

ROBERT BILLS CONTEMPORARY

The Exceptional Ordinary:

Contemporary Paintings by Sioban Lombardi and Gwendolyn Zabicki

July 8 – August 5, 2011

Reception Friday, July 8 from 6 to 9 pm

Sioban Lombardi is a contemporary painter and life-long Chicagoan. She received her MFA from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY and BFA from Barat College in Lake Forrest, IL. She was recently selected to exhibit her work with Wafaa Bilal at Governor's State University. Her paintings were included in the 2010 Midwest edition of *New American Paintings*, a juried exhibition in print. Lombardi has exhibited paintings in various group shows around Chicagoland and the New York area.

Lombardi's practice explores the illusion of memory and nostalgia and the exchange between spectacle and the mundane. Her alteration of contextual tropes distorts this exchange. Within the work, time and recollection are collapsed, questioning what we perceive and what we miss. Her combination of haunting portraits and eerie, undefined landscapes recalls a kind of surrealism more in line with the hazy realm of memory than the dreamscape.

Gwendolyn Zabicki is a native Chicagoan and former sign painter. She received her BFA from The School of the Art Institute and is in the process of completing her MFA at the University of Illinois at Chicago. In 2010 she had a solo exhibition at the Spoke Gallery in Chicago and was featured in both Chicago Artists Month and the Chicago Art Open. Over the last three years she has received numerous grants and fellowships from institutions such as the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. This summer she is excited to travel to the Ukraine for the EchoLuna Residency.

Zabicki's paintings examine ubiquitous objects that fill the urban environment and attempt to subvert the expectation that the ordinary should be synonymous with the mundane. She aims to enliven the everyday and expose the tensions and contradictions embedded in scenes of city life. Her most recent work explores (un)spoken, (un)intentional, and (un)available meanings in the urban environment. The focal point of her work is in the areas of absence where there is a duality between covering and revealing.