

Republic Gallery is pleased to announce the upcoming solo exhibition:

Carol Sawyer

*Proscenium*

Opening reception: Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 6 - 8 pm  
Showing: November 19<sup>th</sup> - January 16<sup>th</sup>



The proscenium arch frames and contains the fictional space of the play - making it seem whole and to some extent, believable. The edges of the frame in cinema serve a similar unifying function. The video **Proscenium** disrupts and plays with the cinematic frame and one's sense of continuity. The stage in a dilapidated Vaudeville theatre (Vancouver's Pantages Theatre) is shot with two separate cameras that each show exactly half of the proscenium arch and, due to the cone-like field-of-view of each lens, an overlapping portion of the stage area beyond. This overlap creates a space that is fictional: you see four doors, where the actual theatre has only two. The unifying influence of the proscenium makes the image seem whole and believable, but this truthful appearance is repeatedly disrupted by events at or near the seam where the two images meet.

**Proscenium** brings together ideas and strategies that have been of ongoing interest in Sawyer's work: an investigation of how representations are constructed; the melancholic power of the

fragment; the pleasures of illusion; and the persistent desire to believe what we see. **Proscenium** is a fiction sutured together from fragments, using the idea of the seam as a literal motif, placing a rupture in the centre of the image.

Also included in the exhibition are photographs of the characters in the video, caught in apparently unguarded “off-stage” moments. Up close, they and their costumes exhibit signs of wear and tear not apparent in the video, revealing the seams and flaws in the construction of their onstage personae. Many of the images are mounted in elaborate oval frames that echo the gilded luxury of the proscenium arch in the video.

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Carol Sawyer is a singer and visual artist working primarily with photography, installation, video, and improvised music. Since the early 1990's her work has been concerned with the connections between photography and fiction, performance, memory, and history. She has exhibited widely in both solo and group shows across Canada and in the U.S., including the recent, acclaimed exhibition *How Soon Is Now* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and has been the recipient of numerous Canada Council and BC Arts Council grants. She has completed three photo-based projects for the City of Vancouver Public Art Program, the most recent of which is a large multi-panel photographic work permanently installed at the National City Works Yard. Sawyer lives and works in Vancouver, B.C. She performs regularly with her improvising ensemble *Ion Zoo*, the big band *Bugs Black Blood* and with other improvising musicians. *Ion Zoo* recently released their second CD *Venus Looks Good*.

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**Proscenium** will be on show November 19<sup>th</sup> through January 16<sup>th</sup> with an artist reception on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 6–8m. Regular gallery hours are 11am–5pm, Wednesday through Saturday, and by appointment.

For more information please contact gallery director Pantea Haghighi by phone at 604.632.1590 or by email at [pantea@republicgallery.com](mailto:pantea@republicgallery.com).