

NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: Travess Smalley, *Compositions in Clay*

Dates: March 6 – April 5, 2014

Opening: Thursday, March 6, 6 – 8 pm

Higher Pictures presents new work by Travess Smalley, *Compositions in Clay*. This is the artist's second solo exhibition at Higher Pictures. Smalley produces work using the materials and actions of collage, drawing, and sculpture through the language and tools of digital photography. In *Capture Physical Presence* (begun in 2011), Smalley translates compositions from the digital to the physical and back again through a series of manual and virtual actions—drawing, cutting, scanning, and printing—performed and re-performed in a loop. *Compositions in Clay* (2012–ongoing) continues the exploration of a new space of production that exists somewhere between the virtual image and the physical object and a practice characterized by a pervasive engagement with notions of simultaneity and hybridity.

For *Compositions in Clay* Smalley starts by covering the glass surface of a scanner bed with a layer of modeling clay that he then kneads, smears and pushes until a painting-sculpture emerges. The clay compositions are then scanned, creating the digital negative from which Smalley makes the final prints. Each unique c-print stands over seven feet tall, a gesture that translates a direct record of the artist's fingerprints into an immersive abstract field. The automatic, workaday action of clicking scan becomes a generative process, making it possible for Smalley to achieve the conversions in form and scale that link the languages of sculpture, photography, and painting.

The iteration of *Compositions in Clay* on view here are the first monochrome prints in the series. Stripping away color and enlarging the textured surface still further, Smalley distills his thesis: the artist's gesture is translated from construction to representation to abstraction, and back again. Standing before the work, the viewer reads material, action, and image all at once.

Travess Smalley was born in Huntington, West Virginia in 1986 and graduated from The Cooper Union in 2010. He lives and works in New York.

For more information please contact Stephen Javaras at 212.249.6100.