

GLADSTONE GALLERY

"Sharon Lockhart," Modern Painters, November 2008



SHARON LOCKHART

SECESSION

Charles C. Ebbets's iconic American photograph of a crew of grimy workers eating lunch on a steel crossbeam, their feet dangling 69 stories above the New York City streets, could stand as a fitting epigraph to "LUNCH BREAK," a new film and photographic series about the bleak state of US labor, by artist Sharon Lockhart. Lockhart's film documents communal lunch hours in various New England labor communities, while her photos show the employees hard at work. The parallels between her project and Ebbets's photo are remarkable: Ebbets took his picture in 1932, during the funereal reality of the Great Depression (13,000,000 unemployed, nearly every bank closed); the following year, Franklin D. Roosevelt would be elected, brokering the New Deal to provide unemployment relief and vast reform of the banking systems. Lockhart's series—made during a recent Radcliffe-Harvard Film Study Center Fellowship and premiering this month in a show at Secession—was undertaken during an unemployment, health-care, and banking crisis that, at the time of this writing, the US presidential candidates were vowing to address.

NOV. 21–JAN. 26, SECESSION.AT