

CIVILIAN

ART PROJECTS

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Civilian Art Projects is pleased to present two solo exhibitions: "The Kids Are Alright" by New Orleans-based Dan Tague and "New Loops" by Washington, DC-based artist Billy Friebele.

Public Opening:
Friday, June 10, 2011, 7-9pm

On View:
June 10 – July 23, 2011

The Kids are Alright Dan Tague



New Orleanian Dan Tague is an artist and social justice advocate. Using a variety of media, techniques, and wordplay, Tague's work points to inadequacies in government policy toward education, environmental health, and financial reform. He incorporates dollar bills, screen prints, paintings, video, restored furniture, and propagandist poster art to create visual riddles and biting -- yet funny, and sometimes sad -- social commentary.

Installing artwork in a layout reminiscent of a classroom, Tague presents discrete works and editions including posters of U.S. Presidents distilled to facial hair; a Mobil oil sign screen-printed using oil from the Deep Water Horizon oil spill; deconstructed movie posters including the word "American"; and folded dollar bill pieces, some folded 100 times to create statements like "The Kids are Alright" (specially made for his show at Civilian) and "Lest we forget."

Two of the works exhibited are made from school furniture discarded from a destroyed New Orleans public school. Tague discovered the chalkboard and school desk in the street, restored and re-purposed them as art, and is driving them to D.C., where they will be on display for over a month. Drawing a tank in chalk on the board, he sealed the drawing so that it could never be erased. For the school desk, he carved the buzzwords "care forgot" into the desktop and fashioned a shark's head from bubble gum on the underside.

His work employs the tools of activism, with an artist's wit. Propaganda posters and flags are altered with subtle twists on popular, reactionary slogans. For example, a familiar snake flag with the slogan "Don't Tread On Me" is transformed into a

skeletal snake with the text "Don't Trespass Against Us." Flipping imagery and transforming rallying cries into religious rhetoric, much of his work comes from his survivalist experience in New Orleans through several disasters. Post-hurricane, his home, like many other Americans', was destroyed; all belongings lost. Since this time, he has witnessed environmental justice and education reform take a back seat to corporate greed, frenzied consumerism, and apathy. His work is a challenge to both lawmakers and voters to do better.

Dan Tague lives and works in New Orleans. This is his first exhibition in D.C. 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 will be 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 and the Weisman Foundation.

New Loops

Billy Friebele



For his first solo exhibition at Civilian, Billy Friebele will present three interrelated video projects: "Walking as Drawing," "Target Loop," and "Commute Loop" in the project space and *The Entrance*.

Exploring the spatial experience of contemporary culture, Friebele's works re-contextualize common notions of everyday public spaces and mundane routines. For "Commute Loop," the artist videotaped his lengthy daily commute to and from work for one year. Sections of the trek are sequenced into a time-lapse, looped, and mirrored on the wall, creating an endless journey of an all too familiar landscape. For "Target Loop," he attached a video camera and GPS unit to a shopping cart and traversed the aisles looking for a birthday present. For "Walking as Drawing," an on-going project the artist creates in varying locations, he invites participants to take a *dérive* walk within a contained space, and tracks their movements. He then color-codes and animates their paths to make a time-based collaborative drawing.

According to the artist, "We often pass through mundane spaces without noticing our surroundings. We are drawn here and there by commerce: commuting to work, walking to the corner store, shopping for clothes and food. We pay little attention to the spaces we are channeled through, yet all spaces have embedded ideologies. Shopping at big box stores mirrors the mindless ambulatory experience of browsing the Internet. Cities have gridded structures that serve to maximize space and capital, keeping our movements locked into right angles."

He continues: "Tracking this motion reveals the patterns impressed upon us as we enact our daily lives. Thinking of driving and walking as physical acts of drawing allows me to understand more concretely how our bodies are controlled by the spaces we inhabit."

Friebele was awarded the Young Artist Program Grant from the District of Columbia Commission on the Arts in Humanities in 2009, and, with collaborator Mike Iacovone, the **Creative Communities Fund** in 2010. He has exhibited at the Baltimore Museum of Art as well as in New York, New Jersey, Colorado, St. Louis, Detroit, Sarajevo, and Washington, DC among other places. He has also participated in many public art projects such as "Driving Without Destination" at Seton Hall University; the Conflux Festival in New York; and collaborations with Mike Iacovone, including "Free Space" at the Martin Luther King Library and "Construct: Space Transformed." He is currently teaching new media at St. Mary's College of Maryland.

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.

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

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