

**TO BE CONSUMED
BY. Stories to chew
on, stories to
choke on.**

A Project by Klaus Speidel & TransArts/DieAngewandte

Opening: Friday, 5th of June, 12 - 9 pm, Exhibition until June 20th

With Dejan Kaludjerović, Estefanía Peñafiel Loaiza, Hector Schofield, Kaja Clara Joo, Kai Trausenegger, Kay Walkowiak, Lara Reichmann, Marlene Lahmer, Nedko Solakov, Nazanin Mehraein, Ramiro Wong

Curator's walkthroughs 5th of June, 6 and 8 pm. Contact: Klaus Speidel +43 660 8 260 270

Krinzinger Projekte
Schottenfeldgasse 45
1070 Vienna

Stories are one of the most fundamental and yet mundane aspects of human life; they are “the banquet on which we feed” for pleasure, comfort and inspiration; they sweep us off our feet and connect us to the world. This – and much more – connects them to other human universals: foods (and other substances we ingest).

Stories use basic ingredients that vary from culture to culture, yet have the same deep structure. Like fats, proteins or carbohydrates make up food, knots, complications and resolutions are the building blocks of narratives.

Some stories are crafted lovingly and meticulously to make us experience all their nuances, others are cheap and mass-produced and satisfy a passing need for salt or sugar. Often we don't get what's promised on the package.

Food metaphors are widespread across languages. We feed people a story, hoping that they will swallow it. Sometimes we eat out of the palm of someone's hand. And of course, it's hard to object to what's presented on the silver platter. Some stories look innocent and are still unhealthy. The same deceptiveness is at play in most manipulative and ideological narratives that try to bait us. Narratives we have agreed on – like national dishes – are the stuff of our identities.

While some brew their stew more successfully and present us with stories that are easy to gulp and stay down, others are revolting. No matter how we react to the stories we are fed, as soon as we consume them, they consume us too. They act on our very gut and transform us from inside. Before we realise, something in us splits them into irretraceable particles that act their magic upon us.

Some stories, like drugs, make their way into our system and change how we see the world: Legends about well poisoning and chemical weapons in Iraq have had terrible consequences.

Sometimes we feel the reflux of a tale that does not become us – that is too sweet, too flaky or sits heavily in the stomach; some narratives are so repelling that we spit them out and yet they leave a foul taste in our mouth and certain stories burn twice.

Like foods, we instinctively avoid stories that don't become us. Yet – whether on Fox News or Netflix – sometimes they irresistibly attract us. The artists in the exhibition “To be consumed by. Stories to chew on, stories to choke on” savor this paradox.

— Introduction text: Marlene Lahmer

The show *To be consumed by* begins **in the basement** with a performance installation by **Ramiro Wong**, where the artist combines two ways to treat the sufferings of the modern man: shamanism and modern para-pharmaceutical treatments. Wong evokes real knowledge about the power of plants, both medical and esoteric, and invokes the power of beliefs. He creates an interaction where he absorbs the stories of the visitors before replying with a brewage, which – once ingested – promises to heal their pain.

In an installation using advanced video plotting techniques, where light is projected on watercolor paintings and accompanied by speech and music, **Nazanin Mehraein** invites us to share her pain like we would share a meal. She finds relief in drawings, voice and music, which in turn act on our psyche.

Back **on the top floor**, we discover **Kai Trausenegger**'s red sculpture that dominates the room like a piece of artificial oversized candy. Inviting us to take up the headphones to absorb its contents, it might well give us an instant sugar rush with its bold attempt at seduction.

What are the long-term effects of the things taken in by various participants in a picnic as they are still manifest 30 years after the event?, is the question asked by **Dejan Kaludjerović** in an installation which combines sound and a slide projection, trying to get us to piece together word and image in order to ourselves understand what really happened... .

Kaja Clara Joo's ambiguous white objects on a steel table do not give away their identity easily. They appear to be situated somewhere between home-baked cakes and imprints. The key to understanding them lies in finding "the cookbook" where the artist "gives away the recipe", in other words documents the process of artistic creation both materially and mentally – which French artists have called "la cuisine" since the 18th century – and explains the intentions that govern her creation. The continued appeal of the organic installation as well as the clean and beautiful photographic image of her creation show that having seen the kitchen does not necessarily ruin the aesthetic experience but can actually enrich it.

Another work where the cuisine of creating art gets the centre stage is **Estefanía Peñafiel Loaiza**'s work *Las palabras andantes (prémices)* for which she documented the traditional process of creating a visual story on canvas that has been performed in India for centuries. For this, she invited a family specialized in the traditional art of visual storytelling to recount in images a story from Latin America, also exploring the circulation of stories between cultures, languages and media and the ways in which they change as they get assimilated... .

Kay Walkowiak's work *Specific Objecthood (Plug #1)* virtually invites us to insert its extension into our bodies, not through the mouth, but rather using another orifice, namely the anus. While their aesthetics differ significantly, Walkowiak's sculpture might be reminiscent of David Cronenberg's bio-fiction movie *Existenz*, where the phobia of body-penetration is a major theme and which contains one of the most intense eating scenes in cinema history when one of the protagonists eats a mutant amphibian 'special' dish. Walkowiak's cinematic film *Anonymous Objects* in turn places iconic objects from modern and contemporary art in garden-variety contexts in Hongkong, among them a kitchen, having them tell the stories of how they fell from their pedestals.

Lara Reichmann plays with real-estate marketing tropes when she creates adverts for inexistent islands, trying to convince us that they are our ticket to long-term happiness.

Conceived in 1989 and recontextualized over 25 years later, **Nedko Solakov**'s monument for a communist leader looks quite like a dish made with leftovers, namely "various wires, screws, staples, a zip part, a drawer handle, a cap from an Earl Grey tea container, three floor covering samples and plywood". His work *The Abstract Painting (with no frame)* could in turn be considered an exercise in *plating*. Its use of an exaggeratedly opulent frame recalls ancient sources telling stories of hosts of Roman banquets adding precious metals and minerals to food in order to enhance its aesthetic appeal.

Framing a "fallen" screen where vignettes about love are displayed with pearls covering the floor, **Marlene Lahmer**, too, plays with the relationship between content and setting. As we absorb her sweet-bitter short fictions, we are made to wonder whether we want to allow their appeal to take over.

Hector Schofield reflects how he suddenly got involved in a large humanitarian crisis while working as a train conductor, a time when humanity was lacking more than food. Providing a QR code we can scan to access his story on our own mobile devices, he created a story to go that we can take home as we leave the exhibition room.

—Work texts: Klaus Speidel