



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAMP@CLAMP

Curated by Greg Ellis/Ward 5B
With Brian Paul Clamp and Jackson Siegal

January 6 – February 26, 2022

Opening reception:
Saturday, January 8, 2022
12:00 – 6:00 p.m.

“You thought it meant a swishy little boy with peroxidized hair, dressed in a picture hat and a feather boa, pretending to be Marlene Dietrich? Yes, in queer circles they call that camping. . . You can call [it] Low Camp. . . High Camp is the whole emotional basis for ballet, for example, and of course of baroque art. . . High Camp always has an underlying seriousness. You can’t camp about something you don’t take seriously. You’re not making fun of it, you’re making fun out of it. You’re expressing what’s basically serious to you in terms of fun and artifice and elegance. Baroque art is basically camp about religion. The ballet is camp about love. . .”
—Christopher Isherwood, *The World in the Evening* (1954)

“To start very generally: Camp is a certain mode of aestheticism. It is one way of seeing the world as an aesthetic phenomenon. That way, the way of Camp, is not in terms of beauty, but in terms of the degree of artifice, of stylization.”
—Susan Sontag, *Notes on “Camp”* (1964)

“Camp’s over. I don’t hear anybody say that word. Maybe older gentlemen in an antique shop talking about a Betty Grable calendar—that’s camp.”
—John Waters, *Paper Magazine* (1990)

The exhibition at ClampArt draws together artwork selected by a wide range of artists, living and deceased, who have created objects that deal with the theme of camp—both conceptually and stylistically. The debate over what is “camp” is never-ending. What is the distinction between “camp” and “kitsch”? Championing style over substance, can there be political potential in “camp”? In an era of “Rupaul’s Drag Race” and Gucci’s sponsorship of The Met’s “Camp: Notes on Fashion,” does the ship tank when everyone climbs on board?

No one exhibition can encompass all that is “camp.” Nor can anyone chronicle the whole history of “camp.” In that spirit, the gallery invites additions to the show through its seven-week run. After all, “camp” is not just appearance, but also also performance.

The experiment begins with works by Aaron Cobbett, Bill Costa, Chuck Samuels, Daniel Handal, Gardar Eide Einarsson, George Platt Lynes, George Stavrinos, Henry Horenstein, Jack Smith, James Bidgood, Jerome Caja, Jesse Egner, Jill Greenberg, John Arsenault, John Waters, Mariette Pathy Allen, Mark Beard, Mark Morrisroe, Mick Rock, Millie von Platen, Nan Goldin, Nancy Burson, Paul LeRoy Gehres, Peter Berlin, Rink, Scott Williams, Sister Boom Boom, Steve Kramer, Tabboo!, Tamara F, Tomata de Plenty, and Victor Cobo.

Ward 5B is an archival and curatorial service specializing in late 20th-century urban ephemera and art, with a focus on punk aesthetic, radical spaces, performance art, drag, experimental theatre, camp, queercore, and guerrilla/street art projects.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director, or see www.clampart.com.