

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHUCK SAMUELS: BEFORE THE CAMERA

February 19 – March 28, 2015

ClampArt is proud to present "Chuck Samuels: Before the Camera." While his work has been exhibited internationally quite extensively since 1980, this is the artist's first solo show in New York City.

Based in Montréal, Samuels frequently photographs or films himself, and his work often touches upon art history, feminism, and psychoanalysis. For this early body of work being presented at ClampArt, Samuels created twelve astonishingly faithful reconstructions of portraits of nude women from the history of photography by such modern masters as Paul Outerbridge, Man Ray, Edward Weston, and Richard Avedon, among others. However, in place of the female subjects, Samuels has staged himself "before the camera."

Going so far as to replicate the precise size and style of display of the original artworks, Samuels caps his deconstructive statement by asking women to click the shutter release on the camera, finalizing his gender inversion. While everyone is aware of the ubiquity and violence of female objectification in Western culture, by parodying these iconic art historical images with his own body, Samuels establishes himself as an erotic object, confusing a typically implicit male gaze. As Deborah Bright writes in her groundbreaking book *The Passionate Camera*: "Samuels' photographs expose the consistent heterosexist underpinnings of elite culture and taste as he vamps and camps through official photo history. Even better, he overtly homosexualizes those master photographers whose signature styles remain carefully preserved."

Samuels' photographs are part of the collections of La Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris; Le Musée de la Photographie, Charleroi, Belgium; the George Eastman House, Rochester, New York; the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography (now part of the National Gallery of Canada), Ottawa, Ontario; Le Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec; Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts; and the Cinémathèque québécoise, Montréal; as well as many private collections. For more information please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director, or visit the gallery's website at www.clampart.com. ClampArt is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Chuck Samuels would like to thank the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec their support in the form of a travel grant.

Image: © Chuck Samuels, "After Outerbridge," 1990, Kodak R-4 print (Edition of 20), 10 x 9.4 inches.

