

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER TO DISPLAY WPA POSTERS IN NEW EXHIBITION, *POSTERS FOR THE PEOPLE*

Philadelphia, PA (October 28, 2009) – Beginning November 5th, 2009, the National Constitution Center will host *Posters for the People*, an exhibition exploring the social landscape of America during the New Deal through posters created by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The exhibition, presented in conjunction with Design for Social Impact, will be on display in the Center's Posterity Hall through January 3, 2010. Admission to *Posters for the People* is FREE with regular museum admission.

The public is invited to a special evening reception for the opening of the exhibition on Thursday, November 5, 2009, during the Center's *5 After 5* extended hours program from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

As part of the New Deal, the government-sponsored WPA employed thousands of out-of-work citizens, including hundreds of artists. From 1935 to 1943, the WPA Poster Division was responsible for designing, printing, and distributing posters to raise awareness about public issues and civic life. Featuring nearly 300 posters, including originals and reproductions, *Posters for the People* communicates the values, vision, and vitality of American democracy through art.

"The WPA posters serve as a fascinating example of citizen engagement," said National Constitution Center President and CEO Linda E. Johnson. "The distinct imagery and clear, concise messages of the posters provide a rare snapshot of an important era in America's past. We hope our visitors will be inspired by the work of these artists and craftspeople to promote the ideals of our nation."

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ADD ONE/POSTERS FOR THE PEOPLE

"Even today, the posters of the WPA still achieve their original goals," said Ennis Carter, founder and director of Design for Social Impact and driving force behind Posters for the People. "They call attention to important social issues and values through beautiful and meaningful design. These posters may be 75 years old, but they still touch our lives and inspire us even today. We are proud to preserve their story and present them again to the American public."

Posters for the People is organized into twelve categories, representing distinct themes:

- Prosperity and Opportunity
- Arts and Crafts
- Health and Safety
- Travel and Destination
- American Cultural Traditions
- Preservation and Conservation
- Community Events
- Knowledge and Information
- Neighborhood Places
- War and Defense
- Sports and Recreation
- Theater, Music, and Dance

To supplement the exhibition, the National Constitution Center will host a variety of family activities and events, including a modern-day poster contest.

The exhibition is part of the ongoing work of Posters for the People, a citizen's initiative started in 2002, dedicated to building the most comprehensive record of posters created under the New Deal's Federal Art Project. Unfortunately, no centralized government record was kept of the WPA posters; so, in an effort to once again bring the posters to the American public, Posters for the People has created a virtual and dynamic "living archive," which will officially launch on October 30, 2009, to coincide with the exhibition debut at the National Constitution Center. More than doubling the number of posters thought to exist, this online resource brings posters to light that have not been seen by the public in more than seventy years.

A kiosk for accessing the online library of posters will be located in the exhibition.

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ADD TWO/POSTERS FOR THE PEOPLE

Posters for the People is a project of Design for Social Impact in Philadelphia. Established in 1996 in Philadelphia, Design for Social Impact is among the first and foremost creative workshops devoted exclusively to promoting public interest social issues through artistry and activism.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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