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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Road Trip: Nine Artists at the Uptown**

**OAKLAND, California** –A group of nine of anything is called an Ennead. This particular group of nine Bay Area Artists will transform the Uptown Body and Fender shop in Oakland's Northgate neighborhood into an energetic painting exhibition entitled "ROAD TRIP." Fueled by the do-it-yourself attitude that has become the signature of Oakland's expanding arts renaissance, this event explores the creative paths embarked upon by the individual artists and reflects the passionate spirit of their cohesive group. "ROAD TRIP" opens with a free public reception from 6:00 to 9:00 pm, Friday, March 7, 2008 at THE UPTOWN, located on 26th St. between Broadway and Telegraph Ave., at 401 26th St., Oakland, CA 94612. (510) 251-8009. Friday's event includes music and light fare. The exhibit continues through the weekend of March 8 and 9, from 11 am to 6 pm on Saturday and Sunday.

**It all starts here.** Inspiration for the weekend-long exhibition evolved from a desire to celebrate the group's origins. Many of the members first met in 2004 while participating in the Taking the Leap Art Business Program. They were all students of painter, mentor/consultant, Jamie Brunson. When their program concluded in early 2005, the artists embraced their collective desire to continue meeting regularly as a cohesive unit. What began as a critical forum for presenting works-in-progress has since expanded into a monthly exchange of ideas about the creative process as well as the more practical matters of the art world. The members share resources, processes, and encouragement—invaluable elements for any artist who is seriously committed to maintaining a thriving art practice.

This multigenerational and multicultural ensemble of eight women and one man is populated with lawyers, designers, architects, gamers, therapists, currency traders, and activists turned artists. The exhibit will feature original paintings from: Lorrie Fink, Sarah Gopher, Judy Levit, Jane Norling, Suzanne Onodera, Tracy Rocca, Michael Sacramento, Becca Shortle, and Amanda Williams. Having exhibited widely as individuals, the artists have teamed up for the first time in this format, launching "Road Trip" at Uptown Body and Fender in Oakland.

The Uptown's co-owner, Giovanna Tanzillo, is a generous supporter of Oakland's cultural arts and Oakland's larger communities. She has frequently donated use of her space for projects that enrich the city's multi-textured fabric. To express their appreciation to Giovanna for hosting this event, the "ROAD TRIP" artists will donate a portion of the exhibit's proceeds to Oakland's Creative Growth Art Center in her honor. The members believe that sharing with the local community increases opportunities for all.

Join the artists at this stop on their journey.

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