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Jeff Thomas

NOW highlights exceptional shows at the Contact photography festival

BY **LEAH SANDALS**

MAY 22, 2008 12:00 AM

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Rating: **NNNNN**

WHAT: Drive-By; at University of Toronto Art Centre (15 King's College Circle, 416-978-1838) to June 28; and Don't Mess With The Pediment, at Stephen Bulger Gallery (1026 Queen West, 416-504-0575) to June 7.

WHY: You know those conversations on awesome First Nations art that Kent Monkman kicked off with his paintings and performances at the MOCCA last fall? Ottawa photog Jeff Thomas continues the discussion with photos that recontextualize First Nations imagery in critical contemporary ways. The U of T show is smile-worthy as well as thought-provoking, featuring mini-dioramas of outdated native-cliché plastic toys in an urban landscape. The Bulger exhibit is more subtle and sobering, documenting biased images of Aboriginal people etched in architecture around Toronto. Go see both.

BUZZ: Besides having work in the Smithsonian, the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography and the Musée de L'Elysée in France, Thomas is an adept curator, creating powerful group exhibitions on the legacy of residential schools and on First Nations leadership.

 Tags **art, art feature, Critics' Picks**

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