

Creator  $\approx$  Subject

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Senior Project

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I started this body of work with one question in mind. What is it to create? Is it possible to create from scratch and bring something into existence out of nothing? Can something truly be unique and original? I began by making single photographs, each with its own world and story line. I struggled with thoughts of how I could combine these varied photographs into one cohesive piece of work. I asked myself how I might bridge the gap between these photographs that were so uniquely different from one another. Some were very far out, while others were very similar to the world we know. With time I began to see how each one carried within itself an opening to its own parallel universe.

A few images shared similar timelines and carried similar features. Several scenes were created and photographed over a relatively short period of hours. Rather than force the individual pictures into a rational timeline I began to think of time in a different way. Instead of a literal timeline, I began to think of time as a stream. The dictionary defines a time-stream as “a metaphorical conception of time as a stream, a flowing body of water.” Conceptions of time as a stream have been used in mythology, fiction and is fundamental in the genre of science fiction. This suggests that we may have the ability to travel within and around time, that streams can converge and also diverge, and that time is branching into alternate universes. These notions opened up my thinking about my work conceptually as well as my ideas regarding sequencing.

Early on I experimented with the concept of using myself as a character in my photographs. However, I later decided that in my role as the creator I did not want to show my face. This is based on the definition of a creator of a world who observes from a third person point of view and has no face. With this concept I imposed limits and restraints on how this creator would interact with its creation. However, this does not mean that the creator is not present in the

photographs. These photographs are seen from the point of view of a creator who allows the viewers to share his vision. The creator and the viewer share curiosity towards these different worlds, as well as the characters portrayed in them. They also share the frustration of their own limitations. The creator must roam through its worlds as an observer and the viewer is given only the photograph with a two-dimensional picture plane and illusion of three-dimensional space. With this in mind, every photograph I create has rules and restrictions, thus allowing me full discretion over which rules can be broken and which will remain the same within a world we believe we know.

*The Ciber Fiend, Photograph #1*, is a collaborative installation piece I created with the artist Hakeem Olayinka. It is a self-reflection piece and a modern social statement. I wanted to portray a future where we are addicted to technology made by slaves, and one we are unable to unplug. The man sitting in the room is paralyzed by the light of the television that is displaying nothing but static and amplifying white noise. He sits in an unidentifiable room with plastic all around the walls and floors. He sports a red mask over his head. The television and equipment is old and outdated. The hooded and masked figure is an executioner who is on trial. We are slaves to our own technology. This is a satire on how we live our lives today. This is the irony of our future.

*Love in the Washer, Photograph #2*, portrays a young couple at a laundromat. The man sits at a table looking out the window into the rainy night. A woman sits on a dryer looking intently at the man. The blue light from the moon casts its glow on the trees while the warm funky light from inside the laundromat reflects on the ground. This love scene is not a conventional one. It's not the romanticized young love we all know and see as the norm within society. Something isn't

being said here. There is some sort of disconnect. They are being split by the vertical lines of the window frames.

In *Do Not Wake!, Photograph #3*, a sitting man falls asleep while watching a movie displayed by a projector. He sits comfy cuddling with the warm blanket around him. He is dreaming, unaware of what is will happen when he wakes. When he opens his eyes, he will notice the blue and red lights outside of his apartment. The banging and chatter outside of his door are not sounds from the movie he fell asleep to. He will panic as awakes with a start. What will be his next move? How will he get out of this one? But for now, no need to worry, he can enjoy his sweet dreams.

In *1000 Year Old Tree, Photograph #4*, a tree has stood tall a thousand years before man was born, and it will stand tall for a thousand years after. Mother nature has ruled without little opposition for billions of years always self-correcting and maintaining balance. Now, what will happen with its new human enemy armed with chemical warfare gassing the Earth until it gasps for air? Cutting down its trees limb by limb until each one can no longer stand straight. Earth fights back with all its might sending powerful earthquakes that make the ground buckle from under our feet and crumbles our tall skyscrapers that have served as monuments to the greatness of mankind, then followed by mighty waves that rush inland extinguishing anything that gets in its way. Who will prevail in this futile battle? Will man be the first to fall or will it be the earth? Is this what earth looked like one thousand years before the arrival of man? Or is it one thousand years after their extinction?

*The Cabin n The Woods, Photograph #5*, and *Cellar, Photograph #6*, both depict a lonely white house in the woods harmlessly sitting in the dark, calling out with a beacon of light like a

lighthouse. The first floor lights are off. No one must be home. There is noise coming from the cellar. What could it be? Is this lighthouse a guide to a safe harbor or is it a signal of the dangerous and treacherous waters ahead. The prints are tinted gold bringing a warm welcoming feel to the scene. maybe in attempt to disguise its true purpose.

In the photograph, *Vacant, Photograph #7*, a man leans on a tree alone in the night while lighting a cigarette. He is lit by the headlights of a car. Was he taking a walk in the woods to get something off his mind ? Or is he there to meet with those who have just arrived in a car? Is this the moment he thinks about when we see him, once again, in the photographic scene in the laundromat? Will what has happened continue to haunt him even when he is in the presence of the woman he loves?

In *Just a Water Fountain, Photograph #8*, a young thirsty woman stands before a water fountain. Some people might go and take a sip to quench their thirst, but for her this is not the case. The act of drinking water at this particular fountain would be breaking the law. She passes it every day dreaming about sipping this water and wondering if somehow it will be more refreshing than the one she usually drinks. For once, how nice it would be to drink from this fountain instead of passing it by on her way to the dingy basement. She thinks to herself, if only I had powers and could just make the sign disappear.

*The First Day, Photograph #9*, our lives revolve around an artificial light. The earth revolves around a ball of light three hundred sixty-five days a year. This is how many times a person can see the sun rise and fall. Each day we see it from a slightly different angle until, once again, see its original face, the same one we saw a year ago. When the sun rises we rise with it and when it sets we follow. Light powers the incomprehensible number of plants that produce our oxygen.

The oxygen that we breathe rushes through our veins like a drug. It is a drug we can't live without, and with every breath we get the high of life. But our lungs grow tired with every huff and puff until one day that supply is cut off. We go into instant withdrawal, our bodies gasping and begging for one last hit. The very first thing you notice when you are born is how bright the world is. What will be the first thing you notice when you die?



*The Ciber Fien, Photograph #1*



*Love in the Washer, Photograph #2*



*In Do Not Wake!, Photograph #3*



*1000 Year Old Tree, Photograph #4*



*The Woods, Photograph #5*



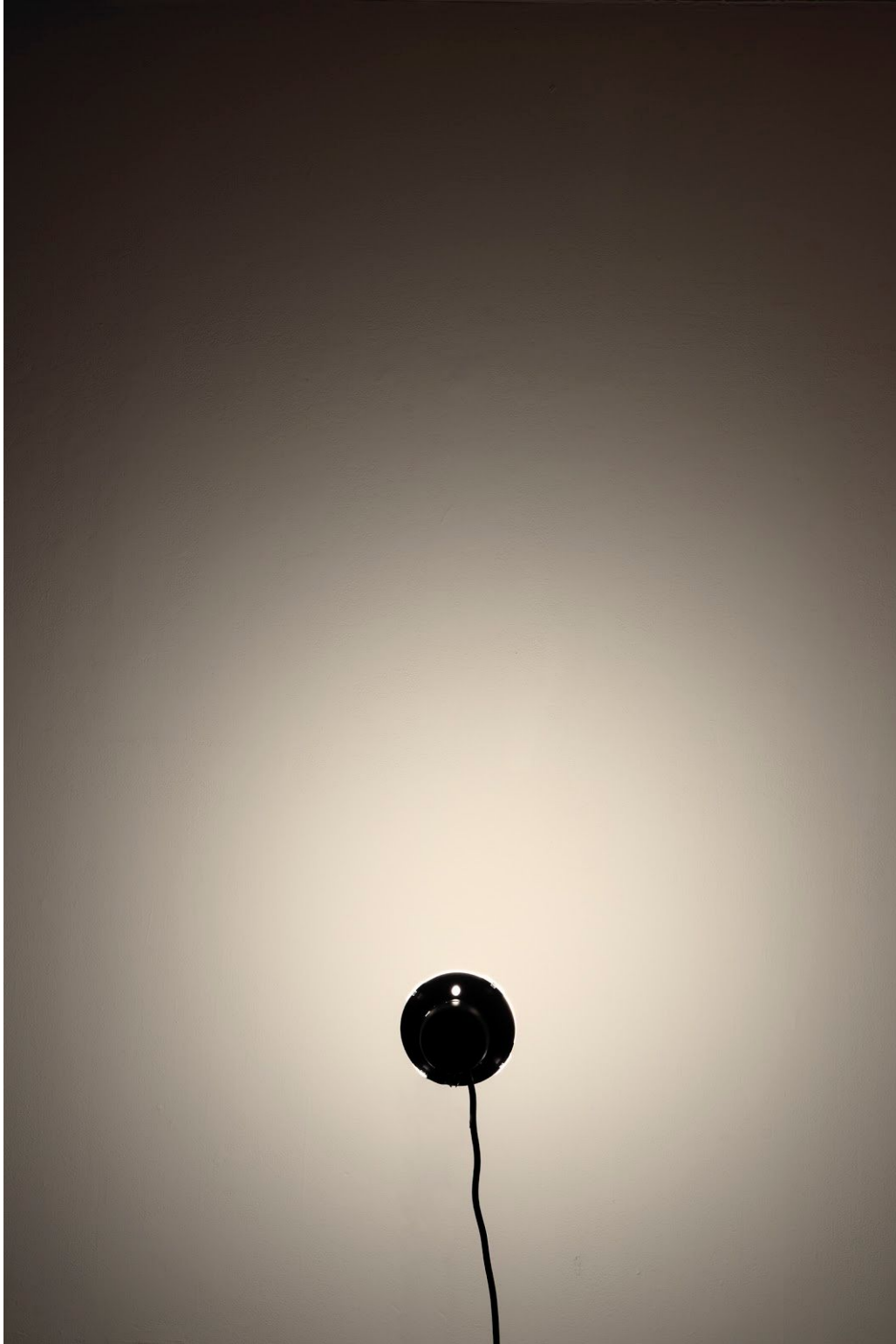
Cellar, *Photograph #6*



*Vacant, Photograph #7*



*Just a Water Fountain, Photograph #8*



*The First Day, Photograph #9*



*Overwatch, Photograph #10*

### Annotated Bibliography

Galassi, Peter. *Philip-Lorca DiCorcia*. New-York: Museum of Modern Art., 1995.

Philip-Lorca diCorcia is an American photographer who carefully combines planned-staging with everyday scenes to evoke an array of emotions such as mystery and abnormality. Although his work uses everyday scenes, the photos bring about a feeling of unease and futurism. This style can especially be seen his photo entitled *Alice*. 1988. The photo portrays a woman standing in a subway station, which is a perfectly normal activity, however something feels off. This eerie feeling is what I hoped to capture in my own photographs.

Philip-Lorca diCorcia has an ability to bring in a narrative to his photographs that make the viewer wonder not only about the moment that is being portrayed, but also what came before and what will come after it. I wanted to bring this style of storytelling to my images.

Jude, Ron. *Other Nature*. Los Angeles, CA: Ice Plant, 2008.

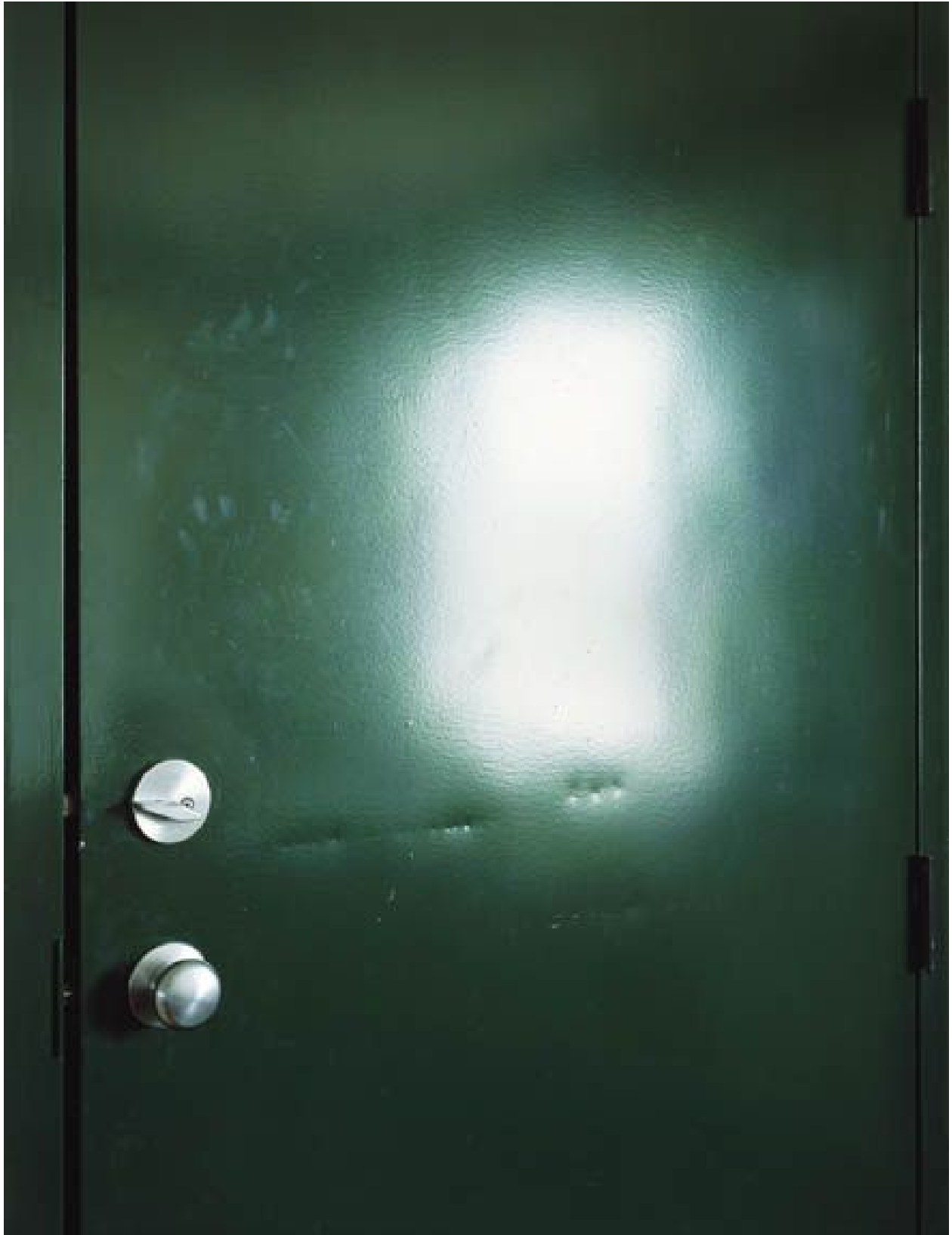
Ron Jude is an American photographer who incorporates a great deal of nature into his work. In the photo book *Other Nature*, Ron Jude puts a twist on the notion that landscapes should feel cheery and portray the upbeat beauty of what nature is perceived to be. Contrary to that belief, Jude's photographs have a feeling of mystery, melancholy and mischief that I hope to embody in my work. This style can be seen in *1000 Year Old Tree, Photograph #4*, and *First Day, Photograph #9*, mimic photographs from Ron Jude's book, *Other Nature*.



Philip-Lorca DiCorcia Alice. 1988



Ron Jude. Other Nature, Calistoga, CA



Ron Jude. Other Nature, Stroud ,OK

