

*In 2019 I was invited to install an American flag made of thorns in the exhibition, Pop Up, hosted by Miniartextil / Arte & Arte in Como, Italy. The local newspaper was writing a monographic insert for the exhibition and, because I was exhibiting such an iconic symbol of America, I was asked to write about my vision for America at this time. Fall, 2019*

My vision for America is built on the idealism nurtured deeply in my soul as an American. I envision our democratic system working as it was designed.

My fervent hope is that the system holds. Fair elections take place in 2020, prevented from outside interference by stringent governmental oversight. Voters are enfranchised. Leaders are elected with the clear majority backing of the people. Fairness and justice return to the public square. Respect for science, facts and education triumphs over fear and hate. The democratic system works, restoring the rights of those willfully disenfranchised by a xenophobic administration. America once again becomes a leader in the world particularly, in the realm of climate change.

I envision the current state of angst providing the catalyst for the majority of Americans to rise and come together, demanding a return to the principles upon which our nation was founded. We have learned that we are not invincible. We are considerably more vulnerable from within, and without, than we had realized. The deep divisions that have been nurtured by this administration cannot be rejoined without a massive and intentional effort at a reconstruction of a New America. The wounds are deep. There is no returning to the idealism of yesterday, there is only forging new ground, building a revitalized country acknowledging and assimilating the scars of our past and recent history.

If our democracy can weather the current state of politics, we will emerge stronger and more authentic in the promise of hope and inspiration for all people. An America revitalized through an enormous re-commitment to trust and truth, internally and internationally, will offer a sense of tempered idealism, a vibrant spirit of opportunity, and a renewed sense of goodwill toward the world and toward all within its borders.

The American flag is a powerful symbol of America.

*Flag IV* is imbued with meaning because of the material of which it is made.

The thorns are both elegant and daunting. They embody a darkness, a sense of danger, a very real capacity for harm. The thorns evoke complex cultural metaphors and a sense of ambiguity relevant to the perception of America today.

Susan White.

2019