



**Featured Artist
Charlie Milgrim**

Artist and sculptor Charlie Milgrim presents a selection of works that address challenges in our changing world. View more by visiting her [website](#).



"Secret Fields" bowling balls, tar paper, 12' x 5' x 5'



"Insomnia" bowling ball, cast concrete, 13" x 18" x 15"

I'm a California-based artist working with various media. I started out my career as a conceptual sculptor, but later, in the spirit of experimentation, I found inspiration in photography and painting.

Creating my sculpture and installations, I make use of scavenged, second-hand objects. I rework and combine them into new forms, often exploiting gravity as an active element.



"Secret Concert" bowling balls, music stands, 4' x 28" x 16"

The primary material of my early work is bowling balls. Over the years I've amassed a collection of 600. These range from plain black ones to others in a kaleidoscope of colors and swirling patterns. Bowling balls are important building blocks in my work that are rich with metaphorical possibilities, being stand-ins for heads, breasts, planets, water pollutants, and so on.



"Fearthramid" bowling balls and steel, 7' x 45" x 45"

For my graduating exhibit at the University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, I unveiled my piece *Fearthramid*. It is a stacked-up pyramid of 35 bowling balls atop a triangular steel table, reaching up over seven feet. I sandblasted the word FEAR into the side of each ball, using smaller type for the bottom layer and larger type for each ascending layer, leading to the biggest FEAR capping off the top.

My piece *Two Histories* represents my concern for the fate of our planet. I placed two bowling balls on an old cast iron balance scale with a number 2 inscribed in the faceplate. The two balls—one a dull gray, the other a vibrant blue—are held in the balance between two alternate histories of earth. When our history is written, will our planet be dead or alive?

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"Two Histories" bowling balls, iron scale, 18" x 26" x 9"

In my installation titled *Stealth Reverie* I made black paper planes out of roofing tar paper—shadowy stealth fighters—creased and folded into the angular abstractions of the dark geometry of our war machine. They hang on the wall in a straight formation projecting outward, menacing the viewer.



"Stealth Reverie" tar paper, 3' x 25' x 6'



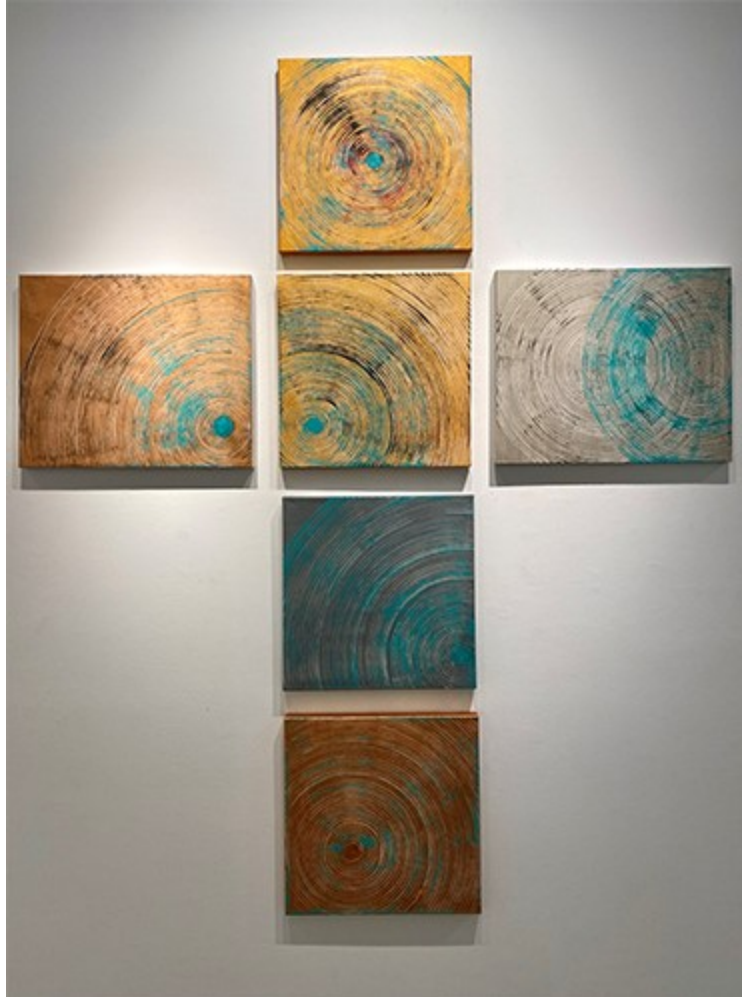
"Bethlehem" photography, 30" x 19"

Years ago, I visited the shuttered Bethlehem Steel mill rusting away in eastern Pennsylvania. I was mesmerized by the enormous scale of the blast furnaces and other decrepit structures looming over the landscape. At one time, Bethlehem was one of the world's leading steel manufacturers, producing steel for some of our nation's most iconic structures. In the photographs of my *Bethlehem* series, I sought to capture in the industrial ruins the mill's former grandeur of an earlier age.



"Street Code" photography, 32" x 20"

My photographic series, *Street Code* was born out of my fascination with the spray-painted scribbles that I first observed on the sidewalks of New York City. I later learned they were the cryptic vocabulary of utility workers.



"Aureoles" acrylic on canvas, 90" x 70"

In recent paintings, I focus, if not obsess, on the concentric circle which recurs in nature—tree rings, patterns in shock waves and electromagnetic fields—as well as in man-made products, such as the grooves in cymbals and vinyl records. Also, early religious iconography often depicts an aureola (or nimbus), a radiant disk of light, often a concentric circle, that surrounds and highlights the heads of sacred figures. In my latest paintings *Aureolas*, I depict shining aureolas that are unbound to any personage, fractured and free-floating, ready to confer their saintliness, democratically, on anyone.

Charlie Milgrim invites you to follow her on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).