

GABRIEL MADAN
ça va aller
September 18–October 30, 2022

Red Baron Pizza #1
14519 Main Street
Hesperia, CA 92345

Red Baron Pizza #2
17130 Main Street
Hesperia, CA 92345

An exhibition is an ideal situation for grieving the loss of a loved one. Works of art are often weighted by emotional baggage, and they can trigger memories of friends, relatives, lovers, and others who may no longer be living among us. Artists also die and those of us who live our lives in the service of artists are often reminded of those whose works remain in their absence.

Before her premature death, Gabriel Madan's sister Rebecca drank Diet Coke as a way of regulating her blood sugar. Handcrafted cans of Diet Coke appear in two locations of Red Baron Pizza in Hesperia, California. Madan considers the cans to be something of a memorial gesture that responds to the existing conditions of the restaurants where they are installed. Diet Coke is a beverage already familiar in this context. It is often paired with pizza. Trophies and commemorative plaques are common as well. Over the course of its 30-year history, Red Baron Pizza has regularly sponsored local youth league sports teams. The trophies that are a part of Madan's installation commemorate grieving, while resonating with the display of existing materials in the lobbies of both restaurant locations.

Art offers another way of talking about experiences in life that are difficult to express in language. Death is a subject so complicated to understand that we often find ourselves articulating its tragedy in ways that lack resoluteness or clarity. The stages of grief that accompany tragic loss include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. An exhibition may very well be an occasion to convey each of these emotional states in relative simultaneity.

–Aram Moshayedi

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