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FAU Presents ‘Political Pandemonium: Presidential Pop Culture From 2008 Through 2020’

BOCA RATON, FL. (September 4, 2020) - The University Galleries in Florida Atlantic University’s Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters presents the online exhibition “Political Pandemonium: Presidential Pop Culture From 2008 Through 2020,” from Thursday, Oct. 1 through Friday, Jan. 15, 2021. It will be available online at www.fau.edu/galleries.

The 2020 election season is one of extreme partisanship, polarization, pandemic, protest and pain – emotional, physical, spiritual and economic. All these are represented vividly in the artifacts presented, drawn from FAU’s significant collection of presidential paraphernalia from 2008, 2016 and 2020. These include bumper stickers, t-shirts, posters, buttons, caps, face coverings and digital media such as memes and videos, arranged in 25 categories, including: The Divided States of America; Dehumanization; Racism and Xenophobia; Who Is “America”? Whose “America” Is It?; Misogyny and Misogynoir; Electoral Violence; Pandemic Politics; Transphobia; Homophobia; Black Lives Matter; “Fake News”; Disinformation and Conspiracy “Theories.” Many display hope and affirmation, while others are based in smears, slurs, distortions, epithets, lies and stereotypes that either favor or discredit candidates and the social groups they represent.

The purpose of the exhibition is educational. The Smithsonian Museum of American History collects election-related “material culture” in order to document “the infinite richness and complexity of American history [and] help people understand the past in order to make sense of the present and shape a more humane future.” The accompanying text for “Political Pandemonium 2020” provides commentary guided by intersectional feminism. The hope is to engage other perspectives, elicit dialogue, debate and critical reflection and thus contribute

toward building a more humane, peaceful, prosperous, inclusive and egalitarian society, long put forth as the promise or dream of this nation.

Considering that our social and political climate is always in flux, this exhibition will be accompanied by an active social media campaign via Instagram, @politicalpandemonium. This platform will be used to collaborate with FAU students in sharing an array of creative, thoughtful and informed responses to the exhibition material and can take a variety of forms – e.g., writing, audio, video, and memes. While “Political Pandemonium” was conceptualized as a physical exhibition, the COVID-19 pandemic shifted the exhibition site from the physical to the virtual, and this social media platform will be used to enrich the online experience of the viewer, in an effort to engage participation and active learning.

“Political Pandemonium” is the third installment in a series of exhibitions conceptualized and curated by Jane Caputi Ph.D., Professor of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at FAU. The show is co-curated by Sika Dagbovie-Mullins, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English at FAU and Robert Caputi, Ph.D., Instructor of Sociology at FAU. Sofia Honekman, graduate student in the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies program at FAU, is the Curatorial Assistant.

The University Galleries Museum Education Program is continuing its programs virtually employing some content from “A Four Exhibition Look at Our Past, Present and Future Politics,” including school partnerships with area schools and its Artist Mentorship Program with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County. Ashley Utley is the Galleries 2020/2021 Museum Education Coordinator. For more information: autley2018@fau.edu

University Galleries exhibitions and programs are supported by the Isadore and Kelly Friedman University Galleries Fund; Florida Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs and Florida Council on the Arts; and Cultural Council of Palm Beach County. Museum Education programs are made possible by the Kaye Arts Integration Endowment.

For more information call 561-297-2661 or email shonekman2016@fau.edu.

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About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of three signature themes – marine and coastal issues, biotechnology and contemporary societal challenges – which provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu

Political Pandemonium:

Presidential Pop Culture From 2008 Through 2020

Curators: Jane Caputi, Sika Dagbovie-Mullins, Robert Caputi
October 1, 2020 - January 15, 2021

A Four Exhibition Look At Our
Past, Present & Future
Politics

ONLINE : October 1, 2020

God, Guns and Trump

screen printed t-shirt
2020
27 x 30 inches



Does America Feel “Great Again” To You?

bumper sticker
2020
3 x 10 inches



Sleepy Joe 2020

postcard
2020
5.5 x 4 inches



Make America Whole Again

trucker cap
2020
5 x 9 x 11 inches



Political Pandemonium:

Presidential Pop Culture From 2008 Through 2020

October 1, 2020 – January 15, 2021



ONLINE : October 1, 2020

Elect a Clown, Expect a Circus

screen printed cotton mask

2020

6 x 7.5 x 10.5 inches

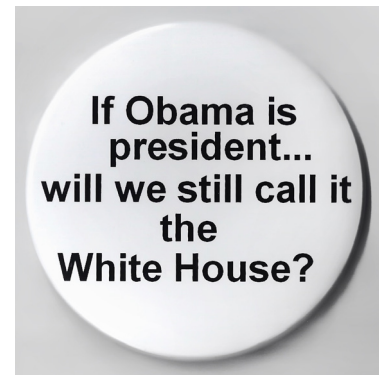


If Obama is president...

aluminum pin

2008

3.5 x 3.5 inches



Trump That Bitch!

bumper sticker

2016

3.6 x 6 inches



Biden, He Won't Inject You With Bleach

sticker

2020

2.5 x 3.75 inches



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ONLINE : October 1, 2020

I Voted (Putin)

aluminum Pin
2017
6 x 6 inches



El Pendejo 45

sticker
2020
4 x 3 inches



Joe and the Hoe

meme
2020



Baby Penis Trump

porcelain figurine
2016
3.5 x 2 inches

