

PETER FREEMAN, INC. 560 BROADWAY #602 / 603 NEW YORK NEW YORK 10012

212 966 5154 / fax: 212 966 5349

PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: **Mel Bochner**

date: **27 March - 24 May 2008**

Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present an exhibition of new "Thesaurus" paintings by Mel Bochner. One of the founders of Conceptual Art in the 1960s, Bochner remains an inventive, provocative and influential artist.

Bochner investigates the intention of the work of art in terms of its perceptual and grammatical logic, in series of calculations, spatial adjustments and rhetorical inventories. In this latest body of work, Bochner continues his use of the thesaurus in his exploration of the limits of linguistic meaning and visual comprehension.

The paintings in this exhibition each contain a group of synonyms, starting with the simplest related words, and eventually devolving to vulgar colloquialisms and phrases. This lettered path from a single word to a roll-call of the vernacular reflects the discrepancy between 'objective', lexical meaning and the perception of a 'subjective' individual. The aggressive, painterly litany of language presents other possible connotations and undercurrents that move understanding ever further away from the basic idea of the original word. The chalky white all-cap lettering "speaks" the text while the wet-on-wet ground threatens to drown it out, further contributing to an overall sense of a communication breakdown. As in so much of his work, Bochner deftly dissects commonly-held assumptions of objectivity and ideology. In Bochner's own words, "Whether in the public or the private domain, my recent work attempts to confront the ideologies and hidden agendas of language. Because as recent history has painfully taught us, all abuses of power begin with the abuse of language."

Mel Bochner's work was the subject of two major museum exhibitions in 2007: a 40-year retrospective of Bochner's drawings which finished a two-year museum tour at the San Diego Museum of Art in March; and a focused retrospective of his language-based works at the Art Institute of Chicago.

A compilation of Bochner's writings, Solar System and Rest Rooms: Writings and Interviews, 1965-2007, will be published by MIT Press in May 2008

The exhibition will open on Thursday 27 March and run through Saturday 24 May 2008.

For reproduction requests or more information, please call the gallery at 212-966-5154.