

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LISSA RIVERA** BEAUTIFUL BOY

June 1 – July 15, 2017

Opening Reception:	Artist talk with BJ Lillis:
Thursday, June 1, 2017	Saturday, June 10, 2017
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m.

ClampArt is pleased to announce “Lissa Rivera: Beautiful Boy”—the artist’s first solo show with the gallery.

*Lissa Rivera’s “Beautiful Boy” portraits revel in gender as a repertoire.*—Stephen Vider, social and cultural historian

On the subway one evening, Lissa Rivera’s new friend BJ shared that throughout college he had almost exclusively worn women’s clothing. However, after taking a professional job, he felt much less free to explore gender. Lissa, having struggled through her own fraught relationship with the demands of proscribed femininity, suggested to BJ that perhaps photographs might help create a space for him to explore his identity outside isolation.

Lissa writes: “Taking the first pictures was an emotional experience. I connected with my friend’s vulnerability. I wanted to make sure that the images were not a compromise for either of us, and we engaged in many discussions.”

Eventually, Lissa and BJ found themselves falling in love. Now romantic partners, the two are collaborators who have sought to “perform and reshape gender individually and as a couple,” writes Stephen Vider. Rivera relishes the visual pleasure an intimate muse can inspire, as so many male artists have experienced historically.

“Beautiful Boy” investigates a visual language of femininity that is deeply embedded in the DNA of our cultural perceptions. Drawing from Lissa and BJ’s shared interests, the earliest photographs mine the history of 20th-century film, photography, and painting. However, as the project evolved, the images began to flood over boundaries of scripts and sets, and reveal individual experiences of gender, desire, and cultural taboo.

Lissa Rivera is based in Brooklyn. Her work has received multiple grants and honors and has been exhibited internationally. She grew up near Rochester, New York, home of Eastman Kodak, where as a child she was exposed to the treasures at the Eastman Museum. After receiving an MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York City, Rivera worked





professionally in collections, including the Museum of the City of New York, where she became fascinated with the social history of photography and the evolution of identity in relationship to photographic technologies. Rivera was chosen as a "Woman to Watch" for the biennial exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Selected honors include the Griffin Museum's Peter Urban Legacy Award; Feature Shoot's Emerging Photography Award;

Photographic Resource Center Exposure 2016; Danforth Museum Purchase Prize; Filter Photo Festival's People's Choice Award; and the 2017 D&AD Next Photographer Shortlist. She is now Associate Curator at the Museum of Sex in Manhattan.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director, or see [www.clampart.com](http://www.clampart.com). Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Image one: Lissa Rivera, "Male Impersonator," 2015, Archival pigment print.  
Image two: Lissa Rivera, "Poolside, Family Home," 2015, Archival pigment print.  
Image three: Lissa Rivera, "Lavender Gown," 2016, Archival pigment print.