PRESS RELEASE

MARK MUMFORD
New work

January 8 – February 14, 2008

Opening Reception
Thursday, January 8, 6 – 8 pm

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present the third exhibition of conceptual based work by Mark Mumford. In this show, the artist continues his investigation of words and phrases often found in everyday speech. The show will consist of suggestive and cryptic phases produced from commercially made vinyl signs and lettering applied directly on paper or the gallery walls.

Mumford's objects of words are at its core, performative. But, instead of being a physical act of endurance the pieces are intellectually driven by the complexity of language. They are conflations of simple thoughts that explore ideas of authorship, authority, and the power of language. With a wry sense of humor, Mumford's works engage the viewer by revealing an underlying complexity of speech.

Mumford's presentation is rooted in advertising and sound bites so prevalent in consumer culture. His flat and unassuming pieces might be described as a language based sculpture whose two-dimensionality become three dimensional with the participation of the viewer. He has a penchant for stacking words of plain typefaces into reduced minimalist form. The short well structured phrases functions on multiple levels---personal, metaphorical, spatial and physical. Each work affirms that the viewer can only complete an artwork.

Visually bold and achingly funny, the signs contrive a situation where, in the artist's words, "meaning hovers on the threshold of realization, and where the knotty relationships between seeing and reading, reading and believing, believing and seeing are given a full and lively expression…. They are, in essence, Neo-Pop paintings that pit spatial syntax against linguistic syntax, and in so doing, provide gallery visitors with a chance to fully experience the blinding noise that words alone create."