

# CIVILIAN

## ART PROJECTS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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JASON ZIMMERMAN



JEN STARK

**FRONT GALLERY**

JASON ZIMMERMAN, "Feel better, longer"

**PROJECT SPACE**

JEN STARK, "Much-much"

**OPENING RECEPTION:**

Friday, May 9, 2008, 7-9pm

**SHOW RUNS:**

May 9 – June 14, 2008

**EXHIBITION HOURS:**

Wednesday - Saturday, 2 to 6pm and by appointment

**Civilian Art Projects** is pleased to announce two solo exhibitions: "Feel better, longer" by Jason Zimmerman in the front gallery and "Much-much" by Miami-based artist Jen Stark in the project space. An opening reception will be held Friday, May 9, 2008 from 7 – 9 pm. Both exhibitions are on view from May 9 to June 14, 2008.

In "Feel better, longer," Jason Zimmerman delivers his most ambitious exhibition to date. Comprised of several interdependent projects that mediate nature or some form of what we perceive as natural, Zimmerman embraces the idea of recreational simulacra and replicas of truth or reality in place of the real thing. Seeing the world as a kind of Lynchian Disney World, Zimmerman's work contains reality or explores the boundary between what is artificial, what is real, and what is remembered.

Often scratching the surface to reveal what is underneath, "Feel better, longer" shows the importance of process as a central characteristic in Zimmerman's art. Many of the works deliberately reveal their mechanics including a choreographed, collaborative video where the artist surrounds a young man in a halo of artificial flowers and a table full of terrariums created by the artist and friends. The terrariums are small self-contained ecosystems made in commonly discarded plastic materials found and cleaned by the artist. The project grows within the gallery. Another project includes "specimens" or items collected over time in places of meaning, places the artist seeks to remember for their weight and importance. All are displayed and shared with the visitor.

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Believing that there is no distinction between natural and unnatural, and that anything the human animal does is part of nature, Zimmerman exorcises an abundance of projects to create an environment of things that literally grow and things that will never grow (artificial flowers, photographs, etc.). These representations yield desire, repression, and the exploration of the mutable notion of reality by creating a new reality through the vision and memory of the artist.

"Feel better, longer" marks Zimmerman's first solo exhibition with Civilian. He graduated from the Corcoran College of Art and Design in 2003 and will move to Oregon in late 2008 to study with Harrell Fletcher in the new social practice program at Portland State University. His work has been included in solo and group exhibitions in Washington, DC, and throughout the United States.

Miami-based artist **Jen Stark**, who has enjoyed recent successes and sold out exhibitions across the country, joins Civilian for "Much-much," her first solo exhibition in Washington, DC. "Much-much" refers to the abundance of material and media in the exhibition as well as the accumulation and layers found within her work. The exhibition will include her signature colorful cut-paper sculptures created only with paper, an X-acto knife, and glue; complex, trippy line drawings; new video animation; a site-specific mural; and a sculpture called "How to Become a Millionaire in 100 days," that is literally a million cut pieces of paper.

Distilling the bright colors of South Florida and the complex patterns found in nature, Stark has mastered an obsessive practice as a sculptor and an equally imaginative deliberation as an animator and illustrator. She began her cut paper sculptural practice while studying abroad in France. She could only take two suitcases and decided to buy her art supplies while there and chose brightly colored paper as her medium of choice. From this restriction came the limitlessness of her imagination with her decision to pile and dissect the paper, revealing its intricacies and beauty. The drawings are another natural outgrowth of her upbringing around the flora and fauna of Miami, forming connections and unions in line and color and space.

Stark graduated from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2005 and currently lives in Miami. Her work has recently been exhibited in at the Carol Jazzar Contemporary Art in Miami, Ok-ok gallery in Seattle, Heaven Gallery in Chicago, and LMAK projects in New York. She is a 2008 recipient of the prestigious South Florida Cultural Consortium's Visual and Media Artists Fellowship. As a result of this fellowship, her work will be included in an exhibition at the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art in July 2008.

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**Civilian Art Projects** is committed to strengthening community and culture through the voice and vision of the artist, in a commercial gallery setting. Civilian produces and supports artist directed projects through exhibitions, books and publications, video and film, one-night events and happenings, and larger-scale projects with an international reach. The gallery is located in the Penn Quarter neighborhood of Washington, DC near many major museums, galleries, and national treasures.