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# The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

4525 Oak Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64111

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## *Anthony Hernandez: L.A. Landscapes* Opens at Nelson-Atkins April 19

### *Exhibition Highlights Artist's Contemporary Views of Urban Environment*

Kansas City, MO. April 3, 2019—For nearly 50 years, photographer Anthony Hernandez has used his camera to document the social landscape in and around his native Los Angeles. *Anthony Hernandez: L.A. Landscapes*, drawn completely from the permanent collection of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, highlights Hernandez's mid-to-late career achievements and features 40 photographs. The exhibition opens April 19.



“The incredible breadth and depth of our photography collection allows us to present exhibitions of internationally recognized artists like Anthony Hernandez for our Kansas City audiences,” said Julián Zugazagoitia, Menefee D. and Mary Louise Blackwell CEO & Director of the Nelson-Atkins. “These compelling works straddle abstraction and social documentation in a unique and fascinating way.”

The earliest projects represented in this exhibition include two black and white photographs from the series *Automotive Landscapes*, *Public Transit Areas*, *Public Use Areas*, and *Public Fishing Areas*. These works, made between 1978 and 1982, focus on the mundane asphalt and concrete landscapes of Los Angeles, a city constructed for, and reliant on, automotive transport. These photographs were the first views Hernandez made using a 5 x 7-inch Deardorff camera, and marked a shift away from his earlier, 35-mm street photography to large-format work.

More recent projects by Hernandez will include a selection of 18 color photographs from *Everything* and *Forever*, two series that take as their subjects the fringe landscapes of Los Angeles. *Everything* includes photographs made while Hernandez walked the Los Angeles River basin, an area often perceived as a wasteland, and one rarely seen by car. These landscapes eschew familiar tropes of natural beauty, focusing instead on such structures as drainage ditches and storm drains, and the human detritus found therein. For *Forever*, Hernandez adopted the point of view of the homeless, turning his camera toward the spaces they inhabit. The photographs record more than the material traces of this way of life. They emphasize the emotional and psychological impact of living on the streets, giving symbolic weight to the simplest of objects. For both *Everything* and *Forever*, Hernandez framed his subjects using a medium-format camera. His use of the square negative



complements Hernandez's ongoing interest in pattern, compositional structure, and typological investigation.



“Anthony’s work uniquely addresses important social issues—such as the impact of city planning on disenfranchised communities—without making a strident political statement,” said April Watson, Photography Curator. “Rather, his approach gently encourages viewers to recognize and understand these concerns through his specific artistic choices.”

*Anthony Hernandez; L.A. Landscapes* closes Aug. 18.

*Image captions: Anthony Hernandez, American (born 1947). Public Transit Areas #11, 1979. Inkjet print, 28 1/16 x 40 1/16. Gift of the Hall Family Foundation, 2012.53.18.*

*Anthony Hernandez, American (born 1947). Everything #2, 2004. Inkjet print, 20 × 20 inches. Gift of the Hall Family Foundation, 2017.68.63.2.*

*Anthony Hernandez, American (born 1947). Forever #34, 2011. Inkjet print, 40 × 40 inches. Gift of the Hall Family Foundation, 2017.68.66.*

*This exhibition is supported by the Hall Family Foundation. Additional support provided by the Campbell-Calvin Fund.*

## **The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art**

The Nelson-Atkins in Kansas City is recognized nationally and internationally as one of America's finest art museums. The museum, which strives to be the place *where the power of art engages the spirit of community*, opens its doors free of charge to people of all backgrounds. The museum is an institution that both challenges and comforts, that both inspires and soothes, and it is a destination for inspiration, reflection and connecting with others.

The Nelson-Atkins serves the community by providing access to its renowned collection of more than 41,000 art objects and is best known for its Asian art, European and American paintings, photography, modern sculpture, and new American Indian and Egyptian galleries. Housing a major art research library and the Ford Learning Center, the Museum is a key educational resource for the region. In 2017, the Nelson-Atkins celebrates the 10-year anniversary of the Bloch Building, a critically acclaimed addition to the original 1933 Nelson-Atkins Building.

The Nelson-Atkins is located at 45<sup>th</sup> and Oak Streets, Kansas City, MO. Hours are Wednesday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Thursday/Friday, 10 a.m.–9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Admission to the museum is free to everyone. For museum information, phone 816.751.1ART (1278) or visit [nelson-atkins.org](http://nelson-atkins.org).

**For media interested in receiving further information, please contact:**

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