

GET DIRTY, 2014,
fused glass, glass
tile/mirror and
acrylic on wood,
40x30 inches.

Samuel Jablon
by James Hyde

BOMB



SIMPLE COUNTRY
GIRL, 2013, acrylic
and 14K gold tile/
mirror on wood,
76x46 inches.
Images courtesy
of Freight and
Volume.



Glittery, reflective, and colored tiles, broken and whole, are stuck to large, bright, and thoroughly paint-slathered canvases. Letters or shapes are formed from tiles. Paint covers older paint; tiles cover paint; paint covers tiles. Facture and process meet with enthusiasm, and the physicality of painterly construction is left raw and open—so to be entirely legible.

With exuberance, Jablon's paintings tell the story of their own making. They are what they are by showing how they got there and how they take up their subject—and that subject is text. In fact, when Jablon burst into making these works some two years ago, it was through making paintings of his poetry. The authority of even these earliest canvasses was due to an excitable tension between text and pretext—Jablon's poetry becoming both the content and excuse for the paintings.

In many of Jablon's paintings the writing itself is less legible than the painterly procedures. Usually one can discern letters, but putting them together into words becomes an effort. Assembling and reading Jablon's poetical phrases causes the physicality of the painting to disappear, thus forcing you to choose between seeing and reading. The conjunction of mirrored tiles with matter-of-fact paint fields results in a similar bind—you can see yourself and your surroundings reflected in the tiles or look at the paint on the painting's surface, but you cannot see both at the same time.

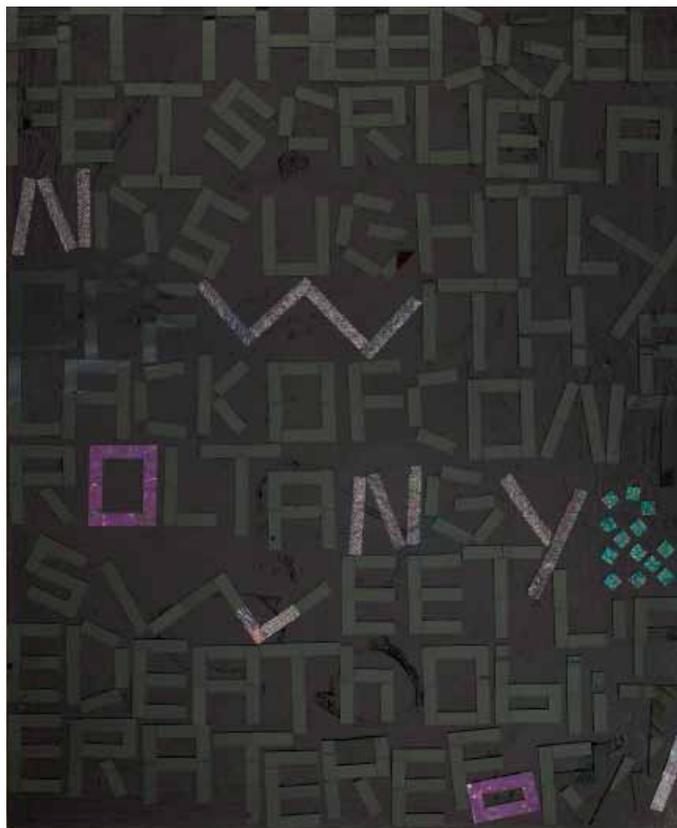
In a manner related to Chris Martin's canvasses, the mode of address in Jablon's paintings is a cheerful greeting. It's enjoyable negotiating the obstacles of brightly-hued paint and shimmering tiles to puzzle out the text. But Jablon's message has an often dark and ironic sensibility:

AMERICA DREAMS
GIVE ME THE LOOT
PASS IT FLEX IT
FORM IT SWIPE IT
ITS DELICIOUS
I'M LOVING IT

The effect is not unlike a Smiths song where a merry pop melody is contradicted by melancholic lyrics. For Jablon, like for The Smiths's singer/songwriter Morrissey, it is neither the content of the words nor the pleasure of making beautiful things that is by itself the point, but it is the wild fun of forging sensibility to fact in the midst of complexity and contradiction.

—JAMES HYDE is a painter living and working in Brooklyn. Upcoming exhibitions include Galerie Filles du Calvaire in Paris, and *SiteLines, Unsettled Landscapes*, at Site Santa Fe.

I CAN'T GO ON I
MUST GO ON, 2013,
acrylic and glass
tile/mirror, precious
stone, and opal on
canvas over wood,
62x52 inches.



COVER ME
GLITTERINGLY,
2013, mother of
pearl, dichroic glass,
glass tile, 14k gold
tile, acrylic, and
enamel on wood,
36x48 inches.

