



**DENIS DARZACQ: HYPER**  
**Laurence Miller Gallery**  
February 5, 2010

French photographer Denis Darzacq creates colorful flights of fancy in “Hyper,” a photo series shot in brightly lit hypermarkets in Paris and Rouen. Darzacq recruited young street dancers for the project, bringing them to huge shopping complexes, then asking them to jump, dive, leap, twist, and turn in the air in the aisles of these depersonalized megamarts, which have been popping up all over the world the last few years. The hypersaturated color photos display the dancers' dazzling sense of freedom as they express themselves against the backdrop of a homogeneous corporate culture that lacks any sense of individuality. “I’m trying to find a balance between having and being,” Darzacq told *twi-ny* in an exclusive tour of the show. He explained that in these pictures, “everybody gets to fly.” In “Hyper No. 8,” a dancer seems to levitate in the dairy aisle, suspended among yogurt and butter. In “Hyper No. 5,” a man in black spreads his body out toward both sides of an aisle, as if trapped or pushing against the products on either side of him. In “Hyper No. 3,” a dancer appears to be floating limply in front of a refrigerator case, as if beaten down by the massiveness of it all. And in “Hyper No. 2” and “Hyper No. 19,” two young men nearly fall over in opposite directions.



The remarkable movements made by the photos' subjects — Darzacq was quick to point out that each shot is genuine, with no digital manipulation of any kind — offer a stark contrast to the rows and rows of neatly aligned products, reminiscent of the work of such photographers as Andreas Gursky and Jeff Wall. Their organic arcs vs. the grid of product are more than they seem; Darzacq pointed out to *twi-ny* that he deliberately chose shots in which the bodies call to mind specific Italian Mannerist works, evoking, for this viewer, St. Sebastian, Christ, and various other figures. Adding to the art historical resonance, the Laurence Miller Gallery has placed Darzacq's stunning pictures in context by including a small accompanying exhibition, “Body Language,” shots of people jumping in the air taken by such seminal figures as Henri Cartier-Bresson, Andre Kertesz, Helen Levitt, Garry Winogrand, Aaron Siskind, and Jacques-Henri Lartigue. Darzacq noted that he was “so proud” of being in their company, particularly Harry Shunk's photo of Yves Klein taking a swan dive from a building. The shows continue through March 27; to get a feel for Darzacq's working process, the gallery Web site includes a link to a short documentary by Marie-Clotilde Chery that reveals his fascinating method.