



## America of Yesteryear

Delve into the world of idealized American culture through the works of the incomparable Norman Rockwell. **Tiffany Parks** has the scoop.

Even those not familiar with the name **Norman Rockwell** could most likely recognize his art instantly. His masterpieces such as *Girl at Mirror*, *Freedom of Speech*, *Homecoming Marine*, and *The Runaway* illustrate the idealized concept of the America of yesteryear. Rockwell's art is like a time capsule that has preserved a nostalgic version of the Golden Age of America, when life was simpler and people were kinder, at least so our grandparents love to tell us. Opening on the 11<sup>th</sup>, *American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell* is a brand-new exhibit at the Palazzo Sciarra displaying more than 100 paintings, documents, and photographs, as well as the complete collection of 323 *Saturday Evening Post* covers, the first exhibit of its kind to take place in Italy.

Appealing more to the heart than to the head, Rockwell's work eventually earned him the title "artist of the people," for its ability to capture the simplest moments in the human

experience, rendering them both touching and universal. He depicts almost exclusively the American family, with its struggles, joys, and small achievements, giving modern viewers the chance to peek inside the America of a century past to find things like a couple in the waiting room of a marriage counselor, a little boy discovering for the first time that Santa Claus doesn't exist, a nervous child as he takes his beloved dog to the veterinarian, a teenage girl reluctantly about to try on her prom dress.

Later in his career, Rockwell's work began to touch on more delicate subjects, including the civil rights movement, racial discrimination, poverty, and the Vietnam War. During this period he produced thought-provoking pieces like *Murder in Mississippi* and *The Problem We All Live With* (pictured), works that forced his audience to confront harsh realities about his often-idealized country. Opens 11 Nov at Pal. Incontro (p54).