Minneapolis-based artist and philosophy scholar Jan Estep creates text-centric images, hand-embroidered linens, scripted narrative video, and critical essays about other artists, all which investigate the function and power of language. For her two-day project in the Front Room, Estep presents recent video work. Filmed in the high deserts of southeastern Utah, *Ad Infinitum* (2005) explores the philosophical journey of an optimist and a skeptic as they make their way through the desert. The Sisyphean video *Endless Day* (2006) captures the Midnight Sun above the Arctic Circle in Norway. For her current project, *Doing Time, Nothing But Time* (2008 – ongoing), Estep travels to a close-security prison in northern Missouri, where she collaborates with inmates in scripted readings of “time”-centered proverbs. On the occasion of her exhibition in The Front Room, Estep delivers a public talk on the poetics and paradoxes of language.
Jan Estep was born in West Virginia, and she currently lives and works in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She has exhibited at Art in General, New York; Franklin Art Works, Minneapolis; and Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis, among others. Since 1998 she has published over 70 critical essays in exhibition catalogues and art magazines including Afterall, Modern Painters, Frieze, and New Art Examiner. From 1997-2002, Estep was an editor of New Art Examiner, serving as senior editor from 2000-2002.

Image:
Ad Infinitum, 2005
Production still
Courtesy of the artist

General support for the Contemporary’s exhibition program is generously provided by the Whitaker Foundation; William E. Weiss Foundation; Regional Arts Commission; Arts and Education Council; Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; Nancy Reynolds and Dwyer Brown; and members of the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis.