



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SAMUEL JABLON *WORD:PLAY* @ FREIGHT+VOLUME, August 21<sup>st</sup>-Sept 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Opening reception Thursday, Aug 21<sup>st</sup> from 6-9pm.

*life's not a paragraph  
And death i think is no parenthesis*  
— E.E. Cummings

*I like poems you can tack all over with a hammer and there are no hollow places.*  
-- John Ashbery

Word made flesh. As much as been said, done and written about that exquisite (and often elusive) realm, the intersection of text and image - there is always room for a newcomer. And along comes Samuel Jablon. At once poet, painter and performance artist, while at the same time none of the above, Jablon pushes the envelope of this genre several steps further in his recent body of work, *Word:Play* – the artist's debut solo at Freight+Volume. This new work cannot be easily categorized, boxed up and neatly wrapped. Jablon is first and foremost an inventor, a seeker, and an explorer. So the work he produces isn't exactly poetry, painting or sculpture – it is a new, hybrid mix of all three disciplines. Like Piet Hein's *Grooks*, Jim Harrison's *Ghazals*, or Wendy White's *Tondos*, Jablon's poem/paintings perhaps need another name, a brand new definition.

To be sure, visual poems, or literary images, have been around as long as cave paintings, Egyptian tablets and medieval illuminated manuscripts. Much more recently, artists such as Richard Prince, Ed Ruscha, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, On Kawara and Christopher Wool utilize text and narrative as the basis and driving force in their work. Samuel Jablon takes this legacy a step further in that he has created a way of seeing language in a new light – a light that shifts with the viewer's experience and perception of the words, ultimately becoming a deconstruction of language and poetry in visual form. Jablon responds and riffs on paintings such as Wool's *Sell the House...Sell the Kids* and Ruscha's *Hollywood* in his own works – including *Lots of Loot*, *America Dreams*, *Say Something* and *Do it*. But Jablon is doing something a bit different.

Samuel Jablon actually makes his words from scratch, fashioned out of mundane materials and sometimes almost nothing. The words he chooses - and in many instances the poetry - may have existed before, but the artist appropriates them, takes each individual letter and molds them carefully and lovingly into personal tableaux from a variety of materials at hand – sequins, mirrors, thick paint, tiles – and thereby makes them his own. The words mean something, or perhaps they mean nothing – but in the

end it doesn't matter, because they are beautiful. Like a seasoned speechwriter ghostwriting text for the artworld, Jablon weaves the words with a dazzling and mellifluous spin. He is affable, polite and good-natured and brilliant - in art as well as in life - and the words he chooses reflect that character. They exist easily on the surface but at the same time they also dig deep – they tease and flirt slyly with our imagination but they are also sincere and pure of heart.

Another Samuel – Beckett, that is, a big influence on the artist (and whom Jablon quotes in the painting *Beckett*) declared: *Every word is like an unnecessary stain on silence and nothingness.* Jablon embodies this philosophy in his own practice to a T. In his dexterous hands, language is transformed and leaves its indelible mark upon the void. So it is, with great pleasure, that we present *Word:Play*, Samuel Jablon's debut solo in NYC, at Freight+Volume.

Jablon (b. Binghamton, NY 1986) was a featured artist in BOMB Magazine's Spring 2014 issue. His past projects, readings, performances, and exhibitions have been presented at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Socrates Sculpture Park, The Queens Museum of Art, The DUMBO Arts Festival, White Box Art Center, Show Room Gallery, Hunter College, The Howl Festival, Lodge Gallery, and the Center for Book Arts. He received an MFA from Brooklyn College, and a BA from Naropa University. Jablon lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Please join us to celebrate the opening of Jablon's *Word:Play* at Freight+Volume on Thursday, August 21st from 6-9pm. The exhibition is accompanied by a full color, 130-page artist book, with text by Archie Rand, Nick Lawrence, Saul Ostrow and Bob Holman. There will be additional events and readings scheduled in the course of the show – for more details on any of these events, to order a book or request a checklist for the show, and for any further information - please contact Nick Lawrence at [nick@freightandvolume.com](mailto:nick@freightandvolume.com) or call 212-691-7700.