

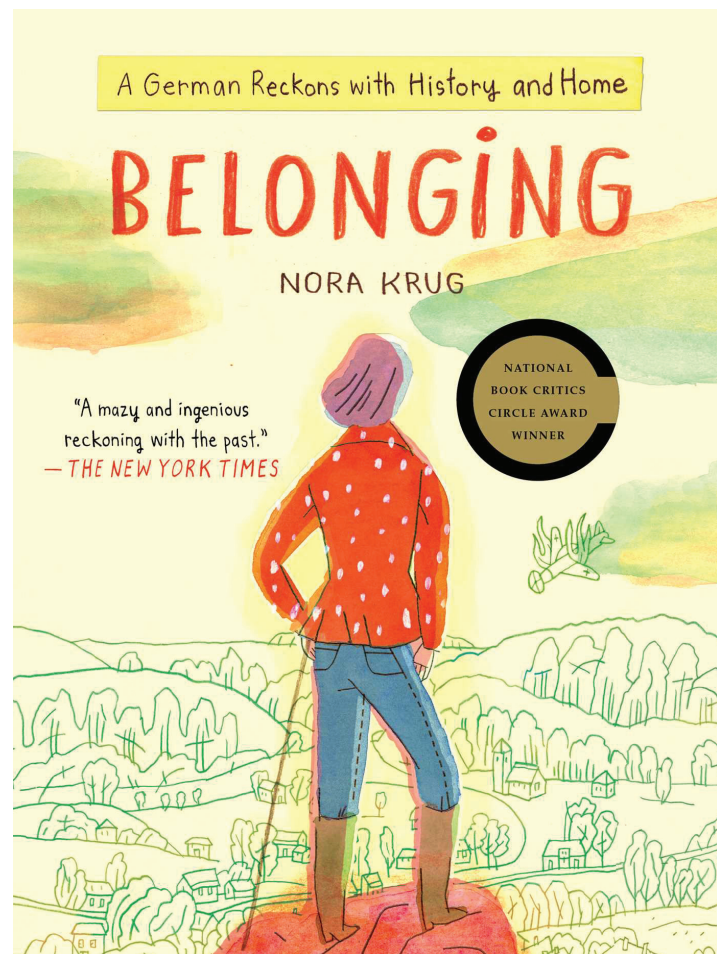
# NORA KRUG: BELONGING

Exhibition organized by Norman Rockwell Museum and curated by Stephanie Haboush Plunkett, Chief Curator.

“Images have political power, and they can change the way we think. Illustrating is also an act of witnessing: images compel us to notice and investigate, and at their best, they shed light on and at the same time critically confront the subjects they engage with.”

—Nora Krug

*Nora Krug: Belonging* examines the work of German American illustrator Nora Krug (b. 1977) whose powerful graphic memoir, *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*, traces the artist’s investigations into the hidden truths of her family’s wartime history in Nazi Germany. The work featured in the exhibition is drawn from Krug’s autobiographical explorations as well as her illustrations for a graphic edition of Yale historian Timothy Snyder’s *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, an analysis of the dark history of fascism and America’s current unsettling political climate. In addition to these notable works, the exhibition also includes Krug’s illustrations for a wide range of stories, many of which



Nora Krug

*Belonging*, 2018

Cover illustration for *Belonging*, by Nora Krug

©2018 Nora Krug. All Rights Reserved

are inspired by the experiences of individuals who have suffered through and survived extraordinary events.

Krug’s graphic editions utilize a rich and surprising visual language — a dynamic assemblage of color, imagery, and design that is woven together digitally and by hand. Printed materials appear alongside hand-colored drawings and paintings, and text flows around visuals, fluidly moving us through each narrative to emphasize passages and ideas. An expressive launch pad for discovery, Krug’s artwork offers a fresh approach to storytelling and reveals the power of published art to inspire, challenge, and open new ways of seeing and understanding.

## EXHIBITION CONTENT

Approximately 200 original drawings and paintings by Nora Krug, as well as historical artifacts, letters, photographs, and flea market finds that inspired the artist's work.

Space Requirements: 3,000 sq feet, (can be scaled down as necessary)

Exhibition Fee: \$25,000 for approximately a 12-week period

Tour Availability: Available now

Nora Krug

*The Man's Account Continues*, 2018

Illustrations for *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*, Scribner

Collection of Nora Krug. ©2018 Nora Krug



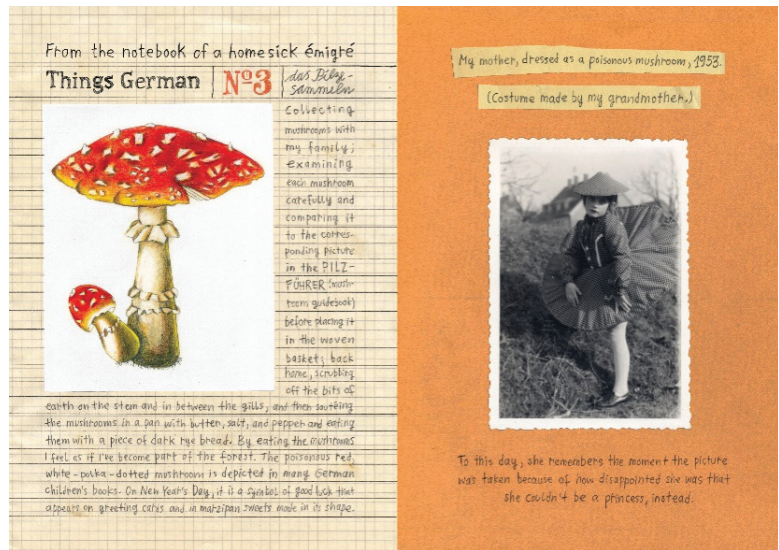
## EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

### *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home (Heimat)*

Though Nora Krug was born decades after the fall of the Nazi regime, the Second World War cast a shadow over her childhood and youth in the city of Karlsruhe, Germany. Perhaps not surprisingly, she heard little about her family's experiences at the time; though all four grandparents lived through the war, it was never spoken of. After studying in the UK and Berlin, Germany, she moved to New York City to complete a Master of Fine Arts degree at the School of Visual Arts. Krug said she felt discomfort when discussing her home country because "as soon as you answer someone who asks you where you are from, the association with the Nazi period is there. You are constantly being confronted with it." She felt a growing urge to engage with her country's past in a new way. "I realized that to overcome the collective, abstract shame I had grown into as a German two generations after the war, I needed to go back and ask questions about my family, my hometown." Returning to Germany, she visited archives, conducted research, and interviewed family members, piecing together the troubling story of her family and their role in the horrors of the Holocaust. This exploration became the impetus for her award-winning visual memoir, *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*.

### *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*

Shifting from her own story, Krug's illustrated edition of Timothy Snyder's best-selling book, *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, considers the impact of totalitarianism on the hearts and minds of people across generations. Snyder's text, in concert with Krug's hand-drawn images and text, paper cut outs, and historical photographs and postcards, examines the darkest moments of twentieth century history, from Nazism to Communism, teaching twenty relevant lessons for our times. The book cautions readers that American democracy is an experiment and must not be taken for granted, and that other democracies worldwide have come and gone.



Nora Krug  
*From the notebook of a homesick émigré – das Pilze-sammeln*, 2018  
 Illustrations for *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*, Scribner  
 Collection of Nora Krug. ©2018 Nora Krug



Nora Krug  
*Campaign for the Donbas*, 2021  
 Illustrations for *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*, Scribner  
 Collection of Nora Krug. ©2021 Nora Krug

## “Never Give Up!” Stories of Survival

Krug’s visual narratives also tell the stories of individuals who have suffered through and survived extraordinary events. *Kamikaze* offers insights into the world of Kamikaze pilot Ena Takehiko, who survived his suicide mission twice; *Fukutsu* tells the story of Japanese soldier Hiro Onoda, who went into hiding in the Philippine jungle at the close of World War II and remained there for twenty-nine years, believing that the war was still going on; *No Man’s Land* focuses on American soldier Robert Jenkins, who after the Korean War fled North across the demarcation line and was forced to remain in North Korea for thirty-nine years; and *Quicksand* portrays nineteenth century Swiss explorer Isabelle Eberhardt, who travelled the Algerian desert dressed as a man.

## Diaries of War

Soon after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Nora Krug reached out to two anonymous subjects, “K,” a Ukrainian journalist, and “D,” a Russian artist, and began an ongoing correspondence documented in *Diaries of War*, a series of Op-Comics for the *Los Angeles Times*. Their dialogue, paired with Krug’s drawings, offers an intimate picture of the tragic effects of the war on individuals, including the loss of family and community, and feelings of desperation and emotional distress, displacement, and disconnection.

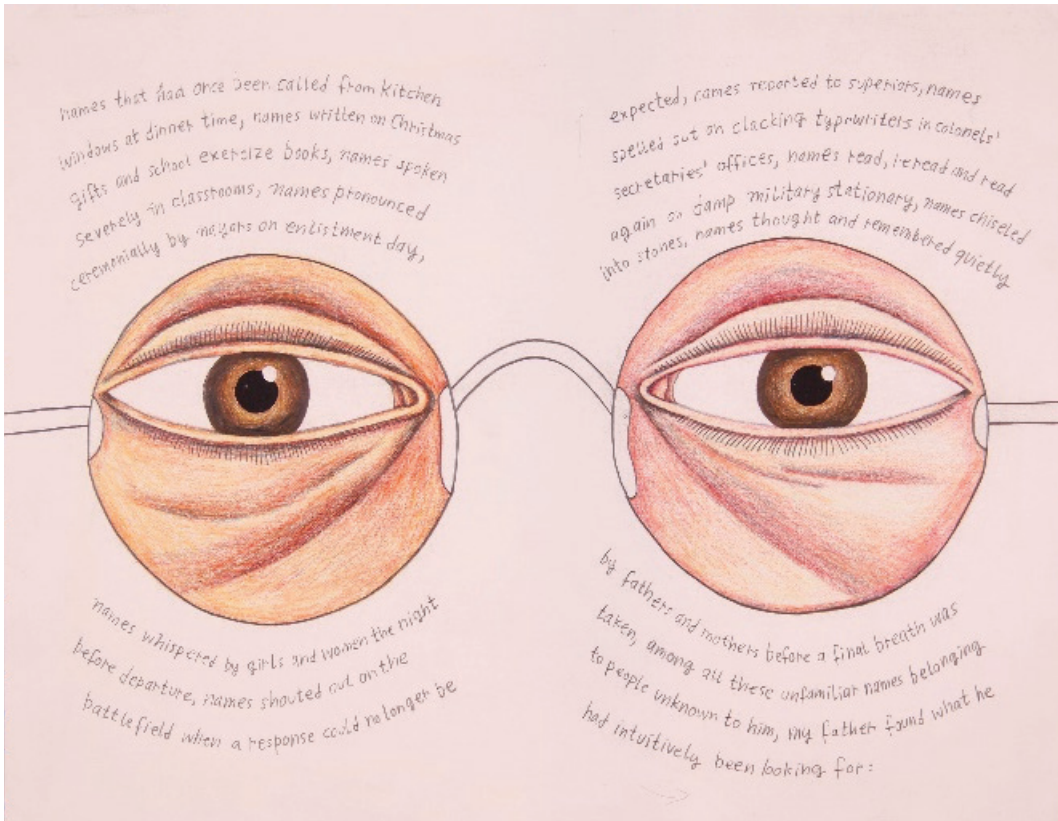


## About Nora Krug

Krug is a German-American author and illustrator whose drawings and visual narratives have appeared in publications including *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Le Monde diplomatique*, and *A Public Space*, and in anthologies published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Simon and Schuster, and Chronicle Books. Krug is a recipient of fellowships from Fulbright, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Maurice Sendak Foundation, and others. Her books are included in the Library of Congress and the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University. Krug was named *Maira Gemmill Illustrator of the Year* and *2019 Book Illustration Prize Winner* by the Victoria and Albert Museum. Her visual memoir *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home* (Scribner, 2018, foreign edition title *Heimat*), was chosen as a best book of the year by the *New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *NPR*, *Kirkus Review*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the *Boston Globe*. It was the winner of the 2019 National Book Critics Circle Award, the Lynd Ward Graphic Novel Prize, the Art Directors Club, Gold Cube and Discipline Winner Cube, the Society of Illustrators Silver medal, and the British Book Design and Production Award, among others. Her collaboration with historian Timothy Snyder, a graphic edition of *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (Ten Speed Press, 2021), was named a *Best Graphic Novel of 2021* by *The New York Times*, and was a *New York Times* Editor’s Choice. Krug’s illustrations have been recognized with gold and silver medals by the Society of Illustrators and the NY Art Directors Club. Her visual biography, *Kamikaze*, was included in Houghton Mifflin’s *Best American Comics* and *Best Non-Required Reading*, and her animations were shown at the Sundance Film Festival. Published this year by Penguin Random House, Krug’s latest project *Diaries of War* relates the experiences of a Ukrainian journalist and a Russian artist living on opposite sides of the Russian war on Ukraine. Illustrated by Krug and featuring interviews she conducted, the book explores how each subject navigates the complex new realities created by this ongoing war. Krug is currently Associate Professor of Illustration at Parsons School of Design in New York City.

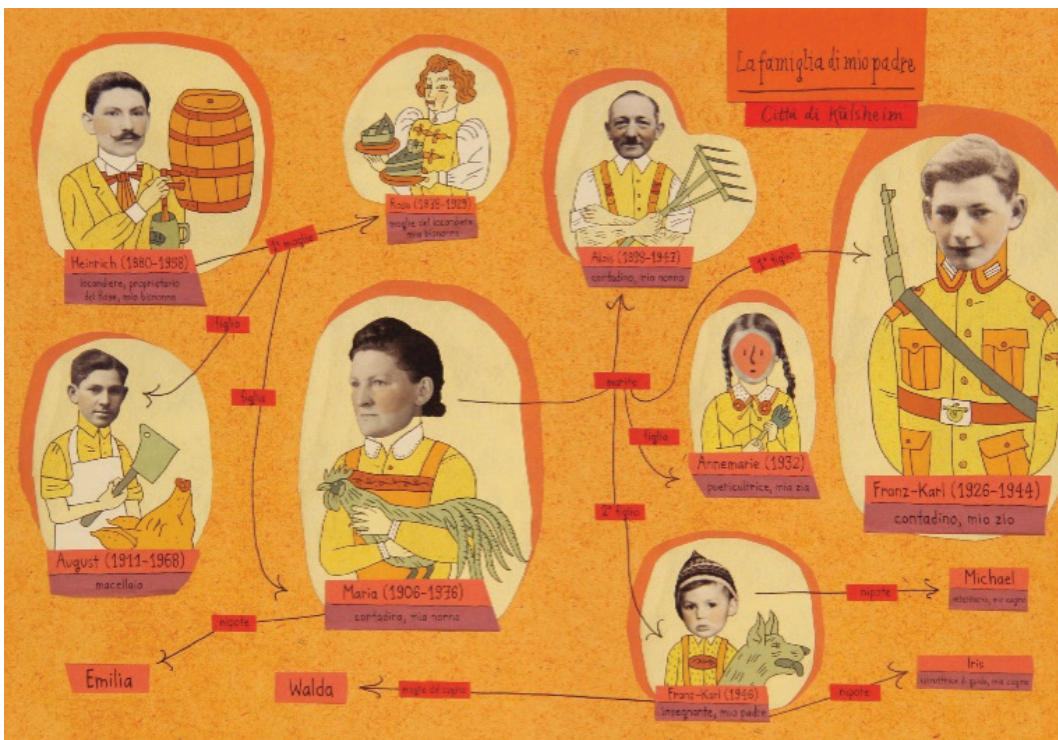
Nora Krug  
*Fukutsu*, 2007  
Illustrations for *Never Give Up! Fukutsu:*  
*The Life of Hirō Onoda, Soldier*, A Public Space.  
Collection of Nora Krug. ©2011 Nora Krug

# NORA KRUG: BELONGING



## SELECTED IMAGES

Nora Krug  
*When I finally caught up with my father at the cemetery, 2018*  
 Illustration for *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*, Scribner  
 Collection of Nora Krug.  
 ©2018 Nora Krug



Nora Krug  
*Family Tree, 2018*  
 Endpaper illustration for *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home*, Scribner  
 Collection of Nora Krug.  
 ©2018 Nora Krug

*On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*

On March 23, the new parliament passed an "enabling act," which allowed Hitler to rule by decree. Germany then remained in a state of emergency for the next twelve years, until the end of the Second World War. Hitler had used an act of terror, an event of limited inherent significance,



to institute a regime of terror that killed millions of people and changed the world.

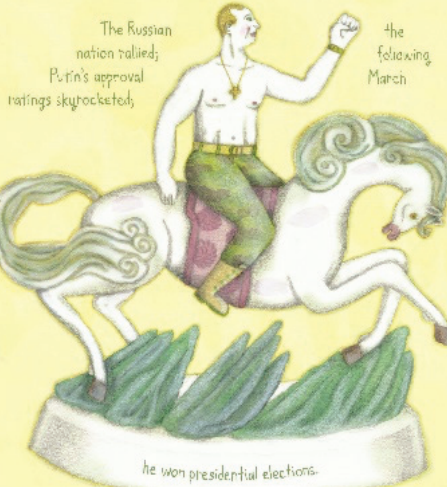


The authoritarians of today are also terror managers, and if anything they are rather more creative. Consider the Russian regime that backed an American candidate. Vladimir Putin not only came to power in an incident that strikingly resembled the Reichstag fire, he then used a series of terror attacks—real, questionable, and fake—to remove obstacles to total power in Russia and to assault democratic neighbors.

91

When Putin was appointed prime minister by a failing Boris Yeltsin in August 1999, he was an unknown with a ragatory approval rating. The following month a series of buildings were bombed in Russian cities, apparently by the Russian secret state police. Its officers were arrested by their own colleagues with evidence of their guilt; in another case the speaker of the Russian parliament announced an explosion a few days before it took place.

Nonetheless, Putin declared a war of revenge against Russia's Muslim population in Chechnya, promising to pursue the supposed perpetrators and "rub them out in the spitthouse."



92

Nora Krug  
*Enabling Act*, 2021  
Illustration for *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, by Timothy Snyder, Ten Speed Press, 2021  
Collection of Nora Krug.  
©2021 Nora Krug

Tyrannical regimes arise at different times and places in the Europe of the twentieth century, but memoirs of their victims all share a single tender moment. Whether the recollection is of fascist Italy in the 1920s, of Nazi Germany of the 1930s; of the Soviet Union during the Great Terror of 1937-38, or of the purges in communist eastern Europe in the 1940s and '50s, people who were living in fear of repression remembers how their neighbors treated them. A smile, a handshake, or a word of greeting—banal gestures in a normal situation—took on a great significance.



When friends, colleagues, and acquaintances looked away or crossed the street to avoid contact, fear grew. You might not be sure, today or tomorrow, who feels threatened in the United States. But if you affirm everyone, you can be sure that certain people will feel better. In the most dangerous of times, those who escape and survive generally know people whom they can trust. Having old friends is the politics of last resort. And making new ones is the first step toward change.

94

13.

Practice corporeal politics.



Power wants your body softening in your chair and your emotions dissipating on the screen. Get outside. Put your body in unfamiliar places with unfamiliar people. Make new friends and march with them.

95

Nora Krug  
*Practice Corporeal Politics*, 2021  
Illustration for *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, by Timothy Snyder, Ten Speed Press, 2021  
Collection of Nora Krug.  
©2021 Nora Krug



TOP LEFT Nora Krug  
*Girl*, 2021

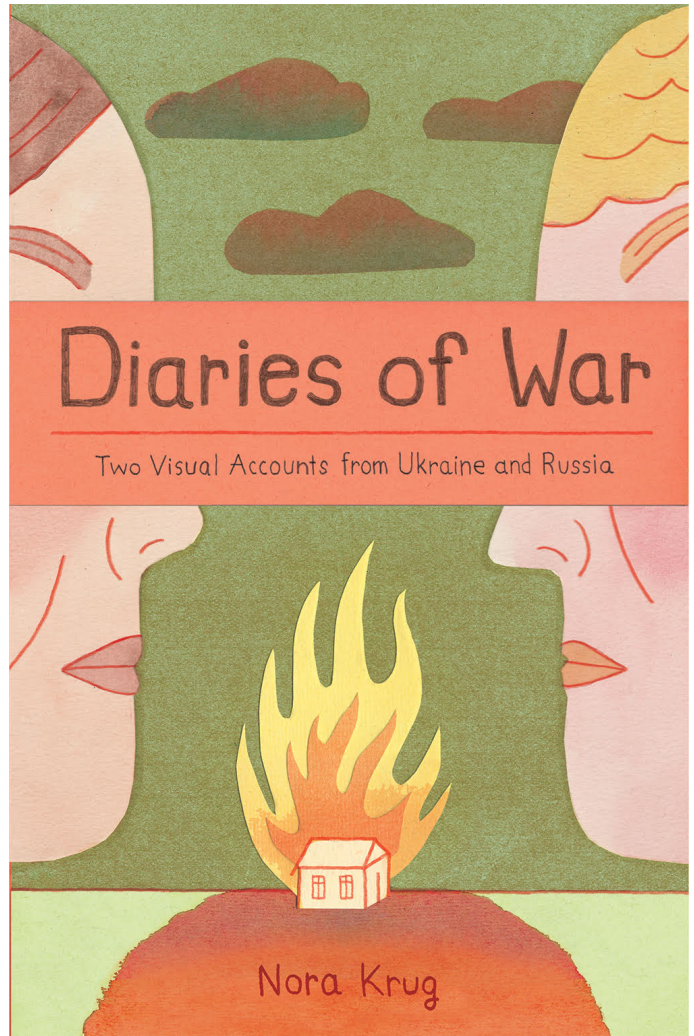
Illustration for *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, by Timothy Snyder, Ten Speed Press, 2021  
Collection of Nora Krug. ©2021 Nora Krug

TOP RIGHT Nora Krug  
*Hand with Heart*, 2021

Illustration for *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, by Timothy Snyder, Ten Speed Press, 2021  
Collection of Nora Krug. ©2021 Nora Krug

BOTTOM LEFT Nora Krug  
*Kamikaze*, 2021

Illustration for *Kamikaze*, republished by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt  
Collection of Nora Krug. ©2021 Nora Krug



## EXHIBITION CURATOR

Stephanie Haboush Plunkett is the Deputy Director and Chief Curator of the Norman Rockwell Museum. She has organized many exhibitions focused on the art of Norman Rockwell and the field of illustration, and leads the Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies, the first scholarly institute devoted to illustration. "The Shifting Postwar Marketplace: Illustration in the United States and Canada, 1940-1970" in *History of Illustration*; *Drawing Lessons from the Famous Artists School: Classic Techniques and Expert Tips from the Golden Age of Illustration*; *Enduring Ideals: Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms*; *Norman Rockwell: Drawings, 1911 to 1973*; and *Tony Sarg: Genius at Play* are recent publications.

LEFT Nora Krug photo by Marty Umans  
All rights reserved.

RIGHT Nora Krug  
*Diaries of War* cover, 2023  
Penguin Random House  
Collection of Nora Krug. ©2023 Nora Krug

## NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM

For more information:  
[NRM.org/norakrugtraveling](http://NRM.org/norakrugtraveling)  
(413) 931-2232  
[LNMOffatt@nrm.org](mailto:LNMOffatt@nrm.org)