



Michael Lazarus
Part Two
June 8 - July 13, 2014
Opening, Sunday, June 8, 7-9pm

From June 8 - July 13, 2014, PARTICIPANT INC is proud to present *Part Two*, a solo exhibition of twelve paintings by Michael Lazarus, made between 2011-2014. These mixed media panels made of paint, wood, glass, adhesive lettering, and, in some cases, plastic reflectors and other found materials, share a vocabulary of pared down imagery, color, and response to materials culled from the artist's everyday surroundings. Modest in size, Lazarus envisions these panels in relationship to the body, where paint and found materials cohabitate and lean into each other. Each work presents itself as a possible painting, sculpture, portrait, mirror, sign, grave marker.

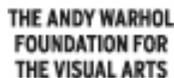
Phenomenological concerns proposed through scale, signification, and materiality evoke the legacy of haptic, tactile agency of a Postminimal generation of painters such as Eva Hesse, Daniel Buren, and Blinky Palermo, who, in different ways, infused painting with the affect of activating space – a condition initiated by Minimalist sculpture. This activation was realized through a mirroring of the surrounding space. Lazarus' panels endow a spatiality by integrating refractory devices and surfaces – apparent in *Know* (2013), *Away* (2011), and more disguised in *Red & Blue* (2013), and overt in the limited edition, *rewardinme* (2014), (pictured above), in which a variation of worn mirror, lettering, and reflection constitute the image.

What propels this work into a radical contemporaneity is Lazarus' situating of directives not only spatially, but also and foremost dialogically. The artist's use and combination of appropriated signage and adhesive lettering, that recur in almost every painting, impart performative commands of speech, soliciting viewers to partake in its language. Through this engagement, portraiture is also proposed, through which messages of caution, fear, joy, and regret get communicated. In Lazarus' words, "Maybe a portrait of a landscape. No... I'd say each one is more like a portrait of a condition. Similar to how Bosch portrayed hell – not merely a place, but as a condition of being." (Hudson, "Michael Lazarus Q&A," February 1998)

An essay about the artist's 2005 exhibition, *Hold Your Mistake Up*, at Feature Inc., reflects on his earlier implementation of mirroring, noting that Lazarus often presented reduced pairings of contrary images that consequently amplified the rigor and physicality of his materials. "Some years ago, when discussions of painting revisited romantic notions of beauty and the sublime, Lazarus enforced economies of scale and image, rendering mostly the permutations of a grinning mask, falling or floating through indeterminate horizons. [...] Rather than arriving at images to be read, as in narrative, the visual end result is a sensual conclusion to a process in which elements have taken on certain irreducible relationships." (Lia Gangitano, "Hold Your Mistake Up," Feature, Inc., 2005)

Michael Lazarus received his BFA in painting from Rhode Island School of Design, and an MFA from School of Visual Arts in New York. His works have been shown nationally and internationally including Feature Inc.; Thread Waxing Space; ANP, Antwerp; Andrea Rosen Gallery; MoMA/PS1; Acme, Los Angeles; Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Saratoga Springs, NY; Sister, Los Angeles; and Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR. His work has been written about in *Artforum*, *Flash Art*, *Art in America*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* among others. Lazarus lives and works in Portland, Oregon.

Image: Michael Lazarus, *rewardinme*, 2014, mylar on mirror, 12 x 12 inches, edition of 6, signed and numbered on back. Through the generosity of artists, PARTICIPANT INC co-produces limited edition artworks designed to support specific projects. On the occasion of Michael Lazarus, *Part Two*, we are offering *rewardinme*.



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PARTICIPANT INC is located at 253 East Houston Street, between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets on the LES, ground floor, wheelchair accessible. Subway: F to Second Avenue, Allen Street exit or JMZ to Essex/Delancey. participantinc.org