

Art

GALLERY SCENE

By David McCracken

This is the final weekend to see the appropriately gritty work of Dan Mills and Don Seiden at Sybil Larney Gallery, at Lake and Morgan Streets in the gritty market area west of the Loop.

Actually, Mills' wall constructions begin much grittier than they end, as he scours abandoned older buildings for the scarred and weatherbeaten wood facades and ornamentation that he recombines in abstract compositions that are themselves reminiscent of architectural patterning.

But his training as a painter is not left behind. The richly textured wood surfaces are brushed in delicate washes of color, some of which seeps into cracks in deeper hues. Mills thus combines the pathos of use, the recirculation of architectural history and the subtle hand of the painter.

Seiden's rough, darkly expressionistic sculptures take off from biblical and mythological meditations on death. A series of small, painted tinfoil sculptures are called "herms" after the small statues placed at crossroads in the Old World, symbolizing the role of the Greek god Hermes in guiding the dead to the underworld.

Larger bronze works such as "Lizard Lady" and "Angel" are winged skeletal figures that might have arisen from the most tenebrous regions of the unconscious. Most of Seiden's work is pretty strong stuff and not for the squeamish.

Dan Mills' wall pieces and Don Seiden's sculptures and half-dozen or so drawings can be seen through May 31 at 952 W. Lake St.