



## Liberty

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This piece began as a jewelry project!

I love the Statue of Liberty. The crown, with its sunrays, is a perfect design for my art deco obsession to feed off of! I have done a series of Lady Liberty in many different styles and techniques on porcelain this year. With this small plate, the project evolved from an unlikely beginning! But, I must back-up:

My first inspiration was an ad in the NY Times, for some **jewelry** made of brass and stainless steel that looked like 3D cityscapes. WOW! That's right up my alley, you know? Immediately I got out my lumpy old porcelain slip and plaster bat, and poured some slip out. I left some all lumpy, for the background shapes and added smooth clay to the foreground for some buildings that would be glazed and shiny. I knew that I wanted to replicate the gold vs. silver idea that I had seen in the ad. With clay, I knew if I left bisque for the gold, it would look soft and dull, but still a pretty gold. For the silver (platinum) parts, I kept the clay smooth for glazing. After fine-tuning the shapes and texture, I cut out window shapes. As I had the mess out already, I continued to pour and shape, sculpt, etc different city shapes and some very delicate cut-outs of Brooklyn Bridge shapes. I high fired them all at cone 6. (That's not 06, but "straight 6.")

The Br. Bridge pieces kept breaking, so I salvaged what I could, using it as "a ruin." The glaze acted as glue in more than one instance! With the cityscape piece, I applied glaze to the smooth foreground buildings. I also put glaze on other pieces, like the Br. Bridge pcs. The painting was fired at Cone 06.

I put platinum on the shiny buildings, and liquid bright good on the bisque. On the Br. Bridge I left the glaze white and put LBG on the edges, to accentuate them. The painting was fired at 018.

I looked at these pieces for quite some time before I knew what to do with them. My son promptly told me that the cityscape was WAY too big, that even a rap star

would not wear it! I put them aside and continued with the myriad of other playthings in my studio. This leads me to the Statue of Liberty.

I had done Lady Liberty in many techniques during the year, including sand blasting. I had a small square plate with a beautiful sharp rim. I placed a line drawing of Lady Liberty on it and decided it was nice on the square shape, as the round crown and pointed rays could divide up the negative space in an artful manner. **Translation:** Each section of white background was of different size and shape, making an interesting negative space. I decided to sandblast the design, so I applied 2 layers of masking tape to the entire plate. One layer was horizontal and overlapping, the 2<sup>nd</sup> layer was vertical and overlapping. After burnishing it down with the back of a metal soup spoon, I drew my lady lib. Design on the tape. Using an X-acto knife, I removed the areas I wanted to blast. I burnished the cut edges again, and sand blasted the design into the piece.

After washing it with soap and water, drying completely, I drew my design outline and resisted all around it. I painted the entire lady with mother of pearl, being careful to place strokes with the contours of her face. I wasn't sure if it would come out streaky or not, so at least the streaks would go with the flow, of the shapes. I could always do another coat of MOP to clean it up or cover up streaks. I fired it to 016. The luster turned out colorful and had definite contours of the facial structure! **Translation:** I got lucky! Using a pen usually used for pen-work, I put a new pen point in and dipped into Liquid Bright Gold, drawing the very delicate outlined of the Lady. I placed the cityscape jewelry piece along the bottom of the plate, overlapping the Lady a little. Usually, city is the background, and the statue is the foreground. I kind of swapped it this time; bring the background into the fore. BUT, it's much smaller than Liberty and it seems to balance the piece well. After setting the cityscape down, I saw that I also had a "ruined" piece of the Br. Bridge, which fit just right on the left corner of the piece. I attached each corner of each piece with a small dot of base for raised gold and fired at 016. Done.

What a journey! This was so much fun and totally took on a life of its own. What started out as an attempt at making porcelain jewelry turned into an interesting combination of techniques and Best of Show piece. Please experiment! You never know where an idea can lead!