

Noah Becker's

WHITEHOT MAGAZINE

of contemporary art

Through October 21st

Freight + Volume in the LES

Samuel Jablon, *Unstung*

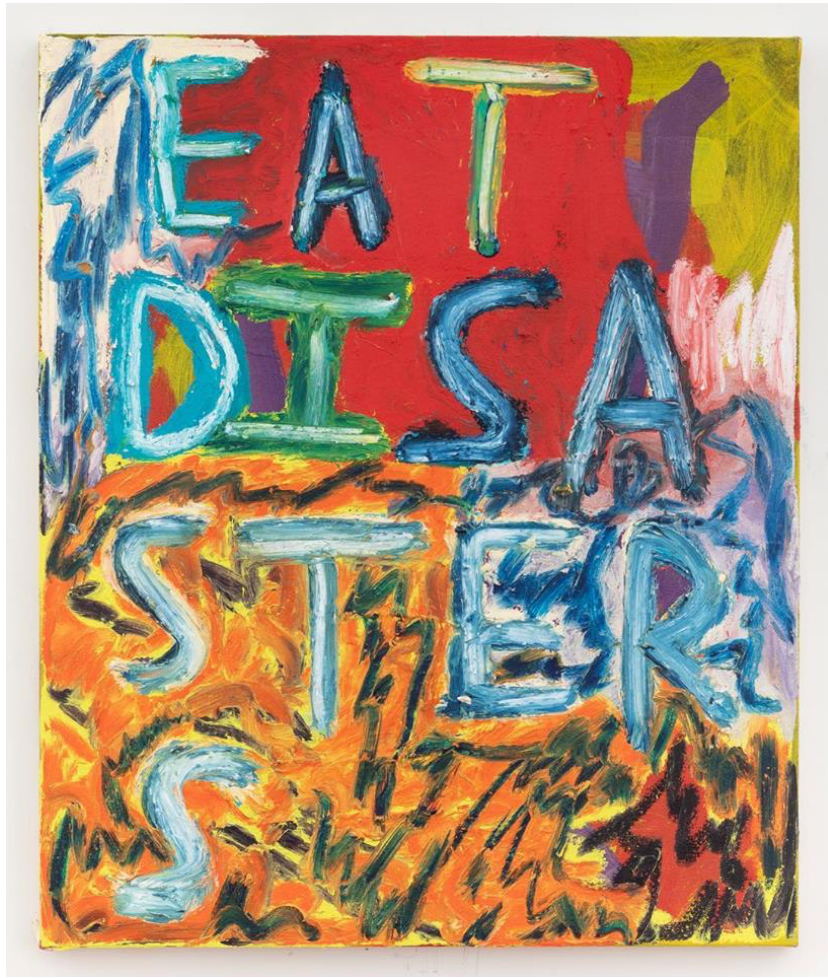
By **JEFFREY GRUNTHANER**, October, 2018



Comfort Can Fuck Itself, 2018, acrylic and oil on canvas, 48h x 48w in

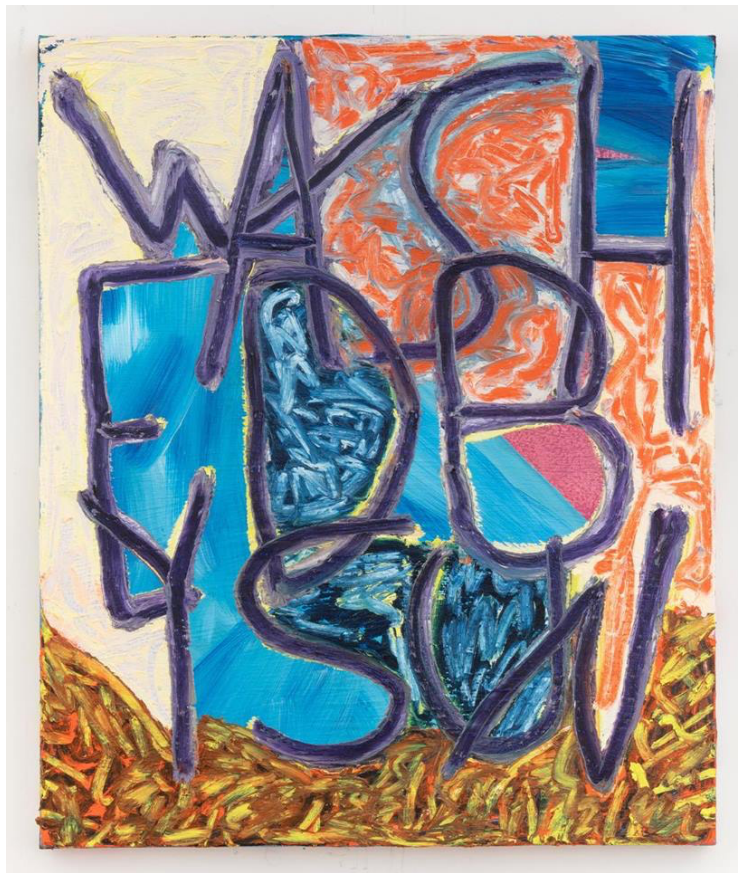
Due to the way language materializes and dematerializes within his *oeuvre*, Jablon is often identified as a poet-painter. It has perhaps been noted less to what extent Jablon is actually something of a conceptualist. Previous bodies of work used glass and sequins very elaborately—a process the artist came to feel was too laborious. “I reached a point where using the same materials felt like work,” Jablon told me. “I felt as if I was going to work...cutting glass, laying it down,

and gluing it to the surface.” The use of those materials gave his work a kind of sculptural fixity. With *Unstung*, however, form and color are unloosed from anything apart from the sheer expressivity of paint on canvas.



Eat Disasters, 2018, acrylic and oil on canvas, 24h x 20w in

This transformation didn't come out of the blue; Jablon's current paintings seem like the inevitable outcome of a long developmental process. But I couldn't help but wonder if any personal experience motivated him to adopt a new kind of working method. "My work is always a reaction to my life," explains Jablon. "I went through some drama, some asshole hit me with a bottle, and it changed my outlook on a lot of things. But I don't think it necessarily was the root cause for change in the work; it was more of a catalyst."



Washed By Sun, 2018, acrylic and oil on canvas, 24h x 20w in

Unlike previous shows, where each painting was a single poem in itself, *Unstung* maps out a wholisitic poem. This pervasive sense of wholeness speaks to a corresponding integrity underlying Jablon's new creative process. What I've always liked best about Sam's work is the way the act of painting words becomes framed as a sort of gestural line. The phrases he paints are something like a landscape, indicating ideas without actually representing them. Is it possible that future bodies of work might abandon language altogether? "The works always start out as abstract grounds," he notes in answer to my question. "I've thought about doing shows with them, but I always get bored with them. The language keeps things fresh for me. I'm into ideas about erasure and erasing the language. I could see a series of those." **WM**