

# The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release  
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## **PHILIP-LORCA diCORCIA: STRANGERS**

April 15 - July 6, 1993

An exhibition of some twenty-five recent pictures by American photographer Philip-Lorca diCorcia opens at The Museum of Modern Art on April 15, 1993. Organized by Peter Galassi, director, Department of Photography, **PHILIP-LORCA diCORCIA: STRANGERS** presents for the first time a body of work begun in 1990 and completed in 1992.

Since the late 1970s, diCorcia has pursued a distinctive photographic style that blends documentary fact with narrative fiction. His lush color photographs, carefully staged and lit, imply unfolding stories. "They are like frames from unforgettable movies that were never made -- arrested dramas in which people play their more mysterious selves," states Mr. Galassi.

The pictures exhibited in **PHILIP-LORCA diCORCIA: STRANGERS** were made in the vicinity of Santa Monica Boulevard in Hollywood, California, in an area frequented by male prostitutes and other hustlers. There diCorcia approached men and offered to pay them to pose in settings he had arranged for them in motel rooms, or parking lots, or on the street. Each photograph is titled with the name of the man who posed for the picture, his age and place of birth, and the sum diCorcia paid him.

In his earlier work, some of which was shown at the Museum in **NEW PHOTOGRAPHY 2** in 1986, diCorcia imaginatively restaged his own world. His new work reaches out to engage a foreign and more troubled world of transient

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characters and failed dreams. In this sense, diCorcia has extended his fictive art to incorporate an old tradition of using photography to explore unfamiliar realities. DiCorcia also has said that the project was, in part, a reaction against a climate of cultural taboo, of which the decency strictures of the National Endowment for the Arts were only the most tangible expression.

DiCorcia's artifice simultaneously seduces the imagination and warns us against reading documentary truth into his pictures. These are not portraits and still less reports on a street culture in Hollywood. Yet the pictures are very rich in concrete fact -- particularities of locale or clothing or posture, for example, which inhabit diCorcia's fictions and which invite the same sort of interpretations that we bring to all photographs. Mr. Galassi writes, "The work is an invention -- diCorcia's moving poem of lost lives -- but it has the specific bitter taste of our time and no other."

Philip-Lorca diCorcia was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1953 and lives in New York City. He began making photographs in the 1970s while studying at the Boston Museum School and earned a Masters of Fine Arts in photography from Yale University in 1979. He is the recipient of several fellowships and awards including a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in 1987 and a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1989.

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For further information or photographic materials, contact the Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.