

# ROCKWELL AT

We are very pleased to welcome the art of Norman Rockwell this winter! *Norman Rockwell's 323 Saturday Evening Post Covers* opens to the public Friday, December 2, 2005, but as a member of

the Russell Museum, you are invited to a special evening preview, Thursday, December 1 at 5:00 p.m.

Organized by the Norman Rockwell Museum,

Stockbridge, Massachusetts, the exhibition includes all of

the covers that Rockwell illustrated. Rockwell's first cover for the *Saturday Evening Post* appeared in

1916 when the artist was 22 years old, and began perhaps the most enduring love affair between an artist and the

American public. For the next 50 years, Americans

waited with anticipation each week to see if the new issue would feature a Rockwell cover. When it did, 50,000-

75,000 additional copies of the *Saturday Evening Post* sold at newsstands.

Rockwell created comfortable and traditional

images of everyday life, saying: "My fundamental purpose is to interpret the typical American. I am a storyteller. I unconsciously decided that, even if it wasn't an ideal world, it should be and so painted only the ideal aspects of it ... foxy grandpas who played baseball with the kids and boys who fished from logs and got up circuses in the backyard."

Of particular resonance today, while our sons and daughters protect us overseas, are Rockwell's covers during World War II, that



# THE RUSSELL!

feature a good-hearted, goofy G.I. Willie. Also during that time Rockwell painted *The Four Freedoms* as his personal contribution to the war effort. Symbolizing the war aims President Roosevelt set forth, *The Four Freedoms* were reproduced in four consecutive issues of the *Saturday Evening Post*. *Freedom of Speech*, *Freedom to Worship*, *Freedom from Want* and *Freedom from Fear* were so successful that the original paintings toured in an exhibition that raised \$139.9 million for the war effort through the sales of war bonds.

So well-loved was Rockwell and his art that in 1977 President Gerald R. Ford presented Rockwell with the country's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Norman Rockwell died in his Stockbridge home on November 8, 1978 at the age of 84. His now nostalgic paintings and illustrations continue to live on in American history and hearts, and his ability to relate to the values and events of an evolving society made him a hero, a visionary and a friend.

The collection of original tear sheets for the magazine that Rockwell himself called the "greatest show window in America" is a compelling pictorial view of life during the first part of the 20th century. They will be on view at the Russell Museum through February 19, 2006.



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