



FRESCO 1936
INSTALLED IN STAIRWELL,
LEFT

SOCIETY FREED THROUGH JUSTICE

Created in 1936, *Society Freed Through Justice* compares the lives of workers in an unjust economic system to those who work in an equitable society. The two outer panels depict the hardships of urban life—with tired, worn workers cramped into close working and living spaces. The three interior panels portray the lives of those who benefit from the economic prosperity made possible by a just society.

GEORGE BIDDLE



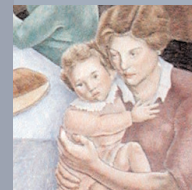
George Biddle (1885–1973)

Through much of his career, George Biddle advocated the use of public art for the betterment of society. In 1933, he wrote to his old schoolmate, Franklin D. Roosevelt, describing his idea for a government-funded mural program. The letter proved successful in launching New Deal art programs.

Biddle used a variety of people, from notable Americans to family members, as models for the figures in the mural. In the far left panel, President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins, is portrayed as a garment worker in a black dress. Biddle included a likeness of himself alongside Perkins; he sits at a



sewing machine, gazing dejectedly at the viewer. Also seen is Biddle’s wife, Belgian sculptress Hélène Sardeau, sitting at the table holding their young son Michael.



COMMISSIONED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
SECTION OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE (1934-1938)
U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
FINE ARTS PROGRAM