

Joshua Liner Gallery

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For immediate release and listing:

Crash (John Matos)
Unfinished Business
January 17–February 21, 2009
Opening reception, Gallery II: Saturday, January 17, 6–9 PM

New York, NY December 7, 2009 -- Joshua Liner Gallery is pleased to present *Unfinished Business*, an exhibition of paintings on canvas and paper by the Bronx-born artist known as Crash (John Matos). This is Crash's first solo show with the gallery.

Including new paintings and selected works from the 1990s, the exhibition highlights the unique place Crash holds in the development of late 20th century visual culture. Some twenty years after Roy Lichtenstein first brought comic books into the fine art discourse, Crash did as much for American graffiti, incorporating his signature tags and style into large, spray-painted canvases. Once transposed, this street language identifying cultural groups and delineating urban territory assumed new meanings and relevance, appraised finally for its formal inventiveness.

In more recent works, Crash excerpts mere details from his wider language of linguistic signs, graphic forms, and rainbow-hued embellishments. Rendered as pure abstraction, these edited bands are placed in contrast with details from the human body, eyes in particular. Sandwiched between wildly colored bands of graffiti-styled marks, these glistening eyes both accentuate and subvert the seductiveness of Crash's self-styled visual language. Commercialism is at once embraced and repelled. Much like the Pop artists Lichtenstein and Tom Wesselmann before him, Crash identifies the graphic arts of his own era as both a communicator and container for human desires—with a measure of the street artist's ambivalence intact.

John Matos (aka Crash), born in 1961 in the Bronx, began his career at 13 and quickly gained recognition for his murals on subway cars and dilapidated buildings. Working under the name "Crash One," he is regarded as a pioneer of the graffiti art movement. Matos later transferred his art from the street to canvases and has exhibited in museums worldwide. Additionally, the artist has created signature Stratocaster guitars for musician Eric Clapton and was commissioned by Fender Musical Instruments for a series of "Crashocasters." Selected solo exhibitions of his work include: *Crash, The Art of the Line*, Speerstra Gallery, Bursins, Switzerland, and *Crash*, Williams Art Gallery, Lafayette College, Easton, PA (2008); *Crash*, Galerie Onega, Paris (2007); *Crash*, Lehmann Leskiw Fine Art, Toronto (2006); *Second Skin*, Wooster Projects, New York (2005); and *Graffiti Indoors*, AZ/NY Contemporary, Scottsdale, AZ (2000). Selected group exhibitions include: *New Works by John "CRASH" Matos and Aaron Sharp Goodstone*, Galerie Onega, Paris (2008); *Collision I & II* (with Jahan), Jendela Visual Arts Space and the Esplanade Concourse, Singapore (2006); *Barrios*, Hostos Community College/CUNY, Bronx, NY (2002); and *Foundation of a Century*, Nassau County Museum of Art, Long Island, NY (2000).

Joshua Liner established Joshua Liner Gallery in New York City's Chelsea district in 2008. Building on the success of his former, Philadelphia-based Lineage Gallery, Joshua Liner's Chelsea space introduces an exciting roster of young and emerging artists from the West and East coasts, Asia, and Europe.

Also on view, in Gallery I: Oliver Vernon, *Unexpected Occurrences*, January 17–February 21, 2009.

For more information, please visit www.joshualinergallery.com, or contact Tim Strazza at 212.244.7415 or tim@joshualinergallery.com.



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1. *Rumors Unfulfilled* Spray paint on canvas 36 x 36 in. 2008
2. *Untitled* Acrylic and enamel on linen 12 x 80 in. 1996
3. *Remnants Repeat* Spray paint on canvas 36 x 36 in. 2008