

New Works by Feodor Voronov and Lester Monzon at Mark Moore Gallery

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By Megan Koester



Mark Moore Gallery proudly presents *Relics*, the first solo show in the main gallery by LA-based painter Feodor Voronov. Concurrently, the gallery also presents *New Work*, the gallery's first solo exhibition by LA-based painter Lester Monzon. An opening reception for the exhibitions, both of which run through October 12th, will take place from 6PM to 8PM on Saturday, September 14th.

A derivation from his trademark *Word Paintings* – first shown in the Project Room in 2012 – Feodor Voronov's newest works feature his emblematically bold color palette and obsessive mark making techniques, but stem from new source material. His vibrant abstractions of words and letters become monuments to his visual thought process and interest in the interconnectivity of language, thus acting as literal and figurative *Relics* of his practice.

In establishing his painterly exploration of the socially explicit and implied perceptions of a word, Voronov has visually conceptualized the idiosyncrasies, structure, and comprehension of human communication. Each canvas features an object-like knot of fine ballpoint pen lines, gestural swaths of spray paint, and whimsical bands of marker ink floating within a raw canvas womb, as if illustrating the intricate nature of language's evolution. Voronov's seemingly organic marks co-exist alongside regimented patterns, thus emphasizing the respectively colloquial and formal aspects to our daily parlance. Though he has been working from a single list of vocabulary words for nearly three years, Voronov has now turned his attention to their amassed combination and composition, likening syntax to the analytical configuration of imagery. Inspired by John Chamberlain's 2012 retrospective at the Guggenheim, Voronov drew from the amalgamations of his metal sculptures, impressed by their feigned weightlessness despite their "hulking masses and multitudes of fractured and jumbled planes." Much like Voronov's own work, these assemblages gave material formality to the tensions, balance, and anatomy of composition, be it physical or intellectual. Stemming from this idea, Voronov's *Relics* reference terms and phrases from a long, rambling paragraph he calls his "piggy bank" – an autobiographical stream of consciousness – that allows for the advanced entanglements competing focal points. More than ever, the viewer will find evolving entry points and altered senses of perspective in Voronov's paintings, analogous to the individualized way in which we converse.

An ambitious display of nearly thirty new works, Lester Monzon debuts his trademark tongue-in-cheek meditations on artistic taxonomy with alluring new compositions and timely critiques.

Since the war between "fine art" and "design" broke out – a distinction increasingly diminishing in the advent of accessible technology – context has been the dividing faction between the two designations. Through his intimate canvases, Monzon acts as an analog commentator on this quarrel, and poses the question of whether or not such denotations are truly relevant or purposeful in art making. Historically, Monzon's colorful gesticulations conceal sections of rigid patterning, a tête-à-tête between so-called "abstract expressionism" and "hard-edge abstraction" that implies a gentle lampooning of the taxonomic tradition behind art "movements." Monzon upends the formalism and segregation innate to the fine art world, and fabricates a composite genealogy of painting – a pithy resolution to an otherwise vapid debate. Monzon's luscious brushstrokes slyly creep into a Hirst-esque field of dots or Noland-like plane of stripes, like the resurrection of a once-declared dead practice through a satirical hand. In this show, Monzon applies this critique of contextual art practices and assimilation to mark-making in public spaces; be it graffiti on tiles in a public bathroom, stains on the sidewalk, or the popularized notion of "street art." In questioning the validity of one set of forms and social framing over the other, Monzon facilitates a larger dialogue about the dissemination of status, and the dominant voices of endorsement.