

Dad used his contacts in the Transport Workers Union to get me a job at Australian Airlines in the catering section. It was heavily unionised and well paid for unskilled labour. In the 8 months I was there we went on strike 10 times, once because we weren't allowed to watch the end of the cricket. After being there a few months I was promoted to the cutlery crew. On any given shift there would be at least five guys next to each other and each of us had a specific role - serviettes, forks, knives, spoons (both tea and soup) and salt and pepper sachets. We would stand in front of a machine that had hollowed out PVC tubes and you would place your item into the tube and at the end it would be clamped and heat-sealed. Whoever was last in line would constantly have to un-jam the heat sealer. For eight hours a day I would listen to music on my Walkman and go to the toilet in an attempt to survive the boredom. At one point I was so bored and fed up that I stuck my finger into the heat-sealing machine. Didn't help much.



Martin Smith
On any given shift, 2008
90 x 120cm
Pigment print (unique edition)

Price (including GST): \$6,600

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