



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## LUKE SMALLEY EXERCISE AT HOME

11.29.2018 – 01.19.2019

Opening reception:  
Thursday, 11.29.2018  
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

ClampArt is proud to present “Luke Smalley (1955-2009) | Exercise at Home” in celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup>-year anniversary of the premiere of the body of work. This is the artist’s third solo show at the gallery.

Smalley passed away far too young at the age of 53, but he left behind three major bodies of work, in addition to four impressive monographs. The new show at ClampArt will feature his second project, and his first in color, titled “Exercise at Home.”

Luke Smalley’s work has been described as pairing “a coolly minimalist aesthetic with a retro nostalgia.” Many of his images were inspired by yearbooks and fitness manuals from the beginning of the

20<sup>th</sup> century. After completing a degree at Pepperdine University—tellingly, in sports medicine—Smalley became increasingly interested in fine art (while earning money from modeling and working as a personal trainer). He spent fifteen years completing his first body of work, “Gymnasium”—a series of black-and-white gelatin silver prints depicting young, male athletes set in an ambiguous time and place. The subjects of the photographs were all local high school students from the small Pennsylvania town where the artist was raised.

Four years later, however, when Smalley completed his second major fine art series, “Exercise at Home,” the models were all professionals whom he had met through his fashion career, which was launched when the artist was discovered by British designer Kim Jones. Jones came across a copy of Smalley’s first monograph, *Gymnasium*, at the Mercer Hotel in SoHo in New York City, and soon hired the photographer to begin shooting his clothing line. (The collaboration ultimately culminated in Smalley’s second book in 2004 titled simply *Kim Jones*, which is now a rare and valuable collectible.)

“Exercise at Home,” which was premiered in exhibitions on both the East and West Coasts in 2008, coincided with the release of a second Twin Palms publication—the artist’s third book. This marked the artist’s initial foray into color, but followed “Gymnasium” in its themes of “adolescent growing pains acted out under the guise





of earnest athleticism.” Teenagers take part in simple but strange competitions in order to establish their standing within the group. Two youths practice boating safety procedures on a small craft that happens to be indoors. Another pair have a psychological game of tug of war. And yet other boys practice swimming strokes on a gymnasium floor. As with the previous black-and-white series, Smalley painstakingly coordinated the creation of the work to the extent of constructing his own athletic equipment and other props, in addition to simple costumes. It was now Smalley’s intent to continue publishing artist books in small editions every few years, which could then be coordinated with

gallery exhibitions of photographic prints, thus augmenting his ongoing commercial career. Sadly, only one more project and monograph were realized before the artist’s death the following year.

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.

Top Image: © Luke Smalley/Smalley Partnership, “Exercise at Home,” 2007, Archival pigment print.

Bottom Image: © Luke Smalley/Smalley Partnership, “Tug of War,” 2007, Archival pigment print.