Golden Rain

by Michael Petry
permanent installation at the Palm Springs Art Museum
by kind donation from Donna MacMillan

Golden Rain was a project I made for “On the Edge” at the Eigeroya lighthouse in Egersund, Norway that was organized by Hå Gamle Prestegard as part of Stavanger 2008. They invited 6 artist to make projects in 6 lighthouses, this was mine. When I was asked to make an installation at Egersund I thought of the classical tale of Danae and Zeus and wanted to link the past with the present, the origin of western culture with a site already deep with its own myths and the erotic realm of today. I had 100 mirrored golden vessels made to my design, which were then suspended down the centre of the tower. Each vessel, shaped like a raindrop or tear, was sealed at the top by a cork. Inside the vessels are 100 texts, images, drawings, photographs, objects or ideas sent to me by other artists and authors. I asked them to think about what they would write, draw or mark on a sheet of paper (up to A4 size), if they too were locked in such a tower and had only a bottle as a means of discourse with the outside world, if they were on the edge, what would they place in the golden bottle? Each response has been documented so that its contents can be seen in the accompanying catalogue to the project, and has now been permanently sealed in one of the bottles.

The Story
Danae (the Greek for parched) was the daughter of the King of Argos. He had been warned by an oracle that a grandson would kill him, so had her locked in a bronze tower. Zeus the king of the gods, looking down on her with lusty intentions came to her as a golden shower and thus she was with child, Perseus.

The King fearing to kill the child of a god, locked his daughter and the child in a wooden chest and threw them into the sea to drown. Zeus instructed Poseidon the god of the seas to save them. Perseus grew to be the first mythic hero, killing the Medusa, the Gorgon and in a sporting accident, an old man, who turned out to be his grandfather the King.

The Artists