

## Confection Affection

Desserts, sweets, and confections have a special place in the hearts of many. Some, including myself, even claim to have a special stomach, a dessert stomach. We receive treats for special occasions and rewards. We take comfort in treats during crises. Certain sweets, after all, offer us a taste of lost youth. In my particular case, childhood summers were filled with ice cream. Everyday, sometimes even for lunch, my mother and I would have a bowl of ice cream together. Even now, on a hot summer afternoon, I ask my husband to take me out for ice cream. I relate to Tim Richardson, as he writes in his introduction to *Sweets*, “With sweets, the distinction between adulthood and childhood is blurred.”

Like the pastry painter icon, Wayne Thiebaud said, “Why not paint cakes?” However, looking deeper, these innocent treats serve as metaphors for our culture’s need for instant gratification, consumption, fulfillment, and reward. Confection affection is a love-hate relationship. The immediate pleasure of a beautiful dessert swiftly fades after it is gone.

Using a combination of mixed media drawings and design principles, this body of work reflects a range of concepts and concerns about thoughts with contemporary American culture. Using artificial candy colors, the drawings become almost too sweet. The “before” and “after” images of the desserts provide moments of reflection for the viewer on the condition of our culture and consequences it may have. We are controlled by consumption in our fast-paced society. Fast food, cell phones, microwaves, and ATM’s are all tools to facilitate our need for instant gratification. In this age of technology, our desire for the next best thing has become an increasingly wasteful lifestyle. Our continual search for fulfillment and reward is devoted to the ephemeral things of life.

I enjoyed further exploring artists whose work influenced my creative project. I also advanced my knowledge of wet and dry mediums by experimenting with watercolor, grease pencils, and litho crayons. Based on these experiments, I created diptychs to portray the dichotomy of desserts. I finished four sets of drawings for my creative project with additional sketches and studies to support my exploration of medium.

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