

Feb. 12, 2019

The Soul Box Project Honors 36,000 Victims of Gunfire with Salem Procession
#SoulBoxProjectAtTheCapitol

WHAT:

The Soul Box Project is a national community art project to raise awareness of the number of gunfire victims. In the tradition of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, the Project is collecting one handmade origami box for every person killed or injured by gunfire in the US since 2014. These Soul Boxes are displayed in public spaces to draw attention to the number of people shot in gun violence, accidents, defense and suicides. To date, the Soul Box Project has collected almost 40,000 3- x 3-inch origami boxes from across the country. Each box represents one life, one soul gunned down.

The Soul Box Project was created by a Portland, Oregon studio artist who wanted to take action after hearing about the Las Vegas music festival shooting in 2017.

[View a video clip about The Soul Box Project.](#)

WHEN:

THIS FRIDAY February 15, 2019, the first large-scale installation of Soul Boxes will happen at the Oregon State Capitol building in Salem. The Project will deliver and exhibit 36,000 Soul Boxes in the gallery lobby while the Oregon Legislature is in session. Legislators and staff have been invited to fold their own Soul Boxes and add them to the installation.

WEDNESDAY, February 11, 2019: Volunteers will stage a preview of the Capitol display, with 36,000 Soul Boxes in a massive pile 6 feet tall and 10 feet by 15 feet wide . This activity will take place at Cerimon House, 5131 NE 23rd Ave., in Portland, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.. In addition, a display of 3,000 Soul Boxes from the current exhibit will be available for viewing.

This week's Soul Box Project activities coincide with the one-year anniversary of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas school shooting in Parkland, Florida where 17 students and staff members died and 17 more were injured by gunfire on February 14, 2018.

WHO:

On Friday, close to 100 people from across Oregon are scheduled to carry Soul Boxes into the Oregon State Capitol building in a respectful procession to honor the 36,000 people* killed by gunfire in the US in 2018. **Volunteers will walk in silence, to the cadence of a snare drum, carrying clear bags of Soul Boxes from Court Street into the Galleria West area of the Capitol building at 10:00 a.m..**

Leslie Lee, founder of The Soul Box Project, believes that when people come face to face with thousands and thousands of Boxes representing victims, they'll understand the enormity of the gunfire epidemic and be inspired to take action. Those actions range from enrolling in gun handling classes to locking up firearms, to working towards gun-sense legislation. "Together, those actions will cause a shift in our nation's culture," Lee says.

MORE:

The Soul Box Project will kick off a national tour with an exhibit at The Multnomah Arts Center in April and intends to take at least 200,000 Soul Boxes to the National Mall in Washington, DC, during the election year 2020.

So far close to 40,000 Soul Boxes have been sent in The Soul Box Project. "We get a lot of activists folding, but we also get boxes from people who've lost someone in a suicide or accident." The Soul Boxes often have a photo or name of a victim on them. "After mass shootings, we've seen people fold as a way to process the news, to take some action and honor the people who've been shot."

"The Soul Box Project joins a tradition of powerful community and counting art projects," says Lee. She 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."

The Soul Box Project intentionally seeks to bridge the so-called gun divide. "Soul Boxes can be made for any person killed or injured by gunfire. It can be healing for anyone experiencing this loss. No matter how or why a person is shot, people grieve," says Lee. "The collective spirit of people coming together to take action, to remember and to heal continues to inspire me."

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

GET INVOLVED: *There are three public folding sessions every week in Portland.*

MAKE A BOX: Download folding instructions and watch an instructional video at www.soulboxproject.org.

Drop off Soul Boxes:

- First Unitarian Church, 1034 SW 13th Ave., Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Symbiosis Printing, 6325 SW Capitol Highway, Monday – Friday, 9:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
- Rose Schnitzer Manor, 6140 SW Boundary St., call for drop-off hours: 503-535-4000.
- Elizabeth Jones Art Center, 516 SW 14th Ave., Wednesday – Sunday, noon – 5 p.m.

Drop in to a public folding session:

- Elizabeth Jones Art Center, 516 SW 14th Ave. Most Sundays, 2 – 4 p.m. Confirm at 503-286-4959
- Cerimon House, 5131 NE 23rd Ave. Most Tuesdays, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- French Quarter, 3530 SW Multnomah Blvd., Wednesdays, 11:00 am - 1 pm

Outside the Portland Area, send Soul Boxes to:

PO Box 19900, Portland, OR 97280

*www.gunviolencearchive.org

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