

STEPHEN BULGER GALLERY

SARA ANGELUCCI

Piece Work

Exhibition Dates: June 2 – July 14, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, June 7, 5-8pm

The Stephen Bulger Gallery is pleased to present “Piece Work”, our second solo exhibition of work by Canadian artist and educator Sara Angelucci.

Invited by the Art Gallery of Hamilton to create a project in recognition of Canada’s 150th birthday, Angelucci considered how she came to be Canadian, and her relationship to Hamilton itself. The 1950s saw a huge wave of European immigration to Canada as people left post-war Europe to seek out work and a better life. Her parents, grandparents, and extended family settled in the bustling industrial city of Hamilton. With little education and no fluency in English, they were grateful for the work they could find and the future it allowed them to build. When Angelucci’s mother, Nina, first immigrated here in 1954 she found employment at Coppley Apparel, a Hamilton clothing factory specializing in men’s suits. This was her first paying job, and she relished the independence it gave her. Like many others, she did piece work – being paid for the number of pieces she was able to sew.

This eponymous exhibition “Piece Work” evolved out of Angelucci’s many visits to Coppley Apparel, and is comprised of colour photographs, sound installation, video, and sculpture. At this company of over three hundred employees in many departments (pattern making, cutting, sewing, ironing, etc.), Angelucci became fixated on the sewers. She imagined her mother’s daily life there on the same sewing floor as she watched the women at their machines, working with skill, strength, and dignity.

The sewers at Coppley Apparel have been making men’s suits since 1883. In Canadian labour history, sewing in factories has most often been the work and purview of immigrant women. Currently there are over thirty languages spoken at Coppley by people who have come to Canada for a range of reasons, many seeking refuge. Living in a time when there are political forces grouping immigrants under one umbrella of fear and suspicion, it is more important than ever to share their stories and remember the individuals behind each piece.

Sara Angelucci is a multi-disciplinary artist, who has been exhibiting her work nationally and internationally for the past twenty years. She also works as an Adjunct Professor in Photography at the School of Image Arts, Ryerson University. She has received grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, and the Toronto Arts Council, and been awarded the Chalmers Fellowship, and the award for best exhibition design by Ontario Association of Art Galleries with Art Gallery of York University. Her work is included in public collections such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton; Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton; National Portrait Gallery, Ottawa; and the Museum of History, Ottawa.

The artist wishes to gratefully acknowledge the following Coppley Employees for their generous assistance: Warwick O. Jones, Kerry Saudade, Anna DeCarolis, Donald Pelletier, Rose Vartanian, Maria Di Felice, Kevin Chester, Sonia Chachee, Hoa Pham, Jeff Fraser. This project would not be possible without the talented support of the following: Philip Strong (sound design), Tom Blanchard (photography assistance), Tom Hobson (electrical engineering), Elisa Gonzalez (camera and video editing), Kristen den Hartog (writing), Karen Chapelle (welding). A special thanks for overall production support to Marcus Schubert, Anne Fauteux, and Petrija Dos Santos. This project was produced with the support of the Ontario Arts Council.

