



Contact: Matthew Adams, Publicist Mayworks Festival
416-762-0260, publicity@mayworks.ca

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Acclaimed Visual Artist Favianna Rodriguez makes her Toronto Debut at Mayworks Festival

TORONTO: Celebrated printmaker and digital artist Favianna Rodriguez (www.favianna.com) will have her first exhibit in Toronto as part of the 24th annual Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts. Rodriguez's exhibition *Transformation/Agitation* opens at the Toronto Free Gallery, 1277 Bloor Street West, Saturday, April 25th with a free talk from Rodriguez from 3:30-4:30 at the opening. The exhibit runs through June 6th.

Using high-contrast colors and vivid figures, Rodriguez's composites reflect literal and imaginative migration, global community, and interdependence. This exhibition centers on the national grassroots movements that helped shift the United States toward a new future. It centers on the most challenging issues of our times, including housing, education, workers' rights, green jobs, equal access, LGBT rights, and an end to the Iraq War.

Rodriguez has lectured widely on the use of art in civic engagement and the work of artists who, like herself, are bridging the community and museum, the local and international.

Rodriguez was recently named one of 50 visionaries by *Utne Magazine* for 2008 and has exhibited at Museo del Barrio (New York); de Young Museum (San Francisco); Mexican Fine Arts Center (Chicago); Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco); Sol Gallery (Providence, RI); Huntington Museum and Galería Sin Fronteras (Austin, TX); and internationally at the House of Love & Dissent (Rome), Parco Museum (Tokyo), as well as in England, Belgium, and Mexico. She was a 2005 artist-in-residence at San Francisco's prestigious de Young Museum, a 2007-2008 artist-in-residence at Kala Art Institute (Berkeley, CA), and received a 2006 Sea Change Residency from the Gaea Foundation (Provincetown, MA). Rodriguez is recipient of a 2005 award from the Center for the Study of Political Graphics.

In 2008 Rodriguez was the co-editor of the book *Reproduce and Revolt!* with internationally renowned stencil artist and art critic Josh MacPhee.

For the 24th year the Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts will bring a medley of artists to Toronto with live music, storytelling, spoken word, film, photography, dance, community theatre and more from April 25th to May 3rd. All events are wheelchair accessible. Full program and artist bios and information available at www.mayworks.ca

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Matthew Adams, Publicist 416-762-0260 publicity@mayworks.ca
25 Cecil Street, Toronto ON M5T 1N1