Utah Museum of
Contemporary Art

Press Release

Communications

801 328 4201 x 115
communucations@utahmoca.org

Contact:
Zachary Norman

Exhibition Dates:
Jan 21–Jun 4, 2022

Opening Reception:
Fri, Feb 18, 2022

Location:
Utah Museum of
Contemporary Art
Main Gallery Presented by
Diane & Sam Stewart

www.utahmoca.org
www.forfreedoms.org
@utahmoca
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Supported by:
Visit Salt Lake
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Salt Lake County Zoo, Arts,
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Kayne Griffin Gallery

UMOCA

For Immediate Release

Utah Museum of Contemporary Art Partners with Artist Collective *For Freedoms* to Spark Civic Joy and Participation Through Visual Art

Opening January 21, 2022, the exhibition *Our Wake Up Call For Freedoms*, a collaboration between the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (UMOCA) and the *For Freedoms* artist collective, examines creativity as a core societal value capable of creating political change. Timed to coincide with the 2022 Utah Legislative Session, this participative exhibition invites visitors to create yard signs, posters, and other visual materials typically associated with political campaigns and movements. Through this process, visitors are encouraged to consider the potential of creativity in the conception of radical, imaginative, and visionary solutions to social issues and identify how art can augment political problem-solving, which tends toward reactionary, zero-sum solutions.

Founded in 2016 by artists and cultural producers Hank Willis Thomas, Eric Gottesman, Michelle Woo, and Wyatt Gallery, *For Freedoms* aims to center artists' voices in public discourse, broaden what participation in democracy looks like, and initiate deeper conversations about the ways in which art can encourage civic engagement. The exhibition, designed by the UMOCA curatorial team in collaboration with *For Freedoms*, features a wide range of works by the collective, including yard signs, billboard reproductions, installations, and other artist activations, such as a *Meditative Disco* in which visitors are invited to follow along with guided meditation playlists on *Soundcloud*; a *Creative Library*, organized in partnership with the Salt Lake City Public Library, that features a curated selection of books on relevant social issues; and an installation of posters by Seattle-based deisgn lab, *Amplifier*, that allows visitors to print any of the included posters for free in the gallery.

In just five years, the *For Freedoms* network has grown to become the largest community of creative civic engagement in the United States, including thousands of artists and organizations working together to invite radical imagination and set the table for new national conversations. *For Freedoms* has achieved this reach by partnering with institutions like UMOCA, whose gallery spaces and exhibitions are ideal vehicles for engendering public discourse and civic engagement through art and community programming. With this in mind, UMOCA has organized programs around the *Our Wake Up Call For Freedoms* exhibition that further explore the intersection of creativity and politics, including film screenings presented in partnership with the Utah Film Center, panel discussions, and artist talks.

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Our Wake Up Call For Freedoms

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- Reproductions must include the full caption information adjacent printing
- Online images may be reproduced no larger than 1,400 pixels on the longest dimension.
- High-resolution image files are available through UMOCA's Dropbox account; email communications@utahmoca.org to request a link.

Hank Willis Thomas, Justice , 2021
Mixed media including U.S. flags
39 1/2 x 71 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches, (100.3 x 181.6 x 6.4 centimeters), © Hank Willis Thomas / Kayne Griffin Gallery

Hank Willis Thomas, Liberty, 2021
Mixed media including U.S. prison uniforms, 57 x 101 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches (144.8 x 257.8 x 6.4 centimeters), © Hank Willis Thomas / Kayne Griffin Gallery

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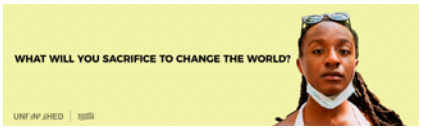
Aaron Huey, *Why Do You Ask for a Sign?*, Billboard Design for For Freedoms, photographic print on Sintra, © Aaron Huey / For Freedoms

Gordon Hall, *What Held Your Body?*, Billboard Design for For Freedoms, photographic print on Sintra, © Gordon Hall / For Freedoms



Joshua Obawole Allen, *What Will You Sacrifice to Change the World*, Billboard Design for For Freedoms, photographic print on Sintra, © Joshua Obawole Allen / For Freedoms

Jun Mabuchi, *Can We Coexist?*, Billboard Design for For Freedoms, photographic print on Sintra, © Jun Mabuchi / For Freedoms

Mark Feijao Milligan & Monica Marin, *Does Black innocence matter?*, Billboard Design for For Freedoms, photographic print on Sintra, © Mark Feijao Milligan & Monica Marin / For Freedoms

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For Freedoms, *Healing To*, Yard Sign to be filled in by visitors in-gallery © For Freedoms

For Freedoms, *Justice For*, Yard Sign to be filled in by visitors in-gallery © For Freedoms

For Freedoms, *Awaken To*, Yard Sign to be filled in by visitors in-gallery © For Freedoms

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For Freedoms, *The Rules of Play*, (01-04) Digital poster © For Freedoms

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