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‘Run for President’ at MCA is a sure conversation starter

by Jodie Jacobs
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Wall photo of the Oval Office during President Reagan's administration 1981-89 opposite a curved mirror

No matter what your political persuasion or whom you favor as the next US President, you might remember some of the jokers who ran in the past. Or you might simply enjoy multimedia artist's Kathryn Andrews' new exhibit “Run for President” at the Museum of Contemporary Art as an apt commentary on the times, past, present and future.

Walk into the exhibit and laugh when you see Bozo the Clown running for President. Utter an “oh no,” as you gaze on an over-sized holiday photo of Nancy Reagan on Mr. T's lap. Say “Wow” as you stand between a huge photograph of the Oval Office opposite a mirror that reflects you. BTW it's a good place for a “selfie.”

Given past and some current candidates you might not consider Andrews' exhibit far out. She has utilized movie props, old photographs, Currier and Ives prints and actual movie costumes (look at some of the work from the side to see costumes stuffed into frames that represent candidates and campaigns in a fictional (really?) election.

However there is also a surreal aspect of a sitting President and a balloon sculpture of the soon-to-be-deflated feel when the term ends.

Her 15 works propose and connect metaphors, allegories and promotional packaging. They are about power, film and other media influences and what appeals to the American public. This exhibit is bound to have people talking, thinking or arguing.

Organized by former MCA curator Julie Rodrigues Widholm, “Run for President is Andrews' first solo US exhibition.

Details: Kathryn Andrews - “Run for President” is up now through May 8, 2016 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60611.

