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Artist Mixes Texts, Images in Exhibition Titled 'Word: Play'

Samuel Jablon Produces Art that is a Hybrid of Poetry, Painting,
Sculpture

By
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Samuel Jablon: Word:Play

Freight + Volume

530 W. 24th St.

Through Sept. 20

There are a lot of visual artists using words out there: Mel Bochner, David Diao, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Jack Pierson, Kay Rosen, Ed Ruscha, Lawrence Weiner and Christopher Wool, among others. It's a crowded field, and it's difficult for an artist to do something different and arresting in the mode.

Samuel Jablon (b. 1986) succeeds, moderately. Also a poet, Mr. Jablon assembles words—sometimes quoted from such famous sources as Samuel Beckett, sometimes not—in barely legible configurations on wooden panels ranging from a few feet on a side to 12 inches square. Mr. Jablon uses sequins, bits of colored mirror glass, and paint thick enough to hold things fast. The work is bouncy, bright, although not particularly witty (if one works with words, that counts), and Mr. Jablon makes good on his apparent aim to create a conflict between reading and simply seeing. The exhibition contains far too many pieces—it has a garage-sale vibe—and if his phrases and sentences were a tad more legible, the tension would probably be greater.