



Bob Gruen, *John Lennon, Statue of Liberty, NYC, 1974*

THE PICTURE | THE STORY

John Lennon, Statue of Liberty, NYC, 1974

The US government, under the direction of President Richard Nixon, perceived John Lennon as a political threat because he was talking of peace in a time of war. They moved to have him deported from the country. I personally felt that was wrong and seeing the Statue of Liberty as a symbol of welcome to the United States, I felt that if we took a picture of John Lennon at the Statue of Liberty it would help dramatize his case for staying in the country. I suggested to John that we take a picture in front of the Statue and I was thrilled when he agreed.

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G A L L E R Y

I picked him up in my car and we drove downtown to the Battery to take the ferry across to the Statue. The ferry coming in brought a class of giggling teenage girls who were just thrilled to see the ex-Beatle! John signed autographs and then we took the ferry across without further distraction. We walked around to the front of the Statue to take the photos. It was a cloudy day and his face was somewhat in shadow, so I used a flash for fill light. The only difficulty then was to line up the picture, to get both the person and the full statue in proportion to each other.

I think this photo is popular now because people relate to John Lennon as a symbol of personal freedom similar to the way people feel about the Statue of Liberty.

- Bob Gruen, 2018.