



## The Quirky Art of Travel at The James Chicago

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The James Chicago looks a lot like an apartment building from the outside, and so when I was walking towards it for the first time on a rainy night, and my umbrella blocked the hotel's sign, a stack of suitcases I spotted through the hotel's window reassured me that I'd found the right place.

Something registered as slightly off with the suitcases, though — all of them vintage, which is to say, they lacked wheels. And some of them were open and filled with...stuff I couldn't immediately identify. After I checked in I realized that what I'd seen through the

window was not a visual representation of a bell staff's list of things to do, but rather an art installation.

It's called Room 28, by Joel Ross. It's worth reading the full story of the making of this piece, and some more photos, but in short: the artist checked into a motel room, dismantled the entire room, piece by piece, and carted it all away in the suitcases.

Travel is something of a theme for Ross — he also has a series of roadside sign sculptures that he installs without authorization. Three of my favorites: Be Gay, False Promises and Unisex Bordello.

In this interview, Ross describes his work in these three words: evades easy explanations. But I'm sure The James Hotel hopes its guests will walk away from the installation with these three words in mind: don't replicate here.