

**PHILLIPS de PURY & COMPANY ANNOUNCES THE EXHIBITION *SANTE D'ORAZIO: DOUBLE CROSS ON VIEW AND IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NRW- FORUM IN DÜSSELDORF***

**SANTE D'ORAZIO'S *DOUBLE CROSS* PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION WILL TRAVEL TO PHILLIPS DE PURY & COMPANY LONDON AND NEW YORK IN 2009**

**ARTIST PORTRAITS OF MATTHEW BARNEY, ED RUSCHA, DAMIEN HIRST, JEFF KOONS, MAURIZIO CATTELAN, NOBYUOSHI ARAKI *ET AL.* COMPOSE D'ORAZIO'S *PRIESTS* SERIES.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Düsseldorf— April 23 — Phillips de Pury & Company is pleased to announce the provocative **Sante D'Orazio *Double Cross*** photography exhibition at the *NRW-Forum Düsseldorf*. Opening on April 19, 2008, *Double Cross* marks a new, creative direction for the celebrated — and notoriously wicked — photographer. Composed of two distinct series, *Priests* and *Scratch Out*, the *Double Cross* exhibition is an important artistic and critical look at the cult of celebrity and role of the artist in our contemporary culture.

Phillips de Pury & Company is also proud to present the accompanying *Double Cross* exhibition catalogue, including essays from seminal culture journalist **Glenn O'Brien**, and artist statement from Sante D'Orazio titled *To Live and Die in New Jersey*.

Born January 23, 1956 in Brooklyn, New York, Sante D'Orazio transformed his Italian-American, Catholic upbringing into a scandalous, trademark style celebrated in the fashion and advertising worlds. D'Orazio presented an alluring combination of sex and celebrity: a world populated by beautiful Supermodels (in various stages of undress), megawatt actresses like Angelina Jolie or Sharon Stone casually lounging on a sofa or by the sea, shirtless rock stars like Axl Rose and hyperbolic bombshells like Pamela Anderson. Through D'Orazio's lens, modern celebrities became mythological beings, reflecting the values of our idol-obsessed times: Eternal Youth. Naked Beauty. Rock 'n' Roll. In a career spanning over twenty years, D'Orazio documented The Glamorous Life — always with a wink from behind the camera — for some of the world's greatest publications, beginning with *Italian Vogue* in 1981 and including *Interview*, *Vanity Fair*, *French Vogue*, *Mirabella*, *Allure*, *GQ* and *Vogue*.

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With *Double Cross*, D'Orazio steps into his own aesthetic frame. While still retaining the signature style of his fashion and advertising work, the two series composing *Double Cross* mark a new stage of artistic creation for the photographer. *Priests* and *Scratch Out* are personal ruminations on the photographer's own shifting identities as artist, documentarian, photographer, creator — playboy and priest.

*Priests* casts some of the most acclaimed artists of our time as modern-day priests whose religion is art; their signs and symbols worshipped in museums. Participating artists include: **Damien Hirst, Ed Ruscha, Matthew Barney, Jeff Koons, Alex Katz, Maurizio Cattelan, Francesco Clemente, Nobuyoshi Araki** and Sante D'Orazio himself. Presented in religious robes in somber black-and-white, the artists pose as secular creators, at turns stoic (Barney), pensive (Clemente), sly (Koons) or irreverent (Cattelan).

As Glenn O'Brien writes in the catalogue essay *Art, a Religion for the 21st Century*, "Here is a group whose job, when done well, brings heavenly things to earth: beauty, sensuality, intelligence and imagination." D'Orazio's *Priests* also centers on belief. Can we envision these artists as our contemporary soothsayers? Or are they merely playacting? Furthermore, how can we verify these priests' "good works?"

*Scratch Out* is a finely balanced rumination on sex and death, in which the artist has scratched out the eyes — and therefore, the identities — of his subjects. Our recognition (the powerful bedrock of the celebrity image) is interrupted by the artist; thereby transforming each image into a *memento mori* rendering both naked Amazon and schoolboy anonymous as in death. In lieu of individual identity, D'Orazio presents an unsettling juxtaposition of the mundane and profane. In *Memento VIII* the bride and groom pose on their wedding day in a suburban rec room; in *Memento IV* a nude supermodel poses in what we imagine to be a luxurious mansion. Without identity, D'Orazio seems to ask, who are we?

What remains in *Scratch Out* are the detailed settings — ordinary scenarios we easily identify with (the school portrait, blowing bubbles on the lawn, eating ice cream on the street) and racier scenes we can only entertain (naughty trysts with models on a sofa, backstage, in threesomes, in a hot tub). All of these experiences belong to D'Orazio's life, and might also belong to ours, if only in our imaginations.

In his essay *To Live and Die in New Jersey*, D'Orazio suggests that what matters is not the individual *per se*, but the electric situation itself:

"There was life after death. It was like the beautiful looking woman walking ahead of you whose face you never see. The best thing that can happen to you is she never turns around. The ideal of that image can last a lifetime, never knowing."

Sante D'Orazio has exhibited widely in museums and galleries internationally, including the Kunsthaus Munich, Kunsthauswien Vienna, the L.A. County Museum, Stellan Holm Gallery (New York) and Cameraworks Gallery (Berlin). His publications include: *A Private View* (Penguin Books, 1998), *Sante D'Orazio Photographs* (Arena Editions, 2002) *Pam: American Icon* (Schirmer/Mosel, 2007) and *Gianni and Donatella* (TeNeus, 2007).

*Following the Double Cross exhibition at NRW-Forum Kultur und Wirtschaft, Phillips de Pury & Company is pleased to offer these 42 prints at its two gallery exhibitions in London and New York in 2009.*

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*Sante D'Orazio: Double Cross*  
*19 April 2008 – 22 June 2008*

*NRW-Forum Kultur und Wirtschaft*  
*Ehrenhof 2, 40479 Düsseldorf*  
*www.nrw-forum.de*

*In 2009, the Double Cross exhibition will travel to Phillips de Pury & Company London and New York. Further details will be released this year.*

*For sales enquiries linked to the Phillips de Pury & Company exhibitions in London and New York, please contact Dr. Michaela Neumeister: [mneumeister@phillipsdeputy.com](mailto:mneumeister@phillipsdeputy.com)*

For further information and images, please contact:

Ariel Childs  
Phillips de Pury & Company

+44 20 7318 4028  
[achilds@phillipsdeputy.com](mailto:achilds@phillipsdeputy.com)

Cynthia Leung  
Phillips de Pury & Company

+1 212 940 1280  
[cleung@phillipsdeputy.com](mailto:cleung@phillipsdeputy.com)