GEORGE VERGETTE: *THEY WILL TAKE MY ISLAND*
at GALLERY JONES
May 7 - 30, opening reception: Thursday, May 7, 6 - 9pm

The intentional obscuring of forms and melding of colours is the most obvious contributor to the aesthetic resonance of George Vergette's paintings. This deliberate obfuscation is also more what the work is about than the words cryptically inlaid beneath and on top of his many layers of pigmented resin. In this exhibition, Vergette lingers over his fascination with the written word, but, unlike in earlier paintings, the relevance of the word as a signifier is greatly decreased, and its relevance as a symbol remains as enigmatic as ever.

In earlier paintings, clear and prominent words featured heavily as compositional elements. Their meaning was clear, as they were often only one word, but their pertinence to the overall meaning of the artwork was open to interpretation. In this exhibition, letters occupy the same theoretical territory as marks and colours. They are symbols enacted for the purpose of furthering the visual language. A shape veiled behind layers of resin, like a stick at the bottom of a shallow lake, is just as important as the colour emerging onto the surface, or the words, inscribed both haphazardly and very deliberately on the placid surface of a painting. These factors work with each other to test the tensile strength of what is above and what is below, rendering the heavily built panels on which the resin sits as delicate and precariously balanced works of art.

Perhaps the best example of the fallibility of the written word as a communication medium is in the piece titled "No Use For Irony". Why, if language is just one imperfect avenue to understanding, would we have any use for words used to express meaning that is actually the opposite of what is being said? These words, laid out expressively on a black pool of resin 60 inches square, are a visual statement, felt viscerally when viewing the work and the immediacy of this experience is unrelated to the meaning of the words. As his artistic practice evolves, Vergette is not only evincing the subtleties of the relationship between the written word and the painted form, but also the potential of paint, pigment and resin to communicate clearly and purely.

For more information, or to contact the artist, please call the gallery.

Regards,

Shane O'Brien