

# SHANE CAMPBELL GALLERY

Chicago Artists Resource  
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## Chicago Works: Chris Bradley on View at the MCA

By David Hall



Sculptor Chris Bradley (American, b. 1982) is interested in the real, everyday things around us that become so commonplace we stop noticing them. Like Warhol, he is attracted to ordinary objects, such as potato chips and pizza boxes. But Bradley examines their multiple associations to transform the objects themselves—like a shape-shifter of sorts. This practice is not unrelated to Salvador Dalí's paranoid critical method, in which Dalí linked unrelated objects into a single image, or André Breton's insistence that the object might morph into multiple significations. For Bradley, the everyday world is a resource used to access what is not apparent at first glance.



This conceptual reading of Bradley's work also describes his material process. What appear to be throwaway materials, like cardboard boxes and junk food, may actually be painted steel or cast bronze. But since Bradley's objects are so finely crafted, it is often difficult to tell if you are looking at a commonplace object or its representation. The artist is deeply

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invested in how things are made, and in the histories and cultural significance of materials. Often described as trompe l'oeil, or a trick of the eye, the precision of representation creates a kind of sculptural illusion. His bags of ice never melt, because the individual pieces of ice are cast glass. His replica key ring grants access to nothing, because the cast is inevitably larger than the original. And his pairings of objects also invoke a tongue-in-cheek humor, as well as point to other artistic influences. For Bradley, the crafting of objects gives rise to the game of looking.

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