



Art Review

Tim Davis

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, through October 24

A recipient of a Rome Prize Fellowship in 2008, Tim Davis spent 11 months exploring the ancient Italian capital with a large-format camera. The documentation of Rome's famous ruins is an everyday occurrence, but Davis found delight in a different kind of artifact. Drawn to what he saw as "ruins in the making," the artist shifted his attention to the outer edges of the Eternal City, where a crumbling suburbia with an endless array of misplaced things became his focus.

After a body of work came together in Italy, Davis dug into his archive of similar scenes in China and then continued the series along the Eastern Seaboard of the U.S. This exceptional exhibition, which includes a dynamic display of 19 color prints in a variety of sizes, and a new book, published by Damiani, premieres the clever collection.

Outside the Ring Road portrays two buxom prostitutes working the woods; Aqueduct Golf captures a group of golfers playing a cheesy-looking course that borders the remains of a Roman aqueduct; and Colosseum Pictures ironically shows Rome's most famous tourist attraction on the screens of 24 digital cameras strewn on the ground.

Davis's pursuit of what he calls "sad little vanities" also led to the discovery of a fresco portrait covered in centuries of graffiti, a decaying album of an immigrant family's photos along a roadside and a cat with a crumpled Charlie Chaplin poster on a pile of rocks outside a Gypsy camp in Palermo. Simple but poetic, these and the other works on view, express a uniquely original, uncanny point of view.—Paul Laster

*Time Out New York*, Wednesday, September 23, 2009, pg. 54.

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