



California College of the Arts Leads For Freedoms' 50 State Initiative in the Bay Area

For Freedoms Co-Founder and CCA Alumnus Hank Willis Thomas to be in-residence as the first Creative Citizenship Fellow

CCA Launches Roster of Programming and Events Promoting Civic Action



Top left: Creative Citizenship Fellow Hank Willis Thomas, photo credit: Andrea Blanch. Artwork included in *Take Action* at CCA Hubbell Street Galleries (clockwise from top right): *Undoing Time | Amends*, installation view, 2016, Sharon Daniel, image courtesy of the artist; *Cargo Cults (Basketwoman)*, 2016, Stephanie Syjuco, image courtesy of the artist; *100 Days Action*, photo credit: Victoria Heilweil.

San Francisco, CA—October 8, 2018—California College of the Arts (CCA) is proud to lead the For Freedoms' 50 State Initiative in the Bay Area—working with major arts and cultural organizations across the region to increase voter registration, voter access, and engagement in the broader practices of democracy. A slate of programming, including town halls, exhibitions, sign-making workshops, and community events, will take place at CCA's San Francisco and Oakland campuses this fall. CCA has also collaborated with other Bay Area art institutions to serve as civic forums for action and discussions of values, place, patriotism, and the importance of voting. Additionally, CCA's San Francisco campus is now a voter registration and polling site serving San Francisco citizens both on and off campus.

"Civic engagement is critical to the education of artists, designers, architects, and scholars at CCA," says Tammy Rae Carland, CCA provost. "Hank Willis

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Thomas has energized creative practitioners across the country to contribute their voices, art, and advocacy to our democracy through his For Freedoms' 50 State Initiative, and we are thrilled to welcome him back to campus this fall."

In conjunction with the program, CCA announces the appointment of Thomas as its first Creative Citizenship Fellow. Thomas will visit CCA's San Francisco and Oakland campuses from October 22–26, 2018. He will facilitate a town hall meeting, attend the opening reception for *Take Action* at CCA Hubbell Street Galleries, engage with CCA students, and energize civil, non-partisan conversations ahead of the November midterm elections.

In spring 2018, CCA, along with the Maryland Institute College of the Arts (MICA), worked with For Freedoms to establish the For Freedoms Residency in Creative Citizenship. At its core, this joint residency is an artistic and organizational strategy for the two colleges to build frameworks for democratic participation on their respective campuses and in their local communities, and to extend this work to other colleges, universities, and arts organizations at a national level.

"As we reach across the country and engage with dozens of artists across communities more broad and vast than we could ever have imagined, we hope to be a bright spark in the torchlight of liberty," notes For Freedoms Co-Founder Hank Willis Thomas. "We are proposing a new manifest destiny. One that is not about destruction or conquest, but instead about creativity and collaboration. One not grounded in our sameness, but in our many differences."

Inspired by this initiative, CCA faculty, staff, and students have also launched the Creative Citizens in Action series, featuring events and programming that promote civic participation, discourse, and action for social and cultural change. Through Creative Citizens in Action, CCA aims to deepen its commitment to social justice, increase participation in civic discourse, and recognize the importance of being responsive—and responsible—to our communities.

Upcoming CCA / For Freedoms' 50 State Initiative Events

Creative Citizenship Fellow: Hank Willis Thomas
Fall 2018 | On campus: October 22–26, 2018
CCA San Francisco and Oakland campuses

***Take Action* / A For Freedoms Exhibition**
5:30–7:30pm, October 23, 2018
CCA Hubbell Street Galleries, 161 Hubbell Street, San Francisco
On view: October 16–November 16, 2018

Take Action is a group exhibition highlighting work by Bay Area artists serving as creative citizens in their communities. The exhibition is urgently contemporary, featuring recent video, sound, prints, photography, and installations by Bay Area artists that prompt visitors to take action and participate in civic discourse. Featuring work by 100 Days Action, Center for

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Tactical Magic, Sharon Daniel, Rodney Ewing, chris hamamoto & Jon Sueda, Taraneh Hemami, Packard Jennings, Dignidad Rebelde, Stephanie Syjuco, Kaitlin Trataris, Leila Weefur, and Christine Wong Yap. This exhibition is supported by Wayee Chu and Ethan Beard, and San Francisco Grants for the Arts. **Creative Citizenship Fellow Hank Willis Thomas will be in attendance.**

All Along the Watchtower / A For Freedoms Student Initiative
5:30-7:30pm, October 23, 2018
CCA Hubbell Street Galleries, 131 Hubbell Street, San Francisco
On view: October 22–November 9, 2018

This course-based presentation features work by CCA undergraduate and graduate students who are called to action, observing, and participating in the structures and ephemera of American resistance in the Bay Area. This exhibition is organized by CCA Fine Arts faculty members Kim Anno and Susanne Cockrell.

Embrace Your Freedoms / Know Your Rights: A For Freedoms Town Hall
7pm, October 25, 2018
CCA Nave Alcove, 1111 Eighth Street, San Francisco
[RSVP here](#)

Would you know what to do if your rights, or the rights of others, were being violated? The surest way to protect your freedoms is to know your rights. In this open public forum and interactive training, artists, legal experts, activists, and community members come together to scrutinize a range of situations to dispel the mystery and embrace our freedoms. Organized and moderated by Aaron Gach in collaboration with the National Lawyers Guild. **Featuring an introduction by Creative Citizenship Fellow Hank Willis Thomas.**

Beyond the Mid-Terms: CCA / MICA / For Freedoms Residency in Creative Citizenship Panel & Luncheon
3–4:30pm, November 8, 2018 (panel)
12:30–1:30pm, November 9, 2018 (luncheon)
Fullerton Hall, Art Institute of Chicago

MICA, CCA, and For Freedoms will hold a panel discussion on Artists, Designers, Citizens and a follow-up luncheon at the 2018 Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) Symposium in Chicago. The purpose of these presentations will be to engage other art and design institutions and organizations in this initiative. For more information about this panel and luncheon, please click [here](#).

About For Freedoms

Founded in 2016 by alumnus Hank Willis Thomas (MFA Fine Arts, MA Visual and Critical Studies 2004) and artist Eric Gottesman, For Freedoms is a platform for civic engagement, discourse, and direct action for artists in the United States. Inspired by Norman Rockwell's 1943 paintings of the four

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universal freedoms articulated by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1941—freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear—For Freedoms seeks to use art to deepen public discussions of civic issues and core values, and to clarify that citizenship in American society is deepened by participation, not by ideology. For Freedoms is part of a rich history of artists employing means of mass communication to provoke political discourse. For Freedoms believes art and artists play an important role in galvanizing our society toward a more representative and transparent government.

About the 50 State Initiative

This year, For Freedoms launched its *50 State Initiative*, a new phase of programming to encourage broad participation and inspire conversation around November's midterm elections. Building off of the existing artistic infrastructure in the United States, For Freedoms has developed a network of over 300 artists and 200 institutional partners who will produce nationwide public art installations, exhibitions and local community dialogues in order to inject nuanced, artistic thinking into public discourse. Centered around the vital work of artists, For Freedoms hopes that these exhibitions and related projects will model how arts institutions can become civic forums for action and discussion of values, place, and patriotism. For more information, please click [here](#).

About California College of the Arts

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) educates students to shape culture and society through the practice and critical study of art, architecture, design, and writing. Benefitting from its San Francisco Bay Area location, the college prepares students for lifelong creative work by cultivating innovation, community engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

CCA offers a rich curriculum of 22 undergraduate and 11 graduate programs in art, design, architecture, and writing taught by a faculty of expert practitioners, and attracts promising students from across the United States and from 55 countries around the world. Graduates are highly sought-after by companies such as Pixar/Disney, Apple, Intel, Facebook, Gensler, Google, IDEO, Autodesk, Mattel, and Nike, and many have launched their own successful businesses.

CCA is creating a new, expanded college campus at its current site in San Francisco that will open during the 2021–2022 academic year. Spearheaded by Studio Gang architects, the new campus design will be a model of [sustainable construction and practice](#); will unite the college's programs in art, crafts, design, architecture, and writing in one location to create new adjacencies and interactions; and will provide [more student housing](#) than ever before. For more information, visit [cca.edu](#).

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