

Consuming Rituals: New Approaches to the Quotidian

by
Emily Cluett

A thesis exhibition presented to OCAD University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts
in
CRITICISM AND CURATORIAL PRACTICE

Graduate Gallery, 205 Richmond Street West, Toronto

April 5th to April 8th, 2017

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, April 2017

© Emily Jane Cluett 2017

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I authorize OCAD University to lend this thesis to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

I further authorize OCAD University to reproduce this thesis by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

ABSTRACT

Consuming Rituals: New Approaches to the Quotidian
Master of Fine Arts, 2017
Emily Jane Cluett
Criticism and Curatorial Practice
OCAD University

This thesis and accompanying exhibition examine the rituals associated with food preparation and consumption. Meals always have been, and always will be, essential to human existence, both physically and culturally, which makes them a rich area not only for research, but also experimentation. Of the nine interdisciplinary artists in the associated group exhibition *Consumed*, some present newly imagined rituals, while others highlight rituals that are subconscious or overlooked. Whereas food has been incorporated into artistic practices for decades, this project is focused on the *rituals* associated with food. Due to the performative and repetitive nature of these rituals, the artworks in *Consumed* are instruction-based. The exhibition presents visitors with the opportunity to enact the artists' instructions in a show of participatory aesthetics. This thesis achieves a new understanding of mealtime rituals' nuanced complexities, and suggests contemporary approaches to eating could benefit from renewed attention to mindfulness and meaningful social connection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my primary advisor, Jim Drobnick, for his consistent support and attentive guidance throughout the production of this thesis. I would also like to thank my secondary advisor, Amish Morrell, for his considerate suggestions and enthusiastic support of my project. Thanks also to Charles Reeve and Emily Fitzpatrick for being part of my examination committee and for their thoughtful feedback.

Many thanks are also owed to my cohort for sharing their creative energy and multifarious insights throughout our MFA experience. I would also like to thank OCAD University for its generous financial assistance through scholarships and grants, without which this project would have been impossible. Thanks also to the artists for generously contributing their creativity, time, and passion to the project.

Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Jacob Pojar, and my family, Helen, Mark, and Victoria Cluett, whose reassuring words and unyielding encouragement gave me the strength I needed to complete this thesis. I could not have done it without you, so thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi

CURATORIAL ESSAY

INTRODUCTION.....	1
BASIL ALZERI'S CLEANSING RITUAL.....	3
DIANE BORSATO'S GRATEFUL RITUAL.....	5
MARK CLINTBERG'S TWILIGHT RITUAL.....	6
MYUNG-SUN KIM'S CHANGING RITUAL.....	8
SOOYEONG LEE'S MINDFUL RITUAL.....	10
MAX LUPO'S SOLO RITUAL.....	12
PETER MORIN'S MEDICINAL RITUAL.....	14
LISA MYERS' (DYS)FUNCTIONAL RITUAL.....	17
DANA PRIETO'S COMMUNAL RITUAL.....	19
CONCLUSION.....	21

EXHIBITION REPORT

INTRODUCTION.....	23
METHODOLOGY	23
EXHIBITION CONCEPT.....	25
EXHIBITION REVIEW	27
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	30
CONCLUSION	34
BIBLIOGRAPHY	35

APPENDICES

A: COMMISSIONED ARTWORKS.....	40
B: ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES.....	53
C: PRESS RELEASE.....	58
D: DOCUMENTATION.....	59

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Basil Alzeri, <i>A Clean Slate</i>	59
Figure 2. Myung-Sun Kim, <i>how to make an elixir</i>	60
Figure 3. Sooyeong Lee, <i>Round and Round</i>	61
Figure 4. Max Lupo, <i>A Meal, Your Meal</i>	62
Figure 5. Peter Morin, <i>hosting a dinner party for the lost (in two parts)</i>	63
Figure 6. Lisa Myers, <i>Functional-actions-of-living (this is not a ritual): Before Dinner</i>	64
Figure 7. Dana Prieto, <i>Make yourself a Mate [Hacéte un Mate]</i>	65
Figure 8. <i>Consumed</i> exhibition pantry.....	66
Figure 9. Exhibition installation shot.....	67

CURATORIAL ESSAY

Consuming Rituals: New Approaches to the Quotidian

INTRODUCTION

The meal is as ubiquitous as it is complex. Every era, every culture, every individual has a different approach to and unique set of rituals associated with the meal. That being said, quotidian approaches to eating have changed dramatically in recent decades in many parts of the world. The increased presence of technology during mealtimes – watching television, working on a laptop, using a cellphone – has greatly impacted the social aspect of eating. Rather than communing at a table with friends or family to socialize while eating, conversation has in many cases been replaced with watching television and barely talking, if at all. Those dining solo also turn to devices for distraction and focus on consuming digital media rather than savouring the tastes and smells of their meals. The decline of religion in much of the western world (Reno 4) has also led to mealtime customs such as saying grace falling out of favour. In short, these new approaches to eating have replaced social, mindful rituals with vapid, perfunctory rituals, which has a damaging affect on individuals' overall wellbeing. However, by highlighting the consequences of these new rituals through the use of audience engagement artists can bring awareness to these issues, which may otherwise be overlooked. By recontextualizing these rituals away from other daily routines, artists can offer the public a different perspective on and space for reconsideration of the current state of the meal.

Margaret Visser, the preeminent authority on dinner, asserts that “a meal can be thought of as a ritual and a work of art, with limits laid down, desires aroused and fulfilled, enticements, variety, patterning and plot. As in a work of art, not only the overall form but also the details

matter immensely” (18). Artists too have been thinking of the meal as a work of art. From the 1930s’ Futurists to today’s relational artists, the meal has a rich history in the artworld; many an artist has held a dinner party for hungry audiences around the world. The participatory nature of these offerings makes them very popular with audiences, but not necessarily with all critics. As exquisite and delectable as these feasts may be, they all fall victim to food’s ephemerality. The exhibition *Consumed* offers a remedy to these short-lived presentations. By inviting artists to design mealtime rituals to be re-enacted time and time again, the artworks comprising *Consumed* will live on.

Each of the nine artists in this exhibition has written detailed instructions for reimagined or newly conceived mealtime rituals that breathe new life into zestless routines. The artists in *Consumed* hail from communities all across Canada. With diverse cultural backgrounds, from Argentinian to Korean, each artist brings a unique perspective to the concept of the meal. The artists also come from various creative disciplines including art historical, culinary, performance, and participatory practices, thereby providing the audience with diverse engagement opportunities.

The audience is another key ingredient in this exhibition. The instructions laid out by the artists must be performed in order to activate the artworks. Visitors to *Consumed* are provided with a pantry full of dishes, utensils, and snacks, which they may use to personalize their own performances. Depending on the participants’ tastes, preferences, and personalities, each enactment of the instructions will result in a different performance, making every visitor’s experience unique. The quirks of each artist’s envisioned ritual are further embellished by the visitors’ personal touches, further emphasizing the complexity of mealtime rituals. By offering take-away instructions, the artists also allow the pieces to have a sense of continuity as they

invite participants to re-enact the performance in various settings beyond the gallery space. *Consumed* intends to encourage a critical re-examination of the mundane eating rituals that make-up day-to-day life.

BASIL ALZERI'S CLEANSING RITUAL

Basil AlZeri's *A Clean Slate* (2017) brings attention to the non-food rituals associated with the meal through a series of deliberate, meticulous actions. This piece focuses on the preparatory tasks that may not be the first thing to mind when considering a meal, but which are integral nonetheless. Many other tasks must be attended to before a meal can be prepared. Researching recipes, planning meals, and grocery shopping are all rituals in their own right, so too is cleaning the kitchen. In an interview AlZeri emphasizes his "interest and practice dealing with work, workers, food, and labour recognition" (qtd. in Bamboat), which shifts the focus away from the final product, and towards the considerable effort that goes into its production. Cleansing and tidying one's workspace in the kitchen is an essential exercise not only because it ensures a hygienic cooking environment, but it is also a ritual that can invoke creativity and tranquility.

Inspired by the chores AlZeri's mother (Suad) assigned him as a child, the task is simple but important. AlZeri recalls an agreement from when he lived with his sister Karmel: "If you want me to cook, you have to [clean and] wash the dishes" (qtd. in Badger 20), which engrained in his mind that the labour of cleaning is part and parcel of a meal. *A Clean Slate* instructs the visitor to wet a cloth with soapy water, ring it out, and fastidiously clean the table's surface, edges and corners. They then dry the table with a clean towel leaving behind: "Tabula rasa!"¹ This final line of the instructions reads like an excited declaration of inspiration. With a tabula

¹ Unless otherwise cited, all quotes from the artists are from the instructional artworks being discussed.

rasa (a clean slate) the possibilities are endless. This ritual not only inspires, but also prepares the mind for the meal to come. The relatively monotonous task and repetitive motion offer time to visualize the cooking process and organize how best to approach the preparation. *A Clean Slate* also relaxes the mind, which may be anxious about germs, or seeking order after a chaotic day.

AlZeri does not stipulate whether this task should be performed before or after a meal, but it would make equal sense to do it at either occasion. This cleaning process would dispatch with the dust and grime that has accumulated on the table throughout the day, or likewise cleanse the surface of the various juices, spices, or scraps from the meal just prepared. The title implies that there is a redemptive quality to the piece. Cleanliness specialists and cultural scholars Ben Campkin and Rosie Cox have determined that there exists a fine balance between reluctant dread and emancipatory satisfaction in daily cleaning rituals (38-40). Similarly, AlZeri's clean slate provides a second chance. This could be as straightforward as providing a second chance to perfect a difficult recipe, or more symbolic, as in reminding one that just as this task is performed every day, so too will the sun rise again on a new day, a new beginning.

A Clean Slate is not a reinvented, or reimagined ritual. Instead, it is a customary practice, which may not be new, but nevertheless invites creativity. By recontextualizing this straightforward task, it brings awareness to the pleasure and potential that can be found in such simple actions. The piece suggests that rather than viewing cleaning rituals as a requisite drudgery, they can be seen as something to be relished and appreciated. This ritual prompts the visitor to consider how cleansing one's space can likewise cleanse one's mind.

DIANE BORSATO'S GRATEFUL RITUAL

Diane Borsato's *Thank you for these gifts* (2016) is an act of collective recognition and appreciation. Arriving at a table, the piece invites visitors to take a beverage served in a glass. Using the familiar gesture, everyone gathered for the meal raises their glass, and is encouraged to make eye contact with fellow diners. With a small but meaningful nod, everyone says to one another in turn "Thank you for these gifts," before gratefully indulging in the meal. By acknowledging every person at the table, this act suggests that each guest has provided an offering for the meal. It may be literal, in that they grew or bought or cooked some of the food on the table, or more abstract in that they are providing a welcoming presence, pleasant conversation, or simply a warm smile. Darren O'Donnell of the artist collective *Mammalian Diving Reflex* extols that "Diane's [work offers] a stealth utopianism, one that primarily grounds itself in the full appreciation of what the senses have to offer" (Chhangur et al. 29). In *Thank you for these gifts* Borsato focuses more on the offerings of social connection and community nested in a meal, rather than the sensory dimension of a meal.

Thank you for these gifts is both communal and participatory, making it a classic example of relational aesthetics. Early critics of this new classification, such as art historian Claire Bishop, suggested that the approach endorsed "function over contemplation, and open-endedness over aesthetic resolution" (Bishop 53). This view is too limited because it fails to appreciate the piece as a whole, judging it at arms length rather than from within the experience. In fact, by incorporating the body into the work, relational art achieves aesthetic resolution better than any other medium because it engages multiple senses rather than exclusively the visual. The embodied nature of relational art also increases contemplation because it provides a more holistic experience, replete with immediate physical and emotional impressions, and lingering corporeal

and cerebral memories. Although most critics, including Bishop herself, have come to accept relational aesthetics as a viable practice, it is still a polarizing subject. Cultural critic Kyle Chayka suggests that some purists believe it is “the latest step in this process of turning everything into art,” and yearn for a return to more traditional modes of creation (1). Despite this scepticism, it can be said that the relational approach to art making is not as radically avant-garde as some critics deem it to be. Borsato is of the same mind. In an interview with performance studies scholar J. Paul Hafferty, Borsato remarks that: “I am not actually so interested in innovative modes of relationality. I think that my way[s] of relating to participants [...] are actually very traditional ways of working, very much like a director with actors” (15). There is a theatrical artistry to Borsato’s work that is at once engaging and easily appreciated.

The creative lineage is clear, and the straightforward instruction makes pieces like *Thank you for these gifts* readily digestible. Borsato’s piece is beautifully simple, but the small gesture has meaningful influence. The ritual of giving thanks before a meal is often enacted through grace or prayer, but this piece demonstrates that regardless of religious affiliation such an expression of gratitude connects people to those around them, and sets a positive tone for the experience of sharing food with others.

MARK CLINTBERG’S TWILIGHT RITUAL

Mark Clintberg’s *The Blue Hour* (2016) provides a space to reset and reconnect. For this performance, participants enter a room, turn off all the lights, and settle down for a meal in front of a window with a view. With the meal fully prepared before them, they proceed to wait until “the blue hour” of twilight arrives, and eat as darkness bleeds into the encroaching blue. Although the colour blue is often linked to melancholy or sadness, the blue of this piece can

instead be associated with the sky or the sea and the tranquil contemplation that the sheer vastness of these expanses tends to trigger.

This ritual reconnects people to the natural world by forcing them to slow down, shut out distractions, and turn their attention to the more biological rhythms that exist in the environment. Personal habitual activities distract from naturally occurring patterns in the world, such as the rising and setting of the sun, the movement of the tides, or the changing of the seasons. *The Blue Hour* provides the opportunity to reset one's internal clock by synching up with the natural end to the day. These cyclical planetary proceedings have an effect on day-to-day life, whether it is acknowledged or not. Waning sunlight can affect a person's mood; changing weather can affect a person's commute. It is also important to note how humans impact the earth. The authors of *Consuming Space: Placing Consumption in Perspective* emphasize the importance of consumers maintaining a connection to the land from which their products are culled in order to foster increased awareness of environmental impact (Eds. Goodman, Goodman and Redclift). *The Blue Hour* offers a space for reflection upon this reciprocal relationship with the planet.

To further this connection, Clintberg's piece is to be lit "without any artificial illumination" allowing the visitor to experience the subtle changes in the aesthetics of the environment, which are caused by the gradual reduction of natural light. The sun's ebbing glow alters not only the view's aesthetics, but also the experience's ambiance and mood. Similar emphasis is placed on ambiance in Thomas Schütte's *take a day off* (1996) created for Hans Ulrich Obrist's instructional artwork exhibition *Do It* (1993 – present). Schütte encourages the participant "to set the mood [...] try to set the mood precisely" with cookies, flowers and music (Obrist et al. 349). Though the mood is not defined in either piece, it is nevertheless to be earnestly sought after. In Clintberg's work, dependant upon whether the participant is a night owl

or tends to turn in early, they might respectively begin to feel an electrifying excitement or a soothing calmness about the evening to come.

Unlike most humanly conceived rituals, this one is ever changing. It does not adhere to the Roman clock, but rather to the natural rhythms of the earth's rotation. Therefore, if practiced on a daily basis, the time of the action would change every day as the earth makes its way around the sun. This means that *The Blue Hour* does not lend itself easily to the structured schedules upon which people have come to rely. And yet, Clintberg specifically designed this piece to be integrated into contemporary life. It does not demand that one must pack up and leave the house to eat dinner in the woods every night, but rather suggests that people stay at home and take a brief hiatus from the grid. *The Blue Hour* simply prioritizes the meal over other responsibilities, such as work or school. Furthermore, watching the sun set in real-time is more grounding and relaxing than staring at a screen, as so many do in an attempt to unwind at the end of the day. Eating pattern psychologist Pavel Somov suggests that "just eating" is not a simplification of the meal as compared to eating with media stimuli, but rather a far more engaging and sensuously satisfying experience (223). It may be an unfamiliar idea to just eat a meal without the presence of technology, but *The Blue Hour* reveals it to be a deeply gratifying experience that reconnects visitors with the natural world.

MYUNG-SUN KIM'S CHANGING RITUAL

Myung-Sun Kim's *how to make an elixir* (2017) is a ritual of change and resilience. Unlike the other works in *Consumed*, which were created for the exhibition, *how to make an elixir* was adapted from a pre-existing piece. The initial work, *time being* (2016), was a participatory experience and artist's multiple created for the *MMMMM...Gendai Kitchen* exhibition concept.

Kim states that *time being* was “motivated by old Korean folklore about dangerous journeys taken by monks into the high mountains, where they sought mythical rocks that give immortality and eternal health when devoured.” The piece itself consisted of two parts, the first describing the rock-like vessels created as multiples, and the second explaining how to create an elixir to drink out of the vessels. Kim conducted the initial performance on a sunny summer’s day in Artscape Gibraltar Point’s outdoor courtyard. The instructions, very similar to *how to make an elixir*, emphasized ingenuity and resourcefulness by encouraging visitors to recognize that “Everything you need is within you and all around you. / Look around your surroundings to find ingredients and materials.” While *time being* was an outdoor performance, where ingredients from the land could readily sourced, *how to make an elixir* had to be adapted to the relatively barren gallery space.

Rather than supplying ingredients to prepare an elixir, which would crush the innovation of creating one’s own recipe, Kim instead decided to offer an elixir of her own making, and a take-away set of instructions for reinterpretation elsewhere. In the instructions Kim explains that “[i]t may take some time before the mixture transforms and becomes an elixir / nanoseconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, years.” With the artist’s offering, visitors are able to enjoy a mature elixir, a fermented beverage prepared days in advance. The “consumption courtship” changes from visitor to visitor as the elixir continues to ferment throughout the exhibition.

The idea of a changing ritual seems oxymoronic at first glance because consistency is a defining feature of ritual, as it is generally understood. Despite that this ritual changes from person to person and location to location, it is in fact founded on one of the oldest food-based rituals in human history: creating beverages from ingredients found in one’s environment. The practice of making fermented beverages such as sake, mead, kombucha, cider, and wine have

rich production traditions dating back centuries. For this ritual, as with other beverage preparation rituals, the ingredients may change, but the essential steps remain the same: gather, combine, alchemy, consume. Visitors are able to sample the artist's elixir, which they can subsequently compare to the elixirs they make themselves based on the take-away instructions. They will follow the same instructions that the artist did, but the results will vary tremendously based on the ingredients and time incorporated by the visitors.

how to make an elixir demonstrates that straightforward, time-tested rituals are powerfully resilient. It establishes that although rituals seem rigid by definition, they instead show themselves to be quite fluid and varied when enacted by different people in different places. The simple steps can be tweaked and changed to better suit the ritual to needs of the context in which it is being performed. This results in an inventive, customized end product more satisfying than anything yielded with staunch precision.

SOOYEONG LEE'S MINDFUL RITUAL

Sooyeong Lee's *Round and Round* (2016) offers a recipe for contemplation. The banal, familiar ingredients seem comforting at first glance. Some zip-top plastic bags and a few black markers accompany an inviting bowl of tangerines wrapped in delicate tissue. These common household objects initially remind the viewer of caring gestures. A bowl of tangerines is gracious; it ensures that no one in the home goes hungry. Re-sealable plastic bags and markers suggest considerate planning: the plastic bags avoid leaking in a backpack or purse. A sign reading: "Please pick a tangerine wrapped in tissue paper and carefully unwrap for more instruction" sustains these notions of thoughtfulness and generosity. However, the next steps in the ritual immediately unsettle any initial feelings of comfort.

Once unwrapped, the tissue itself reveals the remaining instructions. The listed steps provide a challenging twist to an otherwise stale snacking habit. First, Lee presses participants to “[t]hink of one thing that you are afraid of in your life,” and start meditating on that thought while rolling the fruit around in their hands. Visitors maintain focus on that distasteful thought as they slowly, intentionally peel the tangerine. The snack is now ready to be consumed, but the next stage provides no respite from the difficult contemplation. The fourth phase, though arduous, is one of progress and triumph. Rather than indulging in the sensuous pleasure of eating the fruit, participants must use the process to focus on imagining overcoming the negative emotion. As a final cathartic act, visitors name the fear by spelling it out on the label of the plastic bag filled with the fruit’s peel. These instructions turn mindless eating on its head.

Of all forms of eating, snacking is typically the most mindless and unhealthy, as it is often performed in addition to another distracting occupation. High calorie foods are combined with relaxing activities – popcorn at a movie, nachos at a sporting event, ice cream at the beach – to produce a highly pleasurable experience. Although such munching can be harmless if practiced in moderation, snacking is generally bad for both mind and body. Unhealthy snacking habits are acts of escapism, used to repress and avoid unpalatable emotions. In stark contrast, *Round and Round* encourages people to pursue mindful eating by engaging in a challenging thought exercise paired with meditative actions. Pavel Somov purports that “eating is one of the most overlearned voluntary behaviour in the human repertoire,” and so urges people to “breathe some mindful choice into this mindless choicelessness” (150). Lee’s snacking ritual likewise demands a concerted effort; it pushes visitors to not only identify an unpleasant anxious or fearful thought, but also productively reflect upon how best to overcome that feeling. Instead of thoughtlessly moving hand to mouth, they are instructed to roll the food on their palm clockwise

(five times to be precise). This action may be unnecessary for the physical consumption of the fruit, but it focuses the mind on the self-examination at hand. Rather than using this snack-time as a carefree pleasure, or more destructively, to “eat your emotions,” participants are entreated to take a few moments to actively nourish both mind and body. If practiced effectively, they are left feeling satiated and enlightened. Museum studies scholar Edward Whittall believes that the art gallery “offers an intensified experience of food, [which can be described] as humans being made to stop and think” (85). In *Round and Round* one is given the opportunity to address and dispel a personal fear. By taking the time to both identify and contemplate overcoming a fear, the metaphor of leaving it in a plastic bag could also become a reality.

Lee’s ritual encourages an attentive approach to eating that stands in stark contrast to the careless habits many people have developed. *Round and Round* confronts not only how people eat, but also what they think about while eating. It endeavours to infuse snacking habits with healthy, fruitful thought patterns in order to reap more benefits from eating. Like its offering of fruit, the concept behind this piece is generous. Visitors are given the space to reflect upon themselves first and the artwork second. These reversed expectations make *Round and Round* an innovative artwork and ritual.

MAX LUPO’S SOLO RITUAL

Max Lupo’s *A Meal, Your Meal* (2016) uses the recipe format to playfully carve out some personal time during a busy day. As is customary, the recipe outlines a list of ingredients, an approximated preparation time, and step-by-step instructions to follow in order to yield the desired result. However, the required ingredients belie that *A Meal, Your Meal* is not in fact a traditional recipe per se. In “An aesthetics of the mouth,” Deleuzian scholar Rick Dolphijn

investigates how “the culinary realm has furnished the artist with directions in which to push art to its outside and thus opening it up to the world” (179). Lupo’s work exemplifies how an artist has opened the world in this manner. For example, the list of ingredients includes: “1 set of hands, or equivalent, 1 medium sized cloth napkin, 1 elastic band, 1/3 cup of water,” and sounds more like supplies for an experiment than a meal. To be fair, it is an experiment in a way, which hypothesizes that with a simple prompt, anyone can use a meal to create a quiet space of tranquility wherever they are.

The first step in this process requires the visitor to collect the “ingredients” and arrange them on a table “in [their] preferred manner”. They proceed to fold the cloth napkin in half as many times as physically possible and bind it in that shape with an elastic band. Next, visitors are instructed to pour the water into the chosen vessel and place the bundled napkin in the centre to begin absorbing the water. At that point, visitors are free to watch the napkin absorb the water, which Lupo approximates should take up to twenty minutes. Those twenty minutes belong to the participant to do with as they please. If they have procured a meal, they can take the time to thoroughly appreciate the food, or simply sit there in silence. This ritual allows one to relish a quiet, solitary moment.

Unlike most other pieces in *Consumed, A Meal, Your Meal* focuses on the individual and the meal as a solitary experience. As schedules become increasingly packed and micromanaged down to the minute, it has become fairly common to dine solo. Perhaps as a result of being alone, or in a bid for increased efficiency, these solitary meals tend to be eaten quickly, on the go, or in tandem with some other task. *A Meal, Your Meal* endeavours to maintain the reverence of a traditional family meal that is so often is lost in these companionless rituals. The napkin soaking up liquid acts as a timer of sorts because the visitor is required to stay until the water is

completely absorbed. Lupo writes, “this is your chance to be somewhere without obligation [...] while you sit at this table no one will expect you to be anywhere else, I promise,” which provides visitors with the rare opportunity for some coveted me time. And yet, Lupo’s proposed ritual is so simple that it can be done by anyone at any time and could easily be incorporated into a daily routine. Religious studies scholar Catherine Bell suggests that “to ritualize silent sitting [...] is usually done simply by going to a place that [...] is differentiated from other places and uses” (167). On the contrary, the readily accessible supplies and straightforward instructions of *A Meal, Your Meal* make it a ritual that can be performed anywhere. Creating a distraction-free meal could hypothetically be done with a stopwatch rather than the slow absorption of water into a napkin, but the bespoke timer presents a poetic mimicry of the meal. Just as the napkin leisurely, methodically soaks up the liquid on the plate, so too do participants absorb the nutrients of their meal and drink in the tranquility of the moment. *A Meal, Your Meal* has identified an important element missing from many contemporary eating rituals. It inventively redesigns the dining experience, effectively providing an excuse to put everything else aside and enjoy the time allotted for the self.

PETER MORIN’S MEDICINAL RITUAL

Peter Morin’s *hosting a dinner party for the lost* (2016) is a preparatory ritual, but one created from an Indigenous perspective. Morin divides the piece into two parts, the first an embodied recipe for medicinal tea with which to cleanse oneself, the second a set of instructions for how to purify the dinner table in order to create space for sharing and self-expression. This ritual is at once traditional and contemporary. Speaking of his Tahltan community, Morin says “there [is] always culture there, because the process becomes so embedded in our everyday life” (qtd. in

Thom 99). The piece incorporates various elements of indigenous cleansing ceremonies that are practiced now as they were centuries ago, and the open invitation of participation situates the piece in the present-day, and into the future.

The first half of Morin's instructions details a tea preparation intimately tied to the earth. Visitors are instructed to roam the land, from desert to forest, collecting sage and cedar. One does not exclusively take from the land, but also "leave[s] a pinch of tobacco at the base of each plant that [they] pulled medicine from" as an offering in the spirit of equal exchange with the earth. The tea is then boiled and steeped in a pot, which is fanned with a traditional set of eagle feathers. Once prepared and cooled, the tea cleanses the body as participants wash themselves with a tea soaked linen cloth. They are now ready to make their way to the oaken dinner table. The cleansing continues at the table as they wash each table setting with the medicine soaked cloth. Although they are no longer outside where the medicinal ingredients were gathered, Morin retains a connection to the natural world by directing visitors to "follow the path of the sun/ moving around the table." Though the ritual is nearly complete, the journey is just beginning as one says aloud the last line of the instructions: "I wanted to love each of you deeply, but I was afraid."

Like AlZeri's *A Clean Slate*, Morin's piece also has a redemptive, or even liberating, quality to it. Through cleansing the body and the environment one is given the space to start fresh. Morin suggests beginning this new chapter with an admission, a declaration of bereaved love: the visitor must profess aloud "I wanted to love each of you deeply, but I was afraid". Though open to personal interpretation, this could be an address to the missed connections experienced in a lifetime. There are always people one feels drawn to, or inspired by, but the relationship is too brief, too formal, or perhaps even forbidden, and the opportunity for emotional

connection is lost. *hosting a dinner party for the lost* provides the space to reflect upon past relationships and to express hidden emotions. The piece is reminiscent of Norval Morrisseau's 1978 tea party, inspired by the artist's "early appreciation of ceremony and ritual" (Robertson 103). Morin's practice is inspired by Morrisseau whose "work, in particular, spoke loudly to Morin, who 'recognized, not the forms of the stories but the experience[']" (Thom 99). However, whereas Morrisseau's tea party was treated as a spectacle (heavily publicized in the media because of its exclusive guest list), Morin's dinner party is a quieter affair to be repeated and re-enacted by the general public.

hosting a dinner party for the lost therefore brings Indigenous ritual to a wider audience. Aspects of this ritual have been performed by countless generations of First Nations people, and continue to be to this day, but remain largely unknown to the uninitiated general public. Greater awareness, and repetition through performance, means they are less likely to be overlooked or forgotten. In this way Morin's work is political, like many of those studied by curator Nato Thompson. Thompson describes socially engaged art as: "functional and political as well. They engage people and confront a specific issue" (18). *hosting a dinner party for the lost* engages visitors while addressing the preservation of Indigenous culture. Morin sees this work as a ritual that provides space for healing or, as he explains, "As I move through this process of decolonizing my lungs, this piece is a starting place." The ritual instructs visitors to strip themselves down both physically and emotionally, but likewise offers both literal and metaphorical medicinal supplements to support moving forward with renewed strength.

LISA MYERS' (DYS)FUNCTIONAL RITUAL

Lisa Myers' *Functional-acts-of-living (this is not a ritual): Before Dinner* (2017) is a routine born of necessity. Written as a script for a play, Myers walks the participant through a series of actions she has been forced to execute on a daily basis. Performance studies scholar Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues that food and performance are intimately connected, that food instigates and demands performance, and by extension, that food is at once art itself and an excellent medium for performance art (1-2). Myers' theatrical approach to this food-related piece clearly demonstrates this idea. As background for the participant, Myers begins by explaining that "If I don't turn on the fan that sits beside my stove before cooking then the fire alarm will go off, or sometimes if I'm cooking with high heat in the oven the fire alarm will go off even if the fan is on." The performer must begin by collecting the necessary props – fan, food, dinnerware, tea towel, timer, table and chair – and the scene opens with the actor setting a table. In the imagined scenario they proceed to turn on the fan, waiting for the fire alarm to inevitably be triggered. Next, the participant hurriedly moves to the alarm and fans it with the tea towel, but to no avail, and must therefore run to open the hypothetical front and back doors. The frenzied action finally pays off in the fourth phase, when after fanning the alarm for another two minutes it stops at last, and they can close the doors and enjoy their meal. This ritual brings to mind the old adage, "necessity is the mother of invention," but questions the efficacy of such invention.

This adaptive ritual is something to which most people can relate. Myers takes the idea of artwork that "merge[s] art and life" (Thompson 21) quite literally by orchestrating the re-enactment of a mundane part of everyday life. When something breaks or does not function in its intended fashion people often come up with a quick fix; then, based on financial constraint, limited time, or simply limited motivation, the quick fix becomes permanent. Modified patterns

such as *Before Dinner* are often inefficient, and when articulated reveal themselves to be illogical. Other long-term solutions such as replacing the stove or moving the fire alarm would eliminate the need for this stressful sequence of actions, but through repetition they have become woven into the artist's daily routine. Myers describes this scenario as a "mild inconvenience," which is nevertheless "significant in representing an ongoing dilemma where I tend to continue these actions rather than find solutions, in other words, I tend to settle for, and normalize broken situations" (Myers). Once something becomes a habit, it is easy to forget why it started and why it is being repeated. This brings to light the potential insidiousness of rituals not only because the habit can become harmful rather than helpful, but also because some rituals are imposed upon people by circumstances beyond their control, such as limited income, time, or other resources.

The title of the piece, *Functional-acts-of-living (this is not a ritual): Before Dinner*, is ironic in that the act is only functional to a point. The actions allow the artist to successfully cope with a *dysfunctional* situation imposed upon her by her living circumstances. The artist suggests that this is not a ritual, perhaps because one would be reluctant to admit such a series of actions had become a reified routine of their daily life. And yet, it *is* a series of actions that many people have enacted in their own lives many times.

Rituals like the one that inspired *Before Dinner* start out innocently enough as creative acts of resourcefulness. However, once this new, convoluted approach to making dinner becomes a habit it adds unnecessary stress and exertion to every meal. As Myers suggests, this superfluous avoidance tactic is not an isolated example, but rather one of many. There are many such rituals that people perform everyday, which are thereby compounded to produce considerable avoidable distress. Unlike other works in *Consumed* that are performed at a pleasant, leisurely pace, *Before Dinner* is somewhat nerve-wracking to enact. The use of a

stopwatch, paired with detailed instructions timed-out to the second, evokes a sense of panic. Myers is able to emulate the same strenuous anxiety of her pre-dinner routine in a completely different space. This recontextualization highlights the absurdity of these designated actions, which in turn invites visitors to re-examine the practicality of similar rituals in their own lives. Myers' instructional piece prompts visitors to evaluate their own mealtime habits, and personal rituals more generally, with an eye for identifying those that are functional and those that are not.

DANA PRIETO'S COMMUNAL RITUAL

Dana Prieto's *Make Yourself a Mate* (2016) presents a complete twenty-step guide to the niceties of the *mate* beverage and its enjoyment. *Mate* is an infused herbal beverage that is most popular in South America, but is "consumed and shared across households, cultures and classes" and can act as a catalyst of social exchange. The piece is a ritual of considerate knowledge exchange between the artist and the participants. Prieto's work is didactic, but accessible, as it provides the opportunity to experience a unique cultural tradition, while simultaneously learning about oneself and the other participants in the experience.

Before the actual tea preparation can begin, the group must nominate a *cebador(a)*, or host, for the drinking session. The *cebador(a)* is held exclusively responsible for preparing and serving the *mate* until everyone is done drinking or the role is reassigned to another among the group. To begin, the *cebador(a)* heats the water to ninety degrees Celsius – not to a full boil – so as to not burn the herbs. While the water heats, the traditional gourd is filled with *mate* herbs, shaken to remove the strong sediment, and arranged so that the leaves are pushed to one side of the gourd. The approach to tea making that most North Americans are accustomed to consists of fully immersing and steeping tealeaves, but *mate* on the other hand is a more methodical, slow

brew, which involves preparing tea one sip at a time. The *cebador(a)* achieves this by only wetting a small portion of the herbs for each serving, or *mate*. Once ready, the guest to the *cebador(a)*'s left consumes the *mate* all at once through a sieving straw, or *bombilla*. This process is repeated for each guest, moving in a circular counter-clockwise sequence, until all have drunk their fill.

The instructions' thoroughness leaves no room for uncertainty. The etiquette and expected behaviours, from when to say "thank you" to how to clean up, are all included in the precise explanation. Prieto not only provides a detailed set of instructions, but also a glossary of related terms, and some discussion prompts as well. While performing the ritual, Prieto encourages guests to engage in conversation. Certain suggested conversation topics are straightforward, such as "Have you ever had *mate* before?" whereas others are more challenging, like "What rituals keep you alive?" Depending on the participant's comfort level, they can tailor Prieto's piece to be a light-hearted social occurrence, or a deeply meaningful engagement with the other participants. While this *mate* preparation ritual is unique in many ways, there are familiar elements with which people of diverse cultures can identify. Partaking of drink as a social activity is common to most cultures, and like *Make Yourself a Mate* the nuances of each beverage and its preparation can be made into teachable moments in which culture can be shared. Margaret Visser believes that "we use eating as a medium for social relationships: satisfaction of the most individual of needs becomes a means of creating community" (ix). Further, Prieto's *Make Yourself a Mate* is more social than a formal meal because it can be performed at any time; it satisfies social needs above and beyond the need for physical sustenance. This ritual can be shared across cultures, forming a bridge of communal connection between peoples of all backgrounds.

CONCLUSION

The rituals presented by the artists in *Consumed* are generous offerings. These artworks provide not only food for thought, but also the space necessary to digest their content. By disturbing the traditional rituals of the gallery space through relational aesthetics, *Consumed* brings a new understanding of the potentials of engagement, which extends beyond the gallery into individuals' homes. Not only are the behavioural codes typically associated with the gallery (such as hushed voices, careful movements, and avoidance of physical contact with the art) disrupted, but individual rituals are unsettled as well. Personal mealtime rituals are to be left at the door as visitors enact artists' visions of new or reinvented approaches to eating. The artists' varied cultural and artistic backgrounds provide a tantalizing immersive experience. Instructional artworks, which order participants to clean, snack, fan, drink, and toast, engage both body and mind, and challenge visitors to rethink their own eating habits. *Consumed* leaves visitors with a more thorough understanding of the complexities of the meal and the effects such rituals have on daily life.

Read as a commentary upon the state of the meal, these pieces identify some deficiencies in contemporary mealtime rituals. Themes of reflection, reverence, and concentrated intention suggest a need for distinct, focused rituals not impeded by distractions. AlZeri's *A Clean Slate* proposes reconsidering the more humble cleaning routines of meal preparation as offering a fresh start, rather than being a dreaded chore. Clintberg's *The Blue Hour* eliminates technological distraction, thereby encouraging a reconnection with the natural world. Lee's *Round and Round* makes snacking a mindful exercise, rather than a mindless one. Lupo's *A Meal, Your Meal* encourages making time for meals regardless of busy schedules. Myers' *Before Dinner* brings

awareness to actions not typically associated with ritual and invites a reconsideration of their efficacy. These instructional works bring awareness to behaviours and attitudes that have become toxic.

Furthermore, social themes of community and sharing suggest the need for rituals to be experienced and partaken with good company. Borsato's *Thank you for these gifts* honours mealtime expressions of gratitude and likewise upholds the value of good company. Morin's *hosting a dinner party for the lost* promotes honest communication and the sharing of Indigenous culture. Kim's *how to make an elixir* brings attention to the similarities and nuances of beverage preparation rituals shared by people around the world. Prieto's *Make Yourself a Mate* brings cultures together over tea and provides an open forum for forging new relationships or solidifying old ones. By advocating increased socialization and meditation during meals, the works in *Consumed* recognize that current eating habits are rushed and disconnected; rather than critiquing these cultural habits directly, they propose creative solutions to renewing the potential of mealtime rituals to provide tranquility, mindfulness and community.

EXHIBITION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Consumed examines contemporary rituals associated with food, eating and socializing – the meal. Certain production and consumption practices associated with these rituals have undergone considerable changes in recent years, and yet others remain unchanged. The advent of globalization had a profound affect on what people eat because it made available otherwise unheard of ingredients and cuisines. While much research has been done on how this radical shift changed *what* one eats, considerably less work has been done to investigate how this has changed *how* one eats. The meal is a universal ritual shared by all people in some form or another, thus examining similarities and differences between the permutations of this common thread can be very revealing.

The persistence of some rituals and the disappearance of others can be telling indicators of larger changes within a society, which demonstrates why this subject warrants further exploration. For example, the ritual of setting a table is becoming less common as people are increasingly migrating towards couches and desks for meals. On the other hand, rituals such as the birthday cake with candles and a song does not show signs of disappearing any time soon. My inquiry examines multiple interpretations of the contemporary meal in an attempt to glean a more holistic definition of the term as it may be defined today.

METHODOLOGY

To organize an exhibition around rituals I had to first define what I meant by ritual. Rituals often have a religious or grandiose connotation, but I was instead interested in more mundane,

personal practices. I therefore chose to use the secular definition of ritual, being “an act or series of acts regularly repeated in a set precise manner” (Miriam-Webster). The unconventional exhibition concept also demanded a three-pronged approach to research. My work led me to investigate the fields of social ritual behaviour, the history of food in artistic practice, as well as participatory and instruction art practice. This interdisciplinary research method provided a rigorous basis for the multiple facets of my project. Once the artists were confirmed I also delved into more specific research about each artist’s practice. The research was amassed in equal parts from primary and secondary materials. Considerable exploratory reading of both physical and digital secondary sources, along with studio visits, interviews, and other primary research began a year prior to the exhibition.

In order to decide which artists to extend an invitation to I began by researching other food-based exhibitions and performances that had taken place in Toronto in recent years. This investigation led to the discovery of many potential participants both in Toronto and other parts of Canada. Food-themed issues of Canadian art and culture magazines also provided several leads, including *C Magazine*’s Summer 2011 “Food” issue. Once the selected artists started responding to my invitation to participate I began a long series of studio visits and conversations. I felt it was important to meet with the artists in person in order to better understand their vision for the exhibition, so I met with the seven (of the nine) who live in Toronto. During these meetings I interviewed the artists about their creations and their practices in general. I then used this interview material in the curatorial essay to provide the artists’ own perspectives of their work.

Research for the exhibition design was gleaned primarily from visits to similar exhibitions. Gendai Gallery’s 2016-17 *MMMMM...Gendai Kitchen* program, which invited

artists to host food-based performances inspired by the seasons, was of particular interest because of its participatory nature. At the winter iteration of the project I was met Diane Borsato and others involved in the programming. Several of the participating artists from *MMMMM...Gendai Kitchen*, including Borsato, Myung-Sun Kim, and Lisa Myers, later agreed to contribute to my MFA exhibition. I also drew upon my own curatorial experience and experimentation when designing the exhibition. In 2015-16 I co-curated a cassette-based sound art exhibition with Ariel Sharratt in which we experimented with formal and informal display methods. For half of the exhibition we presented the pieces in a makeshift living room with couches and coffee tables, and subsequently reinstalled the work in a white-walled gallery with uniform plinths. Based on feedback from visitors we deduced that the more comfortable, home-like display provided a more engaging and enjoyable experience. I believe that the mealtime rituals of *Consumed* are also better suited to a less formal environment, and thus took steps to create a more relaxed domestic environment.

EXHIBITION CONCEPT

The design of *Consumed* was intended to make the gallery less formal, and more open to visitor interaction. Most gallery experiences are dictated by ingrained standards of behaviour including using hushed voices and looking without touching. *Consumed* endeavoured to promote the opposite by presenting artworks that instruct visitors to abandon not only their own quotidian eating rituals, but also the ritual behaviours of the gallery space. Visitors had to physically engage with the works in order to activate them, and the actions required were diverse, ranging from writing to running to talking. The pieces in *Consumed* may have been embarrassing or uncomfortable to enact, so providing a more inviting space was intended to ease those tensions.

The typically stark white walls of the gallery were painted a softer pastel yellow to evoke a more warm, welcoming environment. The paint was only applied half-way up the wall to create the effect of a lower false ceiling, giving the illusion of domestic space. However, these attempts to create a more home-like atmosphere were not intended to completely mask the fact that the exhibition was housed in a gallery. The pieces could indeed have been displayed in a home, but then the exhibition would have lost its potential to allow visitors the opportunity to disrupt and identify the learned behaviour patterns of the gallery space that the pieces were encouraging them to deviate from.

Also, rather than mounting pieces on the wall, the works were displayed on tables of varying shapes and sizes. The lack of art on the walls was intended to pique visitor curiosity and encourage them to investigate the objects presented on the tables. Using a variety of table styles reduced the sterility of the display and dismissed the idea that each work was a station. As an additional gesture of hospitality there was a dining hutch filled with food, dishes and utensils located by the entrance. This enabled visitors to personalize their experiences by using items to suit their tastes while performing the instructions.

The placement of the artworks was designed based on necessity and following the natural progression of a meal. Peter Morin's *hosting a dinner party for the lost* was located in the media room because of its immense size. It could not be placed in the main gallery because it would dominate the room and leave very little space for the other pieces. Lisa Myers' *Before Dinner* was located in the hall because it involved running several meters. If it was installed in the main gallery there was the risk of visitors running into each other or knocking over other pieces. Basil AlZeri's *A Clean Slate* was located near the door to the gallery because it could be read as either a preparatory or concluding piece. Placing it near the doorway encouraged visitors to enact it at

the beginning or end of their experience, rather than half way through. Diane Borsato's piece was next, if the guest followed a clockwise movement throughout the space. *Thank you for these gifts* – a toast to be enacted at the start of a meal – was placed near the logical beginning of the layout in order to respect that expectation. Following the motif of beverage consumption, Myung-Sun Kim's piece was positioned next to Borsato's. *how to make an elixir* encouraged visitors to think about drinking in a much less traditional way, and therefore provided an interesting juxtaposition. Mark Clintberg's *The Blue Hour* was displayed by one of the gallery's large windows. The piece's instructions stipulated that the visitor eat their meal at twilight, so it was important that they have a view to the outside. Max Lupo's *A Meal, Your Meal* marked a slowing down of the exhibition's pace. Lupo's piece offered quiet reflection, which set the tone for Sooyeong Lee's *Round and Round*, a piece of focused meditation. Finally, Dana Prieto's *Make Yourself a Mate* acted as the digestif of the exhibition by giving visitors a chance to discuss and digest the experience.

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Food as subject matter dates back almost to the birth of art itself. Art critic Sharon Butler writes that "Stone Age cave painters used vegetable juice and animal fats as binding ingredients in their paints, and the Egyptians carved pictographs of crops and bread on hieroglyphic tablets," (1) and food has remained a popular subject of art production ever since. It is considerably more difficult to pinpoint the very first instance of food being brought into an art gallery. However, with Filippo Marinetti's *Futurist Cookbook* and Marcel Duchamp's introduction of the Readymade, food's watershed entry into the gallery space most likely occurred some time in the 1930s. *The Futurist Cookbook* (1930) not only contains outlandish recipes, but also manifestos and essays

that dictate a radical new approach to preparing and eating food. Marinetti's so-called cookbook "blasted [Italian] pastoral food from the landscape and with modern brashness flew in a low-calorie, high-tech cuisine" (Marinetti et al. 7). Since then, food-based exhibitions have proliferated to such a degree that they are now a regular occurrence. Some recent stand-out examples that relate more closely to the themes of *Consumed* include Stephanie Smith's *Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art* (2012) at the Smart Museum in Chicago and Germano Celant's 2015 *Arts & Foods: Rituals Since 1851* at Triennale Museum in Milan. Celant's exhibition displayed an impressive survey collection of primarily sculptural artworks. Celant also addressed ritual by displaying artfully designed tools and utensils alongside the food-inspired artworks, creating a well-rounded presentation of the various elements involved in food rituals. *Arts & Foods* nevertheless avoided the performative and participatory facets of food preparation and consumption. *Feast*, on the other hand, specifically broached these subjects by focusing exclusively on the artist-hosted meal and providing an extensive program of participatory projects. Unlike *Consumed*, *Feast* engaged in a historically contextualized analysis of the works and focused on the radicality of its artist-led projects. Conversely, *Consumed* explores how reimagined rituals can impact both the present and the future by providing approachable rituals that can be practiced both in the gallery and at home.

The idea of participatory artwork gained significant traction when Nicolas Bourriaud coined the term *relational aesthetics* in the curatorial essay for his 1996 exhibition *Traffic*. Expanding upon his neologism in 2002, Bourriaud then curated the groundbreaking *Touch: Relational Art from the 1990s to Now*, which featured a selection of artists who reflected "his own typologies of different forms of relational art and those that encourage participation" (Bourriaud and Moss 3). One artwork of special interest from *Touch* – Rirkrit Tiravanija's

Untitled (tom ka soup) (1995) – featured the artist’s preparation and offering of a Thai soup base, which visitors were invited to add to boiling water and eat (Bourriaud and Moss 33). This piece, like those in *Consumed*, is at once participatory, instructional, and food-based.

Instructional artwork is a distinct, but related, practice initiated by artists of the Fluxus movement. Art historian Astrid Peterle explains that artworks or “scores by Fluxus artists contain instructions that could be performed by anyone, anytime, anywhere” (439), making them extremely open to reinterpretation. Taking the opportunity to expand upon this concept, curator Hans Ulrich Obrist used the instructional approach as a template for a curatorial project entitled *Do it* (1993 – present). The project was enormously successful because of its straightforward and engaging premise, and has taken on numerous iterations since its inception. While the instructions for *Do it* can be related to any subject matter, *Consumed* is more focused, only investigating food-based rituals.

Although some notable exceptions exist, there have been relatively few exhibitions organized around the concept of ritual. Furthermore, these exceptions were culturally specific, and focused on the rituals of distinct communities. In particular, there have been several exhibitions specializing in African rites and the accompanying traditional garb and ornament. For example, *Benin: Kings and Rituals* (2007) was curated collaborative between Barbara Plankensteiner (head of the sub-Saharan African collection in Vienna's Museum für Völkerkunde), Gisela Völger (former director of the Rautenstrauch Joest Museum in Cologne) and Peter Junge (curator of the Africa department at the Ethnology Museum in Berlin). It was presented as a traditional ethnographic exhibition with a focus on ceremonial artefacts used in the royalty courts of the kingdom of Benin. *Spectacular Display: The Art of Nkanu Initiation Rituals* (2001) – curated by David Binkle at the National Museum of African Art (Smithsonian

Institution, Washington, D.C.) – and *Surfaces: Color, Substances, and Ritual Applications in African Sculpture* (2004) – curated by Donna Page and Leonard Kahan at The African Art Museum of the SMA Fathers (Tenafly, NJ) – were approached in a similar fashion, with an emphasis on the objects and no engagement with the rituals themselves. Other such ethnographic exhibitions based on the rituals of other cultures have also been mounted. One example that comes closer to resembling *Consumed* is *Ritual of Tea* (2002) presented at the JamFactory Gallery in Adelaide, Australia. Curator Janice Lally presented an array of ceramics and other tea-making utensils, but expanded the programming to include special events around the exhibit’s “themes of community and sharing food” (109), which incorporated an interactive element and increased visitor engagement. Therefore, despite in-depth research I have not found evidence of any exhibitions pertaining to eating rituals or exhibitions in which visitors are able to perform the rituals themselves. To this end, I feel as though *Consumed* is unique in both its content and presentation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical and historical fields that drove the research for *Consumed* include relational aesthetics, food-based art practice, and ritual studies. The study of ritual has been primarily undertaken from anthropological and sociological standpoints. Ethnographer and folklorist, Arnold van Gennep is generally recognized as a pioneer of ritual studies, as his 1909 publication, *Les rites de passage (The Rites of Passage)* influenced generations of ritual scholars to come. One noteworthy successor was the British cultural anthropologist Victor Witter Turner, who wrote extensively about ritual structure and performance. Though much of his work focused on the rituals of specific African communities, his 1969 *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-*

Structure illuminated key behavioural concepts that can be applied to cultures worldwide. More recently, religious studies scholar Catherine Bell's thorough text, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (1992) took a more interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of ritual. Bell did not provide an overview of specific examples, but instead endeavoured to "formulate an analytic direction better able to grasp how such activities compare to other forms of social action" (4). Performance theorist Richard Schechner's *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance* (2003) began exploring the notion of ritual's incorporation into art, but with a distinct focus on performance and dramatic arts.

Art historian Carol Duncan's foundational text *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (1995) introduced the idea of ritual performances being embedded in the museum. Duncan describes "the ceremonial nature of museum space and the need to differentiate it (and the time one spends in it) from day-to-day time and space outside" (476), thereby likening it to the reverential experience of going to a church. Duncan suggests that it is necessary to uphold the hallowed decorum of the gallery space, an idea that *Consumed* directly challenges by replacing such rituals with new, reimagined ones. The intention of the aforementioned texts was not to address food or eating rituals in depth; however, scholar Margaret Visser carved out that niche with the publication of *The Rituals of Dinner: The Origins, Evolution, Eccentricities, and Meaning of Table Manners* (1992). In this comprehensive tome Visser explored how human beings have "turn[ed] the consumption of food, a biological necessity, into a carefully cultured phenomenon" (ix) through the development of many diverse rituals. More recently, sociologist Alan Warde published *The Practice of Eating* (2016), which further illuminates the social behavioural codes of rituals. Warde uses sociology to make sense of how the way food is consumed affects both individuals and societies as a whole. While all of these texts provide

generous portions of research and insight into rituals, *Consumed* directly addresses the notion of ritual at the intersections of art and food.

In the past two decades, scholarly interest in food studies has exploded, including its overlap with art. Several scholars have written historical analyses of food's depiction in fine art. Recently, three separate authors endeavoured to cover its entire history: in 2015 food historian Gillian Riley published *Food in Art: From Prehistory to the Renaissance*, in 2009 art historian John Varriano published *Tastes and Temptations: Food and Art in Renaissance Italy*, and in 2004 art historian Kenneth Bendiner came out with *Food in Painting: From the Renaissance to the Present*. While these texts are fairly comprehensive, they focussed primarily on the depiction of food in visual art rather than its usage as a medium. In contrast, Nina Levent and Irina Mihalache's *Food and Museums* (2017) offers a much more interdisciplinary look into the role of food in the museum, from their cafeterias to the various food-based exhibitions they display.

As a specific example of one such exhibition, Stephanie Smith's *Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art* exhibition catalogue from 2013 provides insight into the history of food-based artworks. Smith writes that "*Feast* covers a wide but not all-encompassing territory: it does not directly address representations of food, or depictions of meals, or art that uses food as a material to be viewed but not consumed" (13). What *Feast* does cover is the history of food as a material to be touched, smelled, eaten and otherwise manipulated in art practice. *Consumed* bares several comparisons to *Feast*, but whereas *Feast* focuses on spectacular and often ephemeral projects, *Consumed* focuses on quotidian, recurrent ritual artworks. Similar to *Feast*, Cecilia Novero's *Antidiets of the Avant-Garde: From Futurist Cooking to Eat Art* (2010) more closely examines five touchstone examples of the vanguard incorporation of food into art practice. Novero explains that these antidiets, or new, radically

unconventional approaches to eating, “transformed some of the gastronomic principles of pleasure, taste, assimilation, digestibility – as well as of history – and mobilized those principles to redefine art and the subject” (xiv). Novero therefore argues that by remodelling acts of eating, these artists likewise inspired a re-evaluation of the definition of art and its audience.

The interest in food and art goes both ways. The culinary creations of some of the world’s most highly regarded chefs have also garnered the attention of art critics, curators and visual artists who have noted parallels between their work and the practices of visual artists. For example, in *Food for Thought, Thought for Food* (2009), the creations of famed chef Ferran Adrià of elBulli were examined at a round table discussion between art world experts including critic Jerry Saltz and visual artist Carsten Höller (Hamilton and Todolí).

Finally, the field of relational aesthetics had to be addressed because the artworks in *Consumed* are instructional and therefore participatory or relational. The term, coined by curator Nicolas Bourriaud, and the kind of art it endorsed sparked debate in the artworld. Bourriaud believed that these artworks, which promote social interaction, were produced as a reaction against the side effects of the rise of the Internet. Bourriaud implored readers to consider that “[t]he much vaunted ‘communication superhighways,’ with their toll plazas and picnic areas, threaten to become the only possible thoroughfare from a point to another in the human world” (Bourriaud 8). Art historian Claire Bishop warned that the acceptance of such artworks might edge out more traditional forms of art. Bishop’s later work *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012) further question the effectiveness of such social engagement, arguing that they produce spectacle rather than thoughtful engagement. Many other critics have risen in defense of relational aesthetics and its potential. Curator Nato Thompson champions the

approach and put forward *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art From 1991-2011* (2012), offering a multitude of examples of effective politically engaging artworks.

Consumed offers an answer to Bishop's concern about spectacle. Not only does it prescribe a repetition of the rituals on offer, thereby reifying the otherwise ephemeral, but also suggests that the routines be continued in the privacy of visitors' own homes without an audience. In short, much rigorous research has been done in the fields of relational aesthetics, food-based art and ritual studies, but *Consumed* is unique in its intersection of the three.

CONCLUSION

Through this project I have achieved a new understanding of the potential for nuance in mealtime rituals. *Consumed* provides a unique case study for comparing and contrasting multiple interpretations of this concept. The results demonstrate that there is an impetus to re-engage with the more social and meditative aspects of the meal. This project also challenges the paradigm of visual supremacy in the gallery by employing relational and gustatory aesthetics. Instead of having food and art distinct from one another, as they often are in the gallery space, they are here merged in a way that challenges the dominance of static visuality in the gallery. Also, by blurring the lines between food and art consumption I have endeavoured to disrupt the visitor's ritual behaviours. The project serves as both a case study for the interruption of consumption rituals in the gallery space and a contribution to contemporary scholarship on relational aesthetics.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Badger, Gina. "The Archivist in the Kitchen." *Fuse Magazine*, vol. 36, no. 2, Spring 2013, pp. 18-25. Print.

Bamboate, Sharlene. "Intimate Kitchens: Sharlene Bamboate Interviews Basil AlZeri." *Nomorepotlucks*, vol. 36, Fall 2014. Web. <<http://nomorepotlucks.org/site/intimate-kitchens-sharlene-bamboate-interviews-basil-alzeri/>> Accessed 12 February 2017.

Bell, Catherine. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Revised Edition). Cary, GB: Oxford University Press, USA, 2009. ProQuest ebrary. Web eBook.

---. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. Cary, GB: Oxford University Press, USA, 1992. ProQuest ebrary. Web eBook.

Bendiner, Kenneth. *Food in Painting: From the Renaissance to the Present*. London: Reaktion, 2004. Print.

Binkley, David A. "Spectacular Display: The Art of Nkanu Initiation Rituals." *African Arts*, vol. 34, no. 4, 2001, pp. 48–96. Print.

Bishop, Claire. "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics." *October*, vol. 110, 2004, pp. 51-79. Print.

---. *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. New York: Verso, 2012. Print.

Bourriaud, Nicolas. *Relational Aesthetics*. Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2002. Print.

Bourriaud, Nicolas and Karen Moss. *Touch: Relational Art from the 1990s to Now*. San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute, 2002. Print.

- Brillat-Savarin, Jean Anthelme, and M. F. K. Fisher. *M.F.K. Fisher's Translation of the Physiology of Taste, Or, Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy*. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1986. Print.
- Butler, Sharon. "A Brief History of Food as Art." *Smithsonian Journeys Quarterly*. Washington: The Smithsonian, 13 January 2017. Web. < <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/food-art-cultural-travel-180961648/>> Accessed 12 February 2017.
- Campkin, Ben, and Rosie Cox. *Dirt: New Geographies of Cleanliness and Contamination*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2007. Print.
- Celant, Germano. *Arts & Foods: Rituals Since 1851*. Florence: Electa, 2015. Print.
- Chayka, Kyle. "WTF is... Relational Aesthetics?" *Hyperallergic*. New York: Hyperallergic, 8 February 2011. Web. < <http://hyperallergic.com/18426/wtf-is-relational-aesthetics/>> Accessed 8 February 2017.
- Chhangur, Emily, et al. *Diane Borsato*. Toronto: Art Gallery of York University, 2012. Print.
- Dolphijn, Rick. "An Aesthetics of the Mouth: Creativity Between the Culinary and the Arts." *Angelaki*, vol. 11, Routledge, 2006. Print.
- Duncan, Carol. *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- Goodman, Michael K. David Goodman and Michael Redclift, editors. *Consuming Space: Placing Consumption in Perspective*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print.
- Halferty, J. P. "Intimate Interventions: An Interview with Diane Borsato." *Canadian Theatre Review*, vol. 137, 2009, pp. 13-19. Print.
- Hamilton, Richard, and Vicent Todolí, editors. *Food for Thought, Thought for Food*. New York: Actar, 2009. Print.

- Kim, Myung-Sun. Personal correspondence with author. 19 March 2017.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. "Playing to the Senses: Food as a Performance Medium." *Performance Research*, vol. 4, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1999, pp. 1-30. Print.
- Lally, Janice. "Ritual of Tea." *Craft Arts International*, no. 54, 2002, pp. 109. Print.
- Marinetti, Filippo T. *The Futurist Cookbook*. 1930. Reprint. Edited by Lesley Chamberlain, translated by Suzanne Brill, San Francisco: Bedford Arts, 1989. Print.
- Morin, Peter. Personal correspondence with author. 21 March 2017.
- Myers, Lisa. Personal correspondence with author. 29 January 2017.
- Novero, Cecilia. *Antidiets of the Avant-Garde: From Futurist Cooking to Eat Art*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. Print.
- Obrist, Hans U., Bruce Altshuler, and Independent Curators Incorporated. *Do it*. New York: Independent Curators Inc., 1997. Print.
- Peek, Philip M. "Surfaces: Color, Substances, and Ritual Applications in African Sculpture Review." *African Arts*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2005, pp. 81–82. Print.
- Peterle, Astrid. "Fluxus Scores and Instructions: The Transformative Years, "Make a Salad"." *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2009, pp. 439-441. Print.
- Plankensteiner, Barbara. "Benin: Kings and Rituals: Court Arts from Nigeria." *African Arts*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2007, pp. 74–87. Print.
- Reno, R. R. "With Religion on the Decline, Secular Values Are on the Rise." *Opposing Viewpoints: Ethics*. 2015. Print.

- Riley, Gillian. *Food in Art: From Prehistory to the Renaissance*. London: Reaktion Books, 2015. Print.
- "Ritual." Merriam-Webster.com. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ritual>> Accessed 1 February 2017.
- Robertson, Carmen L. *Mythologizing Norval Morrisseau: Art and the Colonial Narrative in the Canadian Media*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016. Web eBook.
- Schechner, Richard. *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance*. London, US: Routledge, 2003. ProQuest ebrary. Web eBook.
- Smith, Stephanie, and The Smart Museum of Art. *Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art*. Chicago: Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, 2013. Print.
- Somov, Pavel. *Reinventing the Meal: How Mindfulness Can Help You Slow Down, Savor the Moment, and Reconnect with the Ritual of Eating*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications, 2012. Print.
- Thom, Ian M., and McMichael Canadian Art Collection. *Challenging Traditions: Contemporary First Nations Art of the Northwest Coast*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2009. Print.
- Thompson, Nato. *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*. New York: Creative Time, 2012. Print.
- Turner, Victor Witter. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. 1969. Reprint. Piscataway, NJ.: Aldine Transaction, 1995. Print.
- Van Gennep, Arnold. *Les Rites du Passage (The Rites of Passage)*. 1909. Reprint. Translated by Gabrielle L. Caffee and Monika B. Vizedom. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. Print.

- Varriano, John L. *Tastes and Temptations: Food and Art in Renaissance Italy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009. Print.
- Visser, Margaret. *The Rituals of Dinner: The Origins, Evolution, Eccentricities, and Meaning of Table Manners*. Toronto: Harper Collins, 1992. Print.
- Warde, Alan. *The Practice of Eating*. Malden, MA.: Polity Press, 2016. Print.
- Whittall, Edward. "Food and Objecthood: Food, Museums, and Anti-Theatricality." *Food and Museums*. Edited by Nina S. Levent, and Irina Mihalache, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017. 71-88. Print.

APPENDIX A: COMMISSIONED ARTWORKS

Basil AlZeri, *A Clean Slate*, 2017

+++++

a clean slate ~

Wet first cloth with soapy water

Squeeze excess water

Wipe the table thoroughly (including edges and corners)

Dry table with clean dry towel

Remove both wet cloth and dry towel from the table

Tabula rasa!

+++++

Diane Borsato, *Thank You For These Gifts*, 2016

+++++

At the start of the meal everyone should hold a glass up to toast.

Look at one another, and everyone says to each other while they gently nod and toast:

“Thank you for these gifts.”

“Thank you for these gifts.”

etc.

And then you eat together with gratitude.

+++++

Mark Clintberg, *The Blue Hour*, 2016

+++++

Seated indoors, with a view of the sky and without any artificial illumination, wait until twilight. At the moment when the sky has achieved a shade of rich, saturated (or entirely dark) colour, and according to your impulses, begin your meal, and complete your meal with only the remaining daylight - or darkness - that the sky provides you.

+++++

Myung-Sun Kim, *how to make an elixir*, 2017

+++++

Hold the arched skin of the chosen vessel,
a void, a hollow vessel facing you.

The nature of a void is to be filled.
Decide on what the elixir will do.
Imagine what this looks, feels, tastes, and smells like.
Gather the ingredients required to construct this elixir.
Everything you need is within you and all around you.
Look around your surroundings to find ingredients and materials.
Consider both objects and edibles in your space.
Combine ingredients and construct the elixir.

It may take some time before the mixture transforms and becomes an elixir
nano-seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, years.
Fermenting compound, a deceptive look of waiting and stillness.

Take the matured substance and fill the void of the vessel.
Find the lip of the vessel to begin the courtship of consumption.
Potency of elixir transforms you as it enters the body
in texture - taste - myth - story - magic - alchemy - weight - temperature.
Offer the elixir to another person.
Solids that satiate
Liquids that makes life flow
Maturing that prolongs the inevitable
Repeat, replenish as desired, with company - an essential element.

+++++

Sooyeong Lee, *Round and Round*, 2016

+++++

----- Start -----

The participant will choose a tangerine from a basket on the table.

On the table, there will be a sign that reads, "Please pick a tangerine wrapped in tissue paper and carefully unwrap for more instruction."

When unwrapped, the tissue paper will read:

1 Think of one thing that you are afraid of in your life. It can be a fear or something that makes you anxious.

2 While thinking about it, place your palm over the tangerine and roll it five times clockwise slowly.

3 Peel the tangerine in any fashion as you wish, but do not rush; put all of the peel inside the plastic bag.

4 Eat the peeled tangerine and be as mindful as you can. Be aware of every movement and sensation in your mouth as you think about overcoming that particular fear or anxiety.

5 When you are finished eating, write your fear or anxiety on the label of the plastic bag.

6 Leave the plastic bag inside the box with the label facing down.

----- Finish -----

+++++

Max Lupo, *A Meal, Your Meal*, 2016

+++++

A Meal, Your Meal

By Max Lupo | YIELD 1-4 optional servings | TIME 25 minutes

Ingredients

1 place setting, suitable for the meal being served
note: the “meal” can instead be a hypothetical non-meal

1 set of hands, or equivalent

1 medium sized cloth napkin

1 elastic band

1/3 cup of water

Preparation

Step 1

If available, acknowledge the location of your hands. Use your hands, or reasonable equivalent, to select and arrange the table setting in your preferred manner.

Step 2

Pick up the napkin and fold it into halves until it cannot be folded any further. With one hand, keep the folded napkin in position, while using the other hand to grab the elastic band.

Step 3

Wrap the elastic band around the napkin so that its tightly folded shape is preserved by the tension of the band.

Step 4

Is there a plate in front of you or a bowl? It doesn't really matter, I guess. Pour the 1/3 cup of water into the bowl/plate. If some water spills on the floor or table, you can clean it up if you like, though this is not really a part of the recipe. I mean, it wouldn't hurt the performance, but acknowledge that your need to clean the spill is a gesture independent of the recipe.

Step 5

Place the bundled cloth into the centre of the bowl/plate, then wait, and watch the napkin for 30 seconds.

Step 6

In defiance of gravity, capillary action will let the water on the plate slowly ascend upward into the cloth. If you stare at the cloth it will look like not much is happening, but in about 15-20 minutes just about all of the water will be absorbed into your folded napkin.

Step 7

Acknowledge that these 20 minutes are yours. This is your chance to be somewhere without obligation. Feel free to eat the prepared meal (if it exists), or sit in silence. While you're at this table, no one will expect you to be anywhere else, I promise.

+++++

Peter Morin, *hosting a dinner party for the lost (in two parts)*, 2016

+++++

instructions for the table:

the table has to be dark oak

set a dinner service for twelve

the service includes wine glasses, water glasses, blood colour napkins (with silver napkin rings),
bone china plates, silverware

instructions for making and using medicine tea:

boil a soup pot filled with sage picked from the desert and cedar from a large tree

sing songs while picking the medicine from the land

leave a pinch of tobacco at the base of each plant that you pulled medicine from

bring the water to a boil

then simmer the water for ten to fifteen minutes

during the simmer wave an eagle fan through the steam

after ten minutes remove the pot from heat

place pot on table

and sit in chair in close proximity to the medicine tea

when medicine tea is cool to touch

place linen wash cloth into the medicine tea

take off all of your clothes

using the medicine tea soaked cloth

careful cleanse your body

instructions for the meal:

clothed or not-clothed carry the medicine tea over to the oak table

sit down at the first chair

take the medicine soaked cloth

wash each piece of the table setting

do this in silences

you should follow the path of the sun

moving around the table

the last table setting would be your seat at this meal

take your time washing this setting

when you are done

place the medicine tea down on the floor beside your feet

take a breath

say out loud – I wanted to love each of you deeply, but I was afraid.

+++++

Lisa Myers, *Functional-actions-of-living (this is not a ritual): Before Dinner*, 2017

+++++

Props: black tabletop fan, plate, food, fork, knife, tea towel, small table and kitchen chair, timer.

Scenario: If I don't turn on the fan that sits beside my stove before cooking then the fire alarm will go off, or sometimes if I'm cooking with high heat in the oven the fire alarm will go off even if the fan is on.

Scene Opens with performer setting a plate, knife and fork on a table.

Action One: Performer turns on Fan sitting on edge of table facing towards the closest edge and then sits at the table waiting. (90 seconds)

Action Two: Performer quickly stands up and takes tea towel to fan the fire alarm located on the ceiling, this involves two hands each holding a corner of at one end of the tea towel and dropping and lifting arms to create a fanning action. (20 seconds)

Action Three: Keeping the tea towel in hand the Performer runs 4 meters and gestures as if they are opening front door and propping open a screen door, performer then turns around and runs 8 meters to gesture as if opening a back door. (10 – 20 seconds)

Action Four: Performer runs back 4 meters and resume fanning the fire alarm. (90 seconds to 2minutes), ends fanning with a drop in their body, tired arms, but the alarm has finally stopped.

Action Five: Performer runs back over and closes both doors. (10 - 20 seconds)

Action Six: Performer sits down and eats (variable timing)

+++++

+++++

Introduction

Mate is a South American drink that is commonly prepared, consumed and shared across households, cultures and classes in Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, Brazil, Bolivia, and most recently in Lebanon and Syria.

It can be drunk in solitude, but it is most likely shared among others. All people involved in a *mate* round or ritual will use and share the same *mate* and straw, and there will be one person in charge of preparing, serving and offering the drink.

Mate is best if it's had with friends or family, but it is also a great way to introduce yourself to strangers. It is a ritual that is good to start having if you feel hungry or loaded, sleepy or scattered, if you are feeling down or up for conversations.

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: Between ½ hour to 4 hours

Materials

- *Yerba Mate*
- Gourd or *Mate*
- Straw or *Bombilla*
- 90°C, non-boiled Water
- Kettle
- Thermos
- At least one other person who will share this ritual with you. It can be a friend, family, lover, acquaintance or stranger. If you are more than two people, you should stand or sit making some sort of circle or round.
- It is an excellent idea to pair *mate* with some snacks such as cookies, crackers, pastries or bread.

Instructions:

Start with Water

- 1) One person will heat the water until small bubbles start sizzling, turn the heat off, right before boiling. If the water boiled it's bad, but don't panic, use jar #1 to add some room temperature water and cool down the kettle. Once the water is ready, pour it into the thermos.
- 2) If you haven't yet, introduce yourself to the other person/persons with whom you are sharing this ritual. Write down your names on paper and insert the paper with the names in jar #2. Decide who will be the person pouring, serving and offering *mate*, this person will be the *cebador* or *cebadora* [see glossary for details]. The rest will be drinkers. The *cebador/a* will be in charge of preparing the *mate* and serving it the whole time.

Prepare the Gourd

- 3) While water is getting hot, use this time to prepare the *mate* gourd. Fill ¾ of the gourd with *Yerba Mate*, cover the top of the gourd with the palm of your hand, turn the gourd

upside down, shake it 10 times, and then gently return the gourd to the upright position, letting the herbs set towards one side of the gourd, and leaving an “empty” space with no herbs. Your hand will have some thin herbal “dust” that you should discard in jar #3.

[This step helps take out some of the herbal “dust”, which can make the drink taste too strong, and it can be too heavy on the stomach.]

- 4) Pour about two tbs. of water at room temperature from jar #1 on the “empty” hole with no herbs. The idea is that some herbs will become wet and some (the ones on the top of the “full” side, will still be dry and fresh). Let water sit for 5 minutes.

[This step prevents on one side, to “burn” the herbs with water that can be too hot, and to wet all the herbs at the same time. In both cases you are avoiding “washing out” all the medicinal and properties and flavor of the herbs in the first few *mates* drunk.]

- 5) Use this time to make sure your straw is clean and ready to use, and pour the hot water into the thermos.
- 6) Pour about two tbs. of hot water into the previously wet “empty” hole of the gourd. Let sit for 2 minutes.
- 7) Cover the “mouth” of the straw with you thumb; gently insert the straw in the wet and “empty” hole of your *mate*. Somewhat you will be drawing a “J” with your movement, smoothly pushing the dry *mate* herbs upwards.
- 8) The straw should be positioned where the “hole” is, let the straw sit on the “mouth” of the gourd, on the hole-side.

[The straw will stay in that position throughout the ritual, and the *cebador/a* is the only person able to move and reposition the straw in order to “mix” and exchange the wet and washed herbs with fresh and dry ones. Other people in the round should not move the straw.]

The First *Mate*

- 9) Pour hot water on top of the straw, right inside the hole, fill the hole with water without covering the dry herbs. The *cebador/a* will drink the first *mate*.

[The first *mate* can be too cold or too strong, and it would be considered impolite to offer it to another person in the round. Every time someone drinks *mate* they should drink it until they have sucked up all the water poured. It is considered rude to give back a *mate* with water still inside it. You will know there is no water left once you make an “air bubble” sound while sucking through the straw. This sound should be done with care, you don’t need to make too much “air bubble” noise or else it can translate as if the *mate* was “too short”, or there was too little water in it.]

The *Mate* Round

- 10) Pour more water in the *mate*, always try to point inside the hole, and not covering with water the dry herbs, or not wetting the whole herbs. Give this *mate* to the first person on your left.

- 11) Once the person is done drinking, they will return the *mate* to you.

[They should never thank you for the *mate* served, the word “thank you” (*gracias*) is only said when the drinker doesn’t want more *mate*, so after somebody says “thank you” you shouldn’t offer any more *mate*. If a drinker wants to show gratitude, they can make positive remarks regarding the *mate* you served them.]

- 12) The *cebador/a* will continue pouring and offering *mate* to all the people in the round.

[It is always best to continue the circle through the left, because the *cebador/a* will have to keep track of the order of the drinkers and continue the same order every new round of *mate*.]

Mate Talk

- 13) People in the round should be starting a conversation. Try asking some general questions to each other. They could be related to the ritual of *mate* per se:
- Have you ever had *mate* before?
 - Have you ever been the *cebador/a* before?
 - What causes your emotions to be destroyed or extinguished?
 - What causes you pain or discomfort?
 - How do you kill your time?
 - What amuses you?
 - What makes you fill opaque or matte?
 - Have you ever played chess before?
 - What rituals keep you alive?

Stop or Change

- 14) Whenever drinkers have had enough and want to stop drinking *mate*, they will say “thank you” to the *cebador/a*, and this should be enough sign for the *cebador/a* to stop serving them.
- 15) Either if the water in the thermos is finished, or the *mate* becomes “washed”, or the *cebador/a* needs to leave or wants to stop serving, the *cebador/a* should comment this situation with the rest of the people in the round. The *cebador/a* should take action either heating more water, changing the *mate* herbs or politely leaving the round.
- 16) For heating more water, follow step 1).
- 17) If the *cebador/a* leaves, the rest of the drinkers will decide if they want to stop drinking too, or if they want to continue drinking *mate*, in which case somebody else will be assigned with the role of *cebador/a*.
- 18) For changing the *mate* herbs, you should discard the “washed herbs” into the jar #3, you can rinse the gourd (optional) and fill the *mate* with fresh and dry herbs, following step 3).

End of the Round

- 19) Once everyone is finished with drinking *mate*, somebody will take charge of setting all materials back in place. The remaining water from the thermos should be used to re-fill jar #1 (if necessary), pouring the rest of the water back into the kettle. The straw should be rinsed with warm water.
- 20) The wet *mate* herbs should be discarded into jar #3. The gourd can be rinsed with warm water (optional). The best way to keep the gourd healthy and lasting is filling it right away with dry herbs, shaking it softly, and then pouring the excess of herbs back in the jar of dry herbs. This creates a thin layer of fresh and dry herbs in the gourd that will protect the *mate* from catching other smells and from drying too much or too little.

Glossary

Mate [mah – téh]

vtr

- From the verb *matar*, to kill, murder or slaughter
- Figurative, to destroy or extinguish an emotion
- Figurative, to cause discomfort
- To blunt or deaden a pain
- To kill time
- To make an effort, to kill yourself with effort
- To be amazed or astounded

adj mf

- Softened or opaque sound or texture, matt or matte

nm

- In chess, mate or checkmate

nm

- South American medicinal plant, botanical name: *ilex paraguensis*. The original denomination for the plant is *ka'a*, a Guaraní word that means herb, and *kõ'gõĩ*, a Tupi expression that means “what keeps us alive”.
- Drink obtained by infusing dried leaves of this plant
- The word derives from the Quechua *mati* and it designates the gourd where mate is served and drunk.
- The ritual of serving *mate* and sharing it with others

Cebador or *Cebadora* [seh – bah – door]

Noun

- Material, mechanism or person that starts a physical or chemical process.
- *Cebar* means to start, feed or nourish and etymologically derives from the Latin *cibus*, which is a general denomination for animal and human food and also designates barley.
- *Cebador* or *cebadora* is the person who serves and offers *mate*. In Guaraní, the word to designate this role is *pahagué*, which means “the last one”, or “the one that goes last”. *Cebadores* are the one that serve, that nourish, and are the ones that drink the last *mate* of the round. This role is clearly assigned at the beginning of the *mate* ritual; it can be self-assigned or somebody can ask another person if they want to do it. The *cebador/a* will continue in this role until the end of the *mate* round, or until they ask if somebody else wants to take this role. In casual, intimate and familiar settings, the role of the *cebador/a* can be shared and alternate between different people.

+++++

APPENDIX B: ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Basil AlZeri

Basil AlZeri is a visual artist living and working in Toronto, Canada. AlZeri's practice involves the intersection of art, education, and food, taking multiple forms such as interventions, exhibitions, performance, and public installation. AlZeri's work examines the socio-political dynamics of the family and its intersection with cultural practices, drawing on the necessities of everyday life and the visibility of labour as sites of exploration. His work aims to facilitate a space for empathy through gestures of inclusivity and generosity. AlZeri's work has been shown in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Sackville, Regina, Vancouver, Mexico City, Santiago, and Tartu/Estonia. AlZeri was one of the artists in residence at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Song Dong Communal Courtyard Project) in 2016.

Diane Borsato

Diane Borsato has established an international reputation for her social and interventionist practices, performance, video, photography, and sculpture. She was twice nominated for the Sobey Art Award and was winner of the Victor Martyn-Lynch Staunton Award for her work in the Inter-Arts category from the Canada Council for the Arts. She has exhibited and performed at major Canadian institutions including the Art Gallery of Ontario, The Power Plant, the Art Gallery of York University, MOCCA (Toronto), the Vancouver Art Gallery, the National Art Centre (Ottawa), and in galleries and museums in the US, France, Mexico, Taiwan and Japan. She is currently Associate Professor in Studio Arts at the University in Guelph where she has taught advanced courses that explore the relationships between art and everyday life, including

Food and Art, Special Topics on Walking, OUTDOOR SCHOOL and Live Art. Her work can be seen at: <http://www.dianeborsto.net>

Mark Clintberg

Mark Clintberg is an artist who works in the field of art history. He is represented by Pierre François Ouellette art contemporain in Montreal, Canada, and is an Assistant Professor in the School of Critical and Creative Studies at the Alberta College of Art + Design. He earned his Ph.D. in Art History at Concordia University in 2013, where he was also an Assistant Professor, LTA. His doctoral dissertation was nominated for the 2013 Governor-General's Gold Medal. He was long-listed for the Sobey Art Award for the Prairies and the North region in 2016, and Shortlisted for the Award in 2013. In August 2014, Clintberg and curator Zoë Chan were researchers in residence at Articule (Montreal). Their project is titled *Everyday Cooking as Practice*, and it explored connections between curating, creative practice, and domestic cookery. His work can be seen at: www.markclintberg.com/

Myung-Sun Kim

Myung-Sun Kim is an artist and arts programmer based in Toronto. Her work as an artist explores ideas around foodways, storytelling, silenced history, war, fiction, memory, trauma, abjection, and resilience. She is interested in the sharing of lived experiences and methodologies that may evoke a collective sense of empathy, a deeper understanding and a care for the differences that exist within our complex intercultural communities in ways that provide sustenance. Currently, she is the Manager of Artist and Community Activation at The Theatre Centre, and one member of the 2017 cohort of Toronto Arts Council's Leaders Lab. Her

programming experience ranges from galleries to festivals including Gendai Gallery, Inside Out Film Festival, OCAD University Gallery, and Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival, where she focuses on diverse and multidisciplinary contemporary art practices, film/ video, and community engagement. Exhibitions in 2017 include the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto, ON), OCAD University (Toronto, ON), Craft Ontario (Toronto, ON), and articule (Montreal, QC). Her work can be seen at: www.myungsunkim.com

Sooyeong Lee

Sooyeong Lee is a multidisciplinary artist based in Toronto whose practice primarily investigates the human form as an instrument of performance. Lee is fascinated by how the physical transformations of aging, injuries, fears and trauma induce vulnerability in individuals. In her work, Lee surveys the absence of the body, the figure underneath the skin, the delicate process of aging, and mortality. She deconstructs objects associated with the human body, such as a suit or a dress shirt, thereby exploring the qualities of the mechanical and the conformed. Similarly, the organic qualities of food – such as decay – are often used metaphorically in her work. Lee is currently experimenting with a series of work using protective gear made out of food in order to overcome her fears and anxieties. Her work has been displayed at various institutions in Toronto including, the Theatre Centre, Harbourfront Centre, and OCAD University. Her work can be seen at: www.sooyeonglee.com/

Max Lupo

Max Lupo is a Toronto-based artist. Lupo is a recent graduate of OCAD University's Interdisciplinary Art Media and Design MFA program, where his thesis project, Beep-

Boopatronics, took nearly obsolete objects and imbued them with new, but not always useful, functionality. Over the course of his undergraduate education Lupo focused on printmaking, and new media sculpture. These days, Lupo works to develop a range of interesting inventions that are used in his performative installations. Lupo has been part of many group exhibitions across Ontario and has also been featured in solo exhibitions at Georgian College's Campus Gallery, gallery VERSO, and OCAD U's Open Gallery. His work can be seen at: <https://maxlupo.com/>

Peter Morin

Peter Morin is a Tahltan Nation artist, curator and writer currently based in Brandon, Manitoba. In both his artistic practice as well as his curatorial work, Morin explores issues of de-colonization and indigenous identity and language. Morin has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions and live events including *Team Diversity Bannock and the World's Largest Bannock Attempt*, *7 Suits for 7 Days of Colonialism*, and *A return to the place where God outstretched his hand* (2007); performative works at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto; *12 Making Objects AKA First Nations DADA (12 Indigenous Interventions)* (2009) at Open Space, Victoria; at Satellite Gallery, Vancouver; and *Circle* (2011) Urban Shaman, Winnipeg. In 2010 the artist was awarded the British Columbia Creative Achievement Award for First Nations' Art. Morin is currently teaching in the Visual and Aboriginal Art Department at Brandon University.

Lisa Myers

In addition to being an artist, Lisa Myers is an independent curator, musician and chef. These disciplines inform her various practices. She grew up in southern Ontario. Her mother's family is Anishinaabe and French from Shawanaga and Beausoleil First Nation in the Georgian Bay

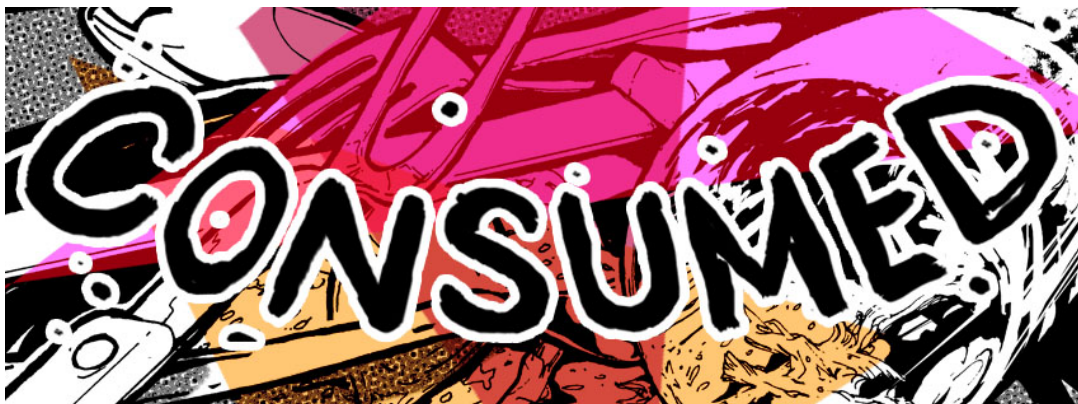
region, and her Dad is from English and Austrian ancestry who settled in southern Ontario. In 2011, Myers earned her Master of Fine Arts in Criticism and Curatorial practice from OCAD University, which focused on the use of food in Indigenous art practice. She has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions in venues including, Urban Shaman (Winnipeg), Art Gallery of Peterborough and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Lisa works and lives in Port Severn and Toronto, Ontario. Her work can be seen at: lisarosemyers.com/

Dana Prieto

Dana Prieto is an Argentine artist and educator based in Toronto and has completed a BFA in Drawing and Painting at OCAD University. Her work circles around the mundane through the creation of spaces, images and actions that propose uncanny participatory experiences. Using ordinary materials such as food, litter and kitchen cloths, her projects reflect on both intimate and social-political issues around migration, belonging, gender and power. She has participated in several award-winning collaborative projects working within diverse communities in Toronto, Halifax, Buenos Aires, Rawson, Quito and Belize. She is currently coordinating Critical Soup, an interdisciplinary food-art initiative that opens dialogues about the impacts of Canadian extractive companies in Indigenous and Global South territories. Her work can be seen at:

www.danaprieto.com/

APPENDIX C: PRESS RELEASE



From OCAD U's Criticism and Curatorial Practice program, MFA candidate Emily Cluett is pleased to announce her thesis exhibition *Consumed*, an art-driven inquiry into the trajectory of eating rituals.

Consumed presents interactive, instructional food-based artworks by Basil AlZeri, Diane Borsato, Mark Clintberg, Myung-Sun Kim, Sooyeong Lee, Max Lupo, Peter Morin, Lisa Myers, and Dana Prieto. Visitors are invited to enact the newly conceived and reimagined rituals put forward by these artists with food and supplies offered in the gallery space. Building on the histories of relational aesthetics and multi-sensorial engagement, Cluett believes that this thesis achieves a new understanding of the nuanced complexities of mealtime rituals and suggests that current approaches to eating may be in need of some adjustment. Artist's multiples of the instructional works are also available for visitors to take home and experiment with in other environments.

The exhibition will be on display at OCADU's Graduate Gallery – Room 104 of 205 Richmond Street West – from April 6 – 8, 2017. The gallery will be open from 11 – 6 daily. An opening reception will be held from 7 – 10 PM on Wednesday April 5, 2017. Please direct inquiries to curator Emily Cluett at ocadu.consumed@gmail.com.

APPENDIX D: DOCUMENTATION



Figure 1. Basil Alzeri, *A Clean Slate*, 2017. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Emily Cluett.



Figure 2. Myung-Sun Kim, *how to make an elixir*, 2017. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Eric Chengyang.

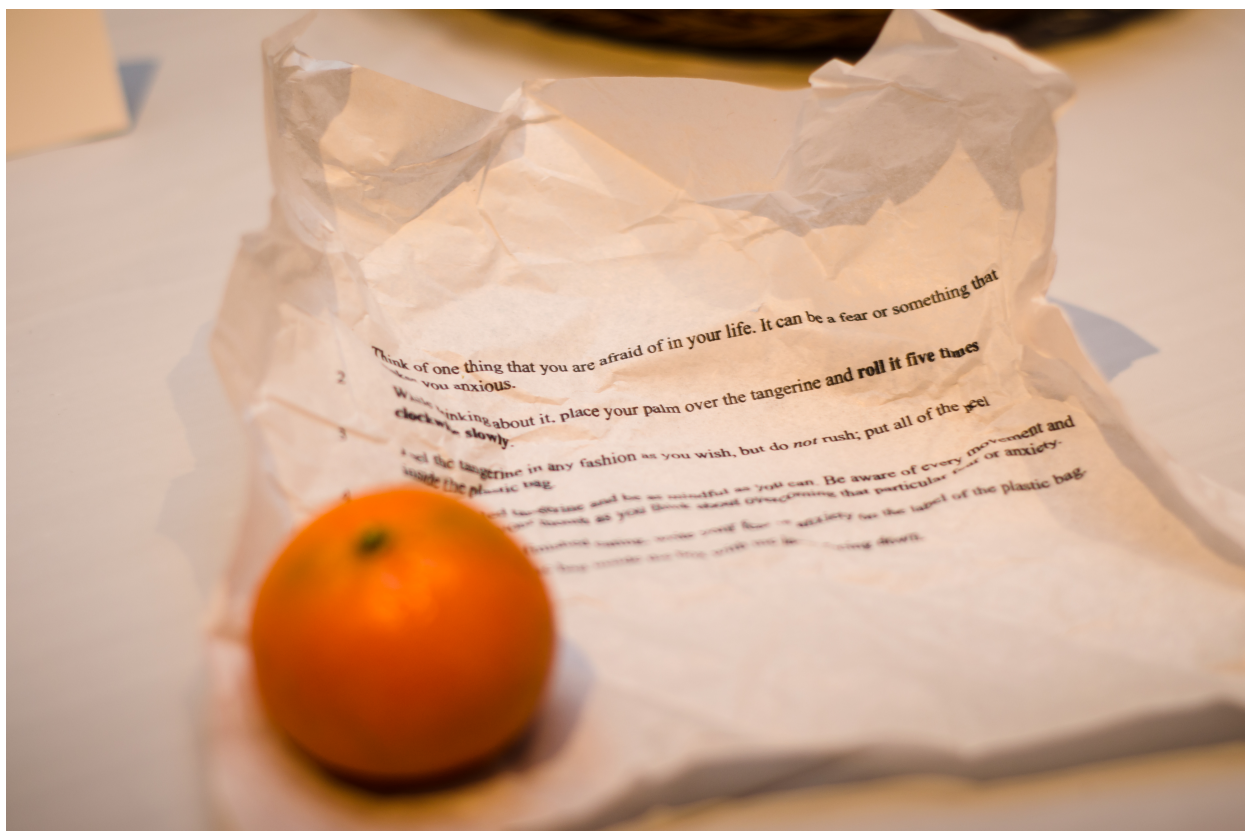


Figure 3. Sooyeong Lee, *Round and Round*, 2016. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Eric Chengyang.



Figure 4. Max Lupo, *A Meal, Your Meal*, 2016. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Eric Chengyang.



Figure 5. Peter Morin, *hosting a dinner party for the lost (in two parts)*, 2016. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Eric Chengyang.



Figure 6. Lisa Myers, *Functional-actions-of-living (this is not a ritual): Before Dinner*, 2017. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Eric Chengyang.



Dana Prieto, *Make yourself a Mate [Hacéte un Mate]*, 2016. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Eric Chengyang.

CONSUMED

This exhibition examines the rituals associated with food preparation and consumption through the presentation of interactive, instructional artworks. Each of the nine artists – Basil AlZeri, Diane Borsato, Mark Clintberg, Myung-Sun Kim, Sooyeong Lee, Max Lupo, Peter Morin, Lisa Myers, and Dana Prieto – has written detailed instructions for reimagined or newly conceived meal-time rituals that breathe new life into zestless routines.

Building on the histories of relational aesthetics and multi-sensorial engagement, these instructional works rely on the audience to activate them and in turn provide a unique embodied experience. A pantry full of dishes, utensils, and snacks, allows visitors to further personalize their own performances. By offering take-away instructions, the artists also allow the pieces to have a sense of continuity as they invite participants to re-enact the performances in different settings beyond the gallery space. Consumed intends to encourage a critical re-examination of the mundane eating rituals that make-up day-to-day life



Figure 8. *Consumed* exhibition pantry. Installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Emily Cluett.



Figure 9. Exhibition installation shot, 2017. Photo credit: Eric Chengyang.