NATIONAL LIBERTY MUSEUM
2000 - 2020
20 YEARS OF INSPIRING HEROES

Philadelphia's Freedom Artist Spotlight

Interview with Lyn Godley

How did you hear about the opportunity to participate in the Philadelphia's Freedom exhibition at NLM?

I was contacted by Jocelyn Beaucher.

What made you want to submit this specific artwork to the exhibition?

Jocelyn requested this piece. I agree that it aligns with the topic.

How do you personally define freedom?

I think freedom is about expression, and the ability to tell your own truth, to be able to chart your path without restriction or censor.

How would you describe your art?

My work is rooted in the belief that art has an effect on the viewer. I use light together with other media to create environments that encourage the viewer to stop and contemplate, to become immersed in a way that promotes calm.

How would you describe your process in making art?

Very interdisciplinary and exploratory. I collaborate with a range of people who have expertise in areas that I do not. I love the 'not knowing' that allows for surprises to happen.

What mediums do you primarily work with?

I work with traditional media as well as technology and circuitry. Always light is incorporated in some manner.

How does the concept of freedom influence how and what you create as an artist?

I have worked along the border of what is defined as design and art for decades. Not fully locked into either. This can make it difficult to categorize my work, but it allows me the freedom to explore as I am not pigeon-holed into a particular defined group.

Has the pandemic and/or ongoing societal issues we are currently facing had an effect on your processes? If so, please elaborate how.

Because so many planned exhibits were postponed, and no one is visiting studios it actually has given me some very welcome time to be totally free to really dig deeper into exploration without a commitment to deliver over the last 5 months. It is very free.

Has the pandemic as well as current ongoing societal issues changed the way you perceive freedom?

Not really, it has just made it more imperative.

What inspirations tied to the ideals of freedom led you to the creation of the artwork you submitted?

Blue Waters/Blood Waters was inspired by a trip to Italy, first to Naples and Pompeii where I was totally blown away with the fact that this entire city had been buried under a red wave of lava and stone, and then to the Isle of Ischia where I was really struck by the pristine shoreline while at the same time we were reading about the thousands of refugees trying (often in vain) to reach the shores of southern Europe. The water took on a very different feel to me, both one of calm, and one of danger and loss.

What do you hope your audience will take away from this artwork?

I hope the piece inspires them to stop for a moment, to get caught in the slowly changing color, and to think about what is going on in the world. The problems we face with immigration are staggering and they are only going to become more complicated as climate change continues to worsen.

What are the requirements you believe need to exist for a country or individual to be indeed free?

We need to stop dividing ourselves. Either we all our free or really none of us are. We as a global population are in this together to sink or swim.

Have you ever had your freedom tested either personally or creatively? Please explain.

I am a woman, so yes, I have not experienced the same freedom or privilege as a white male. This is a very wearisome conversation. But I am also very aware that as a white woman, I enjoy more freedom and privilege than many.

What do you believe the single greatest threat to freedom is today?

The notion that some people deserve more than others. The idea of "us vs. them"

How would you like to see this concept of freedom evolve in the future?

Everyone wants the same thing ultimately, to be able to pursue your path, to provide for your family and/or loved ones. To earn an honest and fair wage. We need to find a way to fight for everyone, around the globe.

Finally, when you think of someone who embodies the fight for freedom, who comes to mind and why?

Ruth Bader Ginsburg. What a magnificent woman!