

# Memoir

June 20, 2018 – October 19, 2018



Rajab Ali Sayed, *Days That Unravel* 2017, oil on canvas 16 x 20 inches.

The exhibition *Memoir* features two Houston-based artists exploring autobiographical spaces and memories. Rajab Ali Sayed and Michael Patrick O'Brien practice an artist's ability to suspend a fleeting moment and offer it permanent existence as a painting or photograph. Their work strikingly mirrors one another, implying narratives through repetition of lone chairs, empty rooms and the careful capturing of human relationships. Whether the subject is deep in contemplation, looking directly at the viewer as if interrupted, or absent from the composition entirely, the intimate settings and emotive use of light and color inform thought-provoking work synonymous in sentiment.

O'Brien's body of work touches on themes of family history, cherished objects and settings. Including a mixture of both staged and candid photos, O'Brien strategically captures just enough context to infuse familiarity to the viewer while simultaneously retaining mystery. His elegant photographs exude poise and a quiet demeanor as if all activity has ceased in the moment, much like the calm before (or after) the storm. This sensation of frozen time in tandem with his signature soft light and clean angles yield an eerie serenity, similar to a beautiful room that is too quiet. O'Brien's personal connection to his work is implied within titles and context clues, and reinforced with recurrent direct eye contact his subjects hold with the viewer.

Similarly, Sayed's paintings are a continuous collection of observations of people and spaces, with defined relationships often left to personal interpretation. This common observational theme reveals Sayed's perceptive nature - a direct result of his diverse upbringing within various cultural and social environments. The lack of direct interaction between the viewer and Sayed's subjects makes his body of work evocative of people watching. Sayed begins his process by spontaneously capturing photos of scenes he finds compelling to later portray on canvas, working from both photos and memory. Drawing from still images allows Rajab to illustrate these candid moments with technical accuracy, while his imaginative hand infuses fluidity and vitality into his painting process.

This exhibition is organized by Kinzelman Art Consulting on behalf of the owners of Bank of America Center and M-M Properties. Works loaned courtesy of the artists. For additional information about the exhibition, please call Kinzelman Art Consulting at 713.533.9923 or visit [www.kinzelmanart.com](http://www.kinzelmanart.com).