

For immediate release

## PHILIP-LORCA DICORCIA

### East of Eden

September 25 – November 16, 2013

Private view: Tuesday, September 24, 6 – 8 PM

Press preview with the artist: 5 PM



*Sylmar, California*, 2008. Inkjet print  
56 x 71 inches (142.2 x 180.3 cm)

David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of photographs from Philip-Lorca diCorcia's *East of Eden* series, marking his first show at the gallery in London. An exhibition of the artist's *Hustlers* series (1990–1992) is concurrently presented at the gallery's 525 and 533 West 19<sup>th</sup> Street spaces in New York from September 12 to November 2, 2013, and coincides with the publication of a large-scale book by steidl+dangin, also titled *Hustlers*.

DiCorcia is particularly well known for his carefully planned and meticulously executed photographs involving family members and a variety of "actors," including anonymous strangers, pole dancers, and street hustlers. His practice takes everyday occurrences beyond the realm of banality, infusing what would otherwise appear to be insignificant gestures with psychology and emotion. DiCorcia employs photography as a fictive medium capable of creating uncanny, complex realities out of seemingly straightforward compositions. As such, his work is

based on the dichotomy between fact and fiction and asks the viewer to question the assumed truths that the photographic image offers.

Begun in 2008, *East of Eden* is an ongoing series of large-scale photographs, which the artist has said was "provoked by the collapse of everything, which seems to me a loss of innocence. People thought they could have anything. And then it just blew up in their faces. I'm using the Book of Genesis as a start." *East of Eden*, John Steinbeck's magnum opus published in 1952, parallels many themes in the biblical Book of Genesis, such as the classic struggle between good and evil (from the Cain and Abel story), the hunger for acceptance and greatness, and the capacity for self-destruction and especially of guilt and redemption. In his series, diCorcia takes the economic and political climate of the United States towards the end of the Bush era as a source of inspiration. These works convey a sense of disillusionment and seem to depict people and events just after "the fall."

The exhibition includes photographs depicting the landscape of California, the primary setting for Steinbeck's book. *San Joaquin Valley, California* (2008) shows a highway crossing through a barren, unpopulated stretch of land, whereby the passing vehicles become metaphors for the passing of time as the road stretches into the horizon and beyond. In *Sylmar, California* (2008), a man is seen riding on horseback through a region that had been ravaged by wildfires; this same scorched scenery is used for another photograph titled *Lacy* (2008), in which a neatly dressed woman stands behind a large tree, her face partially obscured by one of its branches. These works disclose diCorcia's interest in conveying multilayered atmospheres, in which beauty and destruction are ambiguously and simultaneously presented.

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Other photographs in the exhibition reference stories and figures from the Book of Genesis. Whereas the apple tree slowly emerges from a tangle of surrounding foliage in *Upstate* (2009), the serpent appears in the form of a stripper slithering down a pole in *Epiphany* (2009). The artist further plays with the construct of the Edenic landscape in *Andrea* (2008), which depicts Eve as a blind woman, accompanied by her seeing eye dog, standing at the edge of a garden, banished. In *Cain and Abel* (2013), a gay couple sits at the edge of a bed as a nude pregnant woman, a modern-day Eve, watches from a doorway. As noted by the title, the legendary story of the two men, representing the sons of Adam and Eve, is eloquently told through the simple, yet ambiguous gesture of their embrace.

Also included in the exhibition are a number of domestic interiors with elusive subject matter that acquire psychologically charged dimensions and stand as scenes of America after the fall. *Iolanda* (2011) depicts a woman seated on a bed passively gazing out the window of a high-rise apartment building. Her reflection is visible in the window in front of her; yet, it remains unclear if her attention is directed at her own reflected appearance or at the somber scene beyond of a lonely cruise liner floating by. In *The Hamptons* (2008), two white dogs attentively watch a pornographic movie in a well-appointed, pristine, white-walled room; they appear humanized, as if they are in fact the residents of the house.

Born in 1951 in Hartford, Connecticut, **Philip-Lorca diCorcia** received his M.F.A. from Yale University in 1979. Since 2007, he has been represented by David Zwirner, where he has had two solo exhibitions at the gallery in New York: *Thousand* in 2009 and *Eleven* in 2011.

A major survey of the artist's work is on view in Germany at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt (through September 8, 2013), which will travel to the Museum De Pont, Tilburg, The Netherlands (October 2013 – January 2014) and The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, England (Spring 2014). Recent museum solo exhibitions include the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2008) and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2007). In 1993, the artist's first museum solo exhibition was organized by The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Works by diCorcia are held in public collections internationally, including the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Dallas Museum of Art; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum De Pont, Tilburg, The Netherlands; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; 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 currently teaches at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut.

**Special Event: Gallery Talk with Martin Barnes**  
**Saturday, October 19, 11 AM**

To coincide with *Frieze* and *Frieze Masters*, the gallery will host a talk by Martin Barnes about the work of Philip-Lorca diCorcia.

Martin Barnes is Senior Curator of Photographs at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London, which he joined in 1995. His recent exhibitions at the V&A include *Diane Arbus Revelations* (2005–2006); *Twilight: Photography in the Magic Hour* (2006); *Shadow Catchers: Camera-less Photography* (2010); and *Figures and Fictions: Contemporary South African Photography* (2011). He is currently working on exhibitions of early photographs of India and Burma by Linnaeus Tripe and a major retrospective of Paul Strand.

Space is limited. To RSVP, contact Electra Soutzoglou at +44 (0)20 3538 3165 [electra@davidzwirner.com](mailto:electra@davidzwirner.com)

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