

Danielle



LAST MEAL OF JEFFERY BARNEY
Artist: Mat Collishaw
From *Last Meal on Death Row*, still-life photos in the style of 17th-century Dutch oil paintings

"I think the horror of it is something that's quite compelling for people. We like looking at things that maybe we shouldn't be looking at."

LAST MEAL OF JOHN WAYNE GACY
Artist: James Reynolds
From *Last Suppers*, nine photos of meals on orange prison trays

"It was only when I saw the finished photographs that it really struck me that these trays and meal choices were almost a portrait of the criminals."

GRACE

Last Meals

Artists document death row inmates' final taste of life.

LAST MEAL OF CAMERON TODD WILLINGHAM

Artist: Kate MacDonald
From *Last Meals*, eight oil paintings of table scraps (ongoing series)
"You imagine what it was like for that person on their last day, eating that meal. You hope it was prepared with respect, and that they've been treated with as much dignity as possible, given the process."

JUAN OF ARC CHOSE holy communion. Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh chose two pints of mint chocolate chip ice cream. And unhappily for Canadian painter Kate MacDonald, Texas inmate Cameron Todd Willingham chose a gut-buster in 2004—three barbecued pork ribs, two orders of onion rings, fried okra, three beef enchiladas with cheese, and two slices of lemon cream pie. The reason it was such a problem: MacDonald paints the remnants of death row inmates' last meals, and to do that, she has to cook and then eat the same food. "I really have a hard time with ribs now," she says. "They stick in my throat."

MacDonald, who has eaten and painted a couple of pre-execution feasts a year since 2006, is just one of several artists around the world who have found their muse in the final menus of doomed convicts. Most don't go so far as to consume the food themselves, but their re-creations ensure that these meals are remembered long after the last bite.



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