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ANDREW RAFACZ is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new works by Ali Bailey.

Chicago, IL, March 26, 2010 – Andrew Rafacz continues the 2010 season with *It's the Real Thing*, new works by Ali Bailey in Gallery One. This is the artist's first exhibition with the gallery and continues through Saturday, May 8, 2010.

Ali Bailey's practice for the past several years has been invested in a balancing act that questions the authenticity of his objects. Bailey's preoccupation with the real and the copy, fact and fiction, probes at times a more underlying dialogue with failure, loss, and chance by investigating both found and reconstructed objects. His earlier sculptures incorporated realistic three-dimensional renderings such as an old tree stump, graffitied and carved with personal sentiments or a worn baseball sprouting a young plant. These recreations were juxtaposed with similar sculptures that were assemblages of actual discarded materials and remnants.

Bailey's new work opens up a broader discourse that begins to deal with the complex relationships and hierarchies that govern our understanding of objects and cultural or commercial artifacts. By employing a more reductive form of tableaux and cyclical narrative Bailey has created an abstract language whose forms ask to be considered both as autonomous 'sculpture' and as 'prop' or method of display for the various objects that they 'present'. These forms, most of which are handmade and loosely geometric have in some way been disrupted or compromised. *Abstraction with Artifact*, a tall, thrusting construction with allusions to Primitivism has been 'abstracted' by the very construction adhesive used to assemble it and exists in a symbiotic relationship with a can of Diet Coke that rests upon one of its upper levels. A similar dynamic is at play in another piece entitled *Ralph Lauren*, where the can of Ralph Lauren brand house paint used to paint the sculpture dangles from within its framework. Here, the relationship between the two components is more integrated and points toward to a self-reflexive critique of casual association and brand identity.

The largest piece in the exhibition, *East Meets West/Worked Out*, is an austere, gloss-black aluminum armature; produced by metal workers and powder-coated. The structure is draped with a grey felt blanket. At once evocative of both High Minimalism and functional utilitarian or recreational structures, the work generates a dialogue to deal directly with its own curious status as an object 'between modes'. This back and forth is a key facet of Bailey's work and of the exhibition as a whole, speaking as it does of a willingness to allow the works space to exist in uncertain territory - as neither one thing or another.

ALI BAILEY (British, b. 1982) lives and works in Chicago and received his B.A. in Fine Art from University of Brighton in 2006. Exhibitions include a 2009 solo show at Golden, Chicago as well as group exhibitions in Chicago and London. He was chosen by the Saatchi Gallery to participate in the Zoo Art Fair in 2007 and has recently been featured in Time Out Chicago, New City, Chicago Social, and Italian publication Exibart. This is his first exhibition with the gallery.