

THE SOUL BOX PROJECT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Make a Soul Box for a Gunfire Victim Art Revealing the Gunfire Epidemic: Participate in a nationwide community art project to reveal the number of gunfire victims in the U.S.. Over 15,000 origami Soul Boxes – representing the number of people killed or injured by gunfire, so far, in 2019 – are on display at the Multnomah Arts Center. Each 3- by 3-inch Soul Box carries the name of a gunfire victim, an image, or a message of protest or hope. The Portland-based Soul Box Project displays thousands of Soul Boxes in public spaces to illustrate the number of victims of gunfire violence, defense, accidents and suicides. By raising awareness of the number of victims, the Project aims to empower people to choose actions regarding responsible gun use that reflect their values, priorities and beliefs. Visitors to the exhibit can fold a Soul Box and add it to the display.

The 15,000 Soul Boxes in the Multnomah exhibition represent the number of victims in 2019, as of April 5.

- 3,500 dead by gunfire
- 6,200 injured by gunfire
- 5,500 suicides by gunfire

When the exhibit closes on April 30, about 2,450 more people in the U.S. will be dead from gunfire.

*Statistics from GunViolenceArchive.org

WHERE: Multnomah Arts Center Gallery, 7688 SW Capitol Highway, Portland, OR

WHEN: April 5 - 30, 2019. Weekdays 9 am - 9:30 pm. Weekends 9 am - 5 pm. Admission is free.

[See The Soul Box Project Press Page for more media resources, including downloadable images.](#)

MORE:

Portland artist Leslie Lee never doubts the power of art to affect change.

Like many people, after the 2017 mass shooting in Las Vegas, Lee wanted to take action. Searching gunfire statistics she found that 168,605 people had been shot in the U.S. since 2014 - - a number she felt was incomprehensible and therefore dismissible. Lee believed the gunfire epidemic needed a dynamic visual in order to reach people's hearts and minds and begin a shift away from the nation's current gun culture.

Lee launched The Soul Box Project knowing she could make the nation SEE the statistics in a visceral way, with massive displays of hand-folded origami boxes -- one Soul Box for every U.S. gunfire victim.

The Soul Box Project is a national, nonpolitical, grassroots art project to represent ALL gunfire victims of violence, defense, accidents and suicide. It is both personal and communal. Anyone can participate. Thousands of Boxes made by people with differing views and experiences come together in one powerful statement in displays. In less than 18 months The Soul Box Project has collected over 45,000 Boxes and intends to collect 200,000 by 2020, touring them across the nation.

“The idea is that when people come face to face with thousands and thousands of Soul Boxes representing victims, they’ll understand the enormity of the problem and take action,” says Lee. “Those actions may span a wide range – gun safety, education, legislation, mental health. Together those actions will help cause a shift in our nation’s culture.” The Soul Box Project joins a tradition of powerful community and counting art projects; Lee cites the AIDS Memorial Quilt in the 1980s. “That project helped change the trajectory of another epidemic. It showed the numbers, but it also put names and faces on the victims. I know we can have the same impact.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION, visit: www.soulboxproject.org.

THE SOUL BOX PROJECT WILL EXHIBIT AT THESE EVENTS:

April 30, 2019: Alliance for Gun Responsibility, Seattle, WA

May 7, 2019: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) State Conference, Reno, NV

May 10 - 12: Route91Strong’s 24 Hours of Country Music Festival, Las Vegas, NV