As I travel the world taking photographs, I experience a myriad of techniques and styles on walls, rooftops, sidewalks, billboards, public furniture, subways etc., but very often my attention goes to the small, unsanctioned, and illegally placed pieces crafted around the written word. Even in today's ingrained cynicism, or maybe because of it, words matter. At the end of the day – and regardless of wealth, or social position, or power – what we have to back us up, as individuals, is our word. The word that we gave as collateral for the bargain we were negotiating and hoping to win. The word that we used to present ourselves to those who didn't know who we were but were hoping to impress. The word that we give as trust to those around us. Words matter. So, it comes as no surprise that many artists use words to disseminate a message on the streets. They tackle a plethora of topics, many times with great humor and gravitas. Always on point.

Here is a photo essay of some of my discoveries on the streets. Besides words, the other major thing in common those pieces of street art have is that they were illegally placed on the streets, with the exception of the piece by RERO. They are indeed Eloquent Vandals. Let the words speak for themselves. Of course, the irony here goes to the heart of the matter for many: What's more powerful, images or words? In this case it's both. I think.

Jaime Rojo is best known as co-founder and Editor of Photography at the influential blog BrooklynStreetArt.com where he has played an important role in the development of a vocabulary of street photography by providing a platform of exposure for hundreds of artists since co-founding the site in 2008. Rojo's ubiquitous coverage of the streets of New York and the world is known daily to almost half a million friends, followers on BSA's social media platforms. Rojo's photographs have been published in two books authored with Steven P. Harrington, Brooklyn Street Art and Street Art New York (Prestel/Randall House) as well as in numerous articles, magazines and books worldwide. His work has been shown in numerous exhibitions in galleries in New York City and Los Angeles and at the Steinberg Museum in Long Island.

Jaime Rojo
IN A SOCIETY THAT PROFITS FROM YOUR SELF DOUBT, LIKING YOURSELF IS A REBELLIOUS ACT.
Pork. Brooklyn, NY.
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Artist unknown. Lisbon, Portugal.
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