

Artist's Statement

Art and politics are inextricably intertwined in my life. They define who I am as an artist and as an activist. My earliest memories involve making pictures on whatever was at hand and listening to adults talk, with concern, about what was happening in the world.

My work reflects my feelings about a troubled planet. The stimuli around me evoke images I feel compelled to put into concrete terms. Each work in progress enables me to look at myself, at what is occurring in the global community, and in my own, that provoke my outrage, and to look closely at those whose power is directed against the most vulnerable and marginalized in society.

Initially, my focus was primarily on painting which gradually became three dimensional. Over the years I worked in many mediums, but construction of a solid image with external light, shadow and reflection provided a way to say what I was feeling and a way to combine the visual with content and metaphor. The inclusion of movement evolved early in this process with the use of water in motion. It was the start of my work with programmed components.

For the past several years I have been involved with sound components. Some of these are audio tapes that use excerpts from contemporary historical texts as in "American Inquisition," "MAD[E] IN U.S.A." and "Third World Police Torture-Chicago Style." Others use simple sounds such as the heart beat in "attic."

Whether viewers are engaged in my work through their own transient shadows or reflections, or by just looking and listening, I hope the encounter will encourage them to begin to question, to begin dialogue, to draw parallels between past events and the present, and to think about what these may mean for us in the future.



Pearl Hirshfield