

# BERNIE TAUPIN: “THE WALL”

by DANA YARGER



**THE WALL**, can be seen representing the conversation restricting passage into the United States and the beauty of an American dream upon passage. But of course, much more.

The world best knows Mr. Taupin as one-half of one of the most famous music creative partnerships: Bernie Taupin, CBE and Sir Elton John. In addition to being called a songwriter, lyricist and poet, Mr. Taupin describes himself as a “storyteller.” The words written by Mr. Taupin and brought to melody and sung by Sir Elton clearly reflect Mr. Taupin’s storied storytelling genius.

Mr. Taupin’s visual art, while with lifelong inspiration, started over 20 years ago emulating the world’s most influential abstract expressionist artists. Inspired by abstract thought and gesture, Bernie found his own voice beyond painting into concepts of assemblage including found and repurposed objects.

The American flag became central element of his works referencing the history and the aspiration of America. His essay “Ragged Glory” written for an exhibition celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day, provides the background for his inspiration. His first breakthrough artwork of an American flag cocooned as a chrysalis in fiber and cord, which he titled “SLEEPING BEAUTY” was celebrated at the Elton John AIDS Foundation Benefit in 2016 in New York City. One critic commented, the work “Offers the viewer a secure patriotic symbol that is tightly wrapped like a Christo object, as if to protect its dignity and importance to our history”. In Sleeping Beauty, the fairy tale, the Princess was placed under an evil spell and put to sleep for 100 years until a prince arrived with a kiss bring her back to life. The metaphor for the viewer is to see the ‘beauty’ protected and bound within the colorful fibers giving the viewer the opportunity to conceptually release the ‘beauty’ from its spell. **THE WALL** was constructed from many ‘blocks’ of Sleeping Beauty works and unified by aligning cords to create the entire impressive installation, representing the many ‘beauties’ for Mr. Taupin’s life and career. And for the beauties for owner as well.