

For Immediate Release:

## COLLIER SCHORR "There I Was"

September 15 – October 27, 2007

Opening Reception Saturday September 15, 2007, 6:00 – 8:00 pm



303 Gallery is pleased to present new works by Collier Schorr. The exhibition *There I Was* marks a shift in medium and a conceptual departure for Schorr, who is best known for her photographic studies of a real and imagined town in Southern Germany. With this new body of work, Schorr looks to America and specifically the muscle car counter culture of the 1960's in Long Island and Queens, NY. While previous photographic works teased the accepted artifice of photography to forge an appropriated remembrance of German histories, Schorr found drawing a more acute medium to describe events that took place in the neighborhoods of her childhood.

This history is related through the short but spectacular life of charismatic 19 year old drag car racer Charlie "Astoria Chas" Snyder and his '67 "Ko-Motion" Corvette. At the age of 4 Schorr accompanied her father, an automotive photographer and journalist to a local race track where she watched Astoria Chas work on his car. A subsequent article followed, with the now eerie headline "While Astoria Chas is doing his thing in Vietnam his friends are racing his L-88." By the time the article was published Charlie had already been killed overseas.

*There I Was* is Snyder's story and Schorr's dilemma. He was there, she was not. The project examines the role of the photograph as proof of the photographer's presence, territory and view and the difficulty of representing any past without the theatricality of re-staging it. Using a collision of source materials for the drawings beginning with her father's images and Snyder's own snapshots taken in Vietnam, Schorr then draws from "professional" reportage pictures, so as to describe, literally sketch out, one monumental trip from Queens, NY to Vietnam and back, of conjuring up an expressionistic portrait of the dichotomies of late 1960s America.

These dichotomies are echoed in the formal tropes the work bounces between, from gestural strokes to hard-edged, almost woodcut-like pencil renderings depending on the tone and subject matter of the pictures. *Chas Posing for my Father*, a drawing of a blissful Snyder reaching into the engine of his car, is contrasted by *Machine Gun Dedication*, an image of a buddy posing for Snyder. The portrait of a uniformed Snyder fresh from jump school and visiting his mothers Candy Store is foreshadowed by *Drawing K* in which an unknown figure is frantic, wearing a blood splattered shirt. These discordant frictions between pain and bravado and tranquility and chaos add up to a complex and multi-faceted portrait of escape, culture, dreams and mortality in a fractured wartime America.

"There I was" will be published by SteidlMack in October 2007. Schorr's solo exhibition, "Jens F." will open in October 2007 at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, SteidlMack published an artist book of this work in 2005. In 2007 Collier Schorr's solo exhibition "Forest and Fields: Neighbors" was on view at The Badisher Kunstverein, Germany, and in 2008 it will travel to Le Consortium, Dijon, France. SteidlMack published a book of this work in 2006. Schorr was awarded the Guna S. Mundheim Fellow, American Academy, Berlin in 2007 and will complete a residency in 2008.

303 Gallery represents Doug Aitken, Laylah Ali, Anne Chu, Thomas Demand, Inka Essenhigh, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Ceal Floyer, Karel Funk, Maureen Gallace, Tim Gardner, Rodney Graham, Mary Heilmann, Jeppe Hein, Karen Kilimnik, Florian Maier-Aichen, Kristin Oppenheim, Eva Rothschild, Collier Schorr, Stephen Shore, David Thorpe, Jane and Louise Wilson.

303 Gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday from 10am-6pm. For further information please visit us at [www.303gallery.com](http://www.303gallery.com) or contact Lisa Spellman or Mari Spirito.