

SPATULA & BARCODE PRESENT:

THE TASTE

TEXT AND CONCEPT BY:
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THE WORD "TASTING" MEANS A COMMERCIAL OFFER OF VARIETY.



"TASTE OF [CITY_NAME]" INDICATES A CULINARY FESTIVAL WHERE YOU CAN BUY SMALL EXPENSIVE PORTIONS FROM A RANGE OF EATERIES.

A "TASTING MENU" MEANS BEING SERVED A VARIETY OF DISHES WITHOUT CHOOSING.



IN JAPANESE, ONE CAN SAY "OMAKASE SHIMASU"

お任せします

WHICH MEANS "YOU DECIDE," OR "I TRUST YOU, CHEF!"



IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, WE NOTICED THIS IS SOMETIMES CALLED "FEED ME", OR EVEN "JUST FEED ME!", WHICH EMPHASIZES THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE ANY CHOICES.



THESE KINDS OF CULINARY "TOURISM" ARE ECHOED BY ACTUAL TOURS THAT TAKE TOURISTS FROM PLACE TO PLACE WITHIN A CITY OR A REGION TO SAMPLE CULTURE THROUGH CUISINE.



AT THEIR BEST, SUCH TOURS CAN PROVIDE, ALONGSIDE TASTY BITES OF LOCAL FOODS, SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION ABOUT CULTURE AND HISTORY—WHAT WE CALL THE "SOCIAL TERRIOR".

HERE
PAULA MOURENZA,
A FANTASTIC GUIDE WITH
CULINARY BACKSTREETS,
DISCUSSES A PLATE OF MEATS AND
CHEESES ON A TOUR IN BARCELONA.



"SOCIAL PRACTICE ART"
SOMETIMES MIMICS THE
STRUCTURES OF "TASTING
MENU" OR "FOOD TOUR" TO
CREATE SAVORY AND
CONVIVIAL EVENTS, AS WHEN
WORKS PROGRESS
HOSTED MITCHELL DOSE AND
CHEF CHRIS OLSON TO STAGE
THE 100 COURSE MEAL.



BUT SOCIAL PRACTICE ART PROMISES A CRITICALITY BEYOND SIMPLY JUDGING THE GUSTATORY AND AESTHETIC MERITS OF A DISH. HERE WE SEE ANTONIO MIRALDA WITH ARTIFACTS FROM HIS LONG-RUNNING FOOD CULTURA PROJECT.

BUT WHAT IS THE
DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN...

**"CRITICALITY"
AND
DISCRIMINATION!?**

**"JUDGEMENT"
AND
"TASTE"?!?**

BRECHT TAUGHT US TO HATE WHAT HE CALLED "CULINARY THEATRE" AS...



**PETERSON AND CLARK ASK:
(HOW) CAN WE MAKE FEEDING/EATING
THAT IS NOT (ONLY) "CULINARY"?**



SOME ARTISTS (CLAIM TO) USE FOOD TO CREATE A SOCIABILITY THAT LETS US BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF PARTICIPANTS ISSUES THAT ARE OFTEN LEFT AT THE DOOR OF A RESTAURANT: HUNGER, SUSTAINABILITY, PRIVILEGE.



IN SENSORIUM AND MELON (SIC) WORKSHOP WE LITERALLY SPOON-FED CRITIQUE TO THE PARTICIPANTS AS PART OF ELABORATE AMBULATORY FEASTS.

IN GRIM(M) ESSEN, WE TOOK GERMANS ON WALKS IN THE FOREST TO RE-ENACT FOOD SCENES FROM THE BROTHER'S GRIMM TALES, AND THEY SPONTANEOUSLY TALKED ABOUT THINGS LIKE WAR, CHILDHOOD, AND ECOLOGY.



IN PROGRESSIVE DINNER WE ORGANIZED SOCIAL ARTISTS TO FEED FARMERS AND SHARE A MEAL INSPIRED BY ACTIVIST CUISINES.



AND IN THE FOODWAYS PROJECTS IN DARMSTADT, MELBOURNE, AND MADISON, WE CREATE MANY LINKED EVENTS INVOLVING FOOD AND CONVERSATION.

BUT AS THE OTHER "TASTES" SUGGEST, WE SHOULD ASK: WHAT IS THE

DIFFERENCE

BETWEEN...



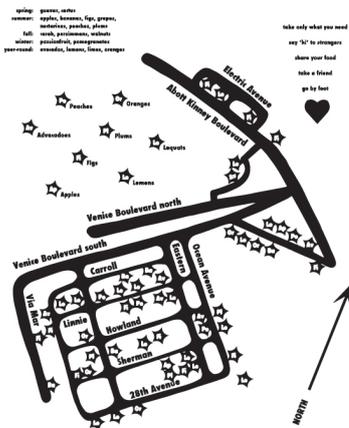
ARTISTS' PERFORMATIVE OFFERINGS OF CONVENIENT, VARIED FOOD EXPERIENCES

AND

THOSE PARADIGMS OF CONSUMPTION AND PRIVILEGE??

COST?

SOCIAL PRACTICE ART WORKS ARE MORE OFTEN CHEAP OR FREE...



FALLEN FRUIT OF VENICE BEACH

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SKILL?

RELATIONAL ARTISTS, LIKE US, ARE FREQUENTLY AMATEUR RATHER THAN PROFESSIONAL COOKS.

TUDO LO QUE ME GUSTA ES ILEGAL, INMORAL O ENGORDA



ON THE OTHER HAND, THE NYAMNYAM GROUP (LEFT) MAKES A LIVING FROM A FOOD BUSINESS, AND ALICIA RIOS' INSTALLATIONS (RIGHT) OBVIOUSLY INVOLVE SKILLED PRODUCTION. RIOS IS ALSO A PROFESSIONAL OLIVE OIL TASTER.

THE FALLEN FRUIT COLLECTIVE LITERALLY MAPS WHERE URBAN FRUIT IS FREE FOR THE TAKING.

INCLUSIVITY?

SOCIAL PRACTICE ART MIGHT BE LESS ELITE THAN FINE DINING BUT IT CERTAINLY HAS SMALLER AUDIENCES THAN FOOD FESTIVALS.



CONFLICT KITCHEN REACHES HUNDREDS (BUT SOME OF THEM MIGHT NOT "GET" THAT IT'S ART!)



PERFORMANCE?

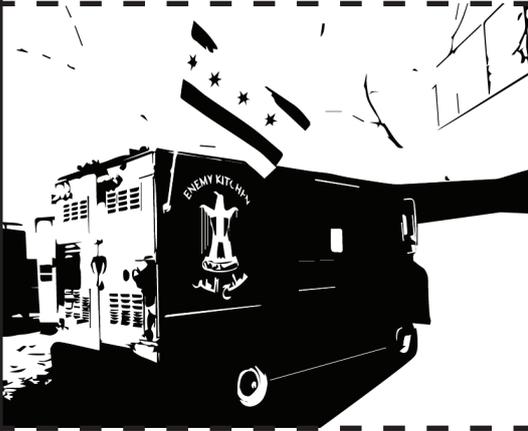
ART WORKS MIGHT ASK BEHAVIORS OF PARTICIPANTS THAT ARE CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE IN A RESTAURANT.

CRITICALITY?

SOCIAL PRACTICE ART USUALLY THINKS IT'S ABOUT SOMETHING.

"DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY"?

FOOD IN ART CAN BE USED IN WAYS THAT ARE NOT NECESSARILY "TASTEFUL" OR "TASTY".



MICHAEL RAKOWITZ IMPLICITLY CRITIQUED U.S. IMPERIALISM IN HIS ENEMY KITCHEN PROJECT.



FOR EXAMPLE, MICK DOUGLAS AND THE CULTURAL TRANSPORTS COLLECTIVE REQUIRED PHYSICAL EXERTION OF PARTICIPANTS IN THEIR RIDE ON DINNER PROJECT.

WE THINK THAT ARTISTS LIKE THEASTER GATES USE FOOD MASTERFULLY, WITH SOCIAL IMPORT THAT IS FAR FROM THE NEGATIVE SENSE OF "CULINARY."



BUT WE STILL SOMETIMES HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE CORNUCOPIC EXCESS OF SOME OF OUR OWN WORK...



...ALTHOUGH THOSE PROJECTS ARE A LOT OF FUN.



AFTER ALL, BRECHT ALSO SORT OF SAID:
"[FOOD] NEEDS NO OTHER
PASSPORT THAN FUN, BUT
THAT IT HAS GOT TO HAVE."