

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*oil, foil, WALLS and toil*

September 10 – October 16, 2010

Opening reception September 10, 6-9 pm

Robert Bills Contemporary presents *oil, foil, WALLS, and toil*, an examination of the tactics four artists employ to negotiate the fine line that divides figuration and abstraction. The exhibition investigates how each artist demonstrates his or her unique artistic vocabulary in a way that challenges the longstanding art-historical binary. While each of the individual artists posits a dramatically different approach to the problem, the common thread that binds them together is the clarity of their distinctive artistic vision.

Woohyun Shim's unique amalgamation of organic forms, vibrant color palettes, appropriative patterns, and delicate layering creates intricate abstractions inspired by figurative motifs. Surreal yet concrete, abstract yet referential, each of Shim's exceptional, contemporary paintings builds an intense visual world that immediately captivates.

The sophisticated cut-out paintings of Timothy Bergstrom present a strikingly different perspective on abstraction. Maximizing the interplay between figure and ground, positive and negative space, pattern and texture in everyday materials, Bergstrom's pieces push the envelope of juxtaposition to its limits and beyond. He simultaneously draws attention to the surface with relief and highlights the integrity of the abstract forms with composition, creating a visual tension and sense of discord.

Jongock Kim's installation creates an immersive environment for the viewer that references both architectural and artistic material. The gritty texture of the printed surface simultaneously evokes the grime of age on a rough stone wall and the oily quality of printed layers of ink on paper. This installation juxtaposes the aesthetic qualities of two types of walls from two different locations: Korea and Chicago.

As a sculptor and as an installation artist, Lisa Nonken, brings a deep and complex understanding of space and scale to the exhibition. Using the anonymous human figure as her primary motif, her installations evoke the emotional drama of human encounters. While her photo-installation might seem to be the most representational piece in the exhibition, closer investigation reveals a deep dependency on the fundamental building blocks of abstraction, including the grid, geometric pattern and repetition.

Robert Bills Contemporary is a new gallery in Chicago's West Loop gallery district. Named one of the top ten new galleries at Next 2010 by the Chicago Tribune, the gallery throws open its doors for the first time in September. We invite you to join us for our fall season opening exhibition featuring four of Chicago's brightest up-and-coming young artists.

The gallery is located at 650 West Lake Street on the lower level. For general inquiries please contact the Gallery Director, Emma Stein at [emma@robertbillscontemporary.com](mailto:emma@robertbillscontemporary.com).