
NEWS RELEASE

**Louisiana
Department of State**



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RODRIGUE BLUE DOG STICKERS TO BOOST ELECTION DAY PARTICIPATION

BATON ROUGE, La.—Louisiana Secretary of State Tom Schedler hopes George Rodrigue’s iconic Louisiana artwork will entice voters to cast their ballot during the 2016 Presidential Elections next month. Schedler, along with Rodrigue’s widow, Wendy, and sons, Jacques and André, unveiled the state’s official “I VOTED” sticker today emblazoned with George Rodrigue’s painting featuring the Blue Dog and an American flag.

Schedler says he is proud to partner with the George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts (GRFA) in using an original image by artist George Rodrigue entitled *Stand Up Straight and Tall* (2001). Rodrigue’s family generously granted the Secretary of State permission to use the painting, which is part of the permanent collection of the New Orleans Museum of Art, for the “I VOTED” stickers.

“We were looking for a way to make this Presidential Election unique and exciting for Louisiana voters,” said Secretary Schedler. “We traditionally have robust turnout when we elect the President, but I’m hoping this sticker will put us over the top in terms of turnout. I have a feeling everyone is going to want to show their patriotism and pride by proudly wearing this nationally-famous Louisiana artist’s ‘I VOTED’ sticker.”

“I VOTED” stickers will be available to participating voters at each polling location on Election Day and at every early voting site in Louisiana. Early voting begins in Louisiana on Oct. 25 and runs through Nov. 1. Election Day across the country is Tuesday, Nov. 8.

A native of New Iberia, La., artist George Rodrigue (1944-2013) often demonstrated his patriotism in his paintings. In the book *The Cajuns of George Rodrigue* (1976, Oxmoor House), he wrote, “I have a series of paintings showing the American flag to reveal the strong national pride of the Cajun. He wanted to be a part of something; he wanted a country; he wanted to be an American. At last he found the country in which he is happy, in which he can fulfill the dream of his forefathers of living somewhere where freedom exists.”

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Echoing his father's sense of patriotism and public spirit, Jacques Rodrigue, Executive Director of the George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts, said he is excited to see his father's work send a positive message to voters across the state. "Participating in the election process and electing good government representation is one of our most important civic duties. Partnering with Secretary Schedler to inspire citizens to take part in this election cycle is something that spoke to me and I think my dad would have loved," said Rodrigue.

The unveiling of the "I VOTED" sticker coincides with a timely exhibit at Rodrigue Studio New Orleans which opened Oct. 6 and marks the 20th anniversary of Rodrigue's landmark "Blue Dog for President" exhibition held at Union Station in Washington D.C. during the 1996 Presidential Election. The Rodrigue family has recreated that exhibit sharing patriotic works spanning 40 years, including Rodrigue's strong red, white and blue designs from his Blue Dog Series his original paintings following 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina and his iconic portraits of Louisiana Governors Huey Long and Earl Long, as well as portraits of U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton. Also on view is his famous *Washington Blue Dog*, featuring the U.S. Capitol and the White House.

"Visiting the exhibit in New Orleans and proudly displaying an 'I VOTED' sticker on Election Day are just a couple ways Louisianians can make this election season unique and special," emphasized Schedler. "George Rodrigue's Blue Dog Series is important within the story of contemporary American art. It is also such a positive symbol for our state and helps spread the word about the outstanding work done by the Rodrigue Foundation in terms of art education for our young people."

Artist George Rodrigue established the George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts (GRFA) in 2009 to advocate the importance of the arts in the development of our youth. GRFA encourages the use of art within all curriculums and supports a variety of arts educational program, providing educators with the tools needed to incorporate the arts into their classrooms. GRFA programs are open to all accredited schools in Louisiana, and online resources benefit schools worldwide.

To learn more about the George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts visit www.georgerodriguefoundation.org. And to find out more about voting in Louisiana go to www.GeauxVote.com.

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