

REVIEWS: NEW YORK



Samuel Jablon, *DO IT*, 2014, acrylic, glass tile, glow-in-the-dark tile, and abalone shell on wood, 40" x 30".

SAMUEL JABLON

FREIGHT + VOLUME
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Words become visceral things in the mosaics of Samuel Jablon, who creates beautifully messy concrete poetry by affixing bits of mirror, fused glass, precious metals, and semiprecious stones to painted wood panels. Certainly, there was a crafty folksiness to the pieces in this show “Word:Play,” but that didn’t make them any less cerebral.

Jablon is both a poet and a visual artist; he chooses words and patterns carefully. Sometimes, this results in a sort of visual onomatopoeia. In *Ugly* (2014), the letters U, G, L, Y are spelled out in acrylic paints and irregular clusters of glass tiles—with the G resembling smeared feces. Conversely, the mother-of-pearl, 14-karat-gold, and dichroic-glass tiles in *Cover Me Glitteringly* (2014) shimmer over a washed-out field of cotton-candy colors.

Other times, compositions became activated. The zigzagging painted lines and iridescent tiles in *Forget* (2014) distort our focus as we attempt to read the sentence “All we need is to forget.” And the fat letters in *DO IT* (2014), partly made from abalone shells and glow-in-the-dark tiles, feel like an exuberant call to action, even as they cheekily recall Hans Ulrich Obrist’s participatory project “do it” and the old Nike slogan “Just Do It.”

It was all very hearty and luscious and palpably present.

TRENT MORSE

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