

For immediate release

PHILIP-LORCA DICORCIA

East of Eden

April 2 – May 1, 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, April 2, 6–8 PM

Press preview with the artist: 5:30 PM



Genesis, 2015
Inkjet print
40 x 60 inches (101.6 x 152.4 cm)

David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of large-scale photographs from Philip-Lorca diCorcia's ongoing *East of Eden* series. On view at 525 West 19th Street in New York, the exhibition marks the United States debut of the series, which was first shown in 2013 at David Zwirner, London.

East of Eden, begun in 2008, takes as its source of inspiration the economic and political climate of the United States towards the end of the Bush era. Identifying a parallel between the financial collapse and the biblical Book of Genesis in terms of an "ensuing loss of innocence," *East of Eden* consists of singular, at times disparate images of people and events after "the fall," unified by a pervading sense of disillusionment. Its title further refers to John

Steinbeck's 1952 magnum opus, which echoes many of the themes in the Book of Genesis, such as the classic struggle between good and evil, the hunger for acceptance and greatness, the capacity for self-destruction, and especially guilt and redemption.

Whereas *East of Eden* incorporates more readily apparent symbolism than the artist's previous series, the various sources are intricately weaved and layered, and the works' referential ambiguity allows for open, wide-ranging interpretations. The exhibition includes *Cain and Abel* (2013), which portrays the biblical brothers as a gay couple, with arms wrapped around each other, while a nude pregnant woman, a modern-day Eve, watches over them. The men's ambiguous gesture—are they embracing or fighting?—appears intensified by the red and blue colors of their respective shirts that hint at the existing divide in America between the political parties. Other photographs on view are *Upstate* (2009), where an apple tree slowly emerges from a tangle of surrounding foliage, and *Abraham* (2010), in which a red dart, balancing inches away from the face of a young man, evokes Abraham's sacrificial offering of his son Isaac. In *San Joaquin Valley, California* (2008), two black vehicles, driving along a highway that stretches through a barren, unpopulated landscape, become metaphors for Adam and Eve's expulsion from paradise.

In the new work *Genesis* (2015), a young boy jumps on a bed, clutching a doll in his hands, with another one tucked into the sheets. It stands as an example of the psychologically charged domestic interiors belonging to

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the series. In addition, *Iolanda* (2011) depicts an elderly woman seated on a bed staring at her reflection in the window of a high-rise building that overlooks the New York Harbor. Deep contrasts between light and shadow are used in both works to heighten the perceived drama and danger. While *Genesis* suggests the beginning, or perhaps the moment before the loss of innocence, *Iolanda* represents “the end of someone’s life,” according to the artist.

Part of the series engages with idealized depictions of American city- and landscapes, several photographs of which were taken in California, the primary setting for Steinbeck’s book. In *Sylmar, California* (2008), a man is seen riding on horseback in what at first appears to be a romantic vision of the American West; yet, closer viewing shows the region has been ravaged by wildfires. Another new work, *The Palace* (2015), captures the motion blur of a passing bus in downtown Los Angeles. Through its window appears a blonde woman illuminated by the brightly colored neon lights of The Palace Theatre. Here, further inspection reveals the theatre’s marquee to be blank, with no forthcoming attractions, transforming it into a post-apocalyptic scene of a city once considered the entertainment capital of the world. These subtle shifts in perception are indicative of diCorcia’s interest in conveying multilayered atmospheres, in which beauty and destruction, presence and absence, fact and fiction are ambiguously and simultaneously shown.

Philip-Lorca diCorcia was born in 1951 in Hartford, Connecticut. After attending the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, he received his M.F.A. from Yale University in 1979.

Since 2007, his work has been represented by David Zwirner, where he has had three solo exhibitions at the gallery in New York: *Thousand* (2009); *Eleven* (2011); and *Hustlers* (2013), which coincided with the publication of a large-scale book by steidldangin, also titled *Hustlers*. His *East of Eden* series was concurrently exhibited in 2013 at the London gallery.

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. Other museum solo exhibitions include those presented at 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; Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas; 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 & 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 and to RSVP to the April 2 press preview, contact

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