

NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Norman Rockwell Museum Announces 2026 Season A Year of Reflection, Imagination, and Celebration



Stockbridge, MA — January 7, 2026 — As the nation approaches its 250th anniversary, Norman Rockwell Museum will unveil an ambitious, multifaceted 2026 program of exhibitions, events, and creative workshops that invite visitors to explore — and imagine — America’s journey through art and visual storytelling.

“The year 2026 invites us to reflect on how our nation has evolved and to imagine the future we hope to build,” said Museum CEO and Director Laurie Norton Moffatt. “Spanning heroic historical painting and inventive comic-strip art, NRM’s exhibitions and programs will illuminate the shared human experience at the heart of American life, moving from the iconic to the innovative.”

In the year ahead, Norman Rockwell Museum asserts its role as a vital cultural hub—one that honors the past while embracing new forms of storytelling, from the grand sweep of history in ***American Stories: From Revolution to Rockwell***, to witty, insightful imagination in ***Exploring Calvin and Hobbes***. With accompanying workshops, talks, and guided tours, the season promises meaningful engagement for art lovers, families, history buffs, and curious creators alike.

“As we mark the 250th anniversary of the formation of our nation,” reflected Norton Moffatt, “we invite visitors not just to look back — but to take stock of the present and look ahead: at who we’ve been, who we are, and who we might become, through the storytelling lens of American illustration art.”

2026 marks an important moment in the history of the Norman Rockwell Museum, ushering in a year of transition with the announced retirement of longtime Director and CEO Laurie Norton Moffatt and the selection of a new leader by the Museum's Board of Trustees.

Major Exhibitions

NEW!

[American Stories: From Revolution to Rockwell](#)

June 6 – October 26, 2026

Commemorating America's 250th anniversary, Norman Museum will present a sweeping, once-in-a-generation exhibition. Spanning more than two centuries of visual culture, *American Stories* brings together over 150 powerful works from the Revolutionary era through the modern day—including paintings, prints, book illustrations, posters, advertisements, and digital media—to trace how artists have reflected and shaped what it means to be American. Organized around a series of foundational chapters, the exhibition explores the evolving ideals, struggles, and aspirations that define the nation's story. The exhibition will occupy nearly all of the Museum's exhibition space.

From early engravings by printers Paul Revere and Benjamin Franklin—created amid revolutionary fervor and rapid advances in print technology—to the rise of 19th-century visual journalism, 20th-century illustration, and today's digitally driven image culture, the exhibition traces how artists have documented events, expressed ideals, influenced thought, and debated the meaning of America itself. Tackling the visual histories of both real and mythical American moments, this exhibition explores enduring questions about the land we inhabit, and whose stories are told, and shares visions of equality, industry, conflict, and hope. While much has changed over the course of this country's history, one constant remains: the images Americans create and share reflect and shape a powerful portrait of the nation and ourselves.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

NEW!

Exploring Calvin and Hobbes

November 14, 2026 – May 31, 2027

In keeping with its tradition of presenting landmark exhibitions on illustration and popular culture, Norman Rockwell Museum will debut *Exploring Calvin and Hobbes*, a major exhibition devoted to Bill Watterson's beloved comic strip. Featuring original art and preparatory drawings, the exhibition offers an in-depth look at Watterson's creative process, iconic characters, and enduring storylines.

The exhibition explores the history, artistic influences, and creative vision behind *Calvin and Hobbes*, offering insight into Watterson's inspirations, including George Herriman and Charles M. Schulz, whose work will also be on view. Original pen-and-ink strips and

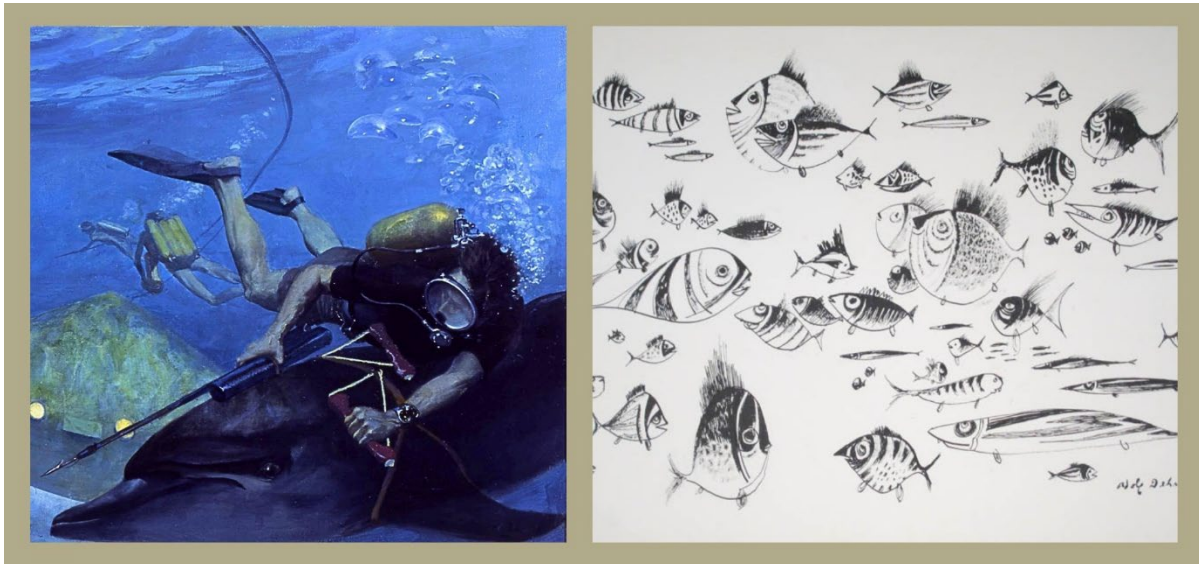
watercolors reveal Watterson's inventive layouts, expressive artistry, and boundless imagination—qualities that continue to influence generations of cartoonists and readers.

This exhibition marks the first time that Bill Watterson's original drawings have been made available for a touring exhibition, and Norman Rockwell Museum is proud to be the first venue to present *Exploring Calvin and Hobbes* in its entirety. The exhibition is curated by Jenny E. Robb, Head Curator of the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum, and organized by The Ohio State University Libraries' Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum.

Special Gallery Features:

Brief History of Illustration Collection Highlight Series

This new series aims to highlight the importance of both the history of illustration and the vast, 30,000-object collection at Norman Rockwell Museum. Each presentation will occupy one of the Museum's galleries, and will change twice a year, with each rotation tracing one theme throughout history. The first of these installations opens in January 2026.



[A Brief History of Illustration: The Abyss](#)

January 15 – May 31, 2026

This exhibition aims to demonstrate the vast complexity of illustration, while simultaneously illustrating something vastly complex: the ocean. From the 19th century to the present, artists have engaged with the concept (as well as the reality) of the ocean for many purposes, from wartime propaganda and political statements to compelling book illustrations and lighthearted cartoons. Some of the works included in ***The Abyss*** depict fictional underwater worlds by Tom Lovell and Stanley Meltzoff while others, including the works of Julian Allen and Thomas Nast, responded to real world events. This collection illuminates the role of the sea as alternately beautiful, serene, threatening or mysterious, and it also offers multiple ways to engage with illustration, from books to posters, and quickly executed sketches to masterful paintings. Together, these works tell

stories about the profundity of the ocean and the deep history of public and published images. It also presents a glimpse into a third kind of abyss, the Museum's ever-expanding collection.

Berkshire County High School Art Show **April 18 – April 28, 2026**

Returning for its 36th year, the *Norman Rockwell Museum High School Art Show* features creative work from the next generation of Berkshire County artists. Inspired by Norman Rockwell—who launched his own professional career as a teenager—the exhibition celebrates the imagination, talent, and diverse perspectives of local high school students.

The Museum's student showcase presents original works across a wide range of mediums, including painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, mixed media, and digital art. Together, these pieces reflect the creative spirit and bold experimentation that define young artists today, offering visitors a vibrant glimpse into the future generation.

Illustrator Spotlight:

George Herriman, Krazy Kat, and the Path to Calvin and Hobbes **November 7, 2026 – May 31, 2027**

George Herriman (1880–1944) transformed the comic strip genre with *Krazy Kat*, a series that defied conventions of humor, language, and visual space. Set against the stunning mesas of Coconino County, Arizona, Herriman's art blended slapstick with the surreal. At a time when most comics aimed for tidy punchlines, Herriman embraced ambiguity and emotional depth.

Decades later, Bill Watterson would cite Herriman as a foundational influence for his popular comic strip, *Calvin and Hobbes*. Watterson was inspired by Herriman's freedom with form and tone, using the Sunday page as a canvas for experimentation. Like *Krazy Kat*, *Calvin and Hobbes* moves fluidly between comedy and contemplation, childlike imagination and adult reflection. Watterson's elastic layouts, visual metaphors, and willingness to let ideas linger—rather than resolve neatly—echo Herriman's innovations.

Both artists trusted readers to follow them into strange but beautiful territory. Herriman opened the door by proving that newspaper comics could be artful, personal, and daring. Watterson brought that legacy to a new generation, reaffirming the comic strip as a medium of limitless possibility.

Spotlight on Norman Rockwell Permanent Collection

Throughout 2026, visitors will have many opportunities to engage with the work of Norman Rockwell. Rockwell plays a central role in *American Stories*, anchoring several key

chapters of that exhibition. Beyond *American Stories*, the Museum will present four galleries drawn from its permanent Rockwell collection, including newly developed thematic installations. Among them, an installation that explores Rockwell's ability to capture human empathy will be featured that will highlight Rockwell's remarkable ability to capture the warmth, humor, and emotional nuance of everyday human interaction.

Holiday Traditions in the Season of Wonder **November 21, 2026 – February 21, 2027**

Across cultures and continents, holidays mark time with rituals of light, rest, remembrance, and joy. In this exhibition, the art of Norman Rockwell and other noted illustrators reflect the wonders of the holidays and the richness of traditions shaped by faith, history, family, and place.

The works on view invite us to consider art's role as a bridge that transforms personal memories into the shared experiences that connect us—from gratitude, renewal, and belonging to our desire to share the warmth and meaning of the holidays together.

Continuing Exhibitions:

[Norman Rockwell: Home for the Holidays](#) through February 22, 2026

[Jazz Age Illustration](#) through April 6, 2026

[Illustrators of Light: Rockwell, Wyeth, and Parrish from the Edison Mazda Collection](#) through May 10, 2026

[Shine a Light: The Art and Life of Deb Koffman](#) through June 8, 2026

[Norman Rockwell's 323 Saturday Evening Post Covers](#), ongoing

[Norman Rockwell: Imagining Freedom Virtual Exhibition](#), ongoing

2026 Programs & Events

Throughout 2026, the Museum will offer a dynamic mix of workshops, family programs, readings, and hands-on art experiences designed to deepen engagement and spark creativity.

Family Day: Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Saturday, January 17

10 am – 4 pm

This is a special day of family activities celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Guided family tours with Museum educators will explore Rockwell's powerful Civil Rights-era paintings. Enjoy drop-in artmaking inspired by themes of equality and hope for all ages, plus stories and poetry related to the life and work of MLK, Jr. read aloud

throughout the day. Drop-In Artmaking activities – 10 am to 4 pm. Family Tours at 10:15 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm, 2:30 pm; recommended for ages 5-12; reservations required for tours. Free with admission.

MLK Weekend Gallery Tours: Norman Rockwell & Civil Rights

Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, January 17 – 19

Tours at 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 1:30 pm

Enjoy a guided tour of Norman Rockwell's iconic Civil Rights paintings of the 1960s that captured the complexities of race, equity, and social justice in America. Learn how Rockwell's art addressed the challenges and beatitudes of a racially diverse society and expressed his belief in equality and human empathy. \$10 tour plus admission. Free for Members.

Readings at Rockwell: *Glimpses of the Moon* by Edith Wharton

Wednesday, February 4

6 pm

In partnership with The Mount, this literary evening—inspired by the *Jazz Age Illustration* exhibition (on view through April 6, 2026)—features a dramatic reading from *Glimpses of the Moon* (1922) by Edith Wharton, which chronicles the lives of American expatriates in Europe. Exhibition viewing begins at 5:30 pm, followed by a brief talk and performance. Tickets: \$25; Members (NRM & Mount) \$20; reservations required.

February Vacation Week: Create Like Rockwell

Monday – Saturday (except Wednesday), February 16 – 21

10 am – 3 pm*

Family-focused activities explore how Norman Rockwell transformed everyday moments into art. Enjoy family tours with Museum educators and drop-in artmaking inspired by Rockwell's techniques.

Family tours: 10:15 am, 11:30 am, and 1:00 pm* (recommended for ages 5–12)

Free with admission; kids, teens, and Members free. Reservations required for family tours.

*Saturday, February 21 artmaking extends until 4 pm and additional Family Tour at 2:30 pm.

Figure Drawing Workshop: Puttin' on the Ritz

Saturday, February 28

1 – 3 pm

Join artist **Warren Prindle** for a Jazz Age–themed figure drawing session featuring a live model in 1920s attire. Participants will explore linear and tonal drawing techniques, from loose sketches to fully realized forms. All materials provided; no prior experience necessary. Limited capacity; \$20 + Museum admission, reservations required.



Mindful Drawing: Embodying the Shape and Rhythm of Sound

Saturday, March 21

1 – 3 pm

This mindful drawing class invites you to immerse yourself in the shapes and rhythms of sound and playfully follow your imagination. Using pencil, crayons or pastels you'll be led on a sonic journey by singer/songwriter/visual artist **JoAnne Spies** that strengthens your intuition, and frees up your inner critic. The class will include a brief meditation, breath awareness, and musical prompts. Supplies provided; no drawing experience is needed. Free with Museum admission. Reservations required.

Readings at Rockwell: *Passing* by Nella Larsen

Spring (date TBA)

6:00 pm

The final event in the literary series in partnership with the Mount features a dramatic reading from Nella Larsen's *Passing* (1929), delving into the complexity of racial identity during the Harlem Renaissance. Exhibition viewing at 5:30 pm; reading begins at 6:00 pm. Tickets: \$25; Members (NRM & Mount) \$20; reservations required.

Spring Break Family Days

Saturday, April 18 & Saturday, April 25

11 am – 3 pm

Join us for drop-in artmaking inspired by Norman Rockwell. Explore your artistic side with fun, hands-on experiences for kids and adults alike. Free with admission.

Norman Rockwell's Historic Stockbridge Studio - Guided Tours

May 1 – November 8

Rockwell called his Stockbridge studio, his “best studio yet.” The building was originally located in the backyard of his home on South Street in Stockbridge, Mass. In 1976, toward the end of his life, Rockwell left the studio and its contents to Norman Rockwell Museum. The building was cut in two and moved to the Museum’s grounds in 1986. Enjoy this special glimpse into Rockwell’s surroundings, working process, and sources of artistic inspiration...just as they were in 1960!

Memorial Day Weekend Family Program

Saturday, May 23

11 am - 3 pm

Join us for drop-in artmaking inspired by Norman Rockwell. Explore your artistic side with fun, hands-on experiences for kids and adults alike. Free with admission.

Annual Gala; opening party for *American Stories: From Revolution to Rockwell*

Saturday, June 6

The Museum opens its major summer exhibition *American Stories: From Revolution to Rockwell* with a festive celebration of our nation’s founding. Music from our country’s many chapters and cuisine will reflect the many cultures that shape the nation.

Fourth of July at Norman Rockwell Museum

Saturday, July 4

Norman Rockwell Museum will celebrate American independence and democracy with a day of special programming, in concert with *American Stories: From Revolution to Rockwell*.

8th Annual Art of Brewing Festival

Saturday, August 15

1 – 4 pm

Returning for its 8th year, the annual Art of Brewing Festival offers guests a chance to sample the best craft brews in the region. Spend an afternoon with friends and families all while sampling local and regional beer, wine, cider, distilled drinks, and even coffee! Enjoy delicious food from local eateries and start a friendly competition with some lawn games. Bring your blankets and lawn chairs and relax on a perfect Berkshire summer day. Plus, you’ll have an opportunity to see the incredible art that you find on all your favorite beverages and talk to some of the artists!

This event is rain or shine. 21 + for Tasting – All ages Welcome for games, food, and art appreciation! Tickets available late Spring 2026.



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 NRM.org.