

GALLERY GOING
GARY MICHAEL DAULT

THE GLOBE AND MAIL
SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 2007

G

VISUAL ARTS

REVIEW • R13

David Trautrimas at Le Gallery
\$650-\$1,000. Until April 1,
1183 Dundas St. W., Toronto;
416-532-6467

A first look at David Trautrimas's wryly conceived, exquisitely made exhibition, Industrial Parkland, might lead you to believe this young Toronto-based artist's background is in architecture, not printmaking. For while his large-scale digital prints certainly do reveal the remarkable technical control and the attention to detail printmakers tend to be good at, his work transcends the givens of its

graphic manipulations. They offer, instead, an amusing and utterly absorbing flight into the architectural imagination — albeit a rather beat-up, dystopian one — where buildings that never existed before exist now, at a flick of the transforming imagination.

Trautrimas's buildings (all of which appear to be factories) involve a witty sense of the literally upscale possibilities for the built environment that lie in something as dumb and abject as an old electric fan or a stapler or an old movie projector.

Like pop veteran Claes Olden-

burg, he makes little things big, but where Oldenburg actually enlarges tiny objects to gigantic size and offers them as sculptures, Trautrimas enlarges things digitally — his enlarged objects remain in pictures, in the landscape of the

embodying imagination.

Trautrimas builds by choosing the objects that will become his buildings (a lampshade, a power drill), and then he simply changes their scale. How? By nestling a photo of a tiny toy car or a small

photo of a tree or a photo of a passing freight train at their feet. You see? If this is a real, full-size train running across the bottom of the photograph, then look how big that power drill must be in comparison — maybe 10 storeys tall. What makes Trautrimas's visionary photo-constructions so compelling is the combination of the seamless reconstruction of a brand new landscape of unlikely thing juxtaposed to unlikely thing, all set down into an absolutely radiantly convincing sense of place — Trautrimas's digital skies, for example, are airless planes of light, so real you can almost breathe them. It keeps his constructed photographs from becoming cute and toy-like, and allows them, instead, an almost operatic sense of dead-tech majesty.