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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**NERY GABRIEL LEMUS**

***A PLACE CALLED HOME***

**APRIL 28 – JUNE 2, 2018**

**ARTIST'S RECEPTION: APRIL 28, 2018, 6-9PM**

**Charlie James Gallery** is pleased to present *A Place Called Home*, the fourth solo show by LA artist **Nery Gabriel Lemus** at the gallery. The exhibition explores immigration through the lens of "The New Colossus," a sonnet originally written by American poet Emma Lazarus in 1883 to raise money for the construction of a pedestal for the Statue of Liberty. The sonnet depicts a mighty woman that lights the way for refugees and immigrants seeking shelter- it highlights her desire to embrace such individuals as a mother would her children; Lazarus calls her the "Mother of Exiles."

Lemus's work in the main gallery will explore the terrain that immigrants traverse on their journey(s) to the United States through a series of highly detailed watercolor paintings of desert landscapes. At first glance, the paintings seem to depict barren images of desert lands, but upon closer observation the images reveal key phrases from the Emma Lazarus poem.

Centered in the main gallery is Lemus's epic floor piece titled "Thee Unknown Females," which brings into stark relief the dangers involved in attempting to cross the US-Mexico border. The piece references the ornate dyed sawdust rugs, known as Alfombras, made in Guatemala during Holy Week. The piece depicts three numbered burial markers for 'three unknown females' who perished making the desert crossing to the US. Lemus's floor painting uncannily evokes the folk tradition of the Alfombra, but achieves the result through the seamless arrangement of fifteen acrylic painted welcome mats.

In the rear gallery signs with ceramic tablets share the narratives of immigrants that came to the US seeking a better life for their children. The signs serve as markers of completion. The pieces are labeled *Tetelestai #1, #2, #3, #4*. Tetelestai is the Greek work for "it is finished." The rear gallery will also contain a collection of smaller Alfombras that reflect elements of contemporary dialogue on immigration.

**Nery Gabriel Lemus** was born in Los Angeles in 1977. The subjects in his work range from issues of stereotype, division and immigration to problems in society that can lead to the failure of families, such as poverty, abuse and neglect. Lemus received his BFA at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California (2007) and his MFA at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California (2009). Lemus also attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine (2008). His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at, Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Steve Turner Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA; The Bindery Projects, Minneapolis, MN; Project Row Houses, Houston, TX. Group exhibitions include, Taste Makers & Earthshakers, Vince Price Art Museum, Los

Angeles, CA; Fútbol: The Beautiful Game, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Made in L.A. 2012, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Dia a Dia/ Day by Day, The 9.99 Gallery, Guatemala City, Guatemala; OZ: New Offerings From Angel City, Museo Regional Guadalajara, Jalisco; Common Ground, California African-American Museum, Los Angeles, CA and exhibitions at the Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA; Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, Santa Ana, CA; Indianapolis Art Center, Indianapolis, IN; Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA; Centro Cultural Paseo del Norte, Chihuahua, Mexico and the Centro Cultural Tijuana, Tijuana, Mexico, among others. He is a recipient of a California Community Foundation Fellowship, a COLA Fellowship Grant from the Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles, and the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Fellowship Award. He is represented by Charlie James Gallery in Los Angeles.