

PRESS RELEASE

Artists: Jean Rim and Special Friend

Date: Thursday June 12, 2014

Hours: 4-8pm

Location: Union Square, NYC

The performance will utilize the whole park so please take a moment to look for them.

On June 12th, 2014 the artist Jean Rim & Special Friend performed an art piece that is a celebration and memorial for a small town couple who just wanted to go home to Virginia while at the same time changed history. Their names are Mildred and Richard Loving, a couple who grew up together and were truly in love with one another. The Lovings were married in June 1958 and after 6 weeks of bliss the town sheriff stood over their bed in the middle of the night and arrested them of breaking the Racial Integrity Act of 1924; this law made it illegal for any race to marry each other in the state of Virginia where they lived. Richard was a white man and Mildred was African and Native American. As they were being charged with this felony the judge at the time gave them a choice to either serve a year in jail or move to another state, they chose the latter.

Being far from their families and living in the big city of Washington DC the Lovings were miserable and found it hard to make a life. Raising their three children in an environment that they did not like was also frustrating since they grew up in a rural town. After five years Mildred wrote a letter to Attorney General Robert Kennedy who then referred them to the American Civil Liberties Union.

On June 12, 1967 their case the Lovings vs. Virginia went all the way to the Supreme Court and made history when Chief Justice Earl Warren said, "The freedom to marry has long been recognized as one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men. Marriage is one of the "basic civil rights of man," fundamental to our very existence and survival ... Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the State."

The artist herself is with a partner of another race and someone she has grown up with. The Lovings' story has always been very powerful for Jean Rim and it has impacted her views on being a citizen of the United States and trying to understand the role the government has in our love lives.

Freedom is something the people have to fight for and celebrate everyday and on June 12, 2014 at Union Square in NYC this artist is going to remember a couple who did. The piece will start at the steps of Union Square at 14th Street and both performers will be wearing handmade masks of Richard and Mildred Loving. Both dressed in costume-y wedding apparel they will slowly walk the perimeter of the park nine times to symbolize the time it took the Lovings to win and to go back home. The performers will be silent and will carry a flipbook with bold and celebratory statements.

The Lovings vs. Virginia is pertinent to the on going cases and fight for same sex marriage.