

Food Democracy

**Critical Lessons
in Food,
Communication,
Design and Art**

**EDITED, CURATED, WRITTEN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY
OLIVER VODEB**

**DESIGNED BY
ROK KLEMENČIČ**



intellect Bristol, UK / Chicago, USA

INTRO

P 15 **OLIVER VODEB**

Hungry for Change + Thirsty for Life
The Socially Responsive Communication, Design and Art
Kitchen and its Dishes

TXTS

P 34 **DARREN TOFTS**

Mean Cuisine
Being a Polemical Discussion of Food in Excess of
Necessity, its Uses and Abuses

P 52 **CIRILA TOPLAK**

**The Global Meat Autocracy: An Issue
of Social Injustice**
Cartelization of the Global Meat Industry

P 81 **NIKOLA JANOVIĆ KOLENC**

**A Shortage of Democracy, Not of Food
and Water**
Trends Shaping Today's Food Industry

P 109 **ABBY MELLICK LOPES, TESSA ZETTEL**

Making Time
Food Preservation and Ontological Design

P 127 **SAM BURCH**

Everything Has a Story
Decolonization, First Nations Sovereignty, and the
Seventh Pillar of Food Sovereignty in the Australian
Context

P 171 **AIDA BAGHERNEJAD**

Hungry
Self-Employment on Street Food Markets and the
Political Dimension of Consumption

P 196 **KATHERINE MOLINE**

Marti Guixé's Food Designing
A Critique of Consumerism?

P 222 TANJA KAMIN, ANDREJA VEZOVIK, PAVLINA JAPELJ

Somewhere over the Rainbow
Cooking a Slovenian Path to a 'Better' Future

P 243 RENFAH

\$\$™ - The Sociosoma

P 260 CLAUDIO SOTOLONGO

Urban Agriculture in Havana
Everything Fresh Including Design

P 276 GEORGE PETELIN

Food for Thought
Visual Practice as Activist Research

P 300 THE LABORATORY OF INSURRECTIONARY IMAGINATION

Geographies of Hope

P 327 EUGENIO TISELLI

What Lies Outside the Cavern

P 349 VEERANGANAKUMARI SOLANKI

Trisikaideka | 13 | UMAMI

P 355 MARIANO MUSSI

The Hidden Sacrifice

P 363 OLIVER VODEB

Designed Pleasure
How Advertising Is Selling Food as Drugs

P 377 OLIVER VODEB

Pleasure Praxis

FOOD DEMOCRACY –

P 414 **FRIENDLY COMPETITION 2013**

VISUAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICE
Curated by Oliver Vodeb

P 420 MIHA MAZZINI, MARKO PLAHUTA

Eat for Democracy

P 422 ASHLEA GLEESON, JACK LOEL

Edible Illusions

- P 424** RODOLFO MEDINA FLORES, JAKUB FIŠER
Merry Kurban Bayrami and Happy New Year
- P 426** MOHAMMAD NASER
Seeds of Hope/Destruction
- P 428** JESSICA NUZUM
What Are You Really Eating?
- P 430** MARIJA JAĆIMOVIĆ, BENOIT DETALLE
Michael Pollan's Food Rules
- P 432** MARIELLA BUSSOLATI
Orto Diffuso
- P 434** MAYA WEINSTEIN
The DIY High Fructose Corn Syrup Kit
- P 436** SANDRA ROJAS
Consciencia
- P 438** LUCY DATYNER
What Do We Know about the Andean Quinoa Industry?
- P 440** KATE SIMPSON
Happy Cow
- P 442** MARIA ISABEL ISAZA ECHEVERRY
Who do You Feed with the Food You Eat?
- P 444** MARKO DAMIŠ, ZDRAVKO PAPIČ (mentor and friend)
Migrants in Europe
- P 446** STEPHAN GROSS
Untitled
- P 448** ANDRES RODRIGUEZ
El Futuro se construye en el Campo
- P 450** KATHERINE JAUCZIUS
Land Grab - The Game
- P 452** DYLAN LEAK
Guerilla Torches
- P 454** HAYLEY SMITH
The Perfect Tomato
- P 456** SYBILLE NEUMEYER
Just a Little Money Involved
- P 458** ZAYRA DOLORES
Pick Me

- P 460** **LIAM MATTHEWS**
Food Democracy
- P 462** **OSCAR WAUGH**
The Patch
- P 464** **JULIA UNKEL**
Facing (orig. Im Angesicht)
- P 466** **KHAULA AL AMERI**
Engineered Corn
- P 468** **THOMAS ROOHAN**
The Food Trade Apparatus (FTA)
- P 470** **SCOTT BURNS**
Info(od)graphics
- P 472** **SOPHIE VAN DER DRIFT**
Meet & Two Veg

BEYOND ...

- P 476** **EUGENIA DEMEGLIO, ALBERTO NOVELLO**
How Much Is Enough?
- P 478** **EUGENIO TISELLI (ET ALL)**
Los Ojos de la Milpa (The Eyes of the Milpa)
- P 480** **CHRISTINE MACKEY**
Seed Matter

DIALOGUE

- P 484** **OLIVER VODEB**
Conflict Kitchen
Dawn Weleski and Jon Rubin

EVENT

- P 514** **OLIVER VODEB**
**Living Out a Situation: The Memefest Food
Democracy Brisbane Sessions**
Visual Essay

TYPOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS BEN MANGAN

**P 20, 36, 73, 85, 119, 134, 179, 205, 232, 253, 265, 289, 311, 336, 352,
359, 368, 380**

DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY OLIVER VODEB

P 3, 14, 32-33, 414-415, 482-483, 512-513

EAT ME - RECIPES

P 50 **Kidneys au poivre Bloom**
BY DARREN TOFTS

P 78 **Beans with Benefits**
BY CIRILA TOPLAK

P 106 **Burek the Great**
BY NIKOLA JANOVIĆ KOLENC

P 124 **Tomato Passata, Chorizo,
Aunty Beryl's Munthari Berry
and Apple Sauce**
BY ABBY MELLICK LOPES, TESSA ZETTEL

P 168 **Crocodile Skewers with Chilli,
Coriander and Native Lemon
Myrtle Sauce**
BY SAM BURCH

P 194 **Borani – Spinach and Yoghurt**
BY AIDA BAGHERNEJAD

P 220 **Catalan Calçotada with
Romesco sauce**
BY KATHERINE MOLINE

P 240 **'Happiness is like a piece
of potica!'**
BY TANJA KAMIN, ANDREJA VEZOVIK,
PAVLINA JAPELJ

P 259 Sticky Palatine

BY REN FAH

P 274 The Original Chicken Salad

BY CLAUDIO SOTOLONGO

P 298 Murray River Punch

BY GEORGE PETELIN

**P 324 A Recipe for Disaster or How to
Make an Omelette and Sabotage
Infrastructure**

**BY THE LABORATORY OF INSURRECTIONARY
IMAGINATION**

P 347 Guacamole

BY EUGENIO TISELLI

P 353 Tehari

BY VEERANGANAKUMARI SOLANKI

P 362 A Transcendental Dessert

BY MARIANO MUSSI

**P 375 Golden Polenta Ice Cream
Sandwich aka Melbourne Kisses**

BY OLIVER VODEB

P 411 Sardinian Magic

BY OLIVER VODEB

**P 542 Pasta with Anchovies and
Breadcrumbs**

BY MANFRED HUBER

AKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is a result of a journey, which started in early 2013 and it included more than two hundred people from 25 countries throughout the several stages of this extradisciplinary research. It is impossible to thank everyone though and so I will thank here those whose contribution is at the core of what I feel is a truly wonderful book.

First I would like to thank the Memefest network and especially Rok, Dejan, Ana and Vida. The fact that Memefest exists for more than 15 years is utterly beautiful and amazing. The wider Memefest network gives me a sense of belonging, which is so very crucial in any intellectual work and provides a space of alternative culture capable of things the university alone isn't.

I would like to thank the publisher Intellect books UK for truly embracing what they called 'a new type of academic book' and the idea of this book series and for keeping the promise of truly supporting the authors' original voices. It is important that this research is published with an independent publisher. A big thank you in particular goes to James Campbell and Amy Rollason. I still remember the sunny morning at which James and I met in our campus Café at Swinburne University in Melbourne. James truly saw and embraced the initial idea of this book, and pushed it even further for this to become a book series. Thank you to Amy Rollason, for her patient collaboration and all her meticulous editorial work and advice. The whole process was truly a genuine pleasure and helped to make this project become what it is in the best possible way. I look forward to work on many books like this in the future. Many thanks also to the peer reviewers and language editors. Of course my big thanks goes to all the contributors to this book, the many diverse voices of theory and practice, the partners in

dialogue, the writers, designers, artists and activists who participated in the several stages of the Memefest process. Thank you to Nikola Janović for his collaboration on conceptualizing the Food Democracy Friendly Competition outlines. Thank you to all the participants and mentors of the Memefest Food Democracy Symposium/ Workshop/ Intervention event at Griffith University Queensland College of Art, to my students and the collaborators of the Brisbane Aboriginal Sovereign Embassy. Thanks especially to George Petelin who has been co-organizing the Memefest Brisbane event with me and co-curating the Memefest/QCA Award for Critical Imaginative Interventions but mostly for all the many important conversations usually in situations of hedonistic pleasure. Thanks also to Manfred Huber for his generous hospitality and collaboration. Thanks to QCA/Griffith for supporting the event financially, enabling us to work in very good conditions, and inviting amazing people from around the world to work with us. Big thank you also to all the co-curators and co-editors of the Memefest friendly competition process. Throughout the years we have created a precious collaboration resulting in a unique methodology, which I highly appreciate. Thank you also to the Center for Design Innovation at Swinburne University for the financial support with which we are able to print this extensive book in full colour and keep the price low, so many more people can appreciate it instead of making this book on food democracy affordable only for libraries or wealthy people – this is true impact. Last but absolutely not least, Rok Klemenčič, thank you for the beautiful book design work, and for being part of it all again.



INTRO

Hungry for Change + Thirsty for Life

The Socially Responsive
Communication, Design and Art
Kitchen and its Dishes

OLIVER VODEB

THE BOOK

This book engages food democracy with communication, design and art. Food is central to our lives, but broader knowledge related to food is increasingly dissolved in the standardizations of consumerist society. Knowledge about communication, media, design and art is largely subsumed to a discourse diluting responsibility through elevating the market as the main principle for the final justification of human actions. We argue that knowledge created under autonomous conditions can lead to change, as it has the potential to create new situations, and particularly that socially responsive communication, design and art can crucially contribute to food democracy.

Not long ago I talked with a university lecturer, an experienced and inspirational designer who regularly participates in radical social actions. He explained to me how a group of academics wanted to study one of their actions – having received a grant to do so. The activists were irritated, wondering what they would get back from

the researchers. They felt that their activities enabled the researchers to get a grant, do the research and probably have a good time too, but were wondering about what impact the research would have. It is true, the usual scenario is that researchers, as a result of their work, publish papers in academic journals, which are mostly only read by an isolated community of academics. While I share many frustrations with current academia, this little story seems typical to me of an important part of the problem. While it is true that academia should collaborate more with social movements, I think social movements should aim to collaborate with academia as well. As is evidenced by this anecdote, a situation emerges where, instead of trying to bridge the different cultures, to create conditions for collaboration and if necessary to provide translation of the academic research to ‘people on the ground’ that could potentially greatly benefit the activists and their efforts, relations of exclusion were reproduced and a chance for the activists to influence academia (which they critiqued) was missed as well.

This book brings together different cultures – academic, activist and professional – and connects them with design, art, social sciences and philosophy. These cultures have different principles of rigour when it comes to knowledge production and research. Brought together in an inter/extradisciplinary manner, they have the potential to measure, think and produce affective insights and act in the world. Connected in a collaborative way and in different (non)institutional contexts, they open up possibilities for response ability.

This methodology, developed by Memefest, is practised through a unique international network, along with a series of events: the international Festival of Socially Responsive Communication, Design and Art, the extradisciplinary symposium/workshops/interventions and this book. The Memefest network connects people of various backgrounds from around the world interested in an alternative to the dominant practices engaged with public communication. The online network has almost two thousand members with various degrees of intensity of participation. The core of the network consists of the Memefest Collective and a close network of curators and editors who

inform many of the Collective's decisions. Curators and editors are mostly long-time collaborators: academics, professionals and activists of various backgrounds.

The Festival of Socially Responsive Communication, Design and Art addresses themes of urgent relevance and creates a 'friendly' competition process that is more formative than selective, more research- and education- than star-driven. This process is an alternative to, and a critique of the dominant design and advertising awards, competitions that play a crucial role in constructing criteria of what is good public communication. Through a complex interplay of awards, their representation, legitimization and marketing-based quality criteria, these dominant design and advertising awards reproduce a self-promotional culture based on competition. They promote and naturalize values and communication and design approaches aligned with the logic of the spectacle and neo-liberal capitalism. Such awards are used as a marketing instrument for promoting the profession and designing its image, and as such are not an instrument for fostering in-depth understanding (Grant 2008; Vodeb 2008, 2012).

Memefest's Friendly Competition engages participants in urgent social issues and puts communication, design and art at the centre of the curated themes: 'Debt' in 2012, 'Food Democracy' in 2013 and 'Radical Intimacies: Dialogue in our Times' in 2014. The process offers a public forum for dialogue and provides participants with multiple forms of educational, curatorial and editorial feedback through the memefest.org website, which also presents a number of works regarded as outstanding. Works are also exhibited in the online gallery and made publicly accessible. In this way the Friendly Competition nurtures and rewards socially responsive communication, design and art (Vodeb 2008).

A range of research is generated from the Memefest Friendly Competition process. The Food Democracy issue of the Memefest festival triggered responses from 25 countries in the areas of visual communication practice, critical writing and participatory art. These projects are used to inform the symposium/workshops/

interventions event, which applies this research to a local context and develops it further. The symposium hosts leading scholars and practitioners and feeds directly into the workshop process where extradisciplinary groups work on developing public interventions in various formats. The groups are mentored and designed as self-sustaining, response-able communication/design/art studios. Within a given deadline, with fixed financial resources, the workshop process culminates in interventions in the public sphere. The Food Democracy workshops were especially significant because of the groundbreaking collaboration with the Aboriginal activist group – The Brisbane Aboriginal Sovereign Embassy (BASE).

This extradisciplinary approach, which is also integrated in Memefest's Friendly Competition, is rooted in artistic institutional critique and directed towards practices that operate at the intersection of art/theory/activism:

At work here is a new tropism and a new sort of reflexivity, involving artists as well as theorists and activists in a passage beyond the limits traditionally assigned to their practice. The word tropism conveys the desire or need to turn towards something else, towards an exterior field or discipline; while the notion of reflexivity now indicates a critical return to the departure point, an attempt to transform the initial discipline, to end its isolation, to open up new possibilities of expression, analysis, cooperation and commitment. This back-and-forth movement, or rather, this transformative spiral, is the operative principle of what I will be calling extradisciplinary investigations. (Holmes 2009)

This experimental research happens at Memefest within a newly created public, connecting network-based self-organization, participatory action, critical research and public media and communication. These four elements of the process are considered to be crucial parts of movements for social change (Holmes 2012) and are used as a set of strategies for research, pedagogy and engagement. The process aims to unfold an expressive, analytic and aesthetic interventionist practice

as well as to (self) organize situations of social exchange with an attempt to transform one's initial discipline.

The extradisciplinary ambition is to carry out rigorous investigations on terrains as far away from art as finance, biotech, geography or psychiatry, to bring forth on those terrains the 'free play of the faculties' and to carry out a lucid and precise critique. These are deliberate and delirious experiments, unfolding by way of material forms, conceptual protocols and situations of social exchange. Satire, hallucination and political activism go hand in hand with careful study and technological sophistication (Holmes 2009).

The ambition to transform one's initial discipline supports the broader goal of Memefest; of contributing to knowledge and understanding of public communication for social change – a process necessarily connected with a critique of the corporate university. The integration of different cultures of knowledge production with a network-based approach, supported by participatory practices, public communication and critical research – both on the level of theory and practice – has proven to be highly effective. The connection between university and marginal and critical social positions is a crucial part of Memefest's activities and its research methodology.

This book presents these processes and the resulting generative insights. It offers knowledge and tools, which are critical both for understanding current situations and are empowering future interventions – hopefully also by you, dear reader.

Appetite for Destruction?

Food is directly related to power, which is largely embedded in food systems. The global food system can be seen as the interplay of food production, distribution, consumption and representation. In the era of privatization of everything, fundamental human needs get colonized through corporate strategies and the food system becomes a machine, which excludes people to maximize profit. On an everyday level, we have almost no chance to participate in the production and distribution of food. Besides providing nutrients to our bodies,

SOCIAL

CHANGE

BEING

food plays a profound social, cultural, economic and political role. It can bring people together or set them apart. It is used as a tool for social control or reclaiming autonomy. As our most intimate experience with the natural world, food can truly connect us with nature or it can alienate us from it if this intimacy is broken.

The capitalist food system is designed to serve a handful of influential food-producing corporations. As a radical profit strategy, corporations are putting exclusive copy rights on seeds – the very source of life and a public knowledge bank, as seeds were cultivated through centuries in a close relation between human and nature. With the strategic use of sugar, salt and fat, food can be manipulated to have the chemical effect of drugs. Addictive relations to food are designed by advertising as well, in many cases food advertising even promotes behavioural patterns, which resemble illicit drug cultures and food itself is more and more designed to be a drug-delivering device. The food system also serves distributors of food, which work on the principles of economies of scale and globalization, rendering small-scale and local food distribution into niche projects. Our consumption and eating habits support a toxic food culture, and the media, together with marketing-based communication practices, institutionalize power relations fundamental to the predatory food system. The food system is reproduced by a culture of appearance driven by advertising, branding and packaging that create a superficially designed world of designed food. It is common practice that more than 30 per cent of fruit and vegetables are thrown away at harvest because what has grown does not match imposed standardized aesthetic visual preferences. Supermarkets react quickly to critique, smell the potential profit and start selling vegetables and fruit labelled as ‘ugly’ for lower prices. Yet, what is still lacking is a connection with nature and a sustainable culture – ‘ugly food’ is just a nice little supermarket brand.

Food production has an immense environmental footprint. An astonishing figure is that around 55 calories of fossil fuel in the form of fertilizers, farm equipment, pesticide, processing and transporta-

tion are used to produce one calorie of beef meat and on average ten calories of fossil fuel are used to produce one calorie of processed food (Pollan in Khong 2013). Recent research by WWF and the Zoological Society of London found out that tuna and mackerel populations have declined by 74 per cent between 1970 and 2012, outstripping a decline of 49 per cent for 1234 ocean species over the same period. This alarming situation is of course critical to human food security.

New evidence suggests that the common factor between the tragic deaths of refugees in the Mediterranean sea in the last years and the Arab Spring are food shortages driven by global warming. Syria's civil war has caused the first withdrawal of crop seeds from a 'doomsday' vault, built in an Arctic mountainside of the Norwegian Svalbard archipelago to safeguard global food supplies, that stores more than 860,000 samples from around the world. The seeds include samples of rice, barley, wheat and grasses suited to dry regions; they have been requested by researchers in the Middle East to replace a seed collection in the Syrian city of Aleppo that has been damaged by the war. Together with the world's population numbers rising, food will become the biggest issue of survival and geopolitical dominance very, very soon. This is the dark picture, but it is far from being the whole picture.

Organic food with attached values that prohibit the use of toxic substances and GMO components and promote more humane treatment of animals is becoming mainstream. The UN urges us to eat dairy free if we want to counter global warming. A company called Impossible Foods is openly battling the meat industry by scientifically developing vegan hamburgers, the meat substitute of which is completely plant-based but smells, cooks, bleeds and has the same texture as beef. Urban gardens are growing around the world; food as a topic is getting high attention in design, art and social sciences, with whole new university degrees focusing on 'food systems' being launched. Awareness of locally grown, home cooked food is more present than ever. The world's most influential and very expensive Nordic restaurant Noma plans to reopen in the middle of its own urban farm, right next to Copenhagen's anarchist autonomous squat Christiania and Guerrilla

Grafters – a group who create public interventions through placing fruit-bearing branches onto non-fruit-bearing, ornamental fruit trees in the streets of San Francisco. Street food brings the world's cuisine at affordable prices to every corner of our cities and food design is becoming its own area of academic investigation. Food has long been the subject matter of artists, and galleries are devoting big exhibitions to it. Farmers around the world are organizing protests, many times using network-based technologies, while restaurants incorporate a sense of politics, social and environmental responsibility in their business models. Global protests have cut Monsanto's (the leading producer of genetically engineered seed) profits by 34 per cent in 2015, and radical networks are distributing food from food banks and other sources to those in need. Under a law set to crack down on epidemic food waste alongside the context of raising food poverty, France has prohibited supermarkets from throwing away or destroying food; instead they must donate waste to charities, food banks or for animal feed. Italy has made the stealing of food legal if done out of severe hunger. A growingly evident, visible presence and role of food in our everyday lives makes everyday people experts on the complex importance of our relation to food. Without a doubt, a culture critical of the dominant food system is growing around the world and people want to be involved and to engage with food in political ways.

All these examples, either contributing to the problem or part of the solution, are closely related to communication, design and art.

Neo-liberal society is strictly regulated and heavily over coded. We have trouble leaving our private self and creating a distance to social mechanisms that impose this private position in the first place. But this is crucial. In the age of the privatization of everything, occupying a common space and creating an intimacy of relations that form around public matters is key to breaking out of the simulacrum of imposed pleasure: respect-collaboration-imagination-intervention. Food Democracy addresses the problem where people are turned into consumers and vote solely through their buying power

and purchase choices. It is evident that such assumed power not only has big limitations but also reproduces power relations imposed by the neo-liberal market, which don't create democracy, but colonization.

So what can communication, design and art do in order to contribute to Food Democracy? In realizing that Food Democracy is about a shared fate, shared resources, shared risks and shared solutions, creating publics, nurturing the commons through involved, inclusive and dialogic communication, design and art is at the core of socially responsive strategies and in opposition to the exclusionary delusions of marketing-based communication, design and art.

It seems like food, with its potential of bringing people together, its inherent connection with pleasure and nature, is the perfect medium to support the aims of socially responsive communication, design and art. How can we respond and gain autonomy through communication design and art today? How can we contribute to Food Democracy and what are the specifics of socially responsive communication, design and art in relation to it? The contradictions of inequitable arrangements of power and the rhetoric of liberal democracies are at hand, but we need to make them visible. Making them visible is more than an image. It is a social relation, which leaves the image behind in an engaged conversation and unfolds in communicative action. Besides making things visible, it is crucial to develop new, different communication, design and art approaches through theory and practice. Any such strategy aiming at creating the future, therefore, needs to include also a change of education and a change in the ways academics, professionals and activists relate to each other in the present.

The Intervention

This book was inspired by the intensive process we undertook during the Memefest festival of Socially Responsive Communication, Design and Art themed 'Food Democracy' – our online global festival Friendly Competition and the extradisciplinary symposium/workshops/interventions held in Brisbane at the Griffith University, Queensland College of Art. It shows selected results of this process and also

presents additional work on the theme created for this publication.

Food Democracy: Critical Lessons in Food, Communication, Design and Art presents an investigation on the subject from a global perspective and includes contributions from Cuba, the Netherlands, Mexico, Ireland, Slovenia, Australia, Slovakia, Bangladesh, Italy, Serbia, the United States, Colombia, Germany, United Arab Emirates, India, Argentina and Mexico. It starts with texts written on the subject for this publication by scholars, educators and activists. The discussions provide a critical, radical and generative analysis of food democracy connecting areas of design, art, social sciences and philosophy.

On the Theoretical Practice Menu:

A dark, poetic and beautiful journey into mean cuisine and the erotic darkness of food by independent academic, writer and public intellectual Darren Tofts.

A passionate exploration of the culture and ideology of carnism, a discussion about animals as sentient beings and the global meat autocracy and a case against eating meat by academic intellectual and animal activist Cirila Toplak.

An activist cultural critique of the logic of food systems and a discussion on the trends shaping today's food industry by sociologist, cultural critic, independent researcher and political communicator Nikola Janović Kolenc.

An adventurous critique of alternative star designer Martí Guixé's food designing, discussing its potential for a critique of consumerism by researcher, artist/designer and educator Katherine Moline.

An empowering exploration on how artists can help to re-establish the bonds of solidarity between humans and natural non-human entities by artist and programmer Eugenio Tisselli.

Design academic Abby Mellick Lopes and artist, writer and design educator Tessa Zettel discuss ontological design and food preservation, developing a much-needed argument for making time as 'an experiment in non-institutional learning' and redirective practice.

Activist, writer, teacher, independent researcher and active

campaigner for the rights of First Nations peoples, Sam Burch contributes powerful and visionary analysis of decolonization, first nation's sovereignty and of food sovereignty in the Australian context.

Journalist and Ph.D. student Aida Baghernejad offers a bottom-up view on street food and its role in the precarious economy and gentrified cities of Berlin and London.

A discursive analysis of Slovenia's popular women's and family magazine *Naša žena*, by communication and media researchers Tanja Kamin, Andreja Vezovnik and Pavlina Japelj.

'Assimilated' intellectual and educator with background in art criticism and critical theory, George Petelin discusses the potentials and approaches of visual practice as activist research, crucial (not only) in the case of food.

Graphic designer, educator and curator Claudio Sotolongo takes us to isolated Cuba in exciting times when Cuba and the United States were just about to reopen embassies, discussing Havana's urban agriculture phenomenon and its related unique design approaches.

Activist/art collective Laboratory for Insurrectionary Imagination inspires us by showing how art, activism and imagination are brought to life in spite of capitalism, discussing geographies of hope through their own lived practice.

Artist Veeranganakumari Solanki explores our fifth basic taste – Umami – and poetically looks into our personal and collective relations to food and democracy.

Public health scholar and Memefest member Mariano Mussi makes a compelling case for cultural participation in the acts of death of animals, a relation hidden through industrial meat production.

Memefest founder, Slovenian and Australian academic and anti-celebrity chef Oliver Vodeb shows first how Advertising is designing pleasure and selling food as drugs and in his second and last chapter introduces the term Pleasure Praxis and its theoretical framework.

A special part of this book is EAT ME, where authors present a special food recipe of their choice – related to their text – written for you to use and enjoy. You should preferably cook it at a social occasion

(maybe including reading of the texts out loud and discussing them), with friends, family and comrades while enjoying the wonderful meal and the many potentials of such a situation. These delicious (theoretical) practices of cooking – as an act of decolonization, and yes, hopefully love, pleasure and hedonism – should connect taste with thought and distil the essence of response-ability into a cuisine of social action.

The book then presents curated works submitted to the Memefest Friendly Competition in response to our curatorial provocations based on a text, *The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply* by Vandana Shiva, and the documentary *Our Daily Bread* by Nikolaus Geyrhalter in the categories of visual communication and critical writing as well as works of participatory art/social practice in the category Beyond....

Our curatorial concept does not produce winners (and losers) as we feel this is a fundamental logic of capitalism, which we don't want to reproduce. We curate a number of works, which are high in relevance. The authors receive publically written feedback from curators with different backgrounds who address the works from different perspectives. Our curatorial process in this way ensures that the richness, complexity and contextual nature of design is addressed and not reduced. In order to understand the curated works, one needs to consider the author's concept and curatorial comments together with the design work. Works therefore include written contextual articulations by authors and commentaries by Memefest's curators. This extradisciplinary contextual, public and dialogic approach to analysing and evaluating communication, design and art is unique to Memefest.

On the Visual Communication Practice and Participatory Art/ Social Practice Menu:

Among others this section includes: projects that range from strategies addressing cultural priorities, to food community building projects, and visual work that explores the relation between religion, culture, economy and power structures in contemporary society

through food in Istanbul. An interactive project that parallels the five stages of sleep with an obsession to junk food. Zines that help students living in shared houses interact with food in more holistic and positive manner and a tactical media supermarket intervention. You will find a photo-documentary investigation on seeds in Bangladesh and visual concepts of an honest supermarket as well as a great poster illustrating the relation between food, migrants and the European Union; we are presenting to you an important project using open-source mobile phone technologies to preserve farmers' knowledge and build food knowledge communities in remote areas of Africa and Mexico and an investigation of what kind of food and ingredients are popular in democracies and authoritarian regimes. All together you will be able to engage with 30 curated visual works with unique critical, radical and creative approaches to Food Democracy.

After the theoretical analysis and practical design and art responses to Food Democracy, we want to give the reader insight into two special projects: Conflict Kitchen and the Memefest Food Democracy symposium/workshop/intervention sessions held in Brisbane at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University in November 2013.

Conflict Kitchen provides precious inspiration to our own food praxis. It is a rare project, which successfully uses food as a medium for social critique in a bold, sophisticated and intellectually ambitious way – things that are also close to our hearts and things that we support and want to see growing. We wanted a close dialogue with founders and directors Dawn Weleski and Jon Rubin, which would reveal the story behind the project, its philosophy, artistic strategies and the people behind it all – a look into artistic gourmandism. Oliver Vodeb takes us on this journey.

The Memefest extradisciplinary Food Democracy symposium/workshop/intervention sessions were of utmost importance for the development of our methodologies for research, pedagogy and intervention. Besides bringing together students, researchers and activists with different backgrounds, we were establishing a unique collaboration between Memefest and the Brisbane Aboriginal Sovereign Em-

bassy (BASE) – a radical Aboriginal activist group, which at that time was in the earlier stages of running their food programme. The food programme was distributing food to mostly aboriginal communities in need in the wider area of Brisbane. The Memefest sessions were completely designed to support BASE and their food programme and our collaboration has proven to be groundbreaking in many ways. The visual essay at the end of the book is dedicated to showing these processes.

In *Food Democracy: Critical Lessons in Food, Communication, Design and Art* disciplinary boundaries will be pushed, critique and imagination explored, foundations rethought, ideologies debunked and an alternative scene further developed. The culture we want to nurture is highly collaborative through joint thinking, making and significant conversations. In the times of radical commercial avant-gardes, university corporatism, the increasing penetration of self-centred design with good intentions into everyday life and more than boring art, the profile of people closest to our ideas might be described as praxis-based theorists, designers as practical intellectuals, critical communication and media makers, artists for social and environmental change, curious researchers with radical imagination, passionate educators, students, citizens and activists.

So here it is, a unique menu of socially responsive communication, design, art and theoretical practice for food democracy. It is your turn now to take it and make use of it. Bon appétit!

MEMEFEST 2013
FESTIVAL OF SOCIALLY RESPONSIVE COMMUNICATION & ART

CORPORATIONS

FRIENDLY COMPETITION



PEOPLE

20.5.2013 SUBMISSION DEADLINE

FOOD IS PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PART OF OUR EVERY DAY LIFE BUT BESIDES ITS OBVIOUS IMPORTANCE TO HUMAN BEINGS, IT PLAYS AN INCREDIBLY STRONG CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ROLE.

MEMEFEST INVITES YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS ON THE THEME FOOD DEMOCRACY IN THE FIELDS OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICE & CRITICAL WRITING.

YOUR WORKS WILL BE EVALUATED BY OUR CURATORIAL AND EDITORIAL BOARD OF RADICAL THINKERS, ARTISTS, COMMUNICATION INTERVENTIONISTS, EDUCATORS, ACTIVISTS AND RESEARCHERS. AUTHORS OF SELECTED WORKS WILL BE AWARDED.

IN THE ERA OF PRIVATISATION OF EVERYTHING, FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN NEEDS GET COLONISED THROUGH CORPORATE STRATEGIES. THE FOOD SYSTEM BECOMES A MACHINE WHICH EXCLUDES PEOPLE. FOOD IS DESIGNED AND SO ARE ITS REPRESENTATIONS. WE ARE NOT ONLY EXCLUDED BUT MANIPULATED TO FORM A SPECIFIC RELATION TO FOOD.

FOOD DEMOCRACY?

A SPECIAL PARTICIPATORY ART CATEGORY "BEYOND" IS ALSO OPEN FOR SUBMISSION.

SUBMIT YOUR WORK AT WWW.MEMEFEST.ORG

References

- Grant, J.** (2008), 'Awards madness', <http://www.eyemagazine.com/feature/article/awards-madness>. Accessed 18 October 2016.
- Holmes, B.** (2009), *Escape the Overcode: Activist Art in the Control Society*, Eindhoven: Van Abbemuseum.
- (2012), 'Eventwork: The fourfold matrix of contemporary social movements', <http://brianholmes.wordpress.com/2012/02/17/eventwork/>. Accessed 18 May 2016.
- Khong, R.** (2013), 'The end of the world as we know it, an interview with Michael Pollan', *Lucky Peach*, San Francisco, McSweeney's.
- Vodeb, O.** (2008), *Družbeno odzivno komuniciranje*, Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede.
- (2012), 'Beyond the image and towards communication: An extradisciplinary critique of the visual communication profession', *Design Philosophy Papers*, 10:1, pp. 5-21.