

Philip-Lorca diCorcia Heavenly Bodies

May 26–June 28, 2020

David Zwirner Online



Philip-Lorca diCorcia, *Vogue*, May 2018, #6, 2018
© Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

May 18, 2020—David Zwirner Online is pleased to announce *Philip-Lorca diCorcia: Heavenly Bodies*. This online-only exhibition will launch on May 26 and will feature three newly available photographs from a series of work diCorcia created for *Vogue* in 2018 on the occasion of *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination*, The Costume Institute's spring exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. These three works were initially published in *Vogue* to celebrate the *Heavenly Bodies* exhibition, and the photos have not been presented since their initial publication in *Vogue*. The works are offered here for sale for the first time. Additionally, David Zwirner and Philip-Lorca diCorcia will donate an edition of each photograph to The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of Photographs.

Featuring models wearing ornate and refined garments which were displayed in the exhibition, diCorcia's images weave together rich displays of visual elegance with subtle references to historical works of art and broader social realities. Highlighting the beauty of the garments, diCorcia staged his models in austere yet elegant settings, contrasting the display of luxurious, embroidered, papal-style vestments and porcelain-white gowns against checkered marble floors and empty stage-like settings. The resulting photographs have a tableaux-like, monumental quality that balances glamour and grit, imagination and irony. A neo-gothic, noirish tension also pervades the scenes, and unmet gazes and reflections in mirrors allude to deeper power dynamics at play.

Especially notable is the fact that the female models are adorned in the patriarchal regalia and iconography of the Catholic church, honoring the history and visual and material cultures of the religion, while challenging its traditions. As author and *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd noted in a personal essay that accompanied diCorcia's photographs: "At Easter and Christmas we saw...bishops

cloaked in glistening white and red robes embellished with silver and gold thread, suffused in smoke from the swinging censer, with a hypnotic sound track of tinkling bells and soaring hymns....It quickly became apparent that the men had taken all the good clothes. And shoes. And hats. But our suppression spurred aspiration. And inspiration. And transgression. And subversion.”¹

DiCorcia’s fashion photography has helped redefine the genre and occupies an inspirational and improvisational role within his forty-year-long career as an art photographer. Between 1997 and 2008, he collaborated with *W* magazine to create a series of eleven editorial projects in various cities around the world that similarly engage with and challenge the fashion industry’s traditional emphasis on formulaic beauty and harmony. Religious themes have also appeared in the artist’s *East of Eden* series, a probing look at the economic and political climate of the United States in the aftermath of the 2008 financial collapse that visually echoes themes from the Book of Genesis.

In addition to this online only exhibition, David Zwirner will reopen their Paris gallery on May 23 with an exhibition of photographs by Philip-Lorca diCorcia. The exhibition will feature images from a series of eleven editorial projects that the artist created for *W* magazine between 1997 and 2008, including several photographs that have never been exhibited before.

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 of diCorcia’s work include Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (1997); Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany (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 travelled later that year to the De Pont Museum, Tilburg, The Netherlands, followed by The Hepworth Wakefield, England, in 2014, and marked the most comprehensive presentation of his work in Europe to date. In 2012, work by diCorcia was included in a major retrospective on the American artist Edward Hopper at the Grand Palais, Paris.

Works by diCorcia are held in public collections internationally, including the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; De Pont Museum, Tilburg, The Netherlands; 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; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tate, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. He lives and works in New York.

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¹ Maureen Dowd, “Like a Prayer,” *Vogue* (May 2018), p. 151.