Art World

Here Are the 150 Artists Making Billboards for Every US State as Part of Hank Willis Thomas's Midterm Election Project

Marilyn Minter, Rashid Johnson, Tania Bruguera, and Theaster Gates are among the participants.

JR *Migrants, Mayra, Picnic across the border, Tecate, Mexico – U.S.A.* (2017) (Arizona). Photo courtesy of For Freedoms and JR-art.net.

Henri Neuendorf • October 9, 2018 • **Share This Article**

For Freedoms, the political action committee co-founded by artist Hank Willis Thomas, unveiled today the artists in its landmark "50 State Initiative." More than 300 artists, including J.R., Marilyn Minter, Rashid Johnson, Tania Bruguera, and Theaster Gates have designed billboards that encourage political participation, and which will be erected in each of America's 50 states ahead of the November midterm congressional elections.

"The '50 State Initiative' can change the political landscape by inspiring more people to participate in civic life and broadening the concept of what democratic participation looks like," the project's producer, Miriam Fogelson, told artnet News.

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Artists were free to depict whatever they wanted on their billboards, according to For Freedoms co-founder Eric Gottesman. "We built For Freedoms as a platform for these artists' voices," he said. "There were no guidelines as the basis of this project is embracing artists' creativity as a means of inspiring civic dialogue and participation—it's about what they had to say."

To realize the hugely ambitious project, For Freedoms partnered with more than 200 American art organizations, from grassroots art centers to major museums, and even international groups. The organization tried "to match the artist's vision and message to location and issue," said For Freedoms political advisor Mark Skidmore in an email. For example, Muslim artist Jamila El Sahili's billboard, *Human Being*, is going up in Lansing, Michigan, where the first Muslim woman could be elected to congress.

Skidmore says that the organization isn't affiliated with either political party, and in fact describes itself as "anti-partisan." But although the current political landscape remains one of the most partisan eras in American political history, Fogelson hopes the initiative succeeds by taking an less common approach. "For Freedoms aims to make civic engagement more inclusive of people who have felt excluded from, or disinterested in, traditional political processes," she said.

See the full list of artist billboards by state below:

ARIZONA

JR, *Migrants, Mayra, Picnic across the border, Tecate, Mexico – U.S.A., 2017*
I-10 & Vicksburg Rd, Phoenix

ARKANSAS

Zoë Buckman, *Inaction is Apathy*
S Walton Blvd & SW 12th St, Bentonville

ARKANSAS

Marilyn Minter, *SAD*
US 70 & N Alexander Rd, Little Rock

CALIFORNIA

Paula Crown, *Hurt People Hurt People*
Crenshaw Blvd & W 59th Pl, Los Angeles

CALIFORNIA

Rashid Johnson, *Untitled Anxious Men*
S La Brea Ave & W 1st St, Los Angeles

COLORADO

Susan Meiselas, *2:00 a.m. Arrest and documentation of twelve-year-old boy, Imperial Beach, CA, 1989*
Federal Blvd & W Irving Pl, Denver

CONNECTICUT

Trevor Paglen, *Nov 6th, 2018.*
US-6 & Pope Park Hwy, Hartford

DELAWARE

Ken Gonzales Day, *Untitled, 2011, featuring Bust of A Young Man, Antico (Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi), and Bust of a Man, Francis Harwood*
Old Airport Rd & Delaware Turnpike, Wilmington

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Edgar Arceneaux, *Hopelessness Freeze Time*
Anderson, Letts, and McCabe Halls at the American University, Washington

FLORIDA

Derrick Adams, *Ode to Bayard Rustin*
NW 79th St & NW 5th Ave, Miami

FLORIDA

Carrie Mae Weems, *Continue to Dream*
Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami

FLORIDA

Trevor Paglen, *Nov 6th, 2018*
Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami

FLORIDA

Stuart Sheldon, *The Best Words*
Student Union / Bookstore, Florida International University, Miami

FLORIDA

Stuart Sheldon, *The Best Words*
US Century Bank Area, Florida International University, Miami

FLORIDA

Jamila El Sahili, *I Love You*
Teaching Academy / Welcome Center, University of Central Florida, Orlando

FLORIDA

Jamila El Sahili, *I Love You*
Health Center, University of Central Florida, Orlando

FLORIDA

Carrie Mae Weems, *Continue to Dream*
The Ringling Museum, Sarasota

FLORIDA

Shaun Leonardo, *Trayvon Martin*
W Tennessee St & Aster Lake Blvd, Tallahassee

GEORGIA

Awol Erizku, *Make America Panther Again*
I-85 & E 10th St, Atlanta

IDAHO

Emily Hanako Momohara, *Family Incarceration: Never Again is Now*
HWY 20 & E Gowen Rd, Boise

ILLINOIS

Paula Crown, *Thoughts & Prayers*
W Jackson Blvd & S Jefferson St, Chicago

ILLINOIS

Paula Crown, *Thoughts & Prayers*
E Illinois S & N State St, Chicago

ILLINOIS

Cheryl Pope, *Lines Can't Be Drawn In The Middle*
Student Center East, University of Illinois Chicago, Chicago

ILLINOIS

Cheryl Pope, *Lines Can't Be Drawn In The Middle*
University Hall, University of Illinois Chicago, Chicago

ILLINOIS

Wendy Ewald, *Christian*
W Eldorado St & N Fairview Ave, Decatur

ILLINOIS

Tomashi Jackson, *Alteronce in Hannah (Oliver Brown, et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, et al.)*
Illinois St & North Street, Normal

INDIANA

Theaster Gates, *Where Black Power Lives*
Indiana Toll Rd & Calumet Ave, Gary

INDIANA

Jesse Williams, *That's All Folks!*
Pendleton Pike & Geneva Ave, Indianapolis

IOWA

For Freedoms, *Four Freedoms*
IA-28 & SW Leland Ave, Des Moines

KANSAS

For Freedoms, *Four Freedoms*
KS-4 & SW Topeka Blvd, Topeka

KENTUCKY

Donald Moffett, *Think Science*
New Circle Rd & Georgetown St, Lexington

KENTUCKY

Ebony G. Patterson, *untitled (...he was 12)*
167 W. Main Street, Lexington

KENTUCKY

Titus Kaphar, *Behind the Myth of Benevolence*
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Expy & Preston Hwy, Louisville

LOUISIANA

For Freedoms, *Four Freedoms*
Hwy 90 & Seven Oaks Blvd, New Orleans

MAINE

Christopher Myers, *Mayflowers*
Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockland

MARYLAND

Shinique Smith, *Portrait of Shinique as a Bundle on Rodeo Beach (3 Months Before Cosco Oil Spill),* 2007
Coppin State University, Baltimore

MARYLAND

Natalie White, *Equal Means Equal*
Mt Savage Rd NW & Homewood St NW, Cumberland

MASSACHUSETTS

David Birkin and Mariam Ghani, *System Failure*
Location Pending, Boston

MASSACHUSETTS

Vincent Valdez, *Dream Baby Dream*
MASS MoCA, North Adams

MASSACHUSETTS

Lorraine O'Grady, *Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are*
I-91 & Plainfield St, Springfield

MICHIGAN

Sam Durant, *Poder*
Cass & Amsterdam NW, Detroit

MICHIGAN

Jamila El Sahili, *Human Being*
Lansing Rd & Pinch Hwy, Lansing

MINNESOTA

Michael Rakowitz, *Ahlan Wa Sahlan*
I-94 & Co Rd 186, St Paul

MISSISSIPPI

Jessica Ingram, *Vote for Vernon Dahmer, 2018*
Hwy 220 & Medgar Evers Blvd, Jackson

MISSOURI

Christine Sun Kim, *Words Shape Reality*
Hwy 54 & Jefferson Rd, Jefferson City

MISSOURI

Jeremy Dean, *InDivisible*
Hwy 35 & Terrace St, St. Louis

MISSOURI

Jeremy Dean, *Hummer Stagecoach*
Hwy 35 & Terrace St, St. Louis

MONTANA

Fred Tomaselli, *I've Fallen*
Hwy 15 & Pinecrest Rd, Helena

NEBRASKA

Jim Goldberg, *It's Mourning In America*
Cornhusker Hwy & N 48th St, Lincoln

NEVADA

Cristina Velazquez, *No Soy Tu Mamacita*
W Charleston Blvd & S Decatur Blvd, Las Vegas

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Paola Mendoza and Kisha Bari, *I Am A Child*
N Main St & Ten Rod Rd, Rochester

NEW JERSEY

William Scott and David Byrne, *Untitled*
Bloomfield Ave & N 12th St, Newark

NEW JERSEY

AFRICA'SOUT!
US Hwy 1 & Muirhead Ave, Trenton

NEW MEXICO

Richard Misrach, *Romans 13:10*
CanAM Hwy & El Suspiro Ct, Las Cruces

NEW YORK

Suzanne Lacy, *ONE/US*
Crosstown Connection & Albany St, Albany

NEW YORK

Carrie Mae Weems, *One Choice*
E Brighton Ave & Ainsley Dr, Syracuse

NEW YORK

Eric Gottesman, *Where Do We Go From Here?*
E Brighton Ave & Ainsley Dr, Syracuse

NEW YORK

Hank Willis Thomas, *Us Is Them*
E Brighton Ave & Ainsley Dr, Syracuse

NEW YORK

Lightwork, *Be Strong And Do Not Betray Your Soul*
E Brighton Ave & Ainsley Dr, Syracuse

NEW YORK

Zoe Buckman, *Grab Em By The Ballots*
E Brighton Ave & Ainsley Dr, Syracuse

NORTH CAROLINA

Stacey L. Kirby, *Yo Soy Válida*
Durham Fwy & Ellis Rd, Durham

NORTH CAROLINA

Jeffrey Gibson, *THIS STORY HASN'T BEEN WRITTEN YET*
I-95 & Red Oak Brattleboro Rd, Raleigh

NORTH CAROLINA

Muna Malik, *Exodus 22:21*
Auxillary Services Parking Lot 16, UNC Charlotte, Charlotte

NORTH CAROLINA

Travis Somerville, *Nevermind, 2016*
Bluford St. Campus Rec. Center, NC AT&T State University, Greensboro

NORTH CAROLINA

Travis Somerville, *Nevermind, 2016*
Laurel St and E. Market St, NC AT&T State University, Greensboro

NORTH DAKOTA

Prune Nourry, << *River Man* >>
Rotating through several billboards in the city, Fargo

OHIO

Emily Hanako Momohara, *Child Imprisonment: Never Again is Now*
I-75 & Vine St, Cincinnati

OHIO

Michelangelo Lovelace, *Glory*
Dublin Rd & Grandview Ave, Columbus

OKLAHOMA

Guerrilla Girls , *Dear Boss, No Wonder You Don't Pay Us A Living Wage*
US 77 & NW 59th St, Oklahoma City

OKLAHOMA

Justin Brice Guariglia, *We Are The Asteroid*
I-40 & S May Ave, Oklahoma City

OREGON

Carrie Mae Weems, *To Dream*
Portland Art Museum, Portland

OREGON

Trevor Paglen, *Nov 6th, 2018*
1219 SW Park Ave, Portland

OREGON

Emily Jacir, *Translate Allah*
Lancaster Dr SE & State St, Salem

PENNSYLVANIA

Mitch Epstein, *The Common Air*
I-83 & S Front St, Harrisburg

PENNSYLVANIA

Anonymous, *Me Pardon Me*
I-96 & Linden Ave, Philadelphia

PENNSYLVANIA

Anonymous, *Pardon Me*
I-95 & Linden Ave, Philadelphia

RHODE ISLAND

Tuan Nguyen, *Not Spaceship Earth*
I-95 & Concord St, Providence

SOUTH CAROLINA

Dustin Yellin, *HERE COMES THE SEA...Anthropogenic Climate Change and the future of our species*
St Andrews Rd & Piney Grove Rd, Columbia

SOUTH DAKOTA

Xaviera Simmons, *Freedom Is Not Guaranteed (TBC)*
8th Ave NE, Aberdeen

SOUTH DAKOTA

Xaviera Simmons, *Freedom Is Not Guaranteed (TBC)*
8th Ave NE & N Roosevelt St, Aberdeen

SOUTH DAKOTA

Sol Guy, We Are All Related
I-90 & Sidney Stage Rd, Pierre/Rapid City

TENNESSEE

Ahron Weiner, *Buttheads*
8th Street, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville

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Ahron Weiner, *Buttheads*
West Ave & Hand Village Ave, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville

TENNESSEE

Sadie Barnette, *Some Space*
Gallatin Pike S & E Due W Ave, Nashville

TENNESSEE

Hank Willis Thomas, *Love Over Rules*
I-24 & Cowan St, Nashville

TEXAS

Alfredo Jaar, *A Logo For America*
N Interstate 35 Frontage Rd & Sonterra Blvd, Austin

UTAH

Richard Renaldi, *Who Are We*
S Shurtz Canyon Dr, Cedar City

Vermont
Luis Jacob, *Land Acknowledgement*

VCFA
East State and West Streets

VIRGINIA

Joy Sela, *We Mirror*
Hampton Roads Dorm, George Mason University, Fairfax

VIRGINIA

Joy Sela, *We Mirror*
Eastern Shore Dorm, George Mason University, Fairfax

VIRGINIA

Equal Justice Initiative, *Presence of Justice*
I-95 & Bellemeade Rd, Richmond

WASHINGTON

Wyatt Gallery, *An Expensive Hoax*
Martin Way E & Chehalis Western Trail, Olympia

WEST VIRGINIA

Sanford Biggers, *Just Us*
MacCorkle Ave SE & West Virginia Turnpike, Charleston

WISCONSIN

Gordon Parks, *I Am You*
Beltline Hwy & Marsh Rd, Madison

WYOMING

Paula Crown, *Thoughts & Prayers*
Interstate 80 Service Rd & E Pershing Blvd, Cheyenne

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