

#VoteInPower

The following is a formal response to a forecasting exercise conducted by the Center for Artistic Activism to gain creative perspectives on three scenarios that could have occurred post-Election Day 2020.

Scenario One – No News: The result of the election is unknown for days or weeks. People feel confused and anxious and there is a lack of clarity about the future.

No News \geq Bad News \leq Good News

It doesn't take a highly trained mathematician to algebraically prove that any news—lack thereof, good, bad, and not to mention the ugly—will lead to an eerie reality where, in the midst of all that has transpired during the current pandemic, the notion of “news” will once and for all mean very different things to different people. But it does require the highly motivated, idiosyncratic, interdisciplinary creative artist to formulate a nuanced approach that accounts for the common denominator of each scenario: communities of people all around this country attach their individual hope to their vote. Therefore, this will be an unorthodox piece written across all three scenarios, acknowledging the contention that stands to arise out of each one, and ultimately establish a universal sentiment that connects all people.

No news is just as disconcerting as bad news as is good news because it begs the question of: “Whose news??” It's relative and a matter of perspective. The subject of “fake news” has been pushed by certain authoritarians to distract, discredit, and disorient the public. As a result, the very institutions and power structures that have been trusted for decades are being called into question. (Continued in next section)

Scenario Two – Bad News: One side declares victory before all votes are counted. There are contentious protests in the streets of some cities.

The irony of the *bad news* scenario is that the intention might have been to damage the integrity of proclaimed dissidents, but it is actually happening across the board, on either end of the spectrum. And from this, we as a People, are presented with an opportunity. We have the opportunity to regain our collective authority and begin showing up in the world as the very people we elect and expect to make positive change in our lives for us. As the creator of the Detroit-based project *Float the Vote*, what I'm insinuating is the notion that we handed in our votes, but we didn't hand over

our power. In reality, this means affirming to voters that the power they exercise when they cast their ballot remains with them after the election is over and winners have been declared. I strongly believe in this psychology because at a time where objective news can easily be deemed subjective, reminding people that there is power in our every individual thought, word, and deed is critical. This power is not surrendered when we vote, rather it is an extension of it towards a select few from among us to channel for collective progress. (Continued in next section)

Scenario Three – Good News: It quickly becomes clear that one candidate has won in a landslide and the other is forced to concede.

The arrival of *good news* will, unfortunately, be met with yet an even clearer picture of the dysfunctional republic that underlies our union—both politically and socially. Yet, as with the *no news* or *bad news* scenarios, empowering people to continue to show up for their communities, families and friends, and themselves will help to better establish the idea of cooperation and defuse the divisiveness of competition. The intentional support of people against any fear, anger, confusion, or hopelessness they may be feeling after this election will add to the nationwide sociocultural and sociopolitical conversation being had at this moment. The status quo of the United States post-Election Day 2020 will surely be characterized by a heightened state of civil dialogue, so my hope is that a unanimous desire for us to work together and take care of one another prevails. Thus, for any one of these scenarios, I am confident that all attempts to lead people toward realizing their own individual power through voting will enable us to collectively better discern relative truths from distortions in order to gain a more adaptogenic awareness of society's mutable identity as a whole.