



## The photo is dead. Long live the photo

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Toronto artist Robert Burley is currently documenting the fate of chemical photography, recording the abandonment and demolition of various Kodak plants. The films, papers and processing chemicals these factories produced will soon be obsolete, although Burley himself is still physically printing images from negatives, albeit ones he edits digitally. The most notable of Burley's large, highly detailed colour photographs shows the implosion of buildings 65 and 69 at Kodak Park in Rochester, N.Y., where a crowd that includes people who worked in the plant busily snap pictures of its demise on their digital cameras. Whatever sacrifices it may demand, technology is irresistible.

A giant mural of this hugely ironic image – created thanks to digital technology, of course – now greets anyone who enters the courtyard of Toronto's Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art on Queen Street West. It is there for Contact, the month-long, city-wide photography festival that launched this week, and it serves as an introduction to the issues MOCCA is raising in an international group show entitled *Between Memory and History: From the Epic to the Everyday*. Photography, the family historian, court painter, official scribe and crusading journalist of the 20th century, has penetrated the 21st century in ways that Kodak founder George Eastman himself could hardly have dreamed. In MOCCA's second year providing a focal point for Contact (now the largest photography festival in the world), curators Bonnie Rubenstein and David Liss address this year's festival theme of memory and history, provocatively asking where exactly photography is leading us, cellphones and Coolpix in hand.

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