

# CIVILIAN

ART PROJECTS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Civilian Art Projects is pleased to launch its sixth season with two solo exhibitions: "Independence in the Age of Decadence" by New Orleans-based Dan Tague and "Found Images" by well-known Washington, DC photographer and professor Frank DiPerna.

**Public Opening:**

Friday, September 14, 2012, 7-9pm

**On View:**

September 14 – October 20, 2012

## **Independence in the Age of Decadence**

Dan Tague

Fresh from Hurricane Isaac, New Orleans-based Dan Tague presents his second solo exhibition at Civilian Art Projects. An artist and activist, Tague's work addresses disparities in contemporary American society. For this exhibition, Tague creates work from punk t-shirts, baseball bats, portraits of presidents, bomb and chandelier parts, painting, photography, collage, sculpture, video, and more.

Forever changed by the politics involved in ineffective responses to poverty, education, finance, and disaster, Tague's work obsessively, ironically, and sometimes comically builds an undeniable argument for the need to change the trajectory of our government and society, especially in terms of the cost of military might and the trappings of wealth. According to Tague, "Military aggression costs billions of dollars and often leads to economic strain resulting in job loss, decline in education, and further restrictions in medical resources for citizens. In this light, some of our basic freedoms are compromised to protect our more capitalist interests."

In an age of rapid-fire communication combined with unprecedented wealth and disparity, Tague's work holds an uncompromising mirror up to society. Recently his print of a folded dollar bill spelling out "We Need A Revolution" was adopted by the Occupy Wall Street movement and, in a matter of minutes, was shared by thousands. Through his work, he is not calling for violent change; he is calling for a social awakening wherein the people realize their own power. Through this, balance can be sought, greed can be tempered, and the common good truly

worked toward.

Tague's work indicates that we have lost our way, but there is hope. He articulates problems and possibilities with artisan acumen and relentless questioning: Can we change our path? Can we become a society that moves toward health and sustainability, where everyone is educated and fed? Can we do this as the nation with the highest military budget in the world? Are we exchanging our freedom for the idea of safety? What is the end game: A good life and a nation of honor? Or is it the quest for power and the fear of being conquered that makes this nation hum? Tague politely asks: Can I get a revolution, please?

Dan Tague lives and works in New Orleans. He received an MFA in Studio Arts from the University of New Orleans in 2000. His work has been used in conjunction with The Spirit Initiative, The Clinton Bush Fund for Haiti, Help USA, and Teach for America. Tague is represented by Jonathan Ferrara gallery in New Orleans and was included in Prospect.2. New Orleans, a new U.S. biennial for internationally recognized artists, curated by Dan Cameron. His work is in the collections of the Whitney Museum of Art, the Weisman Foundation, the West Collection, and numerous other private collections. He will be included in the forthcoming book "For Which It Stands: Americana in Contemporary Art," curated by Carla Sakamoto (tentative publishing date November 15, 2012). The book features work by international politically-minded artists including Ai Weiwei, Barbara Kruger, and Tom Friedman.

## Found Images Frank DiPerna

For his first solo exhibition at Civilian, Frank DiPerna presents never before exhibited work photographed over the last five years in the U.S. and abroad. One part street photographer, one part careful composer, DiPerna's work transcends the tangle of busy and overabundant locations flooded with multiple activities and agendas. Drawn to color, advertisement, the representation of humans, and the other formal concerns of a fine art photographer, DiPerna has created images whose disparate layers of commonly encountered landscapes coalesce into successful, stand-alone images. Within the photographic lens, he makes order and beauty through unexpected connections and parallels.



According to DiPerna, the exhibition was almost called "The Presence of Representational Imagery in the Urban Landscape" or "Back to My Roots." Both are appropriate titles speaking truth to content, but in the end, the titling became simplified -- like the work itself.

According to the artist, "I have an ongoing interest in the presence of other imagery (pictures) in the landscape and what they say about a culture. Beyond what the images might reference, there is the pure pleasure of finding them, and using photography to construct an image that represents how I see, use color and shape to form the world into a rectangle."

DiPerna writes, "My approach to photography has always relied on direct vision as a way of

working. I respond to the information in front of me and interpret it to create an illusion, make what appears normal seem strange or perhaps slightly humorous. My intent is to create work that is a bit odd, formally coherent and visually inviting.”

DiPerna is currently the Ruesch Family Professor of Photography at the Corcoran College of Art and Design where he has been teaching since 1972. Since the founding of the gallery, Civilian has worked with photographers taught and trained by DiPerna over his forty year career as a photographer and professor. His work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions. He is also represented in many collections including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Smithsonian Museum of American Art, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Bibliotheque Nationale, The Center for Creative Photography, Library of Congress and The Virginia Museum among others. He has had several residencies including the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France; Lightwork in Syracuse, NY; The Pittman Study Away Program in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico; and the Vermont Studio Center. He studied photography at the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, NY with Nathan Lyons, Ralph Gibson and Syl Labrot. He also studied with Gary Winogrand. He has an MA degree in photography from Goddard College and Bachelor's degree in engineering from Virginia Tech.

**Civilian Art Projects** is an art gallery based in Washington, D.C. existing to support the voice and vision of the artist. The gallery is located in the Shaw neighborhood in downtown Washington near many major museums, galleries, and national treasures. For more information, please visit [www.civilianartprojects.com](http://www.civilianartprojects.com).

For more information or high-resolution images, please contact the gallery.

**Public exhibition hours:** Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday 1 to 6pm and by appointment.