



## Michael E. Smith

**November 8 - November 27, 2011**

Michael E. Smith's works feature transformations of everyday objects that shift our understanding of their presence and purpose, making them appear strange and even sinister. In so doing, his work reflects both how we take the things in our immediate surroundings for granted, and how a cultural attitude of waste and excess suggests a darker consideration of humanity's own disposability. Smith's deliberate manipulation of the structural and substantive properties of garden hoses, milk cartons, backpacks, and other things prompts consideration of the change and decay that characterizes much of the early 21st-century American landscape. His treatment of these objects appears to violently disrupt or disfigure them, often leaving them in a more homely and abject state than that in which they began. Smith's careful and strategic arrangement of the works plays an equally important role in creating unanticipated experiences that prompt us to see this matter in new and affecting ways.

Michael E. Smith was born in 1977 in Detroit, Michigan, where he continues to live and work. His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Mönchehaus Museum, Goslar, Germany; Michael Benevento Gallery, Los Angeles; and Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Ferndale, Michigan (all 2011); and Clifton Benevento, New York, and Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin (both 2010). Smith has participated in such group exhibitions at Laura Bartlett Gallery, London, and Zero, Milan (2011); The Artist's Institute, New York (2010); and Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York, and Artists Space, New York (2009). Smith's exhibition at CAM is his first solo presentation in an American museum.

## CONTEMPORARYARTMUSEUMSTLOUIS

*Michael E. Smith* is curated by Dominic Molon, Chief Curator, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis.

Image: Michael E. Smith, *Untitled*, 2010 (installation detail). Plastic, sweatshirt, fluorescent light bulbs, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Clifton Benevento, New York, Susanne Hillberry, Ferndale, MI, and KOW, Berlin.

The Front Room is generously supported by Mary Ann and Andy Srenco; and Étant donnés, the French-American Fund for Contemporary Art.

Major exhibition support is provided by Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield; William E. Weiss Foundation; and Nancy Reynolds and Dwyer Brown. General operating support is provided by Whitaker Foundation; Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; Missouri Cultural Trust; Regional Arts Commission; Bank of America Charitable Foundation; The Trio Foundation of St. Louis; Wells Fargo Advisors; Arts and Education Council; and members of the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis.

