

GALERIE
CATHERINE & ANDRÉ HUG

Carl Corey

The Twilight Hours

November 2 –December 17th- 2023

Photo*Saint*Germain November 2-25



14198 • Freeport, Florida © Carl Corey

The timeless, vibrant pictures of America taken by Carl Corey are of the kind that fascinate Europeans. This photographer was introduced to the French public by Catherine and André Hug at their eponymous gallery in Paris. In an exploration of the American Midwest spanning twenty years, Corey has created a rich iconography, emblematic of the mythical American landscape. The exhibition *The Twilight Hours* presents a new series, including some from his latest body of work, *The Strand* (2022) taken in the Great Lakes region.

These images show gas stations, diners, parked cars, and empty streets in the twilight hours, at dusk or dawn. They are composed of a bright center, radiating outwards leaving the edges of the frame to blend into darkness. Humans make a furtive appearance, reminiscent of Eggleston, Stephen Shore or Edward Hopper's paintings. Corey's understated pictures are warmly lit, amply framed and cinematic. They exude a *noir* atmosphere, narrating the adventure of a sentimental traveler keen to record a changing America.

Who is Carl Corey?

In the "Biography" section of his site, he introduces himself modestly, with a black and white photograph captioned: "*Me, holding my first Brownie camera, with my cousin John at home on the South Side of Chicago in 1963. This picture tells you most about who I am.*"

That's it! It also states that he has received over a hundred awards from the photographic and publishing communities and that he has four monographs to his name.

Carl Corey discovered photography, which he experimented with in his first job as a printer in a color photo laboratory. Opening his own studio in Chicago in 1979 led him to direct commercial films. He also worked in California for the famous LucasFilm company for a while.

Missing the Midwest where he grew up, Corey returned to Wisconsin in 2003 to devote his time solely to his personal work. His first book, *Rancher* (2007) is an adventure in the West, searching for what remains of the cowboy, trigger-happy outlaws, Native Americans, and echoes of the 19th century. He found that the fiercely independent spirit of the West lives on, it even thrives. In 2010 he published *Tavern League*, then in 2013 *For Love and Money*.

Other projects ensued, documenting aspects of life in small-town America which composed the chapters of a single book – *The Strand*. Awarded a Guggenheim grant in 2019, he travelled 4,851 miles over 3 years in his camper van, photographing the topography of the Great Lakes. He brought back 2,768 photos out of which *The Strand* was born.

His motifs, a far cry from the tourist guide, are a testimony to the love Americans hold for their country, as Robert Adams wrote "*Landscape pictures offer us ... three verities – geography, autobiography, and metaphor. Geography is ... sometimes boring, autobiography is frequently trivial, and metaphor can be dubious. But taken together, ... the three kinds of information strengthen each other and reinforce what we all work to keep intact - an affection for life.*"

Carl Corey rises to the challenge. He scours the countryside attentively, looking for an honest and intimate connection. His approach is simple: "...

There is a persistent cinematographic quality to these beautiful landscapes, an incandescent vision of America caught between earth and sky. Above all there is the power of an imagination embodying a pioneering and puritanical America. Corey does not take sides, he's merely a photographer interested in the unremarkable. Is this optimism or the acknowledgement of a country's existential crisis?

Frédérique Chapuis

* "Truth in Landscape" in Robert Adams: Beauty in Photography. Essays in Defense of Traditional Values, Aperture, 2005.



8922 • Sault Sainte-Marie, Michigan © Carl Corey