

NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM

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THE AMERICAN SPIRIT: NORMAN ROCKWELL'S ARTWORKS CONTINUE NATIONAL TOUR

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*A non-profit
educational
museum*

STOCKBRIDGE, MA— A rare exhibition from the collection of Norman Rockwell Museum, exploring Norman Rockwell's unparalleled role as an American icon-maker and storyteller, continues its national tour this year. *American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell* is currently scheduled to travel to four venues nationwide. The exhibition is organized by Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell has been generously supported by an American Masterpieces Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Curtis Publishing Company, the Norman Rockwell Estate Licensing Company, and the Stockman Family Foundation Trust.

The exhibition venues currently include Dayton Art Institute, Dayton, Ohio, Nov. 12, 2011—Feb. 5, 2012; Winnipeg Art Gallery, Canada, March 2, 2012—May 20, 2012; Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, California, Nov. 10, 2012—Feb. 3, 2013; and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas, March 7, 2013—June 2, 2013.

Norman Rockwell (1894-1978) painted the best of America, creating indelible images of the lives, hopes, and dreams of Americans in the 20th century. Expertly weaving both narrative and painterly images, he was a consummate visual storyteller with a finely honed sense of what made an image successful in the new, rapidly changing era of mass media.

Rockwell's unique artistic legacy, established during 65 years of painting, offers a personal chronicle of 20th century life and aspirations that has both reflected and profoundly influenced American perceptions and ideals. All of the original works on view in *American Chronicles* are drawn from the permanent collection of Norman Rockwell Museum, including such beloved and well-known images as *Triple Self-Portrait* (1960), *Girl at Mirror* (1954), *Going and Coming* (1947), and *Art Critic* (1955). The exhibition will include materials from the Museum's archives demonstrating how Rockwell worked, proceeding from preliminary sketches, photographs, color studies, and detailed drawings to the finished painting.

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“We are delighted to have the opportunity to share these extraordinary works from our collection with a national audience,” says Norman Rockwell Museum Director/CEO Laurie Norton Moffatt.

Five Themes in the Career of an American Icon Maker

American Chronicles traces the evolution of Rockwell’s art and iconography throughout his career—from carefully choreographed reflections on childhood innocence in such paintings as *No Swimming* (1921) to powerful, consciousness-raising images like *The Problem We All Live With* (1964), which documented the traumatic realities of desegregation in the South. Commentary focusing on recurring personal themes, artistic and cultural influences, and the commercial climate that influenced Rockwell’s creative process will be woven throughout the exhibition.

The exhibition is divided into five thematic groups to demonstrate how Rockwell’s images provided Americans with a vocabulary for describing and celebrating themselves, their country, and their experiences in the 20th century. Themes explored in the exhibition include: *American Roots*; *Reflecting and Shaping American Character*; *Idealism, Attitude and the American Dream*; *Shaping the American Aesthetic*; and *The Artist’s Process*, which offers insight into the development of *Murder in Mississippi* (1965), Rockwell’s haunting depiction of a civil rights tragedy in the South, from first idea to finished painting and published work. The exhibition will bring visitors into Rockwell’s creative process, tracing the artist’s complex, time-consuming working method, from original concept to the final painting and the published image. A complete set of all 323 of Rockwell’s covers for *The Saturday Evening Post* are also included in the exhibition. Rockwell’s work for the *Post* spanned a remarkable 47 years, and the artist became a household name in the process.

Major Publication Accompanies Tour

A fully illustrated, 272-page accompanying exhibition catalog published by the Norman Rockwell Museum provides an unprecedented written perspective on Rockwell’s work. The volume offers an unusually broad approach to the artist’s life and work, using visual analysis, cultural history, and mass media studies to look critically at Rockwell’s role in influencing American perceptions of the 20th century. The catalog features high-quality color plates, as well as reproductions of archival photographs.

To find out more about the exhibition *American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell*, visit www.nrm.org

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About Norman Rockwell Museum

Norman Rockwell Museum is the preeminent museum of American illustration art. Dedicated to art education and art appreciation inspired by the enduring legacy of Norman Rockwell, the Museum stewards the world's largest and most significant collection of Rockwell art, and presents the works of contemporary and past masters of illustration. The Museum's holdings include Rockwell's last studio, moved from its original location to the Museum grounds, and the Norman Rockwell Archives, a 200,000-object collection undergoing digital preservation through ProjectNORMAN, "A Save America's Treasures Project." The Museum is also home to the Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies, the nation's first research institute devoted to the art of illustration. In 2008, Norman Rockwell Museum became the first-ever museum recipient of the National Humanities Medal, America's highest honor in the field.

Norman Rockwell Museum is located on 36 park-like acres in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, Rockwell's hometown for the last 25 years of his life. The Museum is open year-round; closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. From May through October, hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; from November through April, hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Rockwell's studio is open May through October, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Museum admission is \$16, \$14.50 for seniors, \$10 for students, \$5 for kids and teens 6 to 18, and free for Museum members and children 5 and under. Visit the Museum online at www.nrm.org.

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For more information, the public is invited to call 413.931.2290, and to visit the Museum's Web site at www.nrm.org.