

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyman Allyn Art Museum

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LYMAN ALLYN PRESENTS WORD-BASED PAINTINGS BY JOHN BOONE

New London – Lyman Allyn Art Museum announces the opening of *John Boone–WHATSWHAT*. Attuned to idioms and their layers of meaning, Boone (American, born 1951) explores the complexity of language in his word-based paintings. At once playful and serious, he engages the viewer with segments of familiar phrases, initiating a conversation and inviting the viewer to imagine what comes next. This exhibition is on view May 3 through August 10, 2025.

WHATSWHAT features a selection of more than 50 of Boone’s mature paintings from 1994 to the present, with several groupings that explore a key word with a rich range of associations. “Time - Pieces” is one such series, while “Hands” is another, each comprised of canvases at the same scale that pivot around these words, including “It’s out of my hands” and “On one hand....” By isolating and connecting certain words, metaphors, and aphorisms, Boone considers how notions such as time and the physicality of our bodies are deeply woven into the English language.

Boone’s words are meticulously hand-painted, using a signature typeface of his own design that resembles the digitized text of an electronic marquee. At a time when much of the imagery and text around us is computer-generated and mediated by screens, Boone’s carefully crafted paintings challenge us to think about language, technology, advertising, and how we communicate with one another. He favors language that is familiar, isolating idioms and phrases that are widely used, known to everyone, and that have no known author.

“So, what does the installation of *WHATSWHAT* mean?” says Boone. “There are many ways of looking for meaning. This exhibition can be thought of as an illustration, a model, and a review of how we go about things. Or it could be seen as an ensemble of prompts waiting for your answers.”

Based in Brooklyn, NY and Stonington, CT, John Boone has long explored text-based art in his studio practice. Boone’s work has been shown at many museums and galleries,



John Boone (American, born 1954), *WHATSWHAT*, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 20 x 20 inches. Image courtesy of the artist.

including the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include the Boca Raton Museum of Art, the Grounds for Sculpture, Hamilton, NJ, and the Mystic Museum of Art. Boone's work is held in a variety of public and private collections, with commissions that include a sign flown over Berlin, a street mural in Prague, eight murals laser-etched in glass for the Hudson Bergen Light Rail in Jersey City, and a granite compass at the Key West Botanical Garden.

The opening reception is Friday, May 2, from 5 - 7 p.m. Museum members are free, and non-members are \$10. To register, call 860.443.2545 ext. 2129 or email us at info@lymanallyn.org.

Related programming includes a Gallery Talk with John Boone on Wednesday, July 16 at 5:30 pm. Members are \$10, and non-members are \$15. More information will be available on lymanallyn.org.

For more information or to request images, please contact Rebecca Dawson by email at dawson@lymanallyn.org.

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About Lyman Allyn Art Museum

Lyman Allyn Art Museum welcomes visitors from New London, southeastern Connecticut, and all over the world. Established in 1926 with a gift from Harriet Allyn in memory of her seafaring father, the Museum opened the doors of its beautiful neoclassical building surrounded by 12 acres of green space in 1932. Today it presents several changing exhibitions each year and houses a fascinating collection of over 19,000 objects from ancient times to the present, including art from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe, with particularly strong collections of American paintings, decorative arts and Victorian toys and doll houses.

The museum is located at 625 Williams Street, New London, Connecticut, exit 83 off I-95. It is open **Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sundays 1 - 5 p.m.**, and closed on Mondays and major holidays. For more information call 860.443.2545, ext. 2129 or visit www.lymanallyn.org.