

Democracy & Me Artist Statement

Tears of Freedom

By Alexa Theuerling

Upon looking at the events over the past year, I believe America and the world are in a mixture of metamorphosis and catastrophe. My intention with this piece was to use an iconic figure in America, the Statue of Liberty. For a little over a century, she has been a figure of hope and justice within our free country. Though America has been labeled as a place to gain freedom, many have called into question, how free is America? In this call to true freedom and equality for all, I wanted to showcase how fragile American democracy is. The American people saw this in events that showed how genuinely relevant America's racial and political divide is, through the Black Lives Matter protests and attacks against the capital. I wanted to encapsulate in the face of the Statue of Liberty how we are hurting ourselves and how truly broken America has become, through years of racial inequality, the development and acceptance of Jimcrow, and how we act in the reality of a severe pandemic. America has seen its bright days looking towards its citizens' future and progression, but it has also had moments where our democracy was attacked and almost stopped in its tracks. To move forward, America must understand where we started and how we can progress into a new era. In my piece, I included the quote, "...that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter it or to abolish it, and to institute new government" (Declaration of Independence). Including this sentiment, it shows the true core of what makes a democracy indeed a democracy. I wanted to showcase Lady Liberty staring at herself in a broken mirror, with tears running down her eyes to reflect the pain she feels for the people who are hurting in America right now. As the declaration's words are spread across in the background, it gives hope to those that a new government will prevail through another's failure.

(picture of artwork below):

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