

NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM

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Images and interviews available upon request

Norman Rockwell Museum launches the Unity Project 2024 to inspire voting through illustration art

Dynamic digital poster campaign seeks to motivate presidential-year voting

Stockbridge, MA—August 22, 2024—Norman Rockwell Museum is proud to announce the launch of the [Unity Project 2024](#), a get-out-the-vote campaign that harnesses the power of illustration art to inspire and motivate voting in the upcoming presidential election. Published primarily through social media, the campaign features striking images and voting messages from six top contemporary illustrators who reach a wide range of audiences: **Monica Ahanonu, Lisk Feng, Timothy Goodman, Edel Rodriguez, Gary Taxali, and Shar Tuiasoa/Punky Aloha**. This dynamic digital poster campaign goes live on Friday, August 23, with the launch of the first image over social media, followed by a cadenced release of images, messages, and voting resources leading up to Election Day. In addition, the original artwork will be on view as a featured installation in Norman Rockwell Museum’s lobby through election season.

The Unity Project 2024 draws inspiration from the art and life of Norman Rockwell and reflects Norman Rockwell Museum’s public mission to foster civic engagement and participation through art. The project builds on the success of the Museum’s Unity Project voting initiative in 2020. Nonpartisan and action-oriented, the Unity Project encourages Americans to embrace our shared Constitutional right and privilege to elect a government of, by, and for the people. Importantly, this project is undertaken in the spirit of unity and belonging. It reflects the belief that when we come together as a nation to vote, we affirm our commitment to democracy, our communities, our nation, and each other.

“Voting is an essential act of democratic participation, one that Americans have fought for generations to preserve and expand. As part of our public mission, Norman Rockwell Museum is honored to bring together art and civic engagement in a fresh, meaningful, and artistically captivating campaign to encourage Americans, especially younger Americans, to use their voices and vote. This initiative carries forward and deepens our Museum’s commitment to a broadly inclusive democracy in which the voices of all people are valued and heard,” said Director/CEO Laurie Norton Moffatt.

Artist participants in the Unity Project 2024 have offered their reflections on the importance of voting and their motivation for taking part in this project. Internationally exhibited Cuban American artist Edel Rodriguez shared a personal perspective rooted in his family’s experiences in Cuba.

“Having grown up in Cuba, a country without free elections, I have a great admiration for the American electoral process. My family arrived in this country in 1980 and became U.S. citizens years later, eager to exercise our right to vote. These personal experiences inspired my artwork for the Unity Project, a piece which symbolizes the concept of coming together, rising up, and speaking with our votes.” Reflections from other artists are featured in “Artist Bios and Statements” below.

Project Background and Partners

The Unity Project uses compelling illustration art to inspire social good in the tradition of Norman Rockwell. As an artist and citizen, Rockwell created iconic images that reflected the lives, aspirations, and ideals of Americans, most notably his Four Freedoms paintings, inspired by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s vision of freedoms for all peoples. These paintings form part of Norman Rockwell Museum’s permanent collection, and continue to speak eloquently to contemporary audiences. Rockwell also painted portraits of many presidential candidates for magazines of his day, as well as depicting scenes of civic participation and voting. Later in life, the artist was moved to portray the profound changes in American society and ideals during the Civil Rights Era with memorable paintings of conscience that called for widened inclusiveness.

Like Rockwell, the six Unity Project 2024 artistic collaborators share a dedication to illustration art as a vehicle for artistic expression and social change. Project partners Monica Ahanonu, Lisk Feng, Timothy Goodman, Edel Rodriguez, Gary Taxali, and Shar Tuiasoa/Punky Aloha have created resonant artworks that convey the importance of exercising and protecting the right to vote. Images include a stylized American flag that becomes a voting booth, a hand rising up inscribed with determined faces, and young people collaborating to create a vibrant mural with a strong voting message. Shared, amplified, and contextualized through a digital poster campaign, these images will be accompanied by personal reflections from the artists, voter registration resources, and other voting-related content and messaging. In addition, process videos and artist insights will deepen viewers’ understanding of the artistry and intention behind the images.

“Norman Rockwell Museum is delighted to partner with these talented contemporary illustrators on a project of civic significance. The images bring fresh perspectives and needed attention to the act of voting, while also reflecting the personal visions and diverse artistic styles of their creators. Drawing on the rich history and vibrant contemporary relevance of illustration art, this project engages and inspires people through published imagery, affirming its power to reflect and shape our world,” said Chief Curator Stephanie Haboush Plunkett.

The Unity Project is made possible through the generosity of The Wadsworth Family of North Adams, Mass., and is being conducted in partnership with cause-related communications professionals at The Soze Agency and Feel Good Action. The project will involve over thirty not-for-profit voting organizations to reach and motivate millions of prospective voters. In addition to publishing images and information on social media, Norman Rockwell Museum will offer voting resources on its website and through Feel Good Action and VoteAmerica. The public is encouraged to access and share images and resources at unity.nrm.org.

Reflecting the intention and spirit of the project, sponsor Jack Wadsworth offered this encouragement to all eligible voters: “Vote! It’s your privilege and your duty. Norman Rockwell understood this, as do these six amazing contemporary illustrators.”

Unity Project 2024: Artist Bios and Statements

Monica Ahanonu

[\[website\]](#) and [\[Instagram\]](#)

Monica Ahanonu is an illustrator, model, and creator based in Los Angeles. Many consider her an expert in color theory and vector illustration. Ahanonu started her career at DreamWorks Animation, where she honed her unique artistic style. Now as IMG Models' first signed illustrator, Ahanonu is emerging as a leading tastemaker in fashion while she continues to elevate her talents in illustration.

Artist Statement: "I chose to participate in this project because I want to remind people that even if they are overwhelmed with figuring out who to vote for they should remember that the ability to vote wasn't always available — to take a moment to breathe and use their vote."

Lisk Feng

[\[website\]](#) and [\[Instagram\]](#)

Lisk Feng is an award-winning illustrator initially from China who is now a freelance illustrator in New York. She graduated with an MFA in Illustration Practice from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2014, with many publications and advertising projects for *The New Yorker*, Apple, Penguin, Airbnb, *The New York Times*, Chanel, and others. Her illustrations have received numerous awards and recognitions, including two Silver Medals from the Society of Illustrators, the Communication Arts Excellence Award, the 3X3 Silver Medal, and American Illustration Winner. She has also published children's books with Phaeon, Flying Eye Books, Abrams, and Kids Can Press. Feng was awarded one of the Art Directors Club's 15 young gun artists among all artists from all fields worldwide in 2017. She was also selected on the *Forbes* 30 under 30 Art and Style list in 2019; won the Bologna Ragazzi Award with the book *Everest* in 2019; and won the D&AD Silver Pencil Award in 2020. She served as the Society of Illustrators vice president in 2023 and is currently chair of the Society.

Artist Statement: "Every vote counts like a small drop of water. The more people who vote, the louder our collective voice becomes, and change starts to happen. My poster captures a voting event where young students of all backgrounds passionately used various methods to make a difference. The colors I used are vibrant and optimistic."

Timothy Goodman

[\[website\]](#) and [\[Instagram\]](#)

Timothy Goodman's art and words have populated buildings, walls, packaging, clothes, products, books, and magazines for brands such as Amazon, Apple, Nike, Google, Samsung, McDonald's, MoMa, Netflix, Yves Saint Laurent, Tiffany & Co., *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Times*. In 2018 he launched a global collection of clothing with Uniqlo that sold 1 million units, and in 2022 he designed a Nike basketball shoe for NBA star Kevin Durant titled the "Timothy Goodman KD15." Goodman is also the co-creator of several social experiments including the viral blog and book "40 Days of Dating" whose TV rights were optioned to Netflix. He has launched two solo gallery exhibitions for The Richard Taittinger Gallery in NYC, and has taught at the School of Visual Arts.

Goodman regularly speaks around the world at creative conferences, and his graphic memoir, *I Always Think It's Forever*, was published in 2023 by Simon & Schuster.

Artist Statement: “There are broad restrictions and suppression efforts for voting throughout this country, so I wanted to create a poster that was informative and educational. I want to remind folks to be diligent and punctual when voting.”

Edel Rodriguez

[[website](#) and [Instagram](#)]

Edel Rodriguez is a Cuban American artist who has exhibited internationally with shows in New York, Chicago, Dallas, Havana, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Toronto, and Spain. Inspired by personal history, religious rituals, politics, memory, and nostalgia, his bold, figurative works are an examination of identity, mortality, and cultural displacement. Rodriguez graduated with honors in painting from Pratt Institute, and received a Master of Fine Arts degree in painting from Hunter College. He is a regular contributor to the *The New York Times*' Op-Ed page and *The New Yorker*, and has created over a hundred newspaper and magazine covers for clients such as *TIME*, *Der Spiegel*, *Newsweek*, *The Nation*, *Businessweek*, *The New Republic*, and *The Village Voice*. He has created dozens of book covers for publishers such as Simon & Schuster and Penguin Random House. Rodriguez has also created several stamps for the U.S. Postal Service, and has illustrated poster and advertising campaigns for many operas, films, and Broadway shows. His artwork is in the collections of a variety of institutions, including the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., as well as in private collections. His work has received numerous awards from The Art Director's Club and The Society of Illustrators in New York City. He is the author of four children's books, and his memoir, *Worm: A Cuban American Odyssey*, was published by Metropolitan Books in 2023.

Artist Statement: “Having grown up in Cuba, a country without free elections, I have a great admiration for the American electoral process. My family arrived in this country in 1980 and became U.S. citizens years later, eager to exercise our right to vote. These personal experiences inspired my artwork for the Unity Project, a piece which symbolizes the concept of coming together, rising up, and speaking with our votes.”

Gary Taxali

[[website](#) and [Instagram](#)]

Gary Taxali is a contemporary Canadian fine artist and illustrator who holds the rank of Full Professor in the Faculty of Design at OCAD University. His retro stylized art is reminiscent of Depression era artwork, advertising, typography, and packaging. His artwork has been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world and is held in the permanent collection of The Library of Congress. He has collaborated with various brands including Canadian men's retailer Harry Rosen on custom-designed silk pocket squares, and is the creator of six Gary Taxali celebration coins for The Royal Canadian Mint, including the world's first currency celebrating non-gender specific marriage. He has also collaborated with musician Aimee Mann on her album “@#%&*! Smilers,” which earned Taxali a 2009 Grammy Award Nomination for Best Art Package. His illustrations have appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *GQ*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, and other major magazines. He has won hundreds of national and international awards, including from American Illustration, Communication Arts, and the Society of Publication Designers, as well as a nomination

for a Cannes Lion and Gold Medals from the National Magazine Awards, The Advertising and Design Club of Canada, and The Society of Illustrators in New York City. Taxali was listed as one of the top 100 illustrators in the world by art book publisher Taschen. His monographs include *I Love You, OK?*, *Mono Taxali*, and *Happiness with a Caveat*.

Artist Statement: “I have always felt strongly about voting. If we want change, there is no better way than through the vote we cast. The loudest voice we have is at the ballot box. I have created art promoting this message many times in my career, both as personal work and for clients. Therefore, it’s a huge honour for me to be one of the artists in the Unity campaign. I had such a great time creating a poster, I even did two! I truly hope Americans will vote in their upcoming election this November. What happens in the United States, affects all of us in the world. Please vote!”

Shar Tuiasoa/Punky Aloha

[[website](#) and [Instagram](#)]

Shar Tuiasoa is a freelance illustrator based in Kailua, Oahu. After studying fine art at her local community college for six years, Tuiasoa moved to California to earn her BFA in Illustration. She moved back to Hawaii shortly after and started Punky Aloha Studio in the summer of 2018. Punky Aloha Studio houses various branches of illustration work, including murals, freelance and client work, product sales, fine art, and licensing. Tuiasoa has worked as a freelance illustrator with multiple editorial clients on Oahu, including *Honolulu Magazine*, *Hawaii Magazine*, and *Hawaii Business Magazine*, as well as creating work for local organizations and businesses such as Liliuokalani Trust, Honolulu Museum of Art, and Foodland. In addition, Tuiasoa has created art for companies including Apple, Facebook, Disney, Pixar, AT&T, Sephora, Benefit Cosmetics, and *The New York Times*. She is currently working on her first of two picture books as an author and illustrator for Harper Kids, an imprint of HarperCollins. She sells a wide range of art prints and products in her online shop and in retailers throughout Hawaii, Japan, and the U.S. mainland.

About Norman Rockwell Museum

Norman Rockwell Museum illuminates the power of American illustration art to reflect and shape society, and advances the enduring values of kindness, respect, and social equity portrayed by Norman Rockwell. A comprehensive resource relating to Norman Rockwell and the art of illustration, American visual culture, and the role of published imagery in society, 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, including the Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies, and comprehensive online resources.

NRM is open year-round, six days a week; closed Wednesdays. Admission is charged, Free for Kids & Teens. For details, visit the Museum online at www.NRM.org.