

Seriously

November 4 – December 11, 2016

Eight days until the election. The most bizarre campaign...and anything can still happen. Seriously.

This cannot be business as usual.

During World War II, Soviet propaganda posters by the Okna TASS artists and poets were created to goad Russian citizens into resisting the Nazis at all costs. With ample doses of humor and courage, these powerful artworks depict Hitler and his cohorts as subhuman beasts, and helped inspire the Russian people to save themselves and humanity.

Ok, feels like a good start.

In 1963, Ralph Fasanella (1914-1997) painted a canvas called “The Rosenbergs’ Gray Day” about the McCarthy Era. Joseph McCarthy’s right hand man was a lowlife lawyer named Roy Cohn, who helped send Julius and Ethel Rosenberg to the electric chair, and later elect Nixon president. Still later on, Cohn’s most famous client and protégé was none other than Donald Trump.

A heavy piece, but these are heavy times. Next.

In 1988, a country music executive commissioned Paul Laffoley (1935-2015) to paint a series about Elvis. He finished an eight painting suite of portraits in 1995 called “The Life and Death of Elvis Presley.

Don’t overthink it. Just feels right.

Jill Freedman’s pictures from the 60s, 70s and 80’s show an America in transition. A gutsy and fearless photographer, she immersed herself in a macho world, riding with the NYPD and NYFD, recording scenes of violence, kindness, empathy and heartbreak.

Thornton Dial’s (1928-2016) 1998 “Tearing Down the Walls” features Batman as its central figure — perhaps a metaphor for how he saw himself — hidden in the darkness, ultimately emerging as a hero. And finally, George Widener’s “King of the World,” a drawing of the Titanic, which he completed in 2012 on the 100th anniversary of its sinking.

What comes next is anybody’s guess.

Andrew Edlin

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