

## **Lowbrow and Pop Surrealist Birthplace La Luz de Jesus Celebrates 25 Year Milestone With Book and Exhibition**

*Before the existence of La Luz de Jesus Gallery, illustrative and narrative art was not accepted by the fine art world. Upstart gallery owner Billy Shire turned the art world upside down by breaking the rules and showing art that spoke directly to him and California youth culture which grew up on Kustom Car Culture, comics, cartoons, psychedelic posters and punk rock. Shire's visions inspired and changed the art world. This year his gallery celebrates its' 25 year milestone with a massive exhibition and book.*

October 29, 2011 (FPRC) -- "La Luz de Jesus 25," a monumental group show celebrating a quarter century milestone of a gallery that birthed the Lowbrow and Pop Surrealist movement features more than 260 artists, each of whom have created a piece of art and written an essay about their experience with the gallery. In 25 years of groundbreaking exhibitions, this is La Luz's first retrospective survey, featuring three generations of the most important artists working today.

Billy Shire set out to change the relationship between the artist and patron, challenging the notion of "exclusivity," and making a commitment to art and artists regardless of immediate commercial viability. Shire also dedicated his efforts to exhibiting artists he felt were not getting the recognition and exposure they deserved and making their work accessible to more people. La Luz de Jesus gallery became a home to tattoo art, comic book art, pinup art, poster art, folk art, outsider art - any type of art that wasn't safe, mainstream, or played by the rules. With the seeds planted by La Luz de Jesus 25 years ago, things have changed drastically as witnessed by a Robert Williams retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the annual "new contemporary" art fair, Beyond Eden, held at the city run Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and the recent "Art in the Streets" installation at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

In 25 years of groundbreaking exhibitions, this is La Luz's first retrospective survey, featuring three generations of the most important artists working today. Never before have all these artists shown together in one exhibition. The book, a companion to the show, chronicles the rich legacy of La Luz de Jesus and the thriving art movements it helped launch.

La Luz de Jesus 25 opens to the public at 8pm on Friday, November 4 and remains open seven days a week until Monday, November 26, at La Luz de Jesus Gallery, 4633 Hollywood Blvd. Los Angeles CA 90027.

Participating in La Luz de Jesus 25 project is a who's-who of art, including Robert Williams, Joe Coleman, Mark Ryden, Sam Doyle Georganne Deen, Matt Groening, Manuel Ocampo, S. Clay Wilson, Victor Moscoso, Spain Rodriguez, Bill Barminski, Daniel Martin Díaz, Glenn Barr, Elizabeth McGrath, Tony Fitzpatrick, Frank Kozik, Chris Mars, Massimo Giaccon, Mark Mothersbaugh, Gary Panter, John de Fazio, Laurie Lipton, Ric Heitzman, Clayton Brothers, Dave Cooper, Judith Schaechter, Lou Beach, Calef Brown, Eric White, Shag, Tim Biskup and Gary Baseman. The companion book, La Luz de Jesus 25 (La Luz de Jesus Press/Last Gasp) features images of the complete show along with an essay written by each artist. The book also includes essays by Billy Shire as well as current and former La Luz gallery directors, including Robert "El Vez" Lopez.

A full list of artists as well as a preview of each piece in the show can be viewed at the gallery's website

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