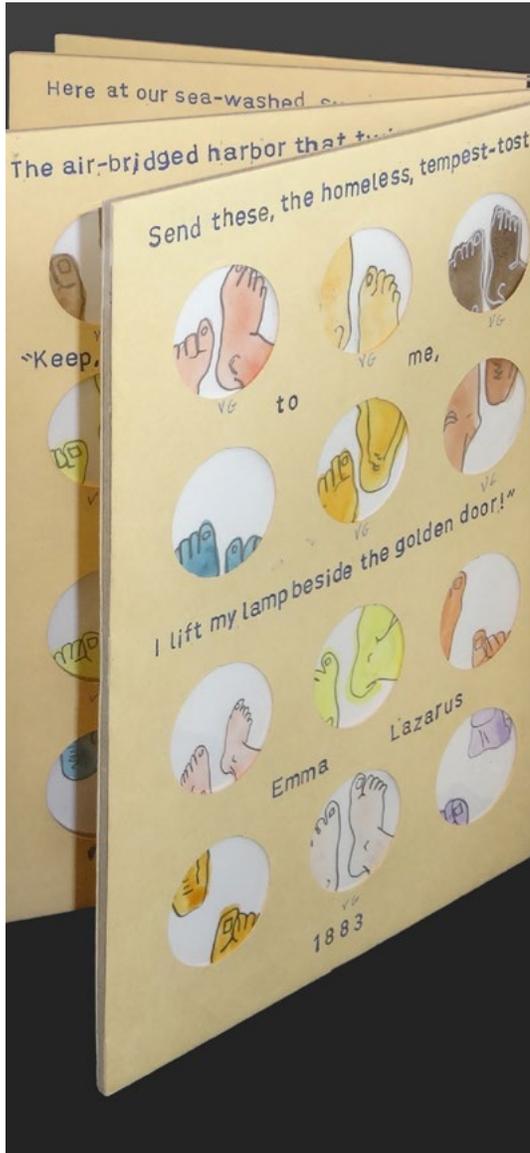


# UTOPIA/DYSTOPIA

Sue Sommers  
Pinedale, WY



“*Liberty Walking*: coin albums full of drawn feet. Honoring the Statue of Liberty, Emma Lazarus, immigrants, and walking women everywhere.”

## *Liberty Walking*

Altered books created with repurposed coin collecting albums, watercolor and pencil on Yupo, collage, and ink. 8” h x 6” w x 1” d (each volume)

### **Statement**

The United States was born from utopian optimism balanced by real-world dystopian experience. Nothing human is ever perfect, but one of our most original, and I would argue, best differences is America’s strength as a nation of immigrants.

*Liberty Walking* is a set of coin collecting albums for the Liberty Walking half dollar. The coin was issued from 1916 to 1947, a challenging era that bracketed both World Wars, the Great Depression, and the start of the Cold War. The front of the coin shows Lady Liberty striding toward the rising sun, one arm outstretched in welcome.

I have altered the coin albums to explore history, freedom, and family.

- The entire text of *The New Colossus*, by Emma Lazarus, is stamped inside each coin album. This poem has been displayed inside the Statue of Liberty since 1903.
- Putting one foot in front of the other is a basic and precious act of self-determination.
- Coin album windows protect things of value. I drew a different pair of walking feet for each window.
- The feet are seen from above, so you can imagine them as your own feet.
- My grandparents were twentieth-century immigrants fleeing poverty and terror about the same time the poem was placed inside the Statue of Liberty.

### **Biography**

Sue Sommers is an artist and publication designer in Pinedale, Wyoming. She received a Wyoming Arts Council Fellowship Award in 1999 for her book art. Sommers’ work hangs in the Wyoming Capitol, is exhibited nationally, and has been collected by public and private entities across Wyoming.

[www.SueSommers.com](http://www.SueSommers.com)