



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## DANIEL HANDAL PAJARITOS

May 17 – July 7, 2018

Opening Reception:  
Thursday, May 17, 2018  
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

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ClampArt is pleased to announce “Daniel Handal: Pajaritos”—the artist’s first solo show with the gallery.

Finding exotic bird keepers in New York City, the artist travels to their homes with a portable studio resembling a pup tent with a variety of pastel-colored backdrops that include a place for a perch. He picks an appropriately hued backdrop to situate in the tent along with the bird, and when the excitement settles and his subject rests, Handal shoots the portrait.



Due to their ability to soar far above the earth, birds universally represent the idea of freedom. Handal embraces this symbology and employs the birds in a form of self-identification. The artist was raised in Honduras in Central America where “pajaros” is a derogatory term for gay men. Growing up in a machismo Hispanic culture, Handal struggled with his own sexuality as a youth, worried about his ability to be true to himself amidst the stringent societal pressure to conform.

Handal writes about his series “Pajaritos”: “With my project I embrace two cultural references: the constrictive idea that in our culture colors define gender—blue for boys, pink for girls—and the liberating realization that I can defy the expected by emphasizing the delicate beauty of birds with the flamboyant use of pastel colors. These conflicting ideas are both reconciliatory and cathartic; they are a deconstruction of gender roles.” Handal’s bird portraits celebrate beauty and visual pleasure. He comments: “They are . . . my way of transforming *pretty* into a statement of rebellion: the angelic beauty of canaries and finches resting on a perch in front of immaculate pastel-colored backgrounds are as much a statement of grace as a state of defiance.”

The photographs are printed with archival inks and mounted to Sintra. The frames are painted to match the predominant background color in each image. The framed dimensions of each are 19 x 15 inches with the bird represented life-size to scale.

Daniel Handal now lives and works in New York City. He received his BS in Applied Sciences from Rutgers University and studied photography at the International Center of Photography. His work centers on portraiture and explores issues of gender, sexuality, identity, and community. He has had a solo exhibition at the Brooklyn Public Library (Flatbush Branch) and has been shown in group exhibitions at the New Mexico Museum of Art, the Deborah Colton Gallery in Houston, and the powerHouse Arena in Brooklyn, among others. His work has been

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exhibited internationally at the Australian Centre for Photography and MKII in London. Handal's photographs have been published in The Huffington Post, Slate, and Hyperallergic. He has been awarded residencies at The Millay Colony for the Arts, the Constance Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts, and the Center for Photography at Woodstock. Handal currently serves on the board of directors of Baxter St at the Camera Club of New York.

For more information and images please contact Raechel McCarthy, 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: © Daniel Handal, "Orange-Headed Gouldian Finch (Orchid)," 2017, Archival pigment print, painted frame (Edition of 3 + 2 APs), 19 x 15 inches.

Image two: © Daniel Handal, "Orange-Cheeked Waxbill (Whisper)," 2017, Archival pigment print, painted frame (Edition of 3 + 2 APs), 19 x 15 inches.