

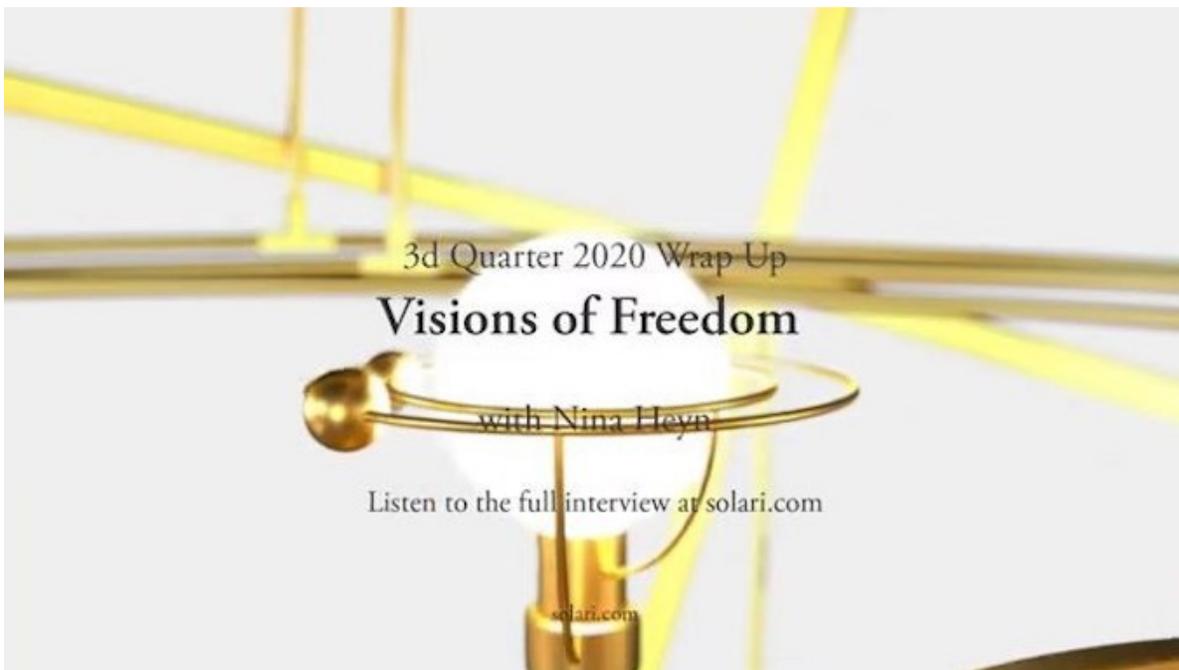
Actionable intelligence to live a Free & Inspired Life



# The Solari Report

**October 22, 2020**

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2020 Wrap Up  
Visions of Freedom  
with  
Nina Heyn



**Summary:** Our 3rd Quarter 2020 Wrap Up: Visions of Freedom web presentation is a work in progress that grows as we publish our weekly segments—Solari Report subscribers can access it at [Solari.com](http://Solari.com)

I celebrated *Visions of Freedom* with *Food for the Soul's* Nina Heyn. Nurturing our vision of who we are as a free people is part of preserving freedom for ourselves and future generations. I asked Nina to invite in the ancestors—revisiting stories of the fight for freedom that great artists have painted throughout the ages. Inspired by our recent discussions with Thomas Meyer on freedom, Nina added reviews of marvelous works of art depicting the story of Gideon as well as the coming of comets throughout history. She also created an outstanding selection of cinematic stories of freedom told by great moviemakers.

As you listen to our discussion, you will want to follow along on the *3rd Quarter 2020 Wrap Up* web presentation. The *Visions of Freedom* section will be published on Thursday when we post the audios. This is truly food for the soul—you can feast on the beauty of the art works.

**Bio:** Nina is the founder of Torus International, a marketing strategy solutions consultancy that specializes in entertainment marketing and film acquisition, particularly in international markets. Her recent activities in international markets included service as head of marketing at a leading Polish independent film distributor, and as acquisitions consultant at a European exhibition and distribution company. In the United States, she served as an executive in global publicity for a major film studio—giving her a strong understanding of the worldwide economic and political impact of entertainment and culture. Every year, Nina watches hundreds of movies and TV shows and spends an inordinate amount of time in museums. This keeps her soul happy and keeps The Solari Report full of fascinating coverage. If you have not discovered the *Food for the Soul* column, just click on the *Food for the Soul* icon on the right side of our home page.

**Catherine Austin Fitts:** Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to *The Solari Report*. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Quarter Wrap Up*, our final section. We are talking about our theme, *Visions of Freedom*, with author and moviegoer and art lover, Nina Heyn, who writes and publishes the *Food for the Soul* column at *Solari* and the *Food for the Soul* podcast. If you haven't tapped into them, I want you to do it as soon as possible. You can link to it from the home page at *Solari*. We have a special dedicated web presentation where Nina 'does her thing'.

Nina Heyn, welcome to *The Solari Report*.

**Nina Heyn:** Thank you, Catherine. It's so nice to talk to you.

**Fitts:** For our 1<sup>st</sup> *Quarter Wrap Up*, we did 'The Real Deal on Going Local'. Then for the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Quarter Wrap Up*, we had the *Injection Fraud* on the Pandemic. Our *Annual Wrap Up* before then had been *Deep State Tactics*. I said, "Too much fear and negativity are going around. We need to reset our minds on the vision we have of where we want to go. For me, of course, we want a human civilization that is free.

I'll never forget being in Uluru, Australia, and constantly hearing about the Aborigines and fighting by the ancestors or saying that the stars were the fires of the ancestors waiting for us to join them in Heaven. I said that we need to revisit what the ancestors have said throughout the centuries about freedom, particularly because tyranny has tried to get its 'mitts' on us many times before. The human race somehow always seems to pull it out. So I thought, "Okay, let's revisit what the great artists and creative types have said to inspire us about freedom through the ages and invite the wisdom of the ancestors in."

I thought, "Clearly, as an investment banker, this is not my strength. Who should I call?" And, of course, "Let's call Nina!"

So I called you and said, "Here is my vision of what I want you to do," and you said... (And now I turn it over to you.)

**Heyn:** I said something that is probably obvious to practically anybody: If we are using the lofty words of freedom or independence, then those words mean different things to different people. Obviously, literature of any kind – books,

novels, journals, and articles – would express with words much better than anything else the abstract notions of something like freedom or independence.

I think that to a great extent, art as in paintings or sculptures or any kind of artistic or visual expression, survives the test of time even better than literature. If you go back to 19<sup>th</sup>-century literature that deals with various issues of freedom and independence, many of the ideas have gotten quite old just because the world has changed so much; people's ideas have changed so much. Some of it is still everlasting, but much of it is no longer relevant to the world that we live in. Whereas, art is much less concrete; on the one hand, it is hard to show in a painting an abstract idea, but on the other hand, it can survive the test of time much better.

Since paintings are something that I love to look at, we thought that we could share some artistic visions on some various aspects of freedom and let it be a starter of ideas for everybody who stumbles upon those articles or anybody who is perusing the issue devoted to that concept.

**Fitts:** I want to tell everybody that if you go to <https://Freedom.Solari.com>, which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Quarter Wrap Up* web presentation, – and you can link to it from this commentary or any of the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Quarter Wrap Up* commentaries – we have a *Visions of Freedom* section so that you can follow along. One of the things that I will tell you is the 'eye candy', as always with any *Food for the Soul* production, is much more dazzling and impressive than anything else you will find at *Solari*.

**Heyn:** 'Eye candy' is what we do for a living. *Food for the Soul* is 'eye candy', but I am a strong believer in 'eye candy' because it gives you two things. It relieves the stress and negativity, which is why we call it *Food for the Soul*. It's something that feeds our emotions and well-being on the one hand, and on the other hand, the very old trite saying that a picture is worth a thousand words works. Sometimes you look at it and have this 'Aha' moment, and you can see how this conveys some idea or some emotion – which is what we try to do in four different articles that are completely disparate and different. We somewhat 'attack' the idea from other points of view.

**Fitts:** Let's dive in. Let's start with: How do you show freedom?

**Heyn:** This is the title that we gave to the first story when we were trying to give an overview to the title of the whole issue. I am a great proponent of a very old saying as well, “If you do not know where you are going, you are never going to get there.” So, having a vision is a very good idea.

First, you have to know where you’re going. This is not practical advice because these are visions or ideas, and obviously, freedom is such a different notion, which is exactly what is in this article. There are different kinds of freedom, as we all know. Some of it is the physical freedom of one nation to be free of another nation or another country that has invaded it. That is the most obvious freedom.

There are freedoms that pertain to the world of ideas, which would be a religious freedom or just the freedom of believing in different political systems that you are living in.

Then I am always fascinated and continually raising my hand on this idea that is possibly the least explored, which is political freedom and other freedoms. It’s a freedom that is economical. In other words, if you are poor, there are many freedoms that are just taken away from you. If you are a woman – even today, even in Europe –some freedoms are completely taken away from you, and so on.

I wanted to go back to art – to ‘eye candy’ and beautiful paintings – to see whether we can find some illustrations of all these notions that we are talking about; what was considered freedom or the lack of it in the past, and why is it that sometimes some paintings are great examples of it?

Did you want to say something here?

**Fitts:** No, I’m just looking at the ‘eye candy’.

**Heyn:** Talking about paintings is one of the dumbest things that we can do, but we will try.

**Fitts:** Let’s start with one of my favorite museum moments ever. This happened to me several times in the National Museum of Scotland. It wasn’t

only once; I had several amazing, shocking ‘Aha’s’, but I turned the corner, and there they had written out the Declaration of Arbroath across the wall very beautifully. It was done in a lighter blue ink, and it was stunning. Then I read it, and it was so impactful. You have it as the quote at the top.

It was one of those moments where you just go, “Ahhh!” Maybe if you could read it for us, that is how we can start.

**Heyn:** If someone has to read it, you have to read it because my charming European accent may not be the best. So go for it.

**Fitts:** This is the period when David Bruce finally won the independence for Scotland. We talked about it when we covered *Braveheart* in your podcast that we recently did:

“For we fight, not for glory, nor riches, nor honors, but for freedom alone, which no good man gives up except with his life.”

**Heyn:** And I wanted to add that this was actually written on a declaration in 1320, in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. That was given to one of the English Kings (sic, actually to Pope John XXII), not that it helped the Scots much, but that is another story. Yes, it is a beautiful inscription.

In the article, I am showing a much later document that expresses more or less the same sentiments and on which the American Constitution is based, as well as several other constitutions in several other countries. It is called the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, which has been turned into a painting by Jean-Jacques Francois le Barbier in 1789 which, of course, is the French Revolution. It is one of the paintings that we are showing.

These are classical examples of one nation fighting for its sovereignty. In places in the Western world like Europe, the United States, and Japan, this issue has slightly gone away – meaning that many places in the Western world (would) be threatened with an imminent invasion. Obviously, that was one of the most prevalent issues as late as World War II, so there is a lot of art that reflects this very clear-cut patriotic expression of disagreement on losing national independence.

We have a painting there that talks about the different aspects of freedom. This is *Liberty Leading the People* by Eugène Delacroix. It is a huge canvas that is at the Louvre (Paris). It is very, very famous because it is a symbol of the nation of the people who are trying to revolt against some loss of citizenship or citizen's rights.

**Fitts:** I used to work at a restaurant that had a big Bastille Day celebration, and I would always see this on Bastille Day.

**Heyn:** Oh, yes. That is a painting that is 'whipped out' by the French quite often because, not only is it a wonderful painting, but it expresses what is at the core of the French democracy, which is this conviction that citizens have rights, and if they are in any way abrogated, they need to be fought for. To a certain extent, this is what you have happening with the gilets jaunes (the yellow vests movement), which is happening right now in 2020. So, it has never gone away from the French political scene. That is why we put that there.

We have put in a couple of other paintings. There is a painting by Jan Matejko of the *Battle of Raclawice*, which is featuring Tadeusz Kosciuszko who is the hero of both the American Revolution and the Polish war of independence against the Russians. It is a classic expression of disagreement of one group of people against invaders.

I have also put in there a painting illustrating the famous Battle of Vienna, which has been extremely important for Europe. The battle took place in 1683 when a coalition of some European forces, mainly those that belonged to the Holy Roman Empire, which is more or less contemporary Germany and Poland and Hungary, and a few other nations, participated. That was the opposition against the invasion of Ottoman forces into Europe since the battle took place at Vienna, which is somewhat in the middle of Europe. You can only imagine what would happen if that battle was lost. Half of Europe – if not all of Europe – would be under the Ottoman Empire's power, and presumably, there would be a push to change the religions of Europe as well.

The battle was won thanks to the leadership and bravery of the Polish King, Jan Sobieski, who had managed a surprise attack on Kara Mustafa, the Vizier of the

Turkish/Ottoman army. The battle turned the tide of the advance of the Ottoman Empire and reshuffled European politics for at least 100 years until Napoleon and the Napoleonic wars.

**Fitts:** This is a remarkable painting. I've never seen it before, until you published it with this piece.

**Heyn:** If you are a Western viewer – if we could travel – you would see a different version of that battle because there is a painting by Jan Matejko, the painter whose painting I'm also showing in this article, which is a different painting. He painted *Battle of Vienna* as well, and that painting has been presented or given to the Pope. It is now at the Vatican. There is a special room called the Sobieski Room, which is named after the king who won the battle.

**Fitts:** Oh, then I've seen it.

**Heyn:** It's an enormous, colorful panorama with dozens of fighters at the same time. It's very colorful, and it takes up a huge wall. It's about 20 feet by ten feet or something like that.

**Fitts:** So, I'm sure if I looked at it I would recognize it.

**Heyn:** It is basically what saved Europe, what saved the Church, and what saved all those nations that were on the way to being changed completely. So, in Europe it's a big deal.

We also have a print – an engraving, which is your favorite medium – of the Reformation. The *Reformation Centenary Broadsheet* is the story of a successful battle of religious freedom of thought (in Europe) where the Huguenots were not successful in France, and France remained Catholic. The Huguenots had to go to-what today, is Canada. Then the Reformation that was in Germany was very successful. About 100 years after Martin Luther nailed his theses to the door, there was a leaflet produced in 1617, which was called Reformation Centenary Broadsheet that was celebrating the victory of Reformation in Germany, or (rather) in Saxony. This reminds us that sometimes fighting for religious freedom or the freedom of convictions – if you want to put it much broader – is as important as fighting for the physical independence of someone

trying to take away your physical freedom.

**Fitts:** I always believed that Martin Luther was a freedom fighter. Then in August, I went to the National Museum in Zurich that had an incredible exhibit on the history of nuns and religious women. It was a small exhibit, but fascinating. One of the things that it said was that during the medieval period, the nuns had built up all of these monasteries where they built up significant resources in terms of lands and agriculture and wealth, and they were all run by the women.

When Martin Luther came along, the Reformation stopped all that, and all the wealth and lands and everything was put back under central control, and men got to run it all. So apparently, the Reformation was very devastating for religious women.

**Heyn:** Right, but it was very good for the people who profited from it, which in this case, was the Duke of Saxony. That is exactly what happened during Henry VIII in England when he changed the religion ostensibly so that he could marry another woman. Also, the nice additional value-bonus was getting all the church land and monasteries.

**Fitts:** It's terrible! One of my favorite comedy routines is the 2000-year-old man by Carl Reiner and Mel Brooks. Mel Brooks is a man who has lived for 2,000 years, and has experienced almost everything throughout history. He's been at the right place at the right time. But he has one line where he explains the difference between tragedy and comedy. He says, "Tragedy to me, if it is, is when I cut my little finger and I cry. Comedy is if you fall into an open sewer and die. What do I care?"

So freedom is when I get your lands, and freedom for you is when you get my lands.

If you look at how many of these pictures relate to war and a change of ownership and control of the land, it's a very old theme.

**Heyn:** Absolutely. Very often, in terms of economics, as you know, freedom of one person is at the expense of somebody else's freedom. My personal

obsession is economic freedom or the lack thereof, and I found an illustration in a painting by a minor female painter in England, Emily Mary Osborn, who has painted several quite well-known paintings. One of them is called *The Governess*. She was very much into the subject of women's difficulties in life. This is in Victorian England, where women had practically no economic rights because a girl would be the property of her father in terms of money until she got married. Then she became the property of her husband who managed all the money, no matter how much she brought in her dowry.

So, the painting is of a young woman who is clearly from a nice background but impoverished, if you like. She is being scolded by a woman who has four children who are her charges that she is taking care of. It is clear that the children are sneering because they know that the governess is powerless, and the woman who is employing her is obviously very unpleasant to her. It is a very humiliating scene for the woman, but she has absolutely no economic power because she has no choice; she has to work to live, and has to endure complete powerlessness that is caused by a lack of freedom that is caused by the fact that she doesn't have any money and no place to turn.

It was a perfect example illustrating that, even if we are not talking about the political or military freedom, there are a million other freedoms that we should keep in mind and we should strive to preserve, maintain, support, and have – if we can. Art is beautifully illustrating all those instances.

**Fitts:** This painting is so beautiful, but the thing that I find remarkable is who purchased it.

**Heyn:** Yes, it was purchased by Queen Victoria even though she was a woman in control. I don't know enough about Queen Victoria to criticize her. There were various charity attempts to put women in workhouses if they became destitute, and there were some events to help impoverished people, including women. But at the same time, as we know, the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Victorian Age was the time where people would go to prison if they couldn't pay their debts. Women would be taken off the streets and made to work in workhouses for the morality. The driver of this behavior was morality or conviction that if you are not working, you are immoral and have to be forced to work, though not necessarily in very good conditions.

Yes, the irony is that this painting was purchased by Queen Victoria.

**Fitts:** I could see why she would want it. It shows you a real demonstration at the intimate level of political power. It's a real comment on political power. No matter how powerful you are, even a queen, there are times when you have to mute your tongue and swallow your pride. I'm sure that Queen Victoria knew what it was like to be on both sides of this picture.

Now we turn to Pablo Picasso.

**Heyn:** We are talking about *Guernica* for two reasons. We talked about it before in our podcast when we discussed movies, and we can talk about it again. In the 1930's and 1940's, things were a little more black and white in the sense that you somewhat knew where you stood. If you had your country – let's say it was Spain – and it was invaded by somebody else or bombed by the German planes, then you knew what was black and what was white; you could be supporting one side or the other. Things were much more clear-cut.

After the 1940's, it's hard to figure out in modern geopolitics who is right in a conflict. Sometimes you can, but it is harder. Did you want to say something here?

**Fitts:** No, I was looking at the 'eye candy' again!

**Heyn:** That is why we put those things up. I thought that we would want to show one of the last moments where you could express in your art, something that is not very controversial in the sense that you knew who the 'bad guys' were. To figure out who the 'bad guys' are after that time period, is extremely difficult.

While we are talking about visions of freedom: Freedom from what or freedom for whom? If I'm having freedom, at whose expense is that freedom?

**Fitts:** The name of this town was the site of a real serious massacre. Do you know why he chose this?

**Heyn:** I think he chose this because, by 1937, Picasso was already very established and one of the most famous European artists. He was invited to create a mural or fresco for an international exhibition in Paris in 1937. He was grappling with the scene because much of his art was not necessarily designed for the huge propaganda canvas or something major that they were expecting him to produce. Then the Guernica happened – the massacre during the war – and that was the Franco War or the Spanish Civil War. That was the kind of intellectual stimulus for him to create the mural that he did.

He obviously had very strong convictions during that war, which was basically the fascists against the communists. I don't know which would be better, but in the 1930's, all the intellectuals and all the liberal and democratic people supported communism because they were supporting the poor people or the regular people against Franco's push for power. So Picasso was on that side, and he wanted to express his outrage at what the Germans were doing because the bombing of the city was done by German warplanes, which were supporting Franco, of course.

**Fitts:** I love the story you told about the Nazi officer. Can you tell that story?

**Heyn:** It's anecdotal, and I'm not entirely sure this is accurate, but it is very well-known. I'm not sure if it's true, but there is a story that Picasso, who lived in Paris during the war, hadn't created that much. He went on internal immigration, meaning that he locked himself in his apartment and tried to ignore what was going on, which was not easy.

He was visited several times by different Nazi or German officers for various reasons – some of them because they knew his art from before the war. Sometimes they may have visited him to check on what this prominent French citizen was doing.

The apocryphal story is that he was being visited, and there was a photo of *Guernica* somewhere in the hallway. The officer was asking, "Did you do it?" to which Picasso said, "No, you did."

It is a very good illustration of Picasso, and apparently, they left him alone after that. Artists are much faster and much better at discerning if there is some kind

of injustice or problem happening. The artists are much more attuned to what is happening in the world in an intuitive way. Of course, not all of them, but if you study the history of art, you can see that there are many things that are expressed in art a long time before it actually becomes something brought into everyday life or the common consciousness. So, you can consider some of them as ‘canaries in the coal mine’ in the sense that they understand things much earlier, which is what the German Expressionism of the 1920’s and 1930’s is a perfect example of.

It’s not that they didn’t know how to paint pretty pictures, but they were sensing that the world was coming to an end – which it did, of course, to about 60 million people.

**Fitts:** One of the things that you mentioned is Banksy. Every time I landed in Amsterdam, there would be a mural for the exhibit for Banksy. I’ve never gone, and, of course, I was planning to go on this trip. Then all of the restrictions happened, and it’s a matter of irritation. I love him!

You will have to write a column on him because I just love his works.

**Heyn:** We all love it. It’s very ephemeral, and there are plenty of jokes that he does. When he sold a painting recently at one of the auction houses, Christy’s or Sotheby’s, as soon as the painting was sold, it was shredded. I think this was a fantastic happening.

**Fitts:** That’s right! You told me about that, but I forgot who shredded it.

**Heyn:** It was designed to be that way. The shredder was hidden in the frame of the painting. It was part of the whole ‘happening’ or ‘installation’ or whatever it is.

**Fitts:** So, the buyer knew that it would be shredded?

**Heyn:** That I do not know, and don’t remember. But it is a great commentary on the ephemeral nature of art and the prices of paintings and 21<sup>st</sup> century artists. There are many things that you can write about or think about, which is why he did it. It is very smart.

If I were the owner who had just bought the Banksy painting at the auction, I probably would be in tears, but I think that he did something interesting.

**Fitts:** We turn to comets now. Are you ready?

**Heyn:** Yes, and can you just say why we are even discussing comets?

**Fitts:** I was in Basel this summer, and Thomas Meyer insisted that we go up into the mountains to see if we could see Comet Neowise. We did a discussion at the same time, and he explained that Steiner said that comets were augurs of periods of great freedom impulse by the human race. It was a very interesting discussion and very inspiring. It got me interested in looking at the history of comets and how they impacted life on Planet Earth.

It came from Thomas teaching us about Steiner connecting comets to freedom, and connecting meteorites to freedom, too. There were many meteorites in August.

I asked you, as part of this look at freedom, to review what the artists had said through history about the coming of comets.

**Heyn:** I like very much what he was saying about comets being nonconformist – the rebels of the skies. Looking at a comet is a symbol of nonconformity, and I am probably not the only one, which is why the artists have always wanted to do something when a comet has arrived and shown up in the sky.

The way that I constructed the article was to talk about the fact that comets have always had different expressions in art, depending on how people's ideas about comets through the centuries have changed. The first example that I talk about is the Chinese manuscript that was found in a very famous tomb. It was a huge archaeological discovery in the 1970's in China, which listed dozens of comets that were being tracked and studied by the Chinese astronomers about the same time that the Vikings were roaming through Europe – meaning the Chinese astronomy was a bit more advanced at the time.

As you and I have talked about, a Chinese ruler's power was a mandate from

Heaven – literally. The extent that I am talking about one of the Chinese emperors, Ruizong, who lived in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD and who had at some point, abdicated his rule after the appearance of a comet. That was probably the comet of 712 AD.

During this period, the comet was a connection to the celestial power, and a portent of approval of the skies in China, or maybe as an omen, and quite often, an omen of bad things rather than good things. This is what you find in a lot of medieval illustrations in art.

The most famous example is the Bayeux Tapestry, which is a document on linen. It is embroidered. It is a long stripe of embroidery and appliqué that illustrates the story of events and conflicts between the Normans and the Anglo-Saxons around the Battle of Hastings in 1066, which is one of the most important dates in English history.

Over there (England), you find a comet, which is Halley's Comet. I'm going to backtrack the story to explain the tapestry.

There were two opposing forces. One was Harold, who was the Anglo-Saxon's heir who would normally be an heir of the previous king. On the other hand, on French lands, there was William of Poitiers, who, for various reasons, also portended to the same throne.

The conflict had culminated in the Battle of Hastings in October of 1066 on English land. William won, and Harold was slain in the battle. There was a widespread belief that the appearance of a comet a few months before that battle was a sign from the heavens that Harold was doomed and that he lost the Mandate of Heaven, meaning the divine approval.

All of this was beautifully embroidered by some very hard-working nuns because the tapestry was commissioned by a bishop. In the most beautiful work of art, it displayed the knights and the battles and various historic moments of the conflict and royal encounters. So, this is a classic example of a belief that the comets were crusading or they were the portents of major historical events – usually negative, meaning something major was going to happen.

Even though we also talk about Giotto, and that is the painting you may like, it is a very, very famous fresco from a chapel in Padua in Italy.

**Fitts:** Yes. Whoever thought that Halley's Comet was the star of Bethlehem?

**Heyn:** That was his artistic license because Giotto was saying, "No, I'm not going to talk about the comet being a bad omen; I am just going to use it as the star of Bethlehem in my *Adoration of the Magi* painting," which is exactly that. You have a manger with Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus. You also have beautiful camels. Even though they don't look like camels, they are my favorites in that painting. He basically took a horse and added two small humps. I don't know if he had ever seen a camel. They don't look like camels, but they look charming.

There you have Halley's Comet again. The astronomers consider it the first accurate rendition of what Halley's Comet could look like as a rendition in art. They named a Halley's Comet probe in 1986 'Giotto' in honor of that painting. So, it is an extremely famous painting for both astronomy and the history of art.

Giotto is credited for being a precursor to the Renaissance, as someone who is essentially a bridge between late Gothic paintings and Renaissance paintings. If you look at his frescoes (water-based paint on wet plaster) in Padua, they are incredibly beautiful.

**Fitts:** We are going to move on to Gideon, but there are many more paintings under comets. As you said, if you had pulled in all of the ones that you wanted, it would have been a book.

**Heyn:** Easily you could create a book with paintings of comets. So, we will put a lot of 'eye candy' out to illustrate the conversation you had with Thomas Meyer that comets are fascinating. If you want to talk about something that is the freest in the sky, a comet is it; it just moves the way it wants.

**Fitts:** These are absolutely amazing, including the Kandinsky. I've never seen that; it's absolutely beautiful.

**Heyn:** It is.

**Fitts:** It's in Munich.

**Heyn:** The comets inspire. Another symbol of inspiration for us is the story of Gideon. Perhaps you should tell us the story of Gideon because you are much more versed in it than I am.

**Fitts:** Gideon was a shepherd in Israel, and Israel had been occupied by the Midianites. This is a story from the Old Testament in Judges, Chapters 6-9. An angel of the Lord insists that Gideon should throw the Midianites out of Israel. He wants them to call for an army. Gideon is furious. He is a shepherd; he is not a soldier. The angel insists, "No, no. The Lord is going to do it. We just need somebody to work through. You're perfect because everybody will know when it works that it couldn't possibly have been you." So, Gideon and the angel agreed to Gideon's humble assessment of himself.

Gideon calls for an army. They show up, and the angel of the Lord insists, "No, no. You have too many people. They're not faithful. Tell the scared ones to go home."

So, Gideon tells the scared individuals to go home, so he has fewer people. He is very nervous and afraid. Then the angel returns and says, "No, you got rid of the scared ones. You have the faithful, but they're not all competent. If the divine intelligence is going to work through a human army, we need them to be both faithful and competent."

Gideon, of course, is very frantic and upset because he doesn't have enough people, let alone if he now sends more people home. The angel instructed him to get everybody to the river to drink water, and the people who drink the water but keep their eyes on the horizon where the enemy might come from, are deemed to be competent. The ones who look down and take their eyes off the horizon are sent home.

I had no idea that these pictures of the drinking of the water existed. Why don't we stop the story for a bit for you to introduce some of the ones you've found?

**Heyn:** There are quite a number of them, and I couldn't get to some of them

because of production rights. There are two that are quite famous, well-known paintings to illustrate what you are saying about the drinking at the edge of the water, which I call ‘Gideon’s river test’. There is a painting by a German painter. The artist himself is not famous, but the painting is well-known. It’s called *Gideon Tests His Army*, and what I like about the image is by the edge of the water, there is a group of his fighters who are painted very distinctly in color. That is what you see in the front. They are talking to each other, sitting down, relaxing. One of them is pouring some water over his face.

Their eyes are definitely ‘not on the ball’; they are not focusing on the task at hand. They are having a good time by the edge of the water. Then you realize that in the very center of the painting, at the end of the water in some kind of blueish-greenish color – in the fog or far away – they are not in color. You see the soldiers who are standing straight. They are not drinking water, they are not letting go of their arms, they are not breaking ranks, and they are ready to fight because the time is now to do the job right and not relax in a group.

It’s a beautiful illustration of the idea that if you do something, you had better do it right. It doesn’t matter how many of you there will be, but the ones who are going to do it . . . is a meritocracy. Use the people who know what they are doing, and not people who are just there ‘for the ride’, so to speak.

**Fitts:** So after the river test, Gideon and his army of 300 men line up at the top of a valley. The Midianites are sleeping at the bottom of the valley. Gideon and his men come down the side of the mountains with trumpets and lanterns – so it’s with light and vibration. They don’t even have any weapons.

They moved down the side of the mountain in the middle of the night, and the Midianites are so hateful and suspicious of each other that they jump up and kill each other as the noise and the vibration comes down. Gideon chases them out of Israel, and they leave. Of course, as the angel said, God was going to do it; not Gideon and his army. They just had to come down the side of the mountains.

The people turned to Gideon and said, “We want you to be our king.”

Gideon said, “No, I’m a shepherd. I’m going back to my flock. You have a

leader. His name is God, and you need to be faithful to him. I need to go back to being a shepherd.” And ‘off he went’.

**Heyn:** That would never work these days, but that is his story. Here we have a painting that is more well-known. This is by Nicolas Poussin who is a 17<sup>th</sup> century French painter. Most of his artistic life was spent in Rome because he wouldn’t paint stupid things by royal commission of the court. So, he moved to Rome and painted there.

There aren’t that many paintings by him in Italy. This one is at the Vatican, but there aren’t that many because his art was very popular for quite a long time, and it was sold all over the world. If you look at most major museums all over the world, and there will be a Poussin canvas somewhere there.

This painting is in the middle of the battle. It’s exactly what you are describing. Gideon is in the middle, blowing on his trumpet and leading his army, and it’s in the middle of the night so there is this beautiful shine coming from those lights. It’s a complete disarray of horses, soldiers, and people who are totally confused. It’s a beautiful composition and a great painting that illustrates the moment of winning through confusion.

**Fitts:** It’s clever because Gideon and his troops look like people you would want to hang out with, and the Midianites look like they are a mess.

**Heyn:** In this painting, Poussin knows what he is doing. He has the Gideon figure portrayed by a young, almost mythological, cherubic figure. It’s a very enduring myth about ‘less is more’ and about the fact that it’s the convictions and having angels on your side, meaning fighting for the right things, that could be stronger than the physical numbers of your opponent. That is why the Gideon story and the Gideon theme are still alive amongst the religious studies, and in art or in naming military operations. Sometimes they use the term ‘Gideon’ to imply the same thing, but there will be a smaller number of very competent people.

**Fitts:** Right at the top, you have a sketch that was designed for a fresco, and I think the sketch was destroyed and a student made another fresco, and that was destroyed. I don’t know exactly what is in Budapest, but Thomas’s wife who is

Hungarian, found it. I absolutely fell in love with it, but it was tiny. So, I took it to the printer here and said, “What can you do?”

He said, “I can make a tapestry from it.” He has one line in his print shop where they utilize beautiful works of art and make wall hangings on a tapestry. So I’ve ordered one, and I’m waiting to see what it will look like. Hopefully, it will be a big piece in my living room here.

**Heyn:** That is amazing! From what I understand, it is actually in Budapest in some shape or form, but it could be a copy of a sketch. Even though the sketch might have survived, the fresco in Europe – what can I tell you. . . not many frescoes are still standing.

**Fitts:** Frescoes don’t often survive the war.

Finally, these sections are always amazing. One of the things that I’ve learned is as soon as you did the first movie section, I said, “I will never do another movie section because I can’t touch you.”

Your knowledge of the movies – and of global movies, not only English-speaking movies – is astonishing. It’s deep and it’s rich. This is an incredible collection.

You wanted to look at freedom from many different points of view, and this is a wide array.

**Heyn:** That was the idea. We actually are saying that this is a starter list. In other words, there are so many movies that can illustrate different aspects of freedom or independence.

We are talking about visions, meaning we are trying to say, “These are various ideas about what freedom means or what it could be important to view in the future or right now.” There is nothing like art that provides some inspiration or some different points of view.

The list is far from completed, in a way. We are not writing a book, but we wanted to go in as many directions as possible to give you some entertainment

ideas, but also some ideas of how the artist presents what is important in human life and what isn't. What we call 'lack of freedom' is exactly something we feel that we should have, and we don't. I don't know if we are going to have time to go through all the movies.

**Fitts:** I know that we will not go through all of them, but this is an absolutely brilliant collection. If you love movies half as much as I do, you should check it out. You will get some great ideas. Some of these have historically been very popular, so I'm sure every subscriber will watch movies that they have already seen.

It's funny because we did the podcast together, and you had me watch *Braveheart* for possibly the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> time, and I loved it more this time than I ever have.

**Heyn:** It's 'eye candy', just as some paintings are. What's not to like?

We went into some other directions on purpose. We have a movie called *Awakenings*. It's about freedom or the lack of it if someone is sick. If you are sick or, God forbid, disabled, then most basic freedoms are taken away from you; they are literally taken away. So that is something I wanted people to think about. If you have your four limbs and can move about, then you have much more than millions of people on the planet. So that is one example.

Another example is, if we talk about *The Imitation Game*, this is about social intolerance – the lack of human rights that led to Alan Turing's suicide in the 1950's, which you would think should not be happening in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century in the middle of Europe, but it did.

We are reviewing various movies looking at freedom from different perspectives.

**Fitts:** One of the movies that I surely want to watch is *The Monopoly of Violence*. It was published this year on the 'yellow vest' protests in France. That looks fascinating.

**Heyn:** I have watched it, and it is a classic French documentary in the sense of form, meaning that various French intellectuals express their views on the concept

of violence. What I found very interesting was that it is extremely current. It talks about the movement of ‘yellow vests’ now in 2020, and also, because it is happening in a country that has been – as we know – the leader in terms of civil rights and independence in the world. There is a reason the Statue of Liberty was given by the French to the Americans and why the constitutions in so many countries are based on the French Constitution. “They have already done it.”

Two-hundred years ago they already blazed a trail. Now they seem to be – for various reasons – making a big circle and going back to what is happening in many European countries right now with the move to the right, and what is happening in England, and the complete abrogation of the freedoms that they have spent hundreds of years establishing, qualifying, and fighting for.

**Fitts:** Oh, but I don’t think that the ‘yellow vests’ are the right (conservative); I think it’s the productive. I think it’s the small, independent producer trying to protect. I think it’s a productivity backlash.

**Heyn:** I’m not necessarily saying that this is a documentary about ‘yellow vests’ because they are just using the ‘yellow vests’ movement to talk about the abrogation of civil rights that are such a huge issue in France. We suddenly have the regular police, not even CRS, which is a Special Forces unit in France. The CRS is the special police. I don’t know what they call it in other countries. It’s not the FBI’s equivalent; these are the storm troopers, the ones who were very active in 1968 in France, and they are generally hated in France. They have been hated for decades.

This is not the CRS; this is regular police who suddenly, instead of taking care of the population, is turning against the population. That is the crux of the matter in this documentary. It’s very interesting.

**Fitts:** So turning away from movies, finally, I have some questions for you: When I asked you to do this, it was quite a big challenge. We initially talked about it. But now that you have gone through and looked at all these different ways of looking at freedom through art and movies, what have you learned? What did you find in this that you found most useful and important to you?

**Heyn:** One thing is, unfortunately, the slightly negative conclusion that the

French express by saying, “Plus ça change, plus c’est la même,” meaning, “The more it changes, it stays the same.”

It is also expressed by the statement, “Unless you learn history, you are doomed to repeat it.” As I look at the paintings and movies and the ideas that the artists have distilled and presented to us, encapsulated in an attractive form of entertainment or art, they are talking about the same things – the economic freedom determines how free people feel or behave. The lack of freedom of convictions is one of the biggest catalysts for people’s protests.

People will put up with physical hardships sometimes better than things that ignite their minds. You cannot win with an idea.

There is a saying, “Once the time for some idea has come, nothing can stop things from happening.” That is rather a negative conclusion, but at the same time, if you look at the same art and movies and people’s ideas, then there is some hope with the fact that people will never stop exploring possibilities and overcoming things that were not available.

Women’s rights and the women’s movement is a perfect example where you can look at the 19<sup>th</sup> century art with the poor governess. You show me a modern kindergarten teacher who has to be berated by an angry parent. It doesn’t work this way; things have changed. Women have certain rights – in some countries more and some countries less – but they can go to work and can be independent and can divorce. Money is not taken away by their husbands and their fathers. There have been changes in their fate, no matter what we say.

Not all of the things that were so completely unattainable 100, 200, or 500 years ago are still unattainable. So, there is some progress. There is some victory of ideas when people would say, “Maybe slavery is not such a great idea,” – any kind of civic or body right. We have the right to master our own body. So there have been some victories.

There have been people who are pushing and pushing an idea about some freedom that we should have, and they have won.

**Fitts:** I want to mention as we close that if you (listeners or readers) have not

checked out the *Food for the Soul* website, you absolutely have to do it. If you go to *Solari*, there is a little section with a beautiful, modern picture of trees. You click on it, and you will find a wealth of resources. You (Nina Heyn) publish two columns a month, and we announce them on *Solari*. The whole catalog is there, and you can access it by ‘*Exhibitions*’ or ‘*Movies and TV*’. If you are looking for great movies or TV series, you have to go through all the movies and TV columns because they are great ideas.

You have some for young people and ideas for when you want to stream and binge-watch. It’s a great selection. You have a couple of videos we did when we were doing the da Vinci tour. Then there is a podcast once or twice a month, and you can link to those from ‘*Podcasts*’ (Audio tab) . We are going to get those streaming on some of the podcast services. You can even click on ‘*About*’ and find out more about Nina, but there is still a lot that is secret.

And you have a special, remarkable collection on ‘Women Artists’, and I’m hoping that you are going to grace us with another ‘Women Artists’ (now Women & Art) sometime before the end of the year. I’m ‘tickling’ you on that.

**Heyn:** I hope that, too, but that was actually tied to my being able to travel. So, there are no guarantees here. I feel absolved. It’s not my fault!

If I can just say one thing, it is that the title says it all. It’s called *Food for the Soul* for a reason, because I believe that if we feel lonely, depressed, unmotivated, left out, or for whatever reason we are not feeling great, then delving into art is therapy. It’s something that takes you out of the daily grind that is so unbearable most of the time, which is why we created all of this. This is meant to be an antidote to all the negativity that is flying back and forth all the time.

**Fitts:** It works tremendously. I had no idea when I first asked you to do this what would happen, and I now am just completely in love with it. If your column goes up a day late, I am always bugging Darlene (Operations Manager), “Where is it? Where is it?”

As soon as she lets me know that it has been published, I stop what I’m doing and read my latest *Food for the Soul* ‘eye candy’.

**Heyn:** Which usually has nothing to do with the daily stories!

**Fitts:** The stories that you come up with and the history that you come up with is from Asia and Europe and America and all around the world. I find it enchanting. It takes me out of where I am, and it takes me to someplace I never even thought of. So, I look forward to them.

If you haven't discovered *Food for the Soul*, please check it out. This is something that you can share. We keep it all public, and you can share it widely. So feel free.

As I told you, Nina, based on my reading of numerous columns in the corporate press, I think that you are the reporter's reporter. I think that they are getting many of their ideas from you.

**Heyn:** So, are you saying that we are going to convert the financial specialists to art? Maybe they are stressed, too.

**Fitts:** They want *Food for the Soul*. We all do.

Thank you again for joining me on *The Solari Report*. Thank you for *Visions of Freedom*. It's a real triumph, and I am so excited to be publishing a big theme on a *Wrap Up* that you won't say is depressing.

**Heyn:** Thank you for the invitation. I'll just hope that *Solari* readers will think the same, and they will like the invitation to have their own visions and look into art for inspiration. Let's see what they say.

**Fitts:** Nina Heyn, thank you for joining me on *The Solari Report*. You have a wonderful day.

**Heyn:** Thank you very much.