

# CIVILIAN

## ART PROJECTS

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CONTACT

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**“Waves”** featuring Lisa Blas, Peter Garfield, Michele Kong and Jen Stark

Project space: Matthew Spahr, ***big guns, hollow shields and other bouyant desires***

#### OPENING RECEPTION:

Friday, November 2, 2007, 7-9pm

#### SHOW RUNS:

November 2 – December 15, 2007

#### EXHIBITION HOURS:

Wednesday - Saturday, 2 to 6pm and by appointment

From a wave in the ocean, to a molecular or wave of color, to the examination of the once fashionable trend of commemorating generals in sculptural form, *Waves* features photographs by DC based artists Lisa Blas and Peter Garfield, glass sculpture and drawing by Michele Kong (Lewisburg, PA), and undulating rainbow colored paper sculpture and drawing by Jen Stark (Miami, FL). Inspired by the essence of a wave as a medium for transport, the work of four artists combine in the gallery space to form one environment. Joined together, formal concerns including line, shape, color and form echo and unite the work. Upon closer examination, the environment breaks down into the unique perspective of each artist. The four bodies of work ebb and flow from similar to dissimilar creating space to consider their sameness and difference. The viewer's vision then becomes the wave itself, as it is transported from form to form.

**LISA BLAS'** artistic practice reflects upon the origins of cultural memory and various constructions of "the American experience." Since 2003, she has been traveling throughout the country examining historical representation and the display mechanisms of commemorative sites, archives and museum collections. In the series entitled, *My Crush On Generals, or, a general crush*, Revolutionary and Civil War generals are photographed and positioned in a serial manner to examine the notion of historical legacy. Lisa teaches interdisciplinary studies in the BFA program at the Corcoran College of Art & Design. Her work has been included in several prestigious group exhibitions throughout the country and will be the subject of a solo exhibition at Meat Market Gallery in Washington, DC in spring 2008.

**PETER GARFIELD** is an award winning advertising and magazine photographer. Over the last 20 years he has shot over 100 Washingtonian Magazine Covers, along with covers for Smithsonian Magazine, U.S News & World Report, and the Washington Post Magazine. Garfield has lectured on photography at The

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National Museum of American Art, The Hirshhorn Museum, and been a featured speaker in the Smithsonian's "Masters of Photography" series. He taught Photography at the Corcoran College of Art. Recently, Peter built a custom waterproof camera housing for his large format camera and entered the ocean to photograph waves at the moment they hit the body. He will present two large-scale photographs of the waves.

**MICHELE KONG** typically employs repetitive gestures with meticulous intricacy to create experiential environments that elicit pause and contemplation as a respite from the fast pace of contemporary life. The works in the exhibition are a confluence of drawn and sculptural elements that describe shifting topographies. Kong drew inspiration from mathematical models used to conceptualize space-time and studies of geological formations to create abstracted landscapes. Kong's work often shifts from micro and macro, collapsing boundaries between the physical and metaphysical. Maryland-based curator Jennie Fleming wrote, "Kong's work touches upon the cosmological, utilizing the power of sculpture to create a sense of place by physical presence... that transports viewers either beyond earthly cares or, conversely, more deeply within themselves." Michele's recent exhibitions include PS1 Contemporary Art Center in Long Island City, NY, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, NE, and the Samek Art Gallery at Bucknell University where she is a professor. She is a Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant recipient and received the Trawick Prize Young Artist Award in 2005.

**JEN STARK** explores how unremarkable material can be transformed into things of beauty. Using only paper, an X-acto knife and glue, Jen transforms common paper into intricate, stunning sculptures. By precisely cutting patterns out of layers of brightly colored card stock she creates what she refers to as "insight in abundance. The results resound with ideas of replication and infinity, often on a minute scale, echoing patterns and intelligent designs found in humanity and nature." Her passion to create artwork is fueled by "a desire for everyone to discover the simplicity of beauty." Jen graduated from Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in 2005. Recent solo exhibitions include "Little By Little" at the Heaven Gallery in Chicago, IL and "Primaries" at LMAK Projects in New York, NY. Jen's work will be featured by Civilian at the Scope International Art Fair in Miami, FL this December.

### PROJECT SPACE EXHIBITION:

Matthew Spahr

#### ***big guns, hollow shields and other bouyant desires***

***big guns, hollow shields and other bouyant desires***, a mixed media installation by Matthew Spahr explores surf culture, secret societies and nautical history as modes for developing masculine identity. Distilling the visual vocabulary of these seemingly disparate cultures, Spahr creates sculptural installations layered with historical forms and familiar materials. According to the artist, by coupling the fantasy of surf culture and nautical history with the equally seductive secrecy and rituals of freemasons, "relationships become evident between seemingly unrelated subjects." Spahr's exploration and discovery expand as information about these societies become more readily available, which leads to more parallels arising in the work. In essence, the installations are always a work in progress. His work is self described as "a partial narrative created through the construction of objects derived from these rich relationships with an emphasis on the coded languages of these guilds...although much of the subject matter used in the work is cryptic and often inaccessible I am interested in side stepping this isolation through the relationships between objects, both conceptually and formally." Matt recently earned is MFA in sculpture from Virginia Commonwealth University where he is the instructor/shop director of Art Foundations. He is a certified Blacksmith and a Lebraine Scholar. Recent exhibitions include "More Fresh Meat" at the Kim Foster Gallery in New York and "Breadfruit Fantasies" at Anderson Gallery in Richmond, VA. His research was recently featured in the VCU publication "Curious."

More information on the artists and jpeg images are available through the gallery.