

## Philip-Lorca diCorcia

10 September–12 October 2019  
5–6/F, H Queen's  
80 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong

Opening reception: Tuesday 10 September, 6–8 PM



Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Tokyo, 1994. © Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of work by celebrated American photographer Philip-Lorca diCorcia (b. 1951), on view at the gallery's Hong Kong location. The show will mark the artist's first solo exhibition in Greater China and his sixth with the gallery.

DiCorcia emerged in the 1980s as part of a generation of photographers who sought to explore and challenge the boundaries of the medium. Over the past three decades, he has become known for his planned and meticulously executed photographs involving a variety of individuals, including friends, relatives, anonymous strangers, pole dancers, and street hustlers, among others. Deploying his subjects in preconceived yet seemingly random positions and contexts, diCorcia's images are far from candid snapshots, but rather explore the tension between the casual and the posed, the accidental and the fated. At once documentary and theatrical, his work operates in the interstices of fact and fiction.

The exhibition will feature a variety of photographs spanning the breadth of diCorcia's influential career. Among the works shown will be a selection of early images from the 1980s. For these works, diCorcia photographed friends and family members in seemingly spontaneous moments that were, in reality, precisely arranged by the artist. While the images offer a unique view into diCorcia's private world, they represent a highly mediated and controlled representation of these individuals and settings.

Several works from *Hustlers* will be presented as well. This iconic series from the early 1990s comprises photographs that diCorcia took in the vicinity of Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, of male and transgender prostitutes posed within motel rooms, on street corners and parking lots, and in the backseat of cars. The images are strikingly lit and saturated in rich colors, evocatively reflecting the individuality of the depicted figures. The title of each work indicates the name, age, and place of birth of the subjects, as well as the fee they would charge for their sexual services.

The exhibition will also explore how diCorcia has responded over the course of his career to the practices of notable street photographers such as Henri Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, Diane Arbus, and Garry Winogrand, reinventing the genre and challenging Cartier-Bresson's popularized notion of the "decisive moment," a spontaneously taken image that is meant to capture the essence of an instance or event. In *Streetwork*, executed between 1993 and 1997, diCorcia photographed pedestrians walking and interacting in the streets of various cities around the world, using artificial lighting—placed outside of the stationary camera's visual field—to enhance the scene and imbue the individuals and everyday settings with gravitas. For *Heads*, a related group of works from the early 2000s, diCorcia used a hidden, overhead strobe light to illuminate unassuming individuals as they passed by on a busy street in New York's Times Square, resulting in the depicted individual becoming a chance variable determined entirely by the coincidence of their presence on the street.

# David Zwirner

Also on view will be selections from a group of editorial projects that diCorcia conducted for *W* magazine between 1997 and 2008. Employing his own models as well as people cast on the spot, these images weave together richly loaded narratives with a stylist's selection of designer-brand clothes. The images sometimes appear far removed from the fashion industry's traditional emphasis on formulaic beauty and harmony, and instead involve a delicate balance between glamour and grit, imagination and irony.

Concluding the exhibition will be works from *East of Eden*. Begun in 2008, this series takes as its source of inspiration the economic and political climate of the United States toward the end of the George W. Bush era. Identifying a parallel between the financial collapse and the biblical Book of Genesis, the series consists of singular, and at times disparate, images of people and events that are unified by a pervading sense of disillusionment. The series's title refers to John Steinbeck's 1952 novel, which echoes many of the themes in Genesis, such as the classic struggle between good and evil, the desire for acceptance and greatness, the capacity for self-destruction, and especially feelings of guilt and redemption.

In addition, a selection of diCorcia's Polaroid photographs will be presented. Sometimes relating to specific series and other times depicting private scenes and nondescript locations, the Polaroids offer insight into the artist's sensibility and visual preoccupations, and they constitute a discrete body of work in their own right.

Viewed together, the works on view offer a comprehensive overview of diCorcia's career, revealing the visual and conceptual depth of his practice, and underscoring his significance as a major influence for younger artists today.

Born in 1951 in Hartford, Connecticut, **Philip-Lorca diCorcia** attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and received his MFA from Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, in 1979. The artist's first museum solo exhibition was organized by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1993. His work has been represented by David Zwirner since 2007.

Venues that have hosted significant solo exhibitions include Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (1997); Sprengel Museum, Hannover (2000); Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2003); Foam Fotografiemuseum, Amsterdam (2006); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2007); and Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2008).

In 2013, a major career-spanning survey of diCorcia's work, consisting of over one hundred photographs from six series, was organized by the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt. The exhibition traveled later that year to the Museum De Pont, Tilburg, The Netherlands, followed by The Hepworth Wakefield, England, in 2014, and marked the most comprehensive presentation of his work in Europe to date.

Works by diCorcia are held in public collections internationally, including the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum De Pont, Tilburg, The Netherlands; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tate Gallery, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. He lives and works in New York, and serves as senior critic at Yale University.

**For all press inquiries, contact**

Dylan Shuai +852 5984 6846 [dylan@davidzwirner.com](mailto:dylan@davidzwirner.com)