

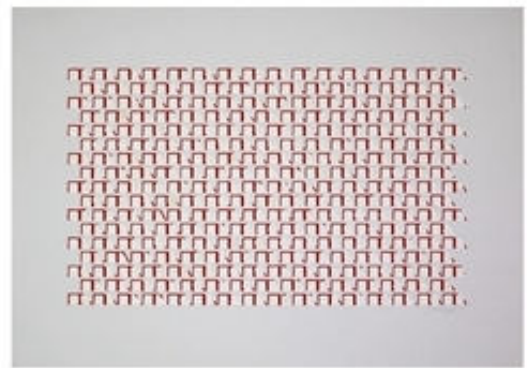
Jerzy Janiszewski

CHARLES KRAUSE | REPORTING FINE ART

1300 13th Street NW, Suite 105

December 9–February 14

Three of the twenty-five works in Jerzy Janiszewski's first solo exhibition feature the logo he designed for the Solidarity trade union movement in 1980, which ignited opposition against the Polish communist government and eventually led to its downfall. Inspired by graffiti from the Gdansk shipyards and written in a font Janiszewski devised specially for the movement, with a Polish flag rising from the *N*, the sign's rawly drawn red lettering has lost none of its capacity to strike. On view is the first imprint of the design, signed by Solidarity leader Lech Walesa, as well as a poster from the movement's first national protest—which Janiszewski had a friend bury in the ground for seven years to protect it from the police—and a painted version of the logo that the artist made in the 1990s.



Jerzy Janiszewski, *Sequence4*: collage, 2009, Marlboro cigarette packaging, 39 5/8 x 27 3/4".

Equally compelling are the mixed-media collages from Janiszewski's thirty-year exile working as a graphic designer in Paris and Barcelona that make up the bulk of the show. The works consist of paper bric-a-brac Janiszewski accumulated in his studio and arranged in intricate patterns; it should be noted that he had no intention of showing the works until this exhibition. *Altogether*, 2008, and the two series "Sequence," 2008–2009, and "Parallels," 2008, are made of carefully torn pieces of Marlboro cigarette packets, while *Gazeta*, 1996, and *Secret Message*, 1994, make semiabstractions from newspapers and other discarded printed material. It's curious that an artist famous for giving a word visual resonance should be interested in pure abstraction and divorcing graphic letters from their meaning, but the paradox holds. Janiszewski never stagnated in the communist-specific tropes that plagued so many Soviet bloc émigré artists, reveling instead in the purely visual sensibility that made his logo a success. His collages are underscored by the same verve for color—red above all—and illusory kinetic qualities that drive his graphic work. Their origins are just as prosaic: The materials were all Janiszewski could afford at the time, and he made of them what he could.

— Max Seddon

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Mel Bochner

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue, NW

November 6–April 29

The latest "In the Tower" exhibition, part of an ongoing series highlighting individual artists of the postwar period, teems with words. This is not altogether surprising: Language has been central to Mel Bochner's art since the mid-1960s, and

