

No More Birthdays

Donna Minor

“No More Birthdays” is a ceramic piece depicting a supersized slice of lavishly decorated layer cake. A must for every celebration, the cake displays a message of congratulations and implies hopes and dreams for the future. The festive mood of the piece is interrupted by a bullet piercing the side of the cake and the resulting drops of oozing blood. Headlines from actual newspaper reports of mass shootings and other gun violence cover of the side of the piece. On top of the cake is a birthday candle with a bullet in the middle. It represents the lives of children who die each year because of gun violence.

As I developed this piece, I wanted to explore the conflicting emotions of joy and horror. The joy of a festive celebration contrasting with the terror and panic of random violence. A mass shooting at a local town festival in Gilroy California resulted in 3 deaths, two of them children. I was grief stricken watching the news and seeing a photograph of the six-year old boy who lost his life at the celebration. I remembered a mass shooting the year before at a music festival in Las Vegas where many young people lost their lives. I grieved for the 58 families who will no longer celebrate their children’s birthdays. I hope that this piece will be a voice for the countless families who have been victims of senseless gun violence.