



**Tim Davis**  
*Aqueduct Golf (The New Antiquity)*  
 2009  
 Greenberg Van Doren Gallery



**Tim Davis**  
*Cat and Charlie Chaplin (The New Antiquity)*  
 2009  
 Greenberg Van Doren Gallery



**Tim Davis**  
*Sole Shop (The New Antiquity)*  
 2008  
 Greenberg Van Doren Gallery

## A SHOT OF WRY

by Charlie Finch

Tim Davis' new photography exhibition, just opened at Greenberg Van Doren, is chock full of wit and sparkle, a sheer delight. Titled "The New Antiquity," the show commemorates the artist's recent sojourn in Rome on a fellowship, in which he tried to coax a bit of archaeology out of some minor objects and juxtapositions, while gently satirizing some of the most celebrated photographers of today.

The show begins with a hilarious snap of a row of golfers teeing off under a majestic Roman aqueduct, a sly takeoff on Thomas Struth's juxtaposition of modern audiences with classic masterpieces. Davis has a dead-on ability to capture the simple enticements of random objects, such as an ambiguous burial mound overgrown with moss or a thin cat quizzically emerging from a pile of rubble, wearing a necklace which is a ripped poster of Charlie Chaplin.

Tim sends up Andreas Gursky with a colorful shelved section of Italian running shoes and captures two bosomy biker ladies wallowing in the woods in a wild jape at Justine Kurland and Katy Grannan. Seldom do we find an artist conveying as much sheer, offhanded fun as Davis, who received well-wishers at a gallery breakfast last Saturday, looking like a Roman consul. On the street below, the joyful anxiety of union bands and bagpipers blared from the Labor Day parade careening up Fifth Avenue, a satisfying counterpoint to the random joys of Tim's vision.

Davis is also a master of "nature morte." His still life of grapes and chicken, next to a blue whisk broom may not sound like much, but it is a riot of shimmering color and poetic arrangement. Similarly, a silver close-up of a Roman tunic glows with funny machismo, and an inverted statue in the middle of a busy Roman traffic crossing, legs thrust up in the air, is good for a sustained giggle.

Greenberg Van Doren always has something of interest in its waiting room in the back. This time, two minimalist Cornell boxes, priced at \$350,000 apiece, one highlighting an owl and the other a young boy, resonate with a final tidbit of Tim Davidian whimsy, the shocked skyward hairdos of three young Japanese men, formally arranged with a touch of the Romanesque. When in Rome, Davis argues, let the antiquity seep through in the commonalities surrounding you until a visual laugh erupts, then disappears, only to re-emerge in an uptown New York gallery.

**CHARLIE FINCH** is co-author of *Most Art Sucks: Five Years of Coagula* (Smart Art Press).



**Tim Davis**  
*Gypsy Meal (The New Antiquity)*  
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**Tim Davis**  
*Angel Armor (The New Antiquity)*  
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