

# The Theater of the Street, the Subject of the Photograph

Written by Philip Gefter

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In 1999, **Philip-Lorca diCorcia** set up his camera on a tripod in Times Square, attached strobe lights to scaffolding across the street and, in the time-honored tradition of street photography, took a random series of pictures of strangers passing under his lights. The project continued for two years, culminating in an exhibition of photographs called **He**

**ads at Pace/MacGill Gallery in Chelsea**

. "Mr. diCorcia's pictures remind us, among other things, that we are each our own little universe of secrets, and vulnerable", Michael Kimmelman wrote, reviewing the show in The New York Times. "Good art makes you see the world differently, at least for a while, and after seeing Mr. diCorcia's new

**Heads,**

for the next few hours you won't pass another person on the street in the same absent way." But not everyone was impressed.

When Erno Nussenzweig, an Orthodox Jew and retired diamond merchant from Union City, N.J., saw his picture last year in the exhibition catalog, he called his lawyer. And then he sued Mr. diCorcia and Pace for exhibiting and publishing the portrait without permission and profiting from it financially. The suit sought an injunction to halt sales and publication of the photograph, as well as \$500,000 in compensatory damages and \$1.5 million in punitive damages.

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When he saw this picture, he was surprised to find that it was a photograph of a man who had been in the theater of the street for many years.



When I first saw this picture, I was struck by the fact that it was a photograph of a man who had been in the theater of the street for many years. I was struck by the fact that it was a photograph of a man who had been in the theater of the street for many years.

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