

LigoranoReese

**The Creators Project**

# The American Dream Melts at the Republican National Convention – Literally

By Nathaniel Ainley  
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Image courtesy Sue Abramson

The words, The American Dream are melting in a park in Cleveland, Ohio outside of the Republican National Convention this week. Whether or not the dream itself has melted is still up for debate. In conjunction with speeches from Rudy Giuliani and Melania Trump, artists Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese kicked off their latest interim art installation: a 30-foot, 4,000-pound ice sculpture that spells out the words, The American Dream. The idea is that the ice letters will gradually melt away after spending hours under the unforgiving July sun, a symbolic representation of the ongoing issue of income inequality and wealth disparity in this country.



The American Dream has turned into a sort of moniker for this country, representing an ideal that anyone living in the United States has an equal opportunity to live a happy and fiscally prosperous life. Ligorano explains, "Melting ice as a material is a perfect medium to show the disappearance of equality and opportunity. This is not specific to one party. Our country is in crisis." The artist duo, working under the name LigoranoReese, installed the same kind of activist performance art at the convention during the last election cycle. The group planted an ice sculpture of the words, The Middle Class in Tampa and Charlotte back in 2012.

Once the Cleveland ice project has finally vanished, LigoranoReese will head over to Philadelphia where they will be putting up another *American Dream* ice sculpture at the start of the Democratic National Convention on July 25. The artists have been getting their letters from local ice carvers that work off LigoranoReese's designs. The video below shows Thomas Brown of Okamoto Studio carving up some letters for the upcoming installation in Philadelphia.



Sketch courtesy the artists

The American Dream project is being streamed online from Transformer Station where the artists will be hosting panel discussions about the artwork with community leaders and other local artists.