

HOLLIE LYKO

Artist Statement

Clues to the collective conscience of American culture can be found in images marketed to the middle class. Belief systems and standards of morality, grounded in religion, class and race are used to cultivate myths like the American Dream. Celebrity culture, populist icons and images of Americana continue to infiltrate domestic spaces. I utilize absurdism, historical ceramics and the kitsch object to both critique and celebrate the psychosis of middle class suburban life and the artificiality and ambivalence equated with it.

Each generation is defined by its cultural moments; events that illicit a collective feeling – joy, outrage, grief and sorrow – to name a few. Commercially produced ceramics have long attempted to capture these moments. Within the materiality of these objects lies an ironic jest- they are cultural detritus that will live on forever.

The plates I use are sourced from thrift shops and E-Bay. I use a Dremel tool to erase the image from the glaze, exposing the raw ceramic surface. I equate the violent act of erasure with the content of the plates themselves -from the assassination of John F. Kennedy, to the whitewashing of America's history and the societal value of marriage and heteronormativity. Through questioning the stereotypes and propaganda disseminated on collectibles of the past, I reopen a conversation about ideals and beliefs within contemporary American culture.

-Hollie Lyko, 2019