



**GARY MICHAEL DAULT  
GALLERY GOING**

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**TIM RODA  
AT THE ANGELL GALLERY**

*\$1,800-\$3,000. Closes today,  
890 Queen St. W., Toronto;  
416-530-0444*

Toronto's Angell Gallery was among the first to exhibit the work of New York photographer Tim Roda, who is now turning up internationally, to considerable acclaim, more frequently.

Roda's rapturous reception isn't too hard to figure. In an art world dominated by gigantic, glutinous colour photographs of landscapes, Roda's witty but severe, theatrically constructed, deliberately ramshackle black-and-white photo-essays seem like a chilled glass of mineral water on a parching, dry day.

The Angell Gallery exhibition, *Family Album*, is made up of only seven prints, all but one made in 2007. They depict the joys and the lunacy of family life (most of his photos feature his wife Allison and his son, Ethan).

As with Roda's previous exhibition at the gallery, the new photos are delightfully cheeky, each of them (like *Nativity*, *Chashama Chapel*, *Untitled #136*) involving amusingly tacky tableaux which Roda stages in his studio. An exception is *Untitled #150 (Living Large)*, which shows Roda and Ethan, who is now engulfed by a black afro, sitting in a big white Mercedes-Benz.

I like the careful ad hocness of Roda's photographs, and their genial chaos. For me, the great appeal of his work lies in the fact that he makes no attempt at all to hide the technical trappings necessary to the making of each photo: Everywhere in his harsh, unshaded light, there are cables, sheets of cardboard, grimy bolts of cloth, broken furniture objects, clip-on floodlights, dank brick walls, oddly fortuitous props and a general air of happy desperation – as if Roda and Ethan were trying to get in as much playing time as they could before someone called them in for supper.