



Restoring Liberty

Artwork by Daryne Rockett

McDade Gallery October 1-November 20, 2026

Restoring Liberty explores freedom, democracy, and justice- not as fixed ideals, but as things that require our continued attention, participation, and repair.

Half of the works in the exhibition are monotypes created through a multi-layer process on a gelatin printing plate. Embedded within their backgrounds are texts that have shaped the American conversation about liberty and responsibility. The Statue of Liberty is the central figure in these works, but she does not appear unchanged. In each piece, her image has been reimagined to reflect some aspect of our freedoms and the forces that threaten, sustain, or restore them.

Several works draw upon the Japanese tradition of kintsugi, using gold to repair visible cracks rather than disguising them. Here, the gold becomes a metaphor for repairing fractures in our democracy while acknowledging that those fractures exist.

The other half of Restoring Liberty consists of mixed-media collages on 18-inch cradled panels. These works grew from responses to a deceptively simple question: What gives you hope?

Hope is essential to the endurance of a democratic people. It gives us reason to remain engaged when progress is difficult, and to imagine that what has been damaged can still be restored. These collages explore some of the qualities that sustain that hope, including Truth, Community, Compassion, and Generosity. Many of their individual elements were also created on a gelatin plate, connecting the two halves of the exhibition through process as well as purpose.

Together, the works of Restoring Liberty ask us to consider democracy not as something we inherit and simply possess, but something we continually create, protect, and repair.

Restoring Liberty 4.0
Acrylic Monotype
20"x 24"



Restoring Liberty 4.0 reflects on freedom, civic responsibility, and the work of preserving democracy. The Statue of Liberty, rendered in blue and white stars, stands against red bands layered over excerpts from Franklin D.

Roosevelt's Fireside Chats. Gold lines trace fractures through Liberty, drawing on the Japanese art of kintsugi, where damage is not hidden but repaired and honored.

Bringing together patriotic imagery, historic words, and visible repair, the work considers democracy not as something permanent or perfect, but as something sustained through participation, accountability, and our willingness to mend what has been damaged.



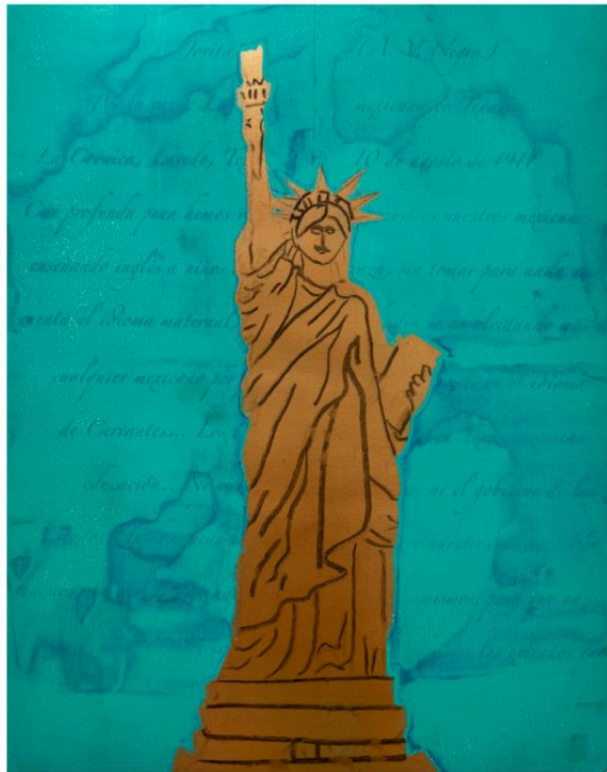
Liberty Pride
Acrylic Monotype
18"x 24"

Liberty Pride celebrates the freedom to live openly and authentically while recognizing the struggle required to secure and protect that freedom. The Statue of Liberty is rendered in the colors of the Progress Pride flag, set against a background incorporating words from Harvey Milk. By bringing together an enduring symbol of American liberty with the history and imagery of LGBTQ+ rights, the work considers equality as essential to the promise of democracy. Liberty belongs to all of us, and its restoration requires defending the dignity, rights, and freedom of every person.

Dreaming of Liberty
Acrylic Monotype
20"x 24"



Dreaming of Liberty draws on the words and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to consider the unfinished work of American freedom. Excerpts from his "I Have a Dream" speech form the background, while the Statue of Liberty emerges in the foreground, casting off chains. Created in recognition of Juneteenth, the work connects emancipation, civil rights, and the continuing pursuit of equality. Dreaming of Liberty acknowledges the distance between America's promise of liberty and the lived reality of that promise, particularly for those historically denied its full protections. The work asks us not only to defend hard-won civil rights, but to continue the work of making a still-unfulfilled promise real for everyone.



Lifting the Lamp
Acrylic Monotype
18"x 24"

Lifting the Lamp honors Mexican American journalist, educator, and civil rights activist Jovita Idár. Her 1911 words about the education of Mexican young people in Texas are layered into the work, confronting discrimination and calling communities to resist humiliation and exclusion. The title echoes Emma Lazarus's words inscribed at the Statue of Liberty, "I lift my lamp beside the golden door," while asking who has historically been welcomed through that door and who has been denied its promise. Liberty lifts her lamp over Idár's words, illuminating both her fight for dignity and equality and the unfinished work of extending liberty's light to everyone.



Natural Liberty
Acrylic Monotype
18"x 24"

Natural Liberty connects the promise of human freedom with our responsibility to the natural world. Liberty herself is rendered in botanical prints made from local vegetation, rooting this familiar national symbol in the landscape around us. The background incorporates words from Silent Spring author Rachel Carson's testimony before Congress, delivered while she was dying of cancer and continuing to advocate for environmental protections. Together, Carson's words and the botanical Liberty ask us to consider clean air, water, land, and healthy ecosystems not as separate from our freedoms, but as essential to the liberty we seek to preserve.



Religious Liberty
Acrylic Monotype
18"x 24"

Religious Liberty reflects on the First Amendment's protection of religious freedom and the pluralism that protection makes possible. The opening words of the First Amendment form the background, while Liberty takes on the appearance of stained glass, assembled from fragmented pieces into a unified whole. Numerous religious symbols appear within her form, representing the many faith traditions that coexist within American life. Religious Liberty uses the language of fragmentation and union to consider a fundamental democratic promise: liberty of conscience depends not on sharing the same beliefs, but on protecting the freedom to believe differently, or not to believe at all.

Restoring Liberty
Acrylic Monotype
18"x 24"



Restoring Liberty is the work that began the series, establishing its central question of how the promises of American democracy can be repaired, reclaimed, and renewed. The bottom layer was created by artist Dixie Redmond and incorporates text from the Declaration of Independence, grounding the work in the nation's stated ideals of equality and unalienable rights. Built upon that foundation, Liberty becomes both symbol and challenge, asking us to consider the distance between those founding promises and their realization. The collaborative layers also reflect the larger premise of the series: democracy is not the work of one person, but something created, sustained, and restored together.



Peace
Mixed Media Collage
18" Diameter

Peace begins with the question, What gives you hope? Peace is more than the absence of conflict. It creates the conditions in which liberty can take root and flourish. It asks us to recognize one another's humanity, to choose dialogue over division, and to make room for people to live without fear. The restoration of liberty depends upon our ability to build a society where peace is not simply an aspiration, but something we actively practice with one another.



Generosity recognizes that liberty cannot thrive when we are concerned only with ourselves. It calls us to share what we have, whether resources, time, knowledge, compassion, or opportunity, and to invest in the well-being of others. Generosity strengthens communities by widening access and possibility rather than guarding them for a privileged few. Restoring liberty requires us to understand that our freedoms are interconnected and that a flourishing democracy depends upon creating opportunities for everyone to prosper.



Equality recognizes that liberty cannot be fully realized when rights, opportunities, and protections are unevenly distributed. Equality asks us to look beyond the promise that all people are created equal and examine whether that promise is reflected in how people actually live. Restoring liberty requires dismantling barriers that have kept some from its full protections and ensuring that freedom is not reserved for a select few. Liberty becomes stronger when every person can stand on equal ground.



Compassion
Mixed Media Collage
18" Diameter

Compassion recognizes that liberty depends on how we respond to one another's suffering. It begins with the willingness to listen, to imagine an experience different from our own, and to offer care without needing every answer. Compassion makes room for vulnerability and reminds us that needing help is part of being human. It gives hope a practical form through patience, kindness, and the everyday choice to show up for one another. Through compassion, we create the trust and connection that allow freedom to flourish.



Community reminds us that liberty is not sustained by individuals acting alone. It grows through connection, participation, and a willingness to take responsibility for one another and the places we share. Community creates space for many voices and experiences while building the common ground necessary for collective action. Restoring liberty requires showing up for one another, especially when another person's rights or freedoms are at risk, and recognizing that democracy is something we create together.



The Truth recognizes that liberty depends upon a shared commitment to truth, even when the truth is difficult or challenges what we want to believe.

Democracy cannot function when facts are deliberately obscured, distorted, or dismissed. Truth makes accountability possible, gives citizens the knowledge necessary to participate, and provides common ground from which disagreement can occur.

Restoring liberty requires the courage to seek the truth, speak it, and protect those who bring it into the light.

Daryne Rockett | Doodle Rex



Daryne Rockett is a self-taught mixed-media artist, Air Force veteran, and trauma therapist based in Orono, Maine.

Her visual art practice began following a brain injury in 2014 and has grown from an intensely personal process of recovery into an exploration of resilience, justice, hope, and our responsibilities to one another. Working in paint, printmaking, collage, and textiles, she uses layers, repeated marks, vivid color, and found materials to explore complex ideas.

Special thanks to the Bangor Public Library for providing the space and support that made Restoring Liberty possible. Artwork in the exhibition is available for purchase, with a price list at the circulation desk. A portion of exhibition sales will be donated to the Bangor Public Library.

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