

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Marcus Civin
American Rifle
July 29, July 30, July 31

Exhibition of related drawings and performance objects:
August 4 – August 21

François Ghebaly Gallery presents *American Rifle*, a new, one-hour solo performance by Marcus Civin, repeated for audiences Thursday July 29 at 8pm, Friday July 30 at 8pm, and Saturday July 31 at 3pm as a part of Perform! Now!, a festival of performance art in Los Angeles's Chinatown.

Civin: "A rifle is a gun; rifle, a noun, but also I am thinking 'rifle' as in: to rifle through, verb, to madly look for something, moving through hoping to seize upon a clue or a point of origin—an origin of violence perhaps. Imagine if this mad searching movement is a pattern, a well-known dance even. Imagine dancing *The American Rifle*. Instructions for dancing *The American Rifle*: put your head down, run in place while clutching and releasing your fists and throwing up your arms—alternate arms, then throw up your arms together. Choose a partner and throw your partner against the wall."

Civin creates prop-based performances, drawings, text works, photographs, and sculptures that explore human violence, human resourcefulness, and the persistence of hope in impossible situations. In solo performances that swing between the comedic and the tragic, Civin plays a determined clown who labors with unwieldy, absurd, wobbly props and set pieces. These solo performances layer recorded text and readings over gestures and appropriated actions.

Civin's intuitive, research-based practice leads to abstract, poetic performance. Civin collides references to different historical periods and notorious figures. In *American Rifle*, Civin puts psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich in French Revolutionary Jean Paul Marat's bathtub, the bathtub/deathbed pictured in the Neoclassical painting, *The Death of Marat*, by Jacques Louis David. Wilhelm Reich, a student of Sigmund Freud's, believed that war was the result of humanity's inability to gage, release, and harness sexual energy.

In Marat's tub, spinning, as Reich, Civin fills up the crotch of his clown pants with waxy rocks and with explosives that might have been provided by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, The Underwear Bomber, who, on Christmas Day, 2009, boarded a commercial airliner headed to Detroit and attempted to detonate explosives hidden in his underwear. Reaching for false teeth and hammers, Civin goes to the store, runs, sings Motown while measuring sexual energy and incendiary matter, shakes, lights up, balances, crashes.

Civin received an MFA in Studio Art from University of California, Irvine, and a BA in Theater from Brown University. He developed *American Rifle* this year, in parts, through writing, drawing, rehearsal, and public performances at Sea and Space, LACE, LAXART, and François Ghebaly Gallery in Los Angeles, and at The Temporary Space in Houston.

American Rifle is best appreciated in its entirety. François Ghebaly encourages audiences to arrive promptly at 8pm for an evening performance or 3pm for the Saturday performance. Objects, drawings, and ephemera will be on sale after the performance. Civin's first performance of *American Rifle* is an Opening Night Fundraiser for Perform! Now!.