

## Bio

Ross Sawyers received a BFA in photography from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA in photography from the University of Washington. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at venues including the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art; the Henry Art Museum in Seattle; and the Tacoma Art Museum in Washington. He has completed multiple solo exhibitions and participated in many group exhibitions throughout the country. His work is included in numerous public and private collections, including the Hallmark Photographic Collection at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Photography and the Henry Art Gallery. Ross Sawyers currently serves as Associate Professor of Photography at Columbia College Chicago.

## Artwork Information:

1. *Nothing Doing Here*, 2013, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 30 x 44 in., \$3,000
2. *Not a Safe Place*, 2013, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 30 x 44 in., \$3,000
3. *Dishonest House*, 2013, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 30 x 44 in., \$3,000
4. *This is the Place*, 2013, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 30 x 44 in., \$3,000
5. *Untitled*, 2011, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 24 x 36 in., \$3,000
6. *Untitled*, 2009, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 35 x 47 ¼ in., \$3,000
7. *Untitled*, 2011, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 24 x 36 in., \$3,000
8. *Untitled (Blue, Sky #4)*, 2007, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 35 x 52 ¾ in., \$3,000
9. *Untitled*, 2011, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 24 x 36 in., \$3,000
10. *Untitled*, 2011, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 24 x 36 in., \$3,000
11. *Variation 1.2*, 2011, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 24 x 36 in., \$3,000
12. *Variation 1.3*, 2011, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 24 x 36 in., \$3,000

Waubonsee Community College's Arrowhead Room and Art Department present:

# Ross Sawyers *Model Pictures*

Saturday, January 9 – Sunday, February 21, 2016



*Untitled* by Ross Sawyers, 2011, Inkjet Print (Epson Ultrachrome), 24 x 36 in.

**Lecture:** Thursday, February 11, 2016  
9 – 10 a.m. in the Arrowhead Room/Gallery  
Free and open to the general public.

Arrowhead Room, Dickson Center  
Waubonsee Community College  
Rt. 47 at Waubonsee Drive  
Sugar Grove, IL 60554  
[waubonsee.edu/art](http://waubonsee.edu/art)

Art Coordinator: Cecilia Vargas, [cvargas@waubonsee.edu](mailto:cvargas@waubonsee.edu), (630) 466-2964

If you need a sign language interpreter or an accommodation for this event please contact the Art Coordinator. A minimum of 2 weeks notice is requested.

Gallery hours:  
Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 9 p.m.  
Saturday: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

WCC does not discriminate based on any characteristic protected by law in its programs and activities.



## Ross Sawyers

Over the past decade I have produced photographs that I hope distill subtle but important aspects of urban domestic architecture. Throughout this project I have remained focused on living spaces and how I understand those spaces in the context of contemporary culture. By constructing model rooms that amplify the design compromises common in new residential developments, I try to highlight a tension between housing as a sellable commodity and the home as place of solitude and retreat.

As I have examined the ways my photographs have evolved over the past ten years, I have become more interested in making photographs that abstract the notion of space and engage in a conversation that references my traditional notions of dwellings and living space in a more subtle and ancillary way. These interests have inspired me to begin to explore the different ways light can function within my photographs. The use of lens flares, reflections, and hotspots in recent photographs has given me a greater understanding of what I can do with light, and how I can incorporate it into my photographs more seamlessly and poignantly. In addition, I have begun to investigate different methods of construction in order to expand the spaces in my photographs beyond the confines of a single room.

In some of my most recent work, I have begun to explore the ways people use their dwellings as a means of communication and as a stage to act out frustrations and anxieties. During the great depression, transients developed a language that is still used today. Commonly known as “The Hobo Code” these signs and symbols were used to inform other transients of the potential or lack of potential of a given town or home for food, work, safety etc. These symbols were drawn on walls, fence posts, houses and other places.

I have used my constructed models to alter and elevate the visual cues I have observed in my own surroundings. Much of my most recent work was made in response to the collapse of the housing market and stories of foreclosure, vacancy and displacement that followed. The photographs of these constructions show interiors that look unfinished, deserted and even destroyed. Through the process of foreclosure, the structures I am referencing undergo an immediate transformation from home to empty building, stripping them of the weight and significance associated with the idea of home. Often, as a last act, inhabitants of these spaces have destroyed or vandalized them as if to mark territory or as an attempt to remind others of their presence after they are gone.