite nostalgia for a part of our past slowly being demolished, but Eastman chooses to preserve what remains, taking subtle care as if he were an archeologist uncovering a long, lost civilization.

Michael Eastman has exhibited across the country and his work is included in many esteemed collections such as The San Francisco Museum of Art, The Art Institute of Chicago, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Gallery II features work from the series "Almost Home-Less" by **Richard Gilles**. Photographing different mobile homes across the West Coast, this body of work illustrates an element of American society that goes unnoticed. As in the ideas of the New Topographics movement Gilles' unbiased images illustrate the distinct personality of each vehicle, while at the same time, giving no direct insight as to its occupants. He asks us to take a closer look at the prevalence of the motor-home lifestyle and observe the camouflaged vehicles dotting our city streets, beaches, and rural landscapes. Gilles received a BA from San Francisco State University. He has exhibited in galleries throughout the United States and has won various awards for his work. This will be his first show in the Los Angeles area.

Please contact the gallery for more information or images.