

Art Work by Marcia Haffmans of Minneapolis, MN, Selected for Inclusion in Major Traveling Exhibition Organized by Norman Rockwell Museum

***Artists Called Upon to Reimagine the Four Freedoms and Provide Contemporary Interpretation For
Enduring Ideals: Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms***

(Minneapolis, MN – May 26, 2018) —In early 2017, the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, sent out a call to artists to create works that would reimagine President Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms—Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear— or explore the meaning of freedom today, for possible inclusion in the major touring exhibition: *Enduring Ideals: Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms*. A distinguished jury of curators, scholars, artists, and historians reviewed approximately 1000 submissions from artists across the United States and countries around the world. They selected 37 works by 36 artists—including **Marcia Haffmans**—for the contemporary section of the exhibition, titled “Reimagining the Four Freedoms.”

Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms opens at the New-York Historical Society, in New York City, on May 25, 2018, and the companion section “Reimagining the Four Freedoms” will be on view simultaneously across Central Park at **Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College**.

Support for *Reimagining the Four Freedoms* has been provided by the Ford Foundation.

Overview of Exhibition

The first comprehensive exhibition devoted to Norman Rockwell’s iconic depictions of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms, ***Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms*** explores how the 1943 paintings came to be embraced by millions of Americans, providing crucial aid to the War effort as they brought the public together in defense of universal human rights. In addition to Rockwell’s celebrated paintings, the exhibition includes numerous other examples of painting, illustration, photography, and more, by both Rockwell and a broad range of his contemporaries—from J.C. Leyendecker and Mead Schaeffer, to Ben Shahn, Dorothea Lange, and Gordon Parks, among others—as well as historical documents, videos, and artifacts; interactive digital displays; and immersive settings. While exploring the response of an earlier generation to the paintings and what they stood for, the exhibition, with the juried selection of contemporary works, also resonates with our own time.

Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms and its seven-city tour are organized by the Norman Rockwell Museum. The exhibition has been co-curated by Stephanie Haboush Plunkett, Deputy Director and Chief Curator, Norman Rockwell Museum, and James J. Kimble, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Communication & the Arts, Seton Hall University. Additionally, a National Advisory Board, comprising scholars, artists, and museum professionals, has provided guidance and expertise for the exhibition.

Reimagining the Four Freedoms

For this section of the exhibition, artists were asked to consider what freedom means today and to provide a contemporary interpretation of the notions of freedom enunciated by Roosevelt in 1941 and painted by Rockwell in 1943. The selected artworks include painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, video, and mixed media.

Ms. Plunkett says, “The story of Rockwell’s images of the Four Freedoms and their success in uniting the American public, continues to resonate, perhaps rarely more powerfully than today. We are thrilled at the enthusiastic response to our call to artists. The diversity of ideas, styles, and mediums in the works that will be shown in the exhibition is a testament to the breadth and power of the very idea of freedom.”

Additionally, the selected works will be featured on the exhibition website; and will join a global discussion of art and ideas about the expression and meaning of freedom in today’s world, using #FourFreedomsToday.

Marcia Haffmans says about the work she created:

“Breaking Free Through Script (SCRIPT FROM WITHIN) intensifies authentic handwritings of women who are incarcerated. These women have been deprived of several or most of Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms. As a Dutch immigrant who worked as a public defender in a legal system with few prisoners, I am abhorred by our mass incarceration and its long lasting ripple effect on human lives and future generations. While barely 5% of the world’s women live in the USA, we account for 30% of the entire world population of incarcerated women. In my home state Minnesota, incarceration of women has risen more than 900% over the past three decades.

The work I created for Reimagining the Four Freedoms is part of a much larger, ongoing collaborative project with incarcerated women in Minnesota (*SCRIPT FROM WITHIN*). To visualize the collaborating women’s unheard voices, I trace fragments of their authentic handwritings through hand-stitching, i.e. with needle and thread. Each handwriting sits in a unique sculpture that I create from synthetic polymers and fibers as a lasting heritage.”

Exhibition Jury

The jury reviewed over approximately 1000 submissions from around the world and included:

- **Liza Donnelly**, cartoonist and writer for *The New Yorker*, which has featured her cartoons about culture and politics for over 30 years.
- **Wendy Tarlow Kaplan**, independent curator and art historian.
- **Anita Kunz**, award-winning illustrator who has been appointed as an Officer of the Order of Canada, Canada's highest civilian honor, by her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada.
- **Robyn Phillips-Pendleton**, Associate Professor of Visual Communications at University of Delaware, Newark, in the Department of Art and Design.
- **Maurice "Pops" Peterson**, visual artist, author, and Artist in Residence of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.
- **Stephanie Haboush Plunkett**, Deputy Director/Chief Curator, Norman Rockwell Museum and co-curator of the exhibition.
- **Chuck Pyle**, Director of the Illustration Program, Academy of Art University, San Francisco.
- **Melanie Reim**, Professor of Art, MFA and BFA Illustration Program at Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York City.
- **John Wetenhall**, Director, The George Washington University Museum and the Textile Museum; Associate Professor of Museum Studies, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
- **Setsuko Sato**, artist and former National Public Radio Producer, whose *Freedom from Fear/Yellow Bowl Project* aims to raise awareness about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Exhibition Tour

Following its inaugural presentation in New York City at the New-York Historical Society and Roosevelt House, ***Enduring Ideals: Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms*** travels to The Henry Ford, Dearborn, MI, October 13, 2018 – January 13, 2019; The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., February 9 – May 6, 2019; Mémorial de Caen, Normandy, France, June 4 – October 27, 2019; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, December 15, 2019 – March 22, 2020; Venue to be Announced, July 4 – September 20, 2020; Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA, Fall 2020. Each venue will present the works in the juried section of the exhibition in its own way, whether as part of the exhibition or, as in the case of the New-York Historical Society, as a companion presentation at another venue. Please note, "Reimagining the Four Freedoms" section of the exhibition will not travel to Mémorial de Caen.

Exhibition Sponsor

Major support for *Enduring Ideals: Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms* has been generously provided by Jay Alix | The Alix Foundation and George Lucas Family Foundation, and by national presenting sponsor The Travelers Companies, Inc. Additional support is provided by an anonymous donor, Michael Bakwin, Helen Bing, Elephant Rock Foundation, Ford Foundation, Heritage Auctions, Annie and Ned Lamont, National Endowment for the Arts, and Ted Slavin.

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About Norman Rockwell Museum

The Museum's recently established Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies supports sustained scholarship in American illustration. The first program of its kind in the nation, the Rockwell Center places the Museum in the vanguard of the preservation and interpretation of published imagery, a critically important but understudied aspect of American visual culture. The Norman Rockwell Museum advances social good through the civic values of learning, respect, and inclusion, and is committed to upholding the rights and dignity of all people through the universal messages of humanity and kindness portrayed by Norman Rockwell.

The Norman Rockwell Museum is dedicated to education and art appreciation inspired by the legacy of Norman Rockwell. The Museum holds the world's largest and most significant collection of art and archival materials relating to Rockwell's life and work, while also preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting a growing collection of art by other American illustrators throughout history. The Museum engages diverse audiences through onsite and traveling exhibitions, as well as publications, arts and humanities programs, and comprehensive online resources.

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Media Contacts for Marcia Haffmans

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