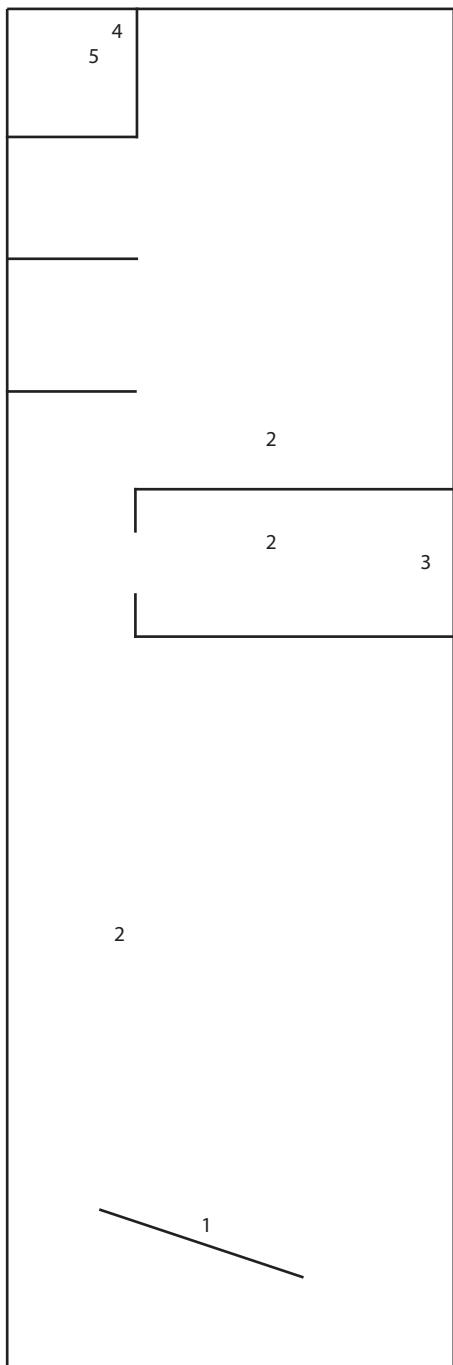


Or Gallery//



JOSHUA SCHWEBEL
SOLVENT
MARCH 1 — APRIL 6, 2019

1. Video montage
Found film and TV footage
Duration: 23 minutes
2. Track lighting
3. Reenacted telephone interview with the owner of the Del Mar building
Performed by Jim Campbell and Joshua Schwebel.
Duration: 20 minutes
4. Bathroom hand soap
Melt-and-pour soap, water from the gallery's ceiling leaks issuing from the first floor apartments of the Del Mar Inn
Edition of 12
5. Gilded bathroom sink drain

/// Or Gallery Staff:
Denise Ryner, *Director/Curator*
Laurie White, *Assistant Curator*
Asia Jong, *Administration and Bookstore Assistant*

The Or Gallery Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council, the Province of BC through the BC Arts Council, the City of Vancouver, our members, donors, and volunteers. Or Gallery is a member of the Pacific Association of Artist Run Centres (PAARC). The Or Gallery operates principally in Vancouver, a city situated on the unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

Or Gallery//

Joshua Schwebel

Solvent

March 1 — April 6, 2019

“*Existing in the world*” — Juliana Huxtable, poet, artist and trans icon, responding to the question: “*What’s the nastiest shade you’ve ever thrown?*”

Solvent is the conclusion of Joshua Schwebel’s year-long research into the conditions and relationships that govern cultural activities and production at 555 Hamilton Street, home to Or Gallery since 2008. This work is presented in an architectural and audio-visual narrative that maps out the complicated ecology that connects publicly funded art spaces, private property development and urban cultural policies. Alluding to this vulnerability to shifts in the public and private sector, Schwebel’s work evokes the observations of curator and critic Nina Möntmann on the potential of art institutions as affirmations of cultural and political change due to their continued existence in such precarious circumstances.¹

Schwebel’s exhibition projects often refuse to uphold the authority of the art institution, instead mining gallery systems as collaborators in progressive re-structuring and re-orientation, if only temporarily. This process results in interventions that have, in previous projects, reversed the flow of monies for remuneration from presentation to unpaid student labour, or highlighted the (in)visibility of the socio-economic communities around gallery sites.

At the Or, Schwebel has followed evidence of structural deterioration at 555 Hamilton through to a line of stakeholders in the financial precarity of the gallery. *Solvent* also takes up the maintenance of nostalgia and authenticity that simultaneously underlines and complicates the existence of this site as a viable public, cultural space.

Keeping within the exhibition’s theme of self-reflexivity, Or Gallery’s location as a frequent site of shooting for film and television is referenced throughout *Solvent*. The title of the exhibition itself plays on associations of insolvent entities and dissolving structures inherent to many non-profit art centres.

-Denise Ryner

1. Nina Möntmann “The Rise and Fall of New Institutionalism – Perspectives on a Possible Future,” quoted in Jonas Ekeberg, “Institutional Experiments Between Aesthetics and Activism,” in *Self-Organised*, ed. Stine Hebert & Anne Szefer Karlsen, 2013.

Joshua Schwebel, based in Berlin and Montreal, often initiates site-specific interventions and installations as spatialized and participatory critiques of gallery and museum practices and conditions. *Solvent* is his first exhibition in Vancouver.

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Or Gallery would like to thank Jordan Milner, Kevin Romaniuk, Ellen O’Connor, Chipo Chipaziwa, Allen Forrister and Brian McBay for their contributions to the completion of this exhibition.