

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New urban photographs celebrating Toronto's heritage streetscapes exhibited as part of the Contact Photography Festival



Toronto, ON – Toronto architectural photographer **David Kaufman** launches a new exhibition, *Early Sunday Morning*, illuminating the rich visual texture of Toronto's disappearing heritage streetscapes.

The exhibition is presented at Twist Gallery, 1100 Queen Street West from May 1 to 26, 2013 and opens with a free reception on Thursday, May 2, 6 to 9:30 p.m., as part of the annual **Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival**.

Like his previous, highly praised exhibition, *The Disappearing City*, which focused on industrial buildings, this body of photographs draws attention to commercial structures in older parts of the city near the downtown core undergoing rapid redevelopment. The heart of the exhibition is a series of images documenting buildings along Queen Street. These three-story brick structures, all constructed between 1880 and the start of the First World War, are depicted in highly-detailed, large scale prints which highlight their beautiful, intricate masonry and richly coloured facades as revealed in morning sunlight.

"The buildings I like to photograph are rapidly disappearing from the centres of our major cities," says Kaufman. "It was these buildings that gave cities their distinctive feel in the mid-twentieth century." Commenting on technique, he adds: "I try to work to the highest technical standards in order to accurately portray the texture of brick, the harsh effects of time and all the other subtle visual aspects of old buildings that make them memorable, even beautiful in my eyes. In many cases, only the photographs will remain."

The exhibition takes its title from that of a 1930 painting by the renowned American realist painter, Edward Hopper (1882–1967). The show's aesthetic framework is equally informed by the features of that iconic cityscape depicting the non-descript facade of storefronts with brick-faced apartments above, the vibrant colours and texture of urban architecture revealed in strong, morning light, the idiosyncratic stillness of the city early on a Sunday, and a hint of the larger, vertical city beyond.

Kaufman directs his exacting photographer's eye at deceptively simple structures with a varied story to tell about Toronto's evolving urban fabric. For example, a Pizza Pizza shop on Church Street has its garish trademark orange façade below the remaining low-relief Doric columns of a branch of the Sterling Bank of Canada, which has not been in operation since 1924. The city's eclectic cultural diversity is revealed in boldly coloured storefront signage announcing an array of ethnic foods and wares. Through Kaufman's treatment the everyday is elevated, from a pharmacy on Queen West to a mattress store on Queen East, to the Redpath Sugar loading dock at the city's harbourfront. Even the all-hours greasy spoon, the Vesta Lunch bar at Dupont and Bathurst, receives the photographer's loving attention – an

unmistakable homage to Hopper's famous late-night diner scene in the enigmatic painting *Nighthawks* (1942). In addition to the streetscapes, the exhibition draws attention to some of the last outposts of industry in downtown Toronto. Several photographs also highlight the dramatic encroachment of high-rise commercial towers on older structures built at a more pedestrian-friendly scale. The latter buildings – at times modest and at times grand like the Canada Post building on Adelaide – are all equally diminished and overtaken by the gleaming tall buildings with their hard, high-shine surfaces.

Of Kaufman's earlier urban work, Toronto Star columnist Martin Knelman writes: "The late Jane Jacobs, who loved taking walks through many of Toronto's more modest neighbourhoods, would have loved David Kaufman's intriguing photography."

Early Sunday Morning is a photographic "cri de coeur" for what remains of Toronto's unheralded heritage buildings and, at the same time, celebrates a century-old era in the city's architecture.

The exhibition opens on May 1 at Twist Gallery, 1100 Queen Street West and runs through May 26. Gallery hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Additional hours available by appointment by contacting David Kaufman at dkaufman@sympatico.ca. A public reception will be hosted on May 2 from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

A related roundtable discussion will be presented in the gallery on **May 11, 2:30 PM: Toronto's Heritage Streetscapes: Can They Be Saved?** with **Margie Zeidler** (architect, President of Urbanspace Property Group), **Deanne Taylor** (playwright, co-Founder of VideoCabaret) and **Adam Vaughan** (Toronto City Councilor, Trinity-Spadina)

David Kaufman was born in Montreal and lives in Toronto. With a focus on architectural and urban landscape photography, Kaufman has completed photo essays on Spadina Avenue and Kensington Market, Mt. Pleasant Cemetery as arboretum, the former buildings of Montreal's early synagogues, and *The Disappearing City* – a portfolio of vanishing industrial and commercial spaces in Montreal and Toronto. Current work includes the documentation of Jewish cemeteries and other historic sites in the Polish cities of Lodz, Warsaw, and Krakow. His photographs have been featured in several publications including *Toronto: A City Becoming* edited by David Macfarlane (2008), *Traces of the Past: Montreal's Early Synagogues* by Sara Ferdman Tauben (2011) and *Like One That Dreamed: A Portrait of A. M. Klein* by Usher Caplan (1982). He has exhibited in both solo and group shows in Toronto and Montreal. Kaufman is also an active and established documentary filmmaker and a past producer/director for CBC's *The Fifth Estate* and *The Journal*.

For additional information and related public programs, please visit:
www.davidkaufmanphotography.com

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To view a selection of images from the *Early Sunday Morning* portfolio, click [here](#).