

# YANCEY RICHARDSON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

David Hilliard

*Just So*

October 24 – December 7, 2019

Opening Reception Thursday, October 24, 6-8pm



Yancey Richardson is proud to present *Just So*, David Hilliard's sixth exhibition with the gallery since 2003. Spanning two decades, the works in the exhibition present Hilliard's career-long interest in exploring complex, universal narratives through the examination of his own relationships with family, friends, muses, lovers and strangers alike. Presented as large-scale, multi-paneled photographs, each portrait comprises a number of images employing different focal points, converging multiple perspectives into a single scene, and in turn, multiple variations of reality. Hilliard takes the personal and familiar and manipulates them to provide a commentary on larger issues such as masculinity, aging, sexuality, and spirituality, striking a balance between autobiography and fiction.

Hilliard's work is rooted in the deeply personal, elevating the everyday to the sublime through formal and conceptual techniques borrowed from theater, film and other modes of storytelling. The photographs themselves portray the people in Hilliard's life in private moments of contemplation, vulnerability, or seduction, captured with an intimacy that calls into question the relationship between photographer and subject. We see Hilliard and his father, quietly embracing by an entryway door; conversely, Hilliard's stepfather is seen at some distance, chest-deep in a hot tub surrounded by absurd lawn ornaments, gazing at the camera with equanimity.

There are shadows and reflections, repetitions of shapes and motifs, echoing as in a poem, inviting associations and connections between the people and the feelings they emote. A young man's disembodied hand rests on an open window, its reflection and owner appearing in a mirror and its reversed shadow cast on a nearby wall; in another photograph, the suggestive pose and direct gaze of a shirtless man repeats in a painting on the floor and in a photograph resting on the windowsill. The distance created is visceral, the details sensual.

The exhibition's title, *Just So*, refers to a state of being where everything is arranged neatly and in its proper place. Alternatively, a "just-so story" is a tale that is speculative and unverifiable. For Hilliard, the ability to see something, as if for the first time, imbues his imagery with a sense of both idealism and illusion. Ultimately, his camera serves as an intermediary, creating a space between himself and a world he longs to understand.

David Hilliard (b. 1964) lives and works in Boston. He received his MFA from the Yale University School of Art in 1994. A recipient of a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and Fulbright Grant, he has been a visiting lecturer at numerous schools, including Harvard University, Dartmouth College, the Art Institute of Boston, and the National Young Arts Foundation. His work is included in the public collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, among many others.

Image: Andreu, 1997. Archival pigment print, three panels. 40 x 30 inches each, 40 x 90 inches overall.

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