

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CLAMPART

IT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO KEEP THE LINE
BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE PRESENT.
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

June 29 – August 4, 2006

Opening reception:
Thursday, June 29, 2006
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The title of the exhibition is the best-known line from the classic film, *Grey Gardens*. Edith Bouvier Beale (better known as “Little Edie”) utters the phrase with a tone of disgruntlement, desperation, and more than a shade of bewilderment, referring to her inability to escape the ghosts haunting her from earlier in life.

ClampArt’s exhibition centers upon contemporary photographs scented with a perfume of the past. A variety of artworks—not all necessarily rendered by means of antique processes—adopt a look of time gone by.

Yes, the renaissance of alternative processes (19th-century photographic practices) can be loosely identified as having begun in the 1970s. However, as critic Lyle Rexer points out in his book, *Photography’s Antiquarian Avant-Garde*, “so mixed are [the antiquarian avant-garde’s] motives that it might not be credited as a movement at all.” And while the attraction of old photographic processes is still strong (ClampArt’s exhibition includes ambrotypes, cyanotypes, salt prints, and daguerreotypes by **Stephen Berkman, John Dugdale, Dan Estabrook, Mark Kessell, and Jerry Spagnoli**, for example), many photographers are now employing digital means to simulate the appearance of vintage prints.



There are those who legitimately fear that our widespread and contentious adoption of digital processes will ultimately lead to bland standardization and numbing uniformity. This is one common explanation for so many artists’ embrace of the materials and processes of early photographic practice. However, how does one account for artists employing complicated and often equally laborious digital technologies to achieve the same aesthetic (including artists such as **Brian Riley** and **Marc Yankus**, also included in the show)?

ClampArt’s exhibition explores the motivations and ends of a diverse range of contemporary artists invoking a 19th-century photographic sensibility. Perhaps a bit like Little Edie, one wonders why the past holds such power over the present.

In addition to those already above stated, other artists represented in the exhibition include **Thomas Brummett, Paul Cava, Robert Flynt, Jefferson Hayman, Louviere + Vanessa, Sally Mann, Joseph Mills, and Christopher Webster**.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

