

## ILLUSIONS PERDUES | LOST ILLUSIONS Part 3

## SARAH PIERCE

with Thomas Dalbec



Image Credit: Installation view of student exhibition *Luminescence*, Saïdye Bronfman Centre, Montréal, 1976

May 10<sup>th</sup> - June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014**Opening:** Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.**Screening:**

*Theatre Svoboda* by Jakub Hejna  
(in Czech with English subtitles)  
Tuesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

*Since 2003, Dublin-based Sarah Pierce has used the term - The Metropolitan Complex - to describe her practice. Despite its institutional resonance, this title does not signify an organization. Instead, it demonstrates Pierce's broad understanding of cultural work, articulated through methods that often open up the personal and the incidental. Characterized as a way to play with a shared neuroses of place (read 'complex' in the Freudian sense), whether a specific locality or a wider set of circumstances that frame interaction, her activity considers forms of gathering, both from the perspective of historical examples and the situations that she initiates.*

Contact: Claire Moeder  
Communications and Development Coordinator  
372 rue Ste-Catherine Ouest, #507  
Montréal (Québec) H3B 1A2  
Tél. 514-861-9992  
info@sbcgallery.ca www.sbcgallery.ca

SBC Gallery of Contemporary Art presents Sarah Pierce's *Illusions perdues/Lost Illusions*, a solo exhibition in three parts. Elements drawn from *Part one* and *Part two*, having taken place at the Walter Phillips Gallery at the Banff Centre and at Mercer Union in Toronto, now make their way across Canada, coming together in Montréal for SBC's *Illusions perdues/Lost Illusions - Part 3*, where the accumulated objects and materials – and with them cross institutional histories– will be added to and renegotiated in the new institutional context.

Pierce's interest in the status of the artwork, of its collection and display and of its relation to the archive, is played out in the ways that she, her student performers, objects and archival documents - and the labour they represent - are brought into focus. For *Illusions perdues/Lost Illusions - Part 3*, 'test pieces' of varying sorts will travel from the other two venues to SBC over the course of the exhibition. These test objects, which register distinct types of labour and value, and act as repositories of specific histories, will join with elements that Pierce has drawn out of SBC's own very recent and distant institutional histories - materially manifested and mixed in with archival documents.

Playing off her concerns about the artwork as test piece, as unfinished, not concluded, Pierce has looked to Brechtian-styled 'learning plays' at all three venues, enacting and filming workshops with student artists which engender the unfinished approach to theatre that Brecht's radical techniques demanded. At SBC, a one-on-one, artist-to-student version of the 'learning play' workshop, will be filmed with Thomas Dalbec, and screened in the gallery. In this version, Pierce implicates herself both as director and as performer in the staging and in the enactment of the workshop and film.

The modes of display that Pierce uses in the exhibition make evident her ongoing renegotiation of the making, doing, seeing, researching, learning and thinking of objects, of archives, of exhibition and institutional histories and of the complex relations to the publics and users that they convene.

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