

# Highway journey in gallery's photography exhibition

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There's more to Ontario than vast, stretching highways, and photographer Jason Brown has captured the nuances we all tend to miss on those long trips.

Born in Elliot Lake and currently based in Toronto, Brown's solo exhibition, *Between Us*, will be presented at the Latcham Gallery from today through Aug. 13. An opening reception is scheduled for July 13 at 7 p.m.

"The work itself is poignant and powerful, you have to come and see it," said Latcham curator Chai Duncan.

Brown's exhibition comprises two bodies of his previous photography work. It's a combination of one project entitled *You Seem To Be Where I Belong* and another project *Alone Together*.

In the first project, Brown portrays his response in living in Toronto compared to growing up in Elliot Lake. The second project is a documentary of the social and environmental effects of construction on Hwy. 69, the long stretch of road connecting Sudbury with Toronto.

Now combined, Brown is excited for his solo exhibition at Latcham to express his artistic thoughts on how rural communities change due to rapid expansion and development.

"I'm trying to develop something that has a social appeal to a wider audience," Brown said. "Even if they're not familiar with the highway, it's something people can appreciate and

understand."

"I think they complement each other aesthetically and the social context," he added.

Brown's photographs were chosen by Duncan, who was first introduced to Brown's work three years ago in one of the gallery's juried exhibitions. Thirty pieces of art are chosen for an exhibition from a pool of 300 submitted works.

"Jason's work won one of the juror's awards, I was really taken by it," Duncan said. "I was very impressed by the quality and the thinking around the projects he's pursuing."

"He was always in the back of my mind," he said.

Duncan decided to curate a solo exhibition for Brown as part of a program at the gallery called NEXT. Sponsored by local patrons Wendy LaValle and Nick LaValle of Valley Environmental Services Inc., the program is a series of exhibitions that are "meant to provide a platform for emerging artists on the cusp of breaking through a wider national audience," Duncan said.

Brown was thrilled when he heard his work would be in a solo exhibition.

"I was excited to offer up anything," he said.

With a creative background in journalism and photography, Brown's foray into artistic photography with a social message began around five years ago.

"It's sort of been going from then on. It's a long journey, still figuring out how it works and where it'll lead," he said.



Antoinette and Tommaso, Parry Sound, ON, 2011 from Jason Brown's photography exhibit, which opens today at the Latcham Gallery in downtown Stouffville.

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