

# "FREEDOM" BY ZENOS FRUDAKIS

26 APRIL 2015



To commemorate the 25th of April holiday just passed, I would like to share with you this wonderful piece of art, perhaps only recognized by few art-lovers, but not one we should underestimate. “**Freedom**” is a handsome bronze sculpture by artist **Zenos Frudakis** (an American with Greek roots), which may be seen outside GSK head-quarters in Philadelphia. In the sculptor’s own words, *“I wanted to create a sculpture almost anyone, regardless of their background, could look at and*

*instantly recognize that it is about the idea of struggling to break free. This sculpture is about the struggle for achievement of freedom through the creative process. Although for me, this feeling sprang from a particular personal situation, I was conscious that it was a universal desire with almost everyone; that need to escape from some situation—be it an internal struggle or an adversarial circumstance, and to be free from it.”*

**Francesco Pisano** in “The States of Freedom” describes the values of “freedom” in a most interesting manner, pausing poignantly on every single thought:

*“In my humble opinion, freedom is the opportunity for each individual to be him/herself, and to manifest his/her own nature in all fields of endeavor, while always respecting others’ freedom. Freedom may be described as comprising 4 states: “Free from..., Free of..., Free to..., and lastly Free with... . The first “freedom from”, pertains to “freedom” intended in its contrarian meaning, it includes a potent psychological component, as in freedom from something. It is key to point out that there are states of slavery (within or without) which don’t allow man to be thoroughly free from internal prisons: psychological blockages, neuroses, and phobias. The second stage is “Being free of” which for many relates to having “choice”. The Freedom to decide what is best for ourselves.*

*Alternatively the Freedom of...accepting a proposal, responsibly, even if it doesn't reflect what we might have planned.*

*The third stage is being "Free to..." In this case freedom is perceived in its positive aspects. For instance, Freedom meaning "free to...do" places emphasis on freedom to do good for oneself and others; Freedom intended as "free to... free," underscores the option to free others who are yet bound! The last stage to overcome is freedom seen as "free with..." It is important to understand that one cannot be free on one's own; one experiences freedom only in the context of others, in a collective effort, exerted together."*



In fact the sculptor engages each stage of freedom in ourselves to the end of reaching this very last phase. Four unique figures are visible, each representing a stage in life. The first is relatively unformed, it is an integral part of the base of the opus, and is the symbol of freedom being held captive by society, and the circumstances associated to society: it addresses the illusion only of freedom, while still bound. The second figure represents the beginning of a process of “liberation,” when a person seeks to find his/her identity within society, gradually detaching from restrictions. The third figure (one arm reaching forward, hand open as if seeking to touch the world) represents the Force exerted by a person reaching for Freedom to ultimate victory. That victory is clearly embodied by the forth figure, joyous and enthusiastic.

On this important anniversary which commemorates the liberation of our country, let’s not forget (even though many will seek to make us forget) the great efforts that were required to attain national liberty, and in consequence but most importantly, individual freedom. At times to feel truly free may be complex, and freedom may seem something abstract, a value subscribed by charter as an inviolable right, while deep down we feel alone, lost, and trapped by this very “sense of freedom.” Lets always remember the importance of Freedom, and that even if temporarily hidden in our experience, its ever-present availability gives opportunity for a better life.

These four figures must trigger inside each one renewed search, especially in these difficult times when many families find themselves in tough circumstances, free yet slaves of poverty. Italy must grant them a peaceful freedom, but to achieve this each must gift Italy with the power and Freedom it deserves. Our grandparents fought for freedom and dignity; let's not allow this to change.

I know it isn't easy but do search for that essence of Freedom, it may be hidden but I assure you it is there.

*-Noemi Bolognesi*

Translation by Marco Menato

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