

CHERYL HAZAN

Contemporary Art

MARK MY WORDS

March 1 – March 31, 2012



What was once new has become a familiar part of our visual vocabulary. In the same way that sampling is employed in music, these painters quote earlier painters. Text, letters as forms, mark making that includes tagging, and a gestural use of symbols are what loosely tie together this selection of painters. **TMNK**, a street artist, splices recognizable styles into his own energetic neo-expressionist pastiche - his work has been compared to Basquiat and influenced by Picasso, Keith Haring and Romare Bearden.

Since the 1980's artists have used imagery inspired by and drawn from the signature marks left by urban street 'taggers'. A trademark stylized initialing left behind originally on the sides of subway cars, on walls and buildings, tags have become part of the visual vocabulary. The "wild style" that first emerged in the South Bronx and East Village has since been through several revivals.

Pop artists in the '60s adapted advertising images - Andy Warhol's Brillo boxes and Campbell's soups cans or their even earlier predecessors, Stuart Davis and Gerald Murphy. The co-opting by artists of the look of advertising has come full circle, so that large corporations pay to use an artists trademark logo. As was the case with **Curtis Kulig**, whose obsessive repetition of the phrase *Love Me* took on a life of its own and was usurped more than once for branding, with and without his permission. **Hugo Moro** uses elements of pop art - from billboards or blown up mid-century American photographs that he then adds his own graffiti to. **James Verbicky's** collages of glossy advertising logos are reminiscent of both vintage advertising memorabilia now being auctioned at Sothebys and the work of Jacques de la Villele', the French artist who collages torn street posters onto canvas. **Andrew Burgess** incorporates typography into collage paintings.

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What may appear to be a naïve and primitive charm is deliberate in the work of **Lisa Bean** and **Tad Lauritser Wright**. Other painters incorporate words into the composition so that the word becomes a shape or is doubly used to convey meaning and as a design element. **Jennifer Jarnot's** cut out letters are patterned with paint by number designs. **CJ Collins** uses computer generated combinations of forms that result in a mid twentieth century look of crisp black lines and primary colors. **Jose Camacho** uses blocks of text traced with old-fashioned stencils. In the same territory as Glen Ligon and Mel Kendrick- Camacho's ground is built up of colored newspaper pages with the expression *Ay Bendito* repeatedly layered on top.

A group exhibit of text based and graffiti inspired paintings which include:

TMNK

Lisa Bean

Andrew Burgess

Jose Camacho

CJ Collins

Jennifer Jarnot

Curtis Kulig

Dan Monteavaro

Hugo Moro

Tad Lauritzen Wright

Briggs Edward

James Verbicky

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