

# LUHRING AUGUSTINE CHELSEA

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## ***Lee Friedlander Framed by Joel Coen***

Luhring Augustine Chelsea

May 13 – June 24, 2023

Opening reception: Saturday, May 13, 2:30–4:30pm

*I found it a daunting task to choose just a few images from Lee Friedlander's vast career. Where to start...? – Joel Coen*

Luhring Augustine is pleased to announce *Lee Friedlander Framed by Joel Coen*, opening in our Chelsea location on May 13. Curated by the widely acclaimed filmmaker Joel Coen, the exhibition showcases approximately 45 of Friedlander's photographs that span the range of his 60+ year career, bringing into the equation many lesser-known images. Rather than focusing on a single subject or period, Coen's selection concentrates on Friedlander's singular approach to composition and evidences an unexpected affinity between the two artists, both of whose work explores the sly power of images.

Friedlander, Coen, and McDormand, long admirers of each other's work, met in the spring of 2022 at Friedlander's home in Upstate New York. During the day-long visit the artists studied hundreds of photographs, which ultimately led to the selection represented in the exhibition and the accompanying publication. This group of images is focused on compositions that are dense and off-kilter, often bisected by stop signs and utility poles, car doors and windshields, trees and shadows.

*As a filmmaker, I liked the idea of creating a sequence that would highlight Lee's unusual approach to framing—his splitting, splintering, repeating, fracturing, and reassembling elements into new and impossible compositions.*

– Joel Coen

*I was present when these two guys met for the first time and observed a familiarity that comes from their lifetimes of singular and eccentric visions... Neither would naturally refer to himself as an Artist. Yet they have honed their crafts over decades of practice, and those of us who cannot see the way they see have no other way to describe what they do but "art."*

– Frances McDormand

Concurrent with the exhibition at Luhring Augustine, *Lee Friedlander Framed by Joel Coen* will also be on view at Fraenkel Gallery in San Francisco (May 6 – June 24, 2023). Both presentations will be accompanied by a special projection created by Coen, which sequences Friedlander's images in surprising and revealing ways. A public reception with Lee Friedlander and Joel Coen will be held at Luhring Augustine Chelsea on Saturday, May 13 from 2:30–4:30pm. Fraenkel Gallery will also host a reception with both artists in San Francisco on May 6 from 2–4pm. In connection with the project, Fraenkel Gallery has published a new hardcover book with an expanded selection of 70 works, an introduction by Coen, and an afterword by the actor Frances McDormand. The publication is available on both galleries' websites.

For more information about the artist, please contact Sasha Helinski at [sasha@luhringaugustine.com](mailto:sasha@luhringaugustine.com).  
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**Lee Friedlander**, born in 1934, began photographing the American social landscape in 1948. With an ability to organize a vast amount of visual material in dynamic compositions, he has made humorous and poignant images among the chaos of city life, dense natural landscape, and countless other subjects. Friedlander is also recognized for a group of self-portraits he began in the 1960s, reproduced in *Self Portrait* (1970), an exploration that he turned to again in the late 1990s, and published in a monograph by Fraenkel Gallery in 2000. Friedlander's work is held by major collections including Art Institute of Chicago; George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; San Francisco Museum of Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among many others.

**Joel Coen** (born 1954) is celebrated as one of the most visionary and idiosyncratic filmmakers of our era. Combining thoughtful eccentricity, wry humor, arch irony, and often brutal violence, the films of Coen (working with his brother Ethan) have become synonymous with a style of filmmaking that pays tribute to classic American movie genres—especially film noir—while sustaining a firmly postmodern sensibility.

**Frances McDormand** (born 1957) is an acclaimed American actor and producer. McDormand has won numerous accolades including four Academy Awards, two Golden Globe Awards, three BAFTA Awards, two Emmy Awards, and a Tony Award, making her one of the few performers to achieve the "Triple Crown of Acting."