

ART IN REVIEW

### CHAD PERSON: 'A Hero Never Fails'

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In art as in life, desperate times call for desperate measures. That may mean mummifying an old car Egyptian style using plastic bags instead of fabric, which Jay Critchley has done as a quasi-magical ritual in the Freight + Volume gallery. He has partly dismantled a '70s-era MG sports car, carefully wrapped its viscera — seats, engine and other parts — in strands of crumpled plastic and put it back together.

Plastic bags are petroleum based, and cars run on petroleum, a substance that continues to cause no end of worldly havoc. Mr. Critchley's funereal tableau is not beautiful, but it effectively expresses an exasperation shared by many about modernity's economic and ecological trajectory.

In a still-timely mockumentary video from 1988, also on view, Mr. Critchley poses as president of a fictional organization called Nuclear Recycling Consultants, whose purpose is in part to convert nuclear plants into residential complexes and historic sites. Resembling a younger, thinner John C. Reilly, he describes his project and performs rituals at nuclear sites with engaging, wide-eyed verve.

In the rear gallery Chad Person offers a complementary solution in the form of folksy signs jig sawed from wood or collaged from pieces of United States currency. They say things like "Resign" and "Accept Less." A giant inflated representation of the cartoon character Underdog sits irresolutely in the gallery too, while video montages show him performing frantic acts of heroism fueled by energizing vitamin pills. Two Cassandras, Mr. Critchley and Mr. Person, deplore our addictions to oil, drugs and competition. Give them credit for trying.