



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## JOSEPH DESLER COSTA *DREAM DATE*

March 5 – April 25, 2020

Opening reception:  
Thursday, March 5, 2020  
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

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*Technology is just gonna get better and better and better and better. And it's gonna get easier and easier, and more and more convenient, and more and more pleasurable, to be alone with images on a screen, given to us by people who do not love us but want our money. Which is all right. In low doses, right? But if that's the basic main staple of your diet, you're gonna die. In a meaningful way, you're going to die.*

—David Foster Wallace, in an interview with David Lipsky, in 1996.

ClampArt is pleased to present Joseph Desler Costa's *Dream Date*, the artist's first solo show at the gallery, and his third in New York City. *Dream Date* is as much about dreams as it is about dates. Costa's highly constructed photographs picture his anxieties and desires as he reconciles a longing for symbols from his youth with the more pervasive images that now occupy his field of view. The resulting works—part autobiographical, part fiction—are a materialization of memories and fantasies warped not only by the passage of time but also by a steady consumption of media imagery.

Costa's interest in the visual language of desire is rooted in his early memories growing up in the suburbs of Pittsburgh in the late 1980s and 1990s. His first influences were shiny pop culture images from television, fashion magazines, and advertisements. For the generation who grew up straddling the digital divide, before the ubiquity of the internet, this was a shared experience. Mainstream material culture, as well as album art, MTV, and graphic novels, seemed to offer a path to transcendence. Not equipped to unpack the messages we were receiving, these images informed our sense of self and understanding of the world. Since then, technology has advanced, weakening and dulling our imaginations, which are now saturated with on-demand images on the multitude of screens that surround us.

Costa's work is indebted to fellow Pittsburgh native Andy Warhol, who challenged the concept of a unique work of art and explored the idea that making art was a form of consumer production. Costa's own exhaustive studio practice includes staging and photographing scenes, making prints, and re-photographing these prints until forms begin to overlap, collapse, and degrade. His final works are printed on stacked aluminum panels, forming three-dimensionally layered pictorial constructions.





The background images—colored gradients resembling a sunset—are visible through graphic symbols and shapes laser-cut in the foreground images. The resulting hyper-stylized and machine-made aesthetic of the work questions the illusions of autonomy offered by consumerism while embracing its trappings. By mixing multiple-exposures with seductive images of beauty and luxury, Costa is reclaiming his memories even as he tailors them to the commercialized world around him. *Dream Date* is a visual exploration of how the forces of technology and commerce shape our desires, perceptions, and, ultimately, our imaginations.

Joseph Desler Costa currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He holds an advanced degree from ICP-Bard College (MFA) and attended the Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión (EICTV) in Cuba. His works have been exhibited nationally and internationally. Costa's photographic works are included in the permanent collections of the Leonard Lauder Collection, the Cleveland Clinic Art Collection, BNY Mellon Collection, the Bidwell Collection and the collection of the International Center of Photography. Costa has curated and organized a number of exhibitions, books, and zines, and in 2014 Costa founded the imprint Silent Face Projects. Costa is a faculty member at the School of Visual Arts and The International Center of Photography, both in New York City.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Principal, or see [www.clampart.com](http://www.clampart.com). Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

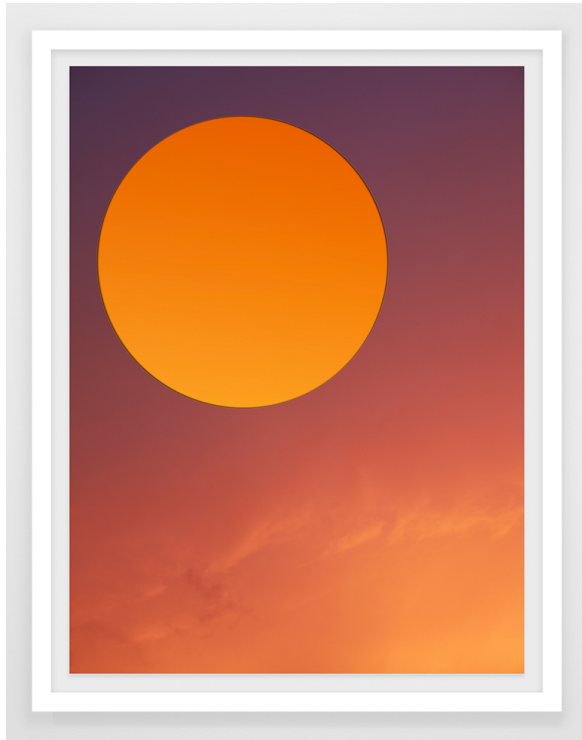


Image 1: © Joseph Desler Costa, "New 1987," 2019, Layered laser cut dye sublimation prints on aluminum (Edition of 3 + 2 APs), 32 x 24 inches.

Image 2: © Joseph Desler Costa, "Drip Rainbow," 2019, Layered laser cut dye sublimation prints on aluminum (Edition of 3 + 2 APs), 32 x 24 inches.

Image 3: © Joseph Desler Costa, "Sun Set Rise," 2019, Layered laser cut dye sublimation prints on aluminum (Edition of 3 + 2 APs), 32 x 24 inches.