

## Touchstones Exhibition

By [Siobhan Argent](#) ArtsHub | Tuesday, July 27, 2010

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You don't expect to stumble across anything particularly priceless when you wander down the Degraeves Street subway. Sure, you get the odd feeling of nostalgia wandering those ancient (in Australian terms anyway) grime-lined paths, where so many others have wandered or rushed before. People get in the way, there's fluorescent lighting, which does no one any favours. Consequently you don't expect it to be the epicentre of any kind of artistic showcasing. Fortunately there's Platform Gallery's various art installations, which will at the very least cause you to stop and think. You may even forget about the fluorescent lighting.

Abby Storey's *Touchstones* photographic exhibition is certainly one of those. If you're heading home from work, tired and grumpy, this is a collection of photos which will remind you of life in more serene moments. The innocent escapism of an image where a tiny bird rests on warped, rusted, vintage bird cage makes you wonder what the hell you're doing in a tunnel on your way to an even smaller, tunnel-shaped vehicle. And an open suitcase, full of change, is a good reminder of two things people need most; a bit of change and a bloody good holiday.

Storey's exhibition is a collection of feel good images, no doubt, but there's also a tiny reminder of life's little necessities. A portrait of a stuffed bear, still encased in a plastic bag, makes you want to reach in and rip the little fella free of his suffocating prison; to hell with production lines! Is what the image seems to say. And in a subway, banishing production lines and a production-style life seems like a brilliant idea. And the almost comical image of a fox stole, as though the fox has just hung itself up to dry, brings the photo to life in ways that few other corpses can.

A swathe of plastic santas, a faded Elle MacPherson poster on a dingy back wall; these are tiny fragments of a life mostly Australian; the times when we are too busy to clean up or refresh, and in so doing we tattoo a little part of dirt onto what was once clean. But it's also kind of enlightening; who cares if it's dirty, or pre-packaged, or restricted by modern life? Abby Storey has captured some beautiful, thoughtful images, and it's a relief to see absorb these friendly, familiar sights and know that they come from the people who are jostling for space next to us on the platform.

**Abby Storey**

***Touchstones Exhibition***

**Platform Gallery**

**Degraves Street subway**

**Exhibition dates: 9-31 July 2010**



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